

ADRIAN ROGERS

**WHAT EVERY
CHRISTIAN
OUGHT TO KNOW**

Essential Truths for Growing Your Faith



SMALL GROUP
Leadership Guide

LEADERSHIP GUIDE

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

The purpose of the Adrian Rogers' small-group discipleship study material is to provide pastors, small-group leaders, and other spiritual leaders a quality, Bible-based tool for Christian discipleship drawn from the teaching of the late Pastor Adrian Rogers, one of the world's most acclaimed pastors and preachers of the 20th and 21st Centuries. The material uses foundational truths extracted from Pastor Rogers' sermons with pertinent discussion questions and amplifying applications that are beneficial for individuals, small groups, and the church as a whole.

TARGET AUDIENCE

These studies are designed to come alongside the existing teaching ministries of pastors and the local church, and are formatted specifically for adult small groups such as Sunday schools, "life groups," discipleship groups, home studies, or intentional outreaches. Though certainly beneficial if used as a private study, these materials are best employed in group settings where discussion and the sharing of personal experiences/knowledge may benefit others on the path of spiritual growth. Each lesson will not only provide believers with the opportunity to develop a closer and more abundant walk with the Lord Jesus, but also will speak to seekers and those in the valley of decision who may be drawn to the Lord's timeless truths and the reality of His redemption.

SCOPE OF INSTRUCTION

Each lesson series encompasses a specific topic important for a successful and fruitful Christian walk. The lessons are primarily thematic, focusing on God's biblical direction for real-life issues. Topics include family, current cultural issues, finances, prayer, baptism, spiritual authority, the pain of sin, and a host of other relevant subjects. Though purposefully thematic to aid in practical discipleship, lessons incorporate theological truths in keeping with Pastor Rogers' sound biblical preaching.

GENERAL FORMAT

Each topic is designed around approximately 4-6 lessons. Some of those lessons will be taught in several sessions. Topics drawn from the same theme build upon each other to form a course of lessons that could comprise several weeks or months of comprehensive study around a key area of Christian growth.

THE BASIC LESSON

Each lesson (or session if the lesson is divided into parts) is designed to be held in a small-group setting and should take approximately one hour depending upon the length of discussion and interaction by the group. The lessons or sessions each use a brief (3-7 min) audio or video excerpt from one of Pastor Rogers' sermons or classes, coupled with amplifying material and thought-provoking discussion questions designed to stimulate personal application of the biblical truths presented.

SAMPLE STRUCTURE

- Introduction 3 min.
 - Reflection Questions 5 min.
 - Presentation-Audio/video clip of an Adrian Rogers message 5 min.
 - Amplification 10 min.
 - Questions and Discussion 20 min.
 - Prayer requests and prayer 10 min.
- 50 min.**

THE ROLE OF THE SMALL-GROUP LEADER

The primary role of the Leader is to **facilitate** the events of the evening. The Leader is not expected to “teach” a Bible study, and therefore does not need to be an accomplished Bible scholar. He/she does not have to be ordained, seminary trained, or even an experienced teacher. There is no heavy Bible study preparation required to lead any of these group study lessons. However, the leader should have a heart for God, should want to grow as a Christian, and should desire to see others grow also.

The small-group leader’s secondary role is to arrange the necessary logistics for the group meeting; time, location, refreshments, student handouts, media device, and/or anything else needed for a comfortable group meeting. **Note:** at the leader’s discretion, this responsibility may be delegated to another.]

PREPARING FOR LEADING A SMALL-GROUP LESSON/SESSION

The leader should make sure that all potential group attendees are aware of the date/time/location of the meeting, and that all logistical arrangements have been set in order (see above).

As previously stated, preparation on the part of the leader is minimal. The discipleship lesson itself is self-contained and only requires the leader to read through the material in advance to become familiar with its content, along with the amplifying material and discussion questions. The leader should also listen to, or watch the 2-7 minute audio/video segment from Pastor Rogers before the group meeting.

Student lesson handouts are available in .pdf format for download, and may be printed and given to participants at the leader’s discretion.

LEADING THE SMALL GROUP

A key function of the small-group design is to offer a non-threatening environment of fellowship and interaction designed for people to encourage one another in spiritual growth. After an initial time of fellowship and greeting one another, the leader should introduce the topic of the lesson by reading the **Introduction** and initial **Reflection Questions**, followed by facilitating a brief time of discussion and interaction before playing the audio/video clip of Pastor Rogers.

After playing the audio/video clip of Pastor Rogers, the leader should read the **Amplification** section of the lesson, followed by facilitating more discussion using the **Discussion Questions and Personal Application** sections. This should be a time in which participants are encouraged to share their personal response to what has been learned, with the group members encouraging one another in their mutual efforts at spiritual growth.

Note: The leader may want to add additional personal comments to the **Amplification** section, and/or introduce additional questions or applications deemed pertinent to the group. At the end of the lesson are additional Scripture references useful for additional discussion, along with a suggested reading list to augment the material presented in the lesson.

GROUP PRAYER

The leader should always allow time at the end of each lesson for prayer. The lesson provides a suggested group prayer, but it is the leader’s discretion as to how to organize the prayer time. The leader may want to have the group share individual prayer requests with members praying for the person to their left or right (remember to emphasize the need for confidentiality), or may choose one person to pray over the group collectively. Allow the leadership of the Holy Spirit and the dynamic of the group to dictate this most important part of the group time.

CLOSING THE SESSION

After prayer and at the close of the lesson or session, ensure all members are aware of the next meeting date, time, and location, and encourage all participants to put into practice the suggested **Personal Application** for the week.

LESSON ONE: THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

SESSION ONE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small group discipleship study, please refer back to the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This session is the first in a four-part series that explains how we know with certainty that the Bible is the Word of God. As Pastor Rogers has said, “Your salvation ... Your assurance ... Your spiritual growth ... Your power in witness [all] depend upon the confidence that you have in the Word of God.” Therefore, this and the next three sessions, are specifically designed to cause your group members consider and evaluate what they believe (or have believed) about the trustworthiness of Scripture, while developing their confidence in the Bible as God’s Word.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Lesson Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader’s Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to presenting it as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats recommended in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON ONE | SESSION ONE

INTRODUCTION

Everyone believes in something, whether that something is true or false. Some choose to carefully examine information themselves while others blindly follow or accept what others may tell them without question. “If it sounds right, it must be right” is the motto for many in this age in which so much information (both true and false) is instantly available at our fingertips. In this study, Pastor Adrian Rogers will begin to state the case for the Bible being the Word of God by virtue of its scientific accuracy, something that many sceptics claim is a major flaw, though few have ever really examined the facts.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

2 Timothy 3:16 “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What is your opinion of the Bible? Do you believe it is fully trustworthy, or do you think there are parts of Scripture that science and history have proven to be false?
- Do you think we should rely upon pastors, academics, or other “experts” to tell us what is in the Bible and what it means, or do you think we each have the ability, and indeed the responsibility, to study and learn from Scripture ourselves?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP 1 OF: “How to Know the Bible Is the Word of God”**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

Your salvation depends upon understanding the Bible. Your assurance depends upon your understanding the Bible. Your spiritual growth depends upon your understanding the Bible. Your power in witness depends upon the confidence that you have in the Word of God.

—**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: A common argument made against the Bible is that it is scientifically flawed, that it is antiquated, that modern science has made it obsolete or irrelevant. However, if you were to ask yourself, “Just exactly **where** is the Bible scientifically inaccurate?” would you be able to give an informed answer? As Pastor Rogers stated, “Many times people who are talking about scientific errors in the Bible don’t know science, and they don’t know the Bible.” The Bible, as the Word of God, is not intended to be a science textbook with detailed specifics of precise scientific information, but rather it contains principles and information that science, as it advances, is continually proving to be correct.

For Discussion: What doubts about the Bible’s scientific accuracy have you had, or maybe still have? Try to be specific about what you thought or might still believe.

Amplification: Consider Psalm 103:12, “As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.” Did you know that on the globe we call, “Earth,” if you travel east, you will never reach west, you will continually be going east? Yet, if you travel north far enough, you will eventually find yourself going south. This can only be so if Earth is a sphere. Written nearly 2,000 years before man (science) ever even discovered that the Earth was round, it was contained in God’s Word. There is a reason why God said that He removes our transgressions “as far as the east is from the west,” as opposed to “as far as the north is from the south.”

For Discussion: Does having a better understanding of what the Bible actually says and how it is written provide you with more confidence in the validity of it being God’s Word? How so?

Amplification: The average person spends far more time watching TV, surfing the internet, playing video games, or reading other material than reading God’s Word. There is a general tendency to rely on others “more learned” than ourselves to inform us of what the Bible actually says or teaches. Instead of being like the psalmist who writes, “As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God” (Psalm 42:1), we tend to squeeze our study of Scripture in between other activities that are far less worthy than reading the Word of God.

For Discussion: What can we do to make more time for personal Bible study in our lives?

Amplification: The Bible is said to be like a road map for life. It provides directions for health, wealth, happiness and, most importantly, for our salvation. Consider how much better the world would be if everyone would just follow the two great commandments of God, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind ... [and] You shall

love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:37-39). If everyone would believe and follow these two great biblical commands, there would be no war, crime, or hatred in the world. Yet, the Bible remains a dust-gathering book on most people’s coffee tables or book shelves, and God’s instructions for life are sparsely gleaned from an occasional 30-minute sermon, **if** one even attends church.

For Discussion: If the Bible is indeed the Word of God and our instruction manual for life, why do you suppose it goes unread most of the time? Could that possibly account for many of the difficulties we personally encounter, and for the mess the world is in as a whole?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

Take time this week to read and study for yourself each of the suggested Scriptures listed in the “**Additional Scriptures to Study**” section. As you read and meditate, ask God to reveal His truth to you concerning the trustworthiness of His Word and the importance of applying it to our lives. You may want to journal your thoughts and impressions as a record of what the Lord reveals to you.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, open our eyes and heart to Your truths.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE TO STUDY

As you read and study the following Scriptures, consider the infinite power, majesty, and greatness of Who God is, and how He is revealed to us through His creation. Use this time of study to worship Him.

Job 26:7 “He stretches out the north over empty space; He hangs the earth on nothing.”

Isaiah 40:22 “It is He who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, who stretches out the heavens like a curtain, and spreads them out like a tent to dwell in.”

Jeremiah 33:22 “As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.”

Romans 1:20 “For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse,”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Charles Hummel, “Priorities; Tyranny of the Urgent” (InterVarsity Press, 1994)
- Ken Ham, “Science Confirms the Bible” (Answers in Genesis, 2012)
- W.A. Criswell, “The Bible for Today’s World” (Zondervan, 1965)

LESSON ONE: THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

SESSION TWO

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the second of four sessions that, taken together, explain how we know with certainty that the Bible is the Word of God. In the previous session, Pastor Rogers began demonstrating the Bible's scientific accuracy by discussing the science of astronomy. In this session, Pastor Rogers continues to focus on science by discussing the Bible's accuracy with respect to medicine and physiology.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Lesson Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to presenting the additional work as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests, and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats recommended in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON ONE | SESSION TWO

INTRODUCTION

There is a thought process today that says, "Truth is relative; your truth may not be my truth." That is quite absurd. Truth is truth. The color "black" is still black, even if someone else chooses to call it "white." Just because someone may believe in something that is false does not make it true. Our previous study contained the challenge to discern for oneself the scientific accuracy of the Bible, an area skeptics often claim is flawed, though few have ever really examined the facts. In that session, Pastor Rogers began demonstrating the Bible's scientific accuracy with respect to what it says about the Earth being hung in space, and the fact that the Bible declared the Earth to be a globe long before "science" ever discovered it to be round and not flat. He also demonstrated the Bible's accuracy with respect to astronomy and the stars. In this session, we look at another aspect of the Bible's scientific accuracy, medicine and physiology; subject areas for which, again, scientists are only now beginning to catch up with what the Bible has always said.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

2 Timothy 3:16 “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- As we discovered in the previous session, astronomical information presented as “science” has often been little more than mythology or fable over the centuries. This is true also in the “science” of medicine and physiology. What are some of the “Old Wives’ Tales” remedies you may have heard of or grown up with over the years that were intended to cure maladies?
- If the Bible remains accurate in the area of science, how does that impact our faith? Should we be more inclined to believe that it is, in fact, God’s Word? Why?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP 2 OF: “How to Know the Bible Is the Word of God”**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

You will never be a great Christian until you come to this first rock-ribbed assurance, that the Bible is the Word of God. —**Adrian Rogers**

For Discussion: There are those who despise the Bible, there are those who deny the Bible, there are those who distort the Bible, and there are those who disregard the Bible. How do you think these perspectives have served to impact our Christian faith?

Amplification: Did you know that in 1840 in Vienna, expectant mothers were dying of infection? They would go in for pre-natal examinations, become infected, then one out of every five Pregnant women would die before giving birth! The doctors were actually going from one examination room to another without washing their hands. As a matter of fact, the doctors were coming from the morgue where they had just performed autopsies and, without washing their hands, would then do pelvic examinations on expectant mothers. One after another, the doctor would unknowingly infect all of those he examined because he had not washed his hands. This was just roughly 150 years ago!

A doctor named, Simmelvise, the head of a hospital in Vienna, began to watch this. He directed all of his doctors to wash their hands after having conducted autopsies. After doing this, only one out of 84 pregnant mothers died, just because the doctors began to wash their hands! But then, there was an incident in which 11 out of 12 died in a row, even though the doctors had washed their hands after leaving the morgue. Dr. Simmelvise now directed his doctors to wash their hands between each examination. The doctors protested saying, “We can’t do that; it takes too much time!” They gave Dr. Simmelvise a terrible time and pushed back against his directive, but he stood his ground. Today, what doctor would even begin to think about going from one patient to another without scrubbing or changing gloves?

For Discussion: If the basic principles of hygiene, quarantine, and hematology (the study of the physiology of the blood) found in the Bible had been understood and practiced, in what ways do you think world history or the advancement of mankind would be different today?

Amplification: The Bible says, “This is the law when a man dies in a tent: All who come into the tent and all who are in the tent shall be unclean seven days; and every open vessel, which has no cover fastened on it, is unclean. Whoever in the open field touches one who is slain by a sword or who has died, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days” (Numbers 19:14-16). Without the people understanding anything about the science of medicine as we understand it today, the Bible prescribed time for germs and bacteria to die, and gave instructions for not contaminating others.

For Discussion: Has information about the scientific accuracy of the Bible impacted your confidence in the Bible as being the Word of God? How do you think you might possibly change the way you will approach Scripture in the future? Explain.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

During your devotions this week, take time to thank the Lord for His Word, the Bible, and how it transcends the ages to give us timeless truths. Ask Him to open your understanding and to give you a hunger to learn.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, continue to open our eyes and hearts to Your truths.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE TO STUDY

As you study the Scriptures, consider how marvelous the Word of God is to have provided guidance for health and cleanliness centuries before “science” ever even knew about germs or how diseases are transmitted. Use your time of study to praise and worship the God of all creation.

Leviticus 13:46 “He shall be unclean. All the days he has the sore he shall be unclean. He is unclean, and he shall dwell alone; his dwelling shall be outside the camp.”

Leviticus 17:14 “For it [blood] is the life of all flesh. Its blood sustains its life. Therefore I said to the children of Israel, ‘You shall not eat the blood of any flesh, for the life of all flesh is its blood. Whoever eats it shall be cut off.’”

Numbers 19:14-16 “This is the law when a man dies in a tent: All who come into the tent and all who are in the tent shall be unclean seven days; and every open vessel, which has no cover fastened on it, is unclean. Whoever in the open field touches one who is slain by a sword or who has died, or a bone of a man, or a grave, shall be unclean seven days.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- U. Saarnivaara, “Can The Bible Be Trusted?” (Minneapolis: Osterhus, 1983)
- S.I. McMillan, “None of These Diseases” (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell Co., 2001)

LESSON ONE: THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

SESSION THREE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** designed to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the third of four sessions that, when taken together, explain how we know with certainty that the Bible is the Word of God. In the previous two sessions, Pastor Rogers confirmed the Bible's scientific accuracy by discussing what the Bible says about astronomy and medicine. In this session, Pastor Rogers shifts the focus to the Bible's historic accuracy and its wondrous unity. Though often disparaged by those who neither know the facts of history or the composition of the Bible, the undeniable truths presented by Pastor Rogers help us to have a firm confidence in the Bible as God's Word.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Lesson Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests, and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats recommended in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON ONE | SESSION THREE

INTRODUCTION

In this series of studies, we have issued a basic challenge for people to seriously examine the accuracy and trustworthiness of the Bible for themselves. This will help people to oppose critics who, without knowledge of the facts, are quick to discount the truth of God's word. In the same way the Bible was not written to be a science textbook, yet remains scientifically accurate, so it is with the Bible's historical content. It is not a history book but is historically accurate. And, just as a completed building points to the reality of an architect behind its design, the wondrous unity of the Bible points to God as its author.

In the previous two sessions, Pastor Rogers confirmed the Bible's scientific accuracy by discussing what it says about astronomy and medicine. In this session, Pastor Rogers shifts the focus to the Bible's historic accuracy and its supernatural unity. Though the Bible is often disparaged by those who neither know the facts of history nor the composition of the Bible, the undeniable truths presented by Pastor Rogers help us to have a firm confidence in the Bible as God's Word.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

2 Timothy 3:16 “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- If the Bible accurately records history as it unfolded during the time of its writing, would you consider it a trustworthy roadmap to study and follow while navigating through current life issues?
- Do you think information about the Bible’s unity might change the opinion of someone who tends to view the Bible as, “just another religious book”?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP 3 OF: “How to Know the Bible Is the Word of God”**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

Not only is the Bible not a book of science, it is not a book of history, but it is historically correct ... The Bible, though it may not be a book of history per se, is “His story,” it is the story of God. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: Though written neither as a science textbook, nor as a history textbook, the Bible remains scientifically and historically accurate. As scientists and archeologists advance their findings, they only continue to validate the Bible’s accuracy. Consider the following excerpt from, “Can the Bible Be Trusted?”:

According to W.F. Albright, there is no doubt that archeology has confirmed the essential historicity of the Old Testament. Millar Burrows agrees with him and states, as a whole, archeological work has strengthened our reliance on what the Bible says, and that in numerous cases it has refuted the views of critics.

Or the following from Dr. Robert Dick Wilson, former professor at Princeton Theological Seminary:

After forty-five years of scholarly research in biblical textual studies and in language study, I have come now to the conviction that no man knows enough to assail the truthfulness of the Old Testament. Where there is sufficient documentary evidence to make an investigation, the statements of the Bible, in the original text, have stood the test.

The noted Dr. J.O. Kinnaman has also said:

Of the hundreds of thousands of artifacts found by the archaeologists, not one has ever been discovered that contradicts or denies one word, phrase, clause, or sentence of the Bible, but always confirms and verifies the facts of the Biblical record.

For Discussion: It has been well said that “history tends to repeat itself.” In reading and studying passages in the Bible that record historical events, do you find any parallels to our contemporary times? What are some of the cultural, religious, and/or nationwide events that seem to mirror the past, and how do you think we should respond to those situations?

Amplification:

The Bible has one theme, redemption; the Bible has one hero, the Lord Jesus; the Bible has one villain, the devil; the Bible has one purpose; the glory of God ... The

unity of the Bible is one of the wonderful proofs of the inspiration of God's Word—that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. —**Adrian Rogers**

Have you ever thought about the complexity of the combustible engine in your car? It is comprised of a thousand different parts, each unique, but all working together to allow your car to function. For that to happen there had to be hundreds of workers, beginning with a designer, then engineers, and workers in factories who make and/or assemble the parts. Many of these people never meet, they possess different educational and societal backgrounds, and they may even live in different parts of the world speaking different languages. Yet, under the watchful eye of a designer, sometimes after years of work, parts come together and you end up with a functioning car. So it is with the Bible. Under the careful and watchful eye of God, who used more than 40 different authors over a span of nearly 2,000 years, He assembled a book of marvelous unity that reveals Himself to us. And, like a car engine, if there is any aspect of the Bible's design that is flawed or defective, then the whole cannot be trusted.

For Discussion: The Bible was written by more than 40 authors on three different continents with backgrounds ranging from fishermen to kings. These authors wrote 66 books in three different languages over a timespan of nearly 2,000 years, yet the Bible is perfectly unified as a single book. How does this lend credibility to the trustworthiness of the Bible?

Amplification: There is a reason why the Bible says in 1 Peter 1:25, "...the word of the LORD endures forever."

For Discussion: How important do you think it is to read and study the Bible, and to use it to guide one's conduct and personal decisions? Why do you suppose there are people who simply choose to either ignore or deny truth? How do you think we should respond to such individuals?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

In your personal devotions this week, consider the marvelous trustworthiness of the Bible, which is not dependent upon man's limited knowledge or understanding. You might consider journaling your thoughts and impressions.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – Teach us Your way, O Lord; Help us to walk in Your truth, and unite our hearts to fear Your name.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE TO STUDY

Read **Daniel 5**. Some have claimed the Bible is historically inaccurate because they knew of only one last Chaldean Babylon king, when in fact, there were two co-rulers—father and son, Nabonidus and Belshazzar—both descendants of Nebuchadnezzar.

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Neil S. Wilson, "Handbook of Bible Application" (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1992)
- W.A. Criswell, "The Bible for Today's World" (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1965)
- U. Saarnivaara, "Can The Bible Be Trusted?" (Minneapolis: Osterhus, 1983)
- Paul Lee Tan, "Bible and Archaeological Testings, in Signs of the Times" (Dallas, TX: Bible Communications, 1998)

LESSON ONE: THE BIBLE IS THE WORD OF GOD

SESSION FOUR

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** designed to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the final of four sessions that, taken together, explain how we know with certainty that the Bible is the Word of God. In the previous sessions, Pastor Rogers confirmed the Bible's scientific accuracy, its historic accuracy, and its wondrous unity. In this session, Pastor Rogers will pursue three more confirmations of the Bible's divine origin; its prophetic accuracy, its everlasting quality, and its transforming power. Altogether, there are six irrefutable reasons for us to have complete confidence in the Bible being fully trustworthy and authoritative as the Word of God.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests, and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats recommended in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON ONE | SESSION FOUR

INTRODUCTION

Did you know there is an ongoing war being waged against the Word of God? From the beginning of recorded time, back to the very Garden of Eden, Satan has tried to convince mankind that God and His Word cannot be trusted. Many individuals have risen up throughout the ages who have actively attempted to deny, twist, or even destroy the Word of God. Others remain fearful of Scripture because they neither know nor understand what it actually says, or because they are living lifestyles that they inherently know are in direct conflict with what God would have them do. Those who choose to ignore or reject the truths contained in God's Word, the Bible, do so at their own peril.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

2 Timothy 3:16 "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- In a book containing prophecies, or in the case of a person making prophetic utterances, if even one of the predictions fails to be true, should we believe that book or person can be trusted?
- With all of the attempts throughout history to destroy or discredit the Bible as God's Word, do you think there might be a Providential Hand at work serving to preserve it?
- There are many so-called "self-help" books on the market today that promote the promise of a better life if one practices certain disciplines. How do you think such books compare with "God-breathed" Scripture? Which would you rather follow, and why?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: "How to Know the Bible Is the Word of God"**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

Only God can prophesy. No one else apart from God knows the future – no one! The only future that you know is the future that God has revealed in His Word. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: Webster's New World Dictionary defines "prophecy" as the "prediction of the future under the influence of divine guidance." Most biblical scholars point to roughly 80(+) very specific and verifiable prophecies in the Old Testament that pertain to Jesus Christ alone, with around 300(+) others that contain corollaries to His life that are assumed to be prophetic. The chance of any one man fulfilling only eight of the 80 major prophecies fulfilled by the life of Christ is astronomical. Dr. Peter W. Stoner, a scientist, mathematician, and astronomer, along with Dr. Robert C. Newman, an astrophysicist and mathematician, calculated the probability of Jesus having fulfilled just eight prophecies to be 1 in 10^{17} . That's 1 in 100,000,000,000,000,000!

Our minds are incapable of fully grasping that figure, so Drs. Stoner and Newman provided a practical illustration of how that mathematical probability would play out. It would be as if the entire state of Texas were covered two feet deep in silver dollars with one specifically marked coin placed somewhere in the mass. Then a blind man would walk across the state and pluck up that marked coin on his very first try. Keep in mind, that probability is considering only eight of the 80(+) specifically agreed upon prophecies, with still another 300(+) likely fulfilled prophecies concerning Christ that are found in the Old Testament. And this statistical analysis examined only one prophetic subject of the Bible, that of Jesus the Christ!

For Discussion: Why do you think the undisputed mathematical probabilities attesting to the fulfilled biblical prophecies of Jesus Christ are virtually ignored, even among intelligent and academically-minded people?

Amplification: God gave us the Bible that we might know Him, His love for us, and His plan for us to live prosperously (meaning righteous, healthy, and bountiful lives). But most importantly, He gave us His Word that we may know the redemption He has provided for our sins and failures through His Son, Jesus Christ. No matter what effort is made by the enemies of God to remove or destroy the Bible, not "one jot or one tittle" (the smallest characters of Hebrew script), will ever be removed from His Word (Matthew 5:18).

Because Scripture is "God-breathed," it contains life and power beyond what any ordinary man, or group of men, could ever produce using cleverly selected words. Pastor Rogers has talked about the Bible's scientific accuracy, its historic accuracy, its prophetic accuracy, its wondrous unity, and its ever-living quality. But what truly separates the Bible from all other books ever written, and from those that will ever be written, is its supernatural transforming power. The Bible is not a magical book, but it does possess God-given power to transform the life of one who truly seeks with his/her heart to know God and His ways. God promises that "you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13).

A learned seminary professor once challenged his class of “neophyte theologians” (newbies) by holding up his Bible while making the following statement, “Gentlemen, this is the Word of God, but it does not become the Word of God until you read it and apply it to your life!” He looked around the classroom at all of the heads nodding approval and then said, “**Wrong!** This **is** the Word of God whether or not you ever pick it up to read and apply it to your life!”

For Discussion: What steps do you think we need to take in order to allow God’s Word to become more real in our lives?

Amplification: Psalm 119:9-11 says, “How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You!”

The Bible is not the Book of the Month; it is the Book of Ages. We read other books; this book [the Bible] reads us. —**Adrian Rogers**

For Discussion: Share with your group a specific portion or aspect of Scripture that you might now be willing to pay more attention to, and why.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week as you continue to develop your personal time of devotion and Bible study, be sure to open your heart to the Lord by asking Him to transform you “by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God,” (Romans 12:2). Have a 3x5” card handy to write down a meaningful Scripture to memorize, and make it a practice to commit at least one verse of Scripture to memory each week.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, we praise You for your transforming power; yes, we praise You for Your mercies, for You are our defense and refuge in days of trouble.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE TO STUDY

As you read the following Scriptures, consider the power that is contained in the Word of God that is too often ignored or taken for granted.

Jeremiah 23:29 “Is not My word like a fire?” says the LORD, “And like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces?”

Psalms 119:89-93 (NKJV) “Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven. Your faithfulness endures to all generations; You established the earth, and it abides. They continue this day according to Your ordinances, for all are Your servants. Unless Your law had been my delight, I would then have perished in my affliction. I will never forget Your precepts, for by them You have given me life.”

Consider how the Word of God is unlike any other book ever written, and that as Pastor Rogers said, “We read other books; this book [the Bible] reads us.”

Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

As you read the following passage, think about the miraculous trustworthiness of biblical prophecy. Meditate on how God used 40 different authors over a span of nearly 2,000 years, who spoke and

wrote in three different languages from different continents, to produce 66 perfectly unified books in what we know as the Bible.

2 Peter 1:19-21 “And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God who spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

Additional Reading Resources

- David Limbaugh, “Jesus on Trial” (Regency Publishing: New York, NY, 2014)
- D. L. Moody, “Secret Power” (Chicago: F. H. Revell, 1881)
- Henrietta C. Mears, “What the Bible is All About” (Gospel Light Publications, 1996)
- Peter W. Stoner, “Science Speaks” (Moody Bible Institute: Chicago, 1976)

LESSON TWO: HOW TO BE SAVED AND KNOW IT

SESSION ONE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics or facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This session is the first in a series of four that, taken together, explain how to be saved, how to have biblical assurance of salvation, and how to understand the biblical birthmarks of true salvation. The enemy has worked hard to inoculate those who call themselves Christians with the Gospel. Many Christians have a great deal of “head knowledge” about the historical Christ and know why He died on the cross for our sins but fail to **trust** in the One in whom they believe. The goal of this session and those that follow is to help people fully grasp the true meaning of salvation. It is vital that this material be taken seriously, and that all those in the small group (including the leader/facilitator) make sure their personal salvation is confirmed by biblical truth.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Lesson Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader’s Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests, and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON TWO | SESSION ONE

INTRODUCTION

Doubts are a natural consequence of the human thought process. They cause us to examine an issue to determine its truth or accuracy. Many Christians go through their lives doubting their salvation. When it comes to having assurance of their salvation, they live “hope-so” lives, and not “know-so” lives. Further, the subject of “grace” is often misunderstood. In this study, Pastor Adrian Rogers clarifies what the Bible says about the issue of salvation, and demonstrates that God has provided us assurance from His Word, the Bible, that we can know with certainty that when we die, we will go to Heaven.

OUR KEY PASSAGES

1 John 5:13 “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”

Ephesians 2:8-10 “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. ¹For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Do you believe it is possible for people to know with certainty that they are saved? Why or why not?
- How would you define the word, “grace,” and in your understanding, how does grace function in the life of a Christian?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to Be Saved and Know It”

AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

“We don’t need to be doubting Christians; we ought to be shouting Christians!” –

Adrian Rogers

Amplification: One should not live with doubts about salvation. Though doubts can be a reality, doubting your salvation does not necessarily mean you are lost any more than having pain in your body means that you are dead. It does mean however, that something is wrong in your spiritual life that needs attention. Just as experiencing physical pain may indicate the need of a doctor, doubt indicates the need to look to Jesus and the Word of God for guidance in correcting the problem.

For Discussion: Have you come to the place in your spiritual life at which you know with absolute certainty that if you were to die today that you would spend eternity in Heaven? What do you think is the source of any doubts you may have, or what is the source of your confidence?

Amplification: Professing Christians are often confused by the different kinds of belief we can have. There is the kind of belief which is referred to as “intellectual assent,” meaning to understand or believe in something intellectually (such as historical facts). But then there is also the belief that results in “actionable trust.” The force of the original word used in our text for “believe,” “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God...,” literally means to “commit, to trust, or to roll your whole weight” onto something.

To explain the difference between these two types of belief, and to illustrate how that difference applies to salvation, consider how we can be in an airport with a ticket in hand while looking out the terminal at an airplane boarding passengers to our desired destination. We can **believe** in the science of aerodynamics that will cause that plane to fly, and we can **believe** the pilot will take the plane to its destination. But until we **trust** what we know to be true by actually boarding the plane, we will not reach our desired destination. We will end up being left in the terminal. This in no way implies a works-oriented salvation (“I must **do** something to earn my salvation”), but it does illustrate that intellectual assent alone in biblical truth does not mean we are saved. Remember how Scripture says, “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.’ And he was called the friend of God” (Genesis 15:6; James 2:23). Abraham didn’t just hear a word from God and believe intellectually in what God told him, he took action on that belief and **trusted** God. We should take some comfort in the fact that Abraham also

experienced doubt in God's promises from time-to-time, but in the end, he "believed [trusted] God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

For Discussion: In what ways do you think "intellectual assent," as opposed to "actionable trust," can work to weaken our Christian walk?

Amplification: There are those who claim the title of "Christian" because they believe intellectually in the historical Jesus, but they never commit or trust their lives to Him. They count on their own righteousness or goodness for acceptance to Heaven. No amount of good works, church attendance, denominational affiliation, or religious disciplines will matter in the Day of Judgment. To receive Jesus Christ and the salvation He offers, one must accept His incredible and undeserved gift of grace (**G**od's **R**iches **A**t **C**hrist's **E**xpense), by faith (**F**orsaking **A**ll **I** **T**rust **H**im), trusting Him, and Him alone, for what He has done for us. "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). The idea that we can either earn or deserve this amazing gift of grace is just not true. We must **receive** His gift of forgiveness and eternal life through **faith**. Our attempts to earn or deserve God's favor are meaningless. "But we are all like an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags; we all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (Isaiah 64:6).

For Discussion: If the Lord Himself were to ask you, "Why should I let you into My Heaven?", how do you think you would respond?

Amplification: Some people believe they have sinned so much in their lives that there is no way God could ever forgive them or receive them into Heaven. Dwight L Moody told the story of being called to the side of a young man dying from his wounds in the Civil War. As Moody shared the gospel and Christ's sacrifice for him, the young man said, "He can't save me; I have sinned all my life!" Moody read from John 3 where it says in verses 14 and 15, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." The soldier asked Moody if that was really what the Bible said, then asked him to re-read the passage two more times. The anguished soldier closed his eyes and began to whisper over, and over again to himself, "whosoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life." The troubled expression on his face was replaced with a peaceful smile. He eventually opened his eyes and told Moody, "That's enough; don't read any more." The next morning Moody returned to the soldier's cot, but it was empty. The attendant in charge told him the young man had died peacefully during the night, and said that he had rested quietly after Moody's visit, repeating to himself, "Whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

For Discussion: Has there been any misapplication of faith or belief in your life that needs to be corrected? How do you intend to correct that?

For Discussion: Have you ever considered that Satan and his demons are believers? James 2:19 says, "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!" What is the defining difference between a Christian believer and demonic believers?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week during your time of devotion or Bible study, take time to make a list of instances in which you may have failed to truly trust or believe God. Ask Him for help in recalling those instances, and be ready to confess, repent, and then recommit yourself to Him. You may want to record your thoughts in your journal.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “O Lord, let our mouths declare Your righteousness, your wondrous love, and Your salvation all the day!”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

As you read John 1:12, ask yourself what it really means to “*receive Him*.” This over-used phrase in Christian circles has become synonymous with “intellectual assent.” Meditate on the same question concerning what it means to “*believe in His name*.” Consider how your life has, or has not, reflected the true meaning of this verse.

John 1:12 “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.”

In studying the next two verses, try to grasp the depth of God’s love for mankind that He would send His Son in human form to die an agonizing death on the cross on our behalf, and to do so while we were yet estranged from Him because of our sin.

John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

Romans 5:8 “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

As you study and meditate on the following verse, analyze carefully each of the key words and phrases; “*grace*,” “*faith*,” “*not of yourselves*,” “*gift of God*,” “*not of works*,” “*boast*.” Ask yourself how your thinking and life has measured up to these truths.

Ephesians 2:8-9 “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Andrew Murray, “The Master’s Indwelling” (Fleming H. Revell, 1896)
- C. I. Scofield, “The New Life in Christ Jesus, Messages of Joy and Victory” (The Bible Institute Colportage Association of Chicago, 1915)
- S. D. Gordon, “Quiet Talks on Following Jesus” (Fleming H. Revell Co., 1913)

LESSON TWO: HOW TO BE SAVED AND KNOW IT

SESSION TWO

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics or facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the second session in a series of four that, taken together, explain how to be saved and to have biblical assurance of one's salvation. In the previous session, Pastor Rogers shared that the Bible tells us that we can know with certainty that we are saved, and that we need not live with doubts. He also explained in detail that we are saved by grace, through our faith in Jesus. In this session, Pastor Rogers will begin to explore the birthmarks of true believers—three biblical indicators that should be present in the life of every Christian.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

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CONDUCTING THE SESSION

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Allow participants to share prayer requests, and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON TWO | SESSION TWO

INTRODUCTION

Many individuals believe that just because they have walked the aisle of a church, received a Certificate of Baptism, or even attended worship services regularly, that they are Christians. In fact, many people even believe that because they live in America, possess a belief in God, and celebrate Christmas along with Easter, that those things make them Christians. In our previous study, Pastor Rogers examined what the Bible has to say about salvation, grace, and faith. In this session, Pastor Rogers identifies the first of three biblical “birthmarks,” or indicators, that reflect the presence of Christ in the lives of genuine believers.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

1 John 2:3-6 “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, “I know Him,” and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What would you consider to be the Biblical characteristics, or traits, of a true believer?
- If Christians were ever placed on trial just for being Christians, what kind of evidence do you think would be needed to convict them?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to Be Saved and Know It”**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

“You’re not saved because you keep the commandments, you keep the commandments because you’re saved.” —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: One of the first true tests of a genuine believer is the Lordship Test: “By this we know that we know Him, **if** we keep His commandments” (1 John 2:3). As Pastor Rogers explained, this is not a verse demanding perfection, but by using the present tense, it is a verse that directly scrutinizes the present-day activities of our lives. In the original language, the word that we translate, “keep,” not only described how sailors would steer by the stars, but it also had the connotation of guarding or being watchful over something. It is where the term, “castle keep,” comes from, which was the highest tower of a castle designed specifically to guard against and provide warning to counter an approaching enemy.

For Discussion: In your opinion, what does the lordship of Christ look like in the life of a true believer?

Amplification: The commandments and precepts of God are the mechanisms by which we steer our lives; they also provide us with protection. In other words, “If you call yourself a Christian and are not steering by God’s commandments, and if you are living a habitually sinful life with no conviction, no compunction, no contrition, no disquietude, then don’t call yourself a Christian, because you are not” (Adrian Rogers). Jesus is Lord and Savior, but He cannot be our Savior if He is not our Lord.

Simply to call oneself a Christian, even to actively participate in church, does not earn one a place in Heaven. Only submission to the lordship of Christ through genuine repentance of sin, and faith in His atoning death and resurrection will allow one to become an everlasting child of God. Remember the acronym for FAITH that Pastor Rogers shared in the previous session, “**Forsaking All, I Trust Him.**”

To follow Jesus means to walk in His steps, to seek after His ways, to allow Him lordship over your life. There was a man who turned to his friend one day and said, “That man over there must have served in the military or attended a military school.” The friend asked, “How can you tell?” He said, “By the way he walks.” You can also tell when some people have been with Jesus by their walk. When we walk with Jesus as Lord of your life, we will have a natural propensity to steer by God’s Word and to shun sin. That does not mean we will live lives of perfection and will never fail, but it does mean that we do not willingly choose to sin. It means that we recognize our sin when we fail, confess it, and then repent of it.

For Discussion: What are some of the struggles or distractions in life that work against us living lives surrendered to the lordship of Christ?

Application: The late Dr. Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade for Christ (today known as “CRU”), used to speak of the practice of “spiritual breathing.” Just as we breathe out bad air to be replaced by good air, the regular practice of true believers should be immediate confession when they sin (exhale), followed by immediate appropriation of forgiveness by faith in Christ’s atoning death (inhale). For some, this “spiritual breathing” is needed infrequently, for others of

us, we may find the need to intentionally breathe this way many times throughout the day. The point is, a true believer **does not want** to sin, and because of the “Lordship Test,” his/her life will be marked by a desire to “keep” (steer their lives by) the Word of God. Jesus said in Luke 6:46, “But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?”

For Discussion: What are some of the things we can do to help strengthen our reliance on the lordship of Christ in our lives?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week during your personal devotions, make it a point to study Psalm 119:33-40. As you study, make this passage of Scripture your personal prayer back to God. (It is a powerful practice to pray the Word of God back to God!) Choose one or two verses from this passage to memorize and pray the words back to God throughout your day.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, teach us Your ways, and help us to live lives that honor You as reflected by our steadfast submission to Your Lordship.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE TO STUDY

The book of Psalms is a book of prayers and worship. Personalizing prayers recorded there helps us commune with God and become intimate with Him by praying His Word back to Him. As you meditate on Psalm 119, make it your personal prayer.

Psalm 119:33-40 “Teach me, O LORD, the way of Your statutes, And I shall keep it to the end. Give me understanding, and I shall keep Your law; indeed, I shall observe it with my whole heart. Make me walk in the path of Your commandments, for I delight in it. Incline my heart to Your testimonies, and not to covetousness. Turn away my eyes from looking at worthless things, and revive me in Your way. Establish Your word to Your servant, who is devoted to fearing You. Turn away my reproach which I dread, for Your judgments are good. Behold, I long for Your precepts; revive me in Your righteousness.”

As you read the warning from Jesus Himself, consider how He makes clear that works, even those “done in His name,” that lack the foundation of personal intimacy with Him, are considered “lawless” deeds.

Matthew 7:22-23 “Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'”

To call oneself a Christian, and yet ignore the teachings and precepts of Christ, is hypocrisy. As you study these verses, ask the Lord to reveal to you any changes you may need to make in your life to help you know, and obey, His commands.

Luke 6:46 “But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?”

John 10:27 “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.”

John 14:15 “If you love Me, keep My commandments.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Andrew Murray, “The School of Obedience” (CreateSpace, 2018)
- John MacArthur, “The Gospel According to Jesus” (Zondervan, 2008)
- Matthew Henry, “The Secret of Communion with God; How to Begin the Day, Spend the Day, and End the Day with God” (Kregel, 1991)

LESSON TWO: HOW TO BE SAVED AND KNOW IT

SESSION THREE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

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ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the third session in a series of four that, taken together, explain how to be saved, to have biblical assurance of salvation, and to understand the biblical birthmarks of true salvation. In the previous sessions, Pastor Rogers shared what the Bible tells us about salvation, grace, faith, and how we can have assurance of our salvation. He also introduced the first birthmark of a believer, the “lordship test.” In this session, Pastor Rogers continues a biblical examination of the birthmarks of believers. Every person who is born again will exhibit certain biblical traits and characteristics that mark him or her as a genuine child of God.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader’s Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

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As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests, and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON TWO | SESSION THREE

INTRODUCTION

Many individuals believe that just because they have walked the aisle of a church, received a Certificate of Baptism, or even attended worship services regularly, they are Christians. In fact, many people even believe that because they live in America, possess a belief in God, and celebrate Christmas and Easter, those things make them a Christian. In our previous studies in “How to Be Saved and Know It,” Pastor Rogers examined what the Bible has to say about the new birth, grace, faith, and lordship. In this and the next session, Pastor Rogers will elaborate on two additional biblical indicators, or “birthmarks,” that reflect the presence of Christ in the lives of genuine believers.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

1 John 3:14 “We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How would you describe the purpose of the local church? When problems or disputes crop up, how should its members conduct themselves?
- What are some of the ways that we, as Christians, can demonstrate love for one another?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to Be Saved and Know It”**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

“A church is comprised of people who have finally realized that they are sinners and have banded themselves together to do something about it. It is the only organization I know besides Hell’s Angels that you have to profess to be bad before you can join.” —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: One of the first biblical tests of a genuine believer is the *Lordship Test*: “By this we know that we know Him, **if we keep His commandments**” (1 John 2:3). The second test of a true believer is the *Fellowship Test*: “We know that we have passed from death unto life, **because we love the brethren**” (1 John 3:14). All true believers are part of the body of Christ. We are each unique with specific gifts and functions within the body, yet we are one within the body. The hand can no more separate itself from the arm than can a true believer from the presence of other believers.

For Discussion: Why do you think fellowship is such an important mark of a true believer?

Amplification: There are professing Christians who refuse to participate in the local church because they claim, “There are hypocrites, counterfeit believers, in the church.” Do tell! The church is not a club for perfected saints, but a hospital for professing sinners. Do you know that there has to be a genuine product before a counterfeit can be made of something? The fact that there are disingenuous people who call themselves Christians does not negate Christianity or the local church, it only proves the reality and value of fellowshiping believers. Those who refuse to participate in the local church because of hypocrites or counterfeit believers, using the same logic, should stop using all of their money and give it away because there are counterfeit bills in circulation!

For Discussion: What struggles do we face in fulfilling the mandate to “love one another” in the local church? Why do you think that such struggles persist, and what do we need to do about it?

Amplification: The Bible provides several analogies in describing the church to help us understand what our fellowship and relationship with one another should look like.

- The church is described as a building (not the white building on the corner with a steeple), but a spiritual building with Christ as its cornerstone, and His true followers joined together by the Spirit to become a dwelling place for God (Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:5).
- The church is described as Jesus’ bride (Romans 7:4; Revelation 21:2, 9).
- The church is described as Jesus’ body (Romans 12:4, 5; 1 Corinthians 12: 12-22).

For Discussion: Who would say, “Yes,” to a foundation but, “No,” to the building? Who would say, “Yes,” to a groom but, “No,” to the bride? Who would say, “Yes,” to Christ as the head but, “No,” to the body?

Amplification: Local churches are never perfect because they are comprised of imperfect people. Nevertheless, they are a gathering of people for worship, study, and ministry. It should be the desire of every believer to want to fellowship with other believers, and to be a part of others' spiritual growth, as well as to spiritually grow themselves. Pastor Rogers would often tell his congregation, "Never look to join the 'perfect church,' because if you do, you will ruin it."

An interesting thing about the human body as an analogy of the church; when you hit your thumb with a hammer, the whole body will hurt. The thumb immediately goes into the mouth, and generally you find yourself hopping around on one foot until the pain subsides. So it is within the body of believers in the church. When one member hurts, the whole church body hurts and reacts. When we are united together as a body with Christ as our head, we cannot help but react to the joys or sufferings of other believers.

For Discussion: What are some things you or your small group could do to help strengthen fellowship among your church body?

Amplification: To cause harm to the church is to cause harm directly to the Lord Jesus. This is made clear in the Bible when Saul (who later became the Apostle Paul) persecuted the church. The Lord met Saul on the road to Damascus where he was headed to imprison and possibly execute the believers who had fled from Jerusalem, and said, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? ...I am Jesus...whom you are persecuting" (Acts 22:6-8). When we speak ill of the local church, or of any of its members or staff, we are speaking ill of Jesus.

For Discussion: How do you think we should respond to someone who professes to be a Christian but refuses to fellowship with other believers? What hurts do you think might need to be healed in that person's life, and how could we help that to happen?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week during your personal devotions, make it a point to pray for your church. Take time to write a note of encouragement to someone in the body who you know is struggling, and maybe volunteer to visit a church member who is homebound.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – "Lord, place within our hearts a desire to love others as You have loved us."

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE TO STUDY

As you read the following verses, ask the Holy Spirit to confirm in your heart your function in the body of the local church. Remember, we are all created with different gifts and abilities, each of which is necessary for the healthy function of the body.

Romans 12:4, 5 "For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another."

1 Corinthians 12:12-22 "For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. For in fact the body is not one member but many. If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God has set the members, each one of them,

in the body just as He pleased. And if they were all one member, where would the body be? But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. No, much rather, those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary.”

The following verses explain that you have been created to be a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit of God. Are there any dirty or cluttered “closets” in your life that need to be cleaned up in order to make your life acceptable as a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit?

Ephesians 2:19-22 “Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone, in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.”

1 Peter 2:5 “You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

Additional Reading Resources

- Arthur Pink, “Practical Christianity” (Baker Books, 1995)
- Brother Lawrence, “The Practice of the Presence of God” (Baker Books, 1989)
- Robertson McQuilkin, “The Five Smooth Stones” (B&H Publishing, 2007)

LESSON TWO: HOW TO BE SAVED AND KNOW IT

SESSION FOUR

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the fourth and final session in “How to Be Saved and Know It.” In the last two sessions, Pastor Rogers began discussing the birthmarks of a believer—certain characteristics or indicators described in Scripture that should be evident in the life of every Christian. The first mark or test was the *lordship test*, meaning is Jesus lord over your life, or is He simply an addition to your life? The second mark or test was the *fellowship test*, meaning do you love His church, the body of believers, as Jesus does? In today’s session, Pastor Rogers will look at the third characteristic and discuss the *relationship test*.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader’s Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

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LESSON TWO | SESSION FOUR

INTRODUCTION

There are those who view Christianity as a religion, and it is categorized as such when lumped together with Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, or other such religious systems. However, one striking truth that separates Christianity from all other such systems is the fact that Christianity is not a religion (meaning a man-made set of rules or traditions to follow); it is a **relationship** with the living God. No other system can claim this because their foundations do not rest upon a relationship with an interactive and living god.

In our previous sessions we examined the difference between intellectual belief verses trust (faith), the meaning of grace, that our salvation cannot be earned or deserved, and that according to Scripture we can know with certainty that we are saved. We also began a review of the birthmarks of true believers beginning with the *lordship test*, followed by the *fellowship test*. In today’s session, Pastor Rogers will introduce the *relationship test*.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

1 John 5:10-13 “He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son. And this is the testimony: that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Do you believe it is possible to experience an intimate relationship with God? How so, or why not?
- Do you think it is possible for people to engage in so much church or ministry work that it hinders their personal intimacy with Christ? How does that happen, and how should one avoid this problem?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to Be Saved and Know It”

AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

The Bible never uses a past experience as proof of salvation. It never points us back to some time when we may have believed on Jesus Christ. It always deals with our present confidence. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: There was once a man who had come to Christ, and as a result enjoyed a remarkable transformation in his life. Another person who had known him for many years, and who had claimed to be a Christian himself, recognized the dramatic change and said to him one day, “Tell me about this religious experience that you have had.” The man correctly replied, “I have not had a ‘religious experience,’ but I have entered into a loving relationship with the living God.”

For Discussion: How would you discern whether or not a person was having a loving relationship with Christ? Are there certain characteristics or behaviors that you would look for?

Amplification: As Pastor Rogers noted, there are those who believe they must nail down a specific date and time when they were saved, when they received Christ, when they prayed the “Sinners’ Prayer,” or when they walked the aisle of a church. Some people who have come out of darkness into Christ’s marvelous light may know exactly when that happened. Others who were brought up in a Christian home and who lived in that light all or most of their lives may not really know when they actually began to trust Him, but they know they do so now.

The real problem comes when people confuse religious activity with salvation. Religion is manmade and can be defined as “A set of beliefs...usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs.” When one trusts in past or present “ritual observances” (walking the aisle of a church, praying the “Sinners’ Prayer,” baptism, or their church membership) instead of believing (meaning throwing their whole weight upon—present tense) *the name* (authority and character) *of the Son of God* (Jesus), they miss the mark! The question is not, “Have you trusted Jesus?,” but, “Are you trusting Jesus?”

For Discussion: Have you ever known someone who participated in so many church activities that their ministry work seemed to overshadow their personal intimacy with Christ? How would you counsel such a person?

Amplification: There is the story of a man walking along a road who was bent over under a heavy load. A wagon pulled up and the driver offered to help him on his journey. The man happily accepted the offer, but after he seated himself in the wagon continued to carry his burden on his shoulders. “Why don’t you put your burden down?” asked the driver. “Oh!” replied the man, “I feel it is too much to ask for you to carry me and my burden. I would not think of letting you do both.” So it is with many who have come to Christ through “ritual observances,” and “intellectual assent,” but have never fully trusted Him with the full burden of their lives.

Jesus said, “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light” (Matthew 11:29, 30). This verse implies a trusting intimacy with Christ that should be reflected in the life of every believer. When we truly believe on [throw our weight upon] the name [the authority and character] of the Son of God, we join ourselves to the “yoke” that Jesus is already pulling. He takes upon Himself our burdens. We also become disciples, actively seeking to learn from Him through His lordship in our life, and through the fellowship of other believers. The end result is that our burdens are lifted, not necessarily that problems go away, but that the weight we have been carrying over those problems is lifted from our shoulders and we find rest.

For Discussion: In your view, what would you say are some of the burdens we may continue to carry after coming to faith in Christ? Why do you think that is, and how should we deal with that?

Amplification: “Many will say to Me in that day [the day of judgment], ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness’” (Matthew 7:21-23)!

For Discussion: Having a healthy relationship with anyone requires communication, and that includes our relationship with God. What are the ways we can communicate with God, and how does He communicate with us?

For Discussion: Share with your group any things you may have done, or currently do, that have helped you to develop your personal intimacy with Christ.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week during your personal devotions, imagine Jesus standing before you in the room as you read your Bible or pray. Pray as you might talk with Him if He were in the room, and read Scripture with the expectancy that He will teach or explain what it means. Remember, “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you” (Matthew 7:7).

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, we set You always before us. Show us the path of life, because in Your presence is fullness of joy.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE TO STUDY

As you read and meditate on the words of Jesus, focus on what it means to love God “with all your **heart**,” “with all your **soul**,” “with all your **strength**,” and with “all your **mind**.” Determine the difference between those specific aspects of life, and ask yourself how that plays out, or needs to play out, in your life. Then apply the same examination to what it means to love “your neighbor as yourself.”

Luke 10:27 “So he answered and said, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’”

The wonderful news of the Gospel is that when we take Jesus’ yoke upon us, the burden of our sin is lifted and He carries it away. To continue to carry the guilt of past indiscretions is to deny the grace He provided through His sacrifice. Meditate on the power and promise of the verse. Concentrate on what it means to be “washed,” “sanctified,” and “justified.”

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.”

The following verse is a serious warning against the hypocrisy of claiming to be a Christian while walking “in darkness,” meaning living a life that either ignores or deliberately disobeys the Word of God. As you meditate on this Scripture, ask God the Holy Spirit to reveal any unconfessed sin in your life that needs to be dealt with and turned from.

1 John 1:6 “If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.”

Additional Reading Resources

- Hannah Whitall Smith, “The Christian’s Secret of a Happy Life” (Moody Press, 1968)
- Lewis Sperry Chafer, “He That is Spiritual” (Zondervan, 1983)
- R.A. Torrey, “How to Pray” (Moody Press, 1980)

LESSON THREE: HOW TO BE SURE YOU ARE ETERNALLY SECURE

SESSION ONE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the first of four sessions that clarifies what the Bible has to say about the security of our salvation. Knowing that one is secure in salvation is crucial for an effective and fruitful spiritual life. The subject of the security of the believer has been controversial and has resulted in denominational differences, but Pastor Rogers looks straight to Scripture for the answers to this most important facet in the life of the believer.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

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LESSON THREE | SESSION ONE

INTRODUCTION

It is a sad reality that many Christians live day-to-day lives believing they can lose their salvation. The question of whether or not we can have eternal security of our salvation cannot be determined by human logic; it must be confirmed by the Word of God. This course, "What Every Christian Ought to Know," began with a study on how we know with certainty that the Bible is the Word of God. The Bible is our source of foundational truth, **not** our perceptions, logic, or feelings. In this study, Pastor Rogers begins a series of sessions that examine exactly what the Bible has to say about our security in Christ.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

John 10:27-28 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Why do you think that some people who initially profess to be Christians, and who are for a season active in Bible study or church, suddenly, or even gradually, change their behavior to what is obviously in contrast to the Christian walk? Why do you think that happens?
- How do you think the possibility of being able to lose one's salvation impacts a person's spiritual life? How many sins, or what kind of sins, do you think it would take to cause people to lose their salvation?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: "How to Be Sure You Are Eternally Secure"**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

"The faith that fizzles before the finish had a flaw from the first."

—Adrian Rogers

Amplification: The Bible stands as our foundational source of truth for understanding the ways of God and His plan of salvation for mankind. Anything else becomes sheer speculation and an attempt to conform God to man's limited understanding. It is a dangerous practice to project upon God our thoughts and values. "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways," says the LORD" (Isaiah 55:8). Too often we may presume something to be true as a result of our narrow view and limited understanding; we need to know what the Bible really says about a subject.

For Discussion: How should knowing our salvation is secure affect our Christian walk? Should that security ever be an excuse to allow sin, even small offenses, to be acceptable?

Amplification: A common reaction to having observed someone who one day is actively involved in the Christian life, but then drops away to engage in obvious sinful behavior, is to suggest that person must have lost his or her salvation. Too often that conclusion is reached because of a weak or limited understanding of salvation, and/or because of not really knowing the person's true spiritual condition to begin with. The assumption is made that because someone walked the aisle of a church, prayed the sinners' prayer, or was baptized, that he or she was saved. Our previous studies dealt with what it means to be truly saved, which is trusting in Jesus alone for salvation. People can change their bad behavior for a season to conform to certain expectations placed upon them by Christian friends or the church, giving the appearance of having been saved. The truth of the matter is, we cannot see into any person's heart, only God can do that, and lest we forget, He actively does!

For Discussion: What would you say to friends who seem to have abandoned their faith as evidenced by their outward behavior?

Amplification: False followers come as no surprise to the Lord. Remember the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13:4-9, 18-23; Mark 4:3-8, 13-20; Luke 8:5-8, 11-15). This story is found in all three of the synoptic gospels which is an indicator of its importance. In this parable, Jesus makes it clear that there are those who will hear and be either indifferent, or will reject the gospel outright (the seed along the wayside). There are also those who will hear and receive the word of the gospel with joy for a season, but because they have no serious root within themselves, they fall away in the face of temptation or tribulation (the seed on stony ground). Other false followers are those who hear and may actually accept intellectually the truth of the gospel, but they allow the cares, riches, and other worldly desires to choke away their fruitfulness (the seed sown among thorns).

For Discussion: In your opinion, what kind of things would make up “good soil” in the life of a believer?

Amplification: Jesus’ parable also describes true believers who will bear much fruit (the seed on good soil). True believers hear with their hearts, keep what they have received (remember our previous study on the meaning of “keep”), and with patience bear good fruit (Luke 8:15). The question then becomes, “What constitutes the ‘good soil’ in which true believers should be planted?” The answer varies, but essentially it can be broken down to three essential elements: Bible study (water), prayer (Sonlight), and fellowship (nourishment).

Jesus said in John 15:6, “If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned.”

For Discussion: How do you think Christians should react when they find themselves having sinned in thought, word, or deed?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

In your personal devotions this week, do an evaluation of the “spiritual soil” in which you are currently planted. Are you being watered by the Word, receiving light from the Son through prayer, and are you receiving sufficient nourishment from fellowship with other believers? Take note of any deficiencies you find, and make a plan to shore up those areas in your spiritual life that need attention.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Salvation belongs to You, Oh Lord. We will rejoice in Your salvation and praise You for what You have done!”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE TO STUDY

As you read the Parable of the Sower as recorded in the three Gospel accounts, determine how your life reflects the soil in which you have allowed yourself to be planted. Have you been ambivalent to the things of God (the wayside)? Have you allowed personal discouragement to turn you away from God (stony ground)? Are you more consumed with material things than you are with the things of God (thorny soil)? Or are you bearing fruit for God (good soil)?

Matthew 13:4-9, 18-23; Mark 4:3-8, 13-20; Luke 8:5-8, 11-15

Consider this unfailing testimony of Jesus’ authority and power to keep those who are His. Meditate on the key words and phrases in this verse:

John 10:27-29 “My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.”

The verse explains why people “fall away.” It’s not because they lost their salvation, it’s because they were never genuinely saved to begin with. Review this verse in conjunction with the Parable of the Sower, above.

1 John 2:19 “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- D. L. Moody, "Sovereign Grace: Its Source, Its Nature, and Its Effects," (CreateSpace, 2015)
- Thomas M. Cucuzza, "Secure Forever! God's Promise or Our Perseverance? True Salvation and its Relationship to the Christian Life," (Xulon Press, St. Cloud, MN, 2007)
- Whitney T. Kuniholm, "The Essential Jesus; 100 Readings Through the Bible's Greatest Story," (InterVarsity Press, 2007)

LESSON THREE: HOW TO BE SURE YOU ARE ETERNALLY SECURE

SESSION TWO

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

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ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the second of four sessions that clarify what the Bible has to say about the security of our salvation. Knowing that one is secure in salvation is crucial for an effective and fruitful spiritual life. In this session, Pastor Rogers will introduce the first three of eight very specific reasons from the Bible demonstrating why he believes in the eternal security of the true believer.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

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LESSON THREE | SESSION TWO

INTRODUCTION

Throughout Scripture God makes clear His love and faithfulness toward mankind despite mankind's rebellion and unfaithfulness. This does not contradict His righteous indignation and wrath concerning sin, but it firmly establishes His character of mercy as found in Jesus Christ's sacrifice on the cross. If we were dependent upon our own ability to live righteously in order to be saved, we would be in a terrible state, constantly in jeopardy of losing our salvation every time we sinned. Sadly, that is precisely how many Christians live. In this session, Pastor Rogers will introduce the first three of eight biblical reasons why he believes in the eternal security of the believer.

OUR KEY PASSAGES

Romans 8:38-39 "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Philippians 1:6 “...being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ;”

Romans 8:29 “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How do you think being insecure in salvation affects the way we live day-to-day lives?
- Conversely, how do you think having security in salvation affects our lives spiritually, our service in ministry, and our personal evangelism?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to Be Sure You Are Eternally Secure”

AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

“If salvation is your work, maybe it will run out in a ditch somewhere; but if it is God’s work, it will be completed.” —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: The Bible promises that *nothing* is able to separate us from God’s love which is in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:38-39). That sacred promise cannot be broken because of God’s love for His Son. To break that biblical promise would require God to stop loving His Son, and to stop loving Himself. He can no more abandon His love than, as Holy God, He can allow sin to enter His presence. When we unite ourselves to Jesus Christ we become His children (John 1:12). As any parent knows, a wayward child may break your heart or make you angry, but as a parent you never stop loving that child. God loves us so much more than we are able to love, or even conceive of love, in this earthly existence. His love is unfathomable, and we have His sacred promise that He will *never* allow *anything* to separate those of us who are in Christ from His love. The story is told of an atheist who was dying. As he appeared uncomfortable, unhappy, and distressed, another atheist who stood at his bedside said to him, “Don’t be afraid. Hold on, man; hold on to the last!” The dying man said, “That is what I am trying to do, but tell me what to hold on to!” How sad to not know God’s eternal and infinite love for those who are in Christ!

For Discussion: How should knowing that the Bible provides a sacred promise of “nothing can separate us from God’s love,” impact our daily walk with Christ?

Amplification: A popular bumper sticker says, “God is not finished with me yet!” Our new birth in Christ does not instantaneously transform us into little robotic saints, perfectly living sanctified lives without any form of sin in thought or deed. However, our new birth, just like a physical birth, means that we need to grow and develop into the person we are to become. So it is spiritually after the new birth; we are to grow and develop into the person God intends us to become.

Fortunately, we don’t have to accomplish this growth in the dark or without help. God provides us another sacred promise in Scripture, that He will complete the good work He has begun in us until the day of Jesus Christ. The Bible also declares, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10).

H.A. Ironside, a great pastor and theologian of the Twentieth Century said, “When born from above, Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, and as He lives out His life in us, we are enabled to walk as He walked. There is no other way whereby we may live the Christ life.”

For Discussion: God’s Word also indicates God has a sacred purpose for each of our lives. How do you think we can effectively find and fulfill that purpose?

Amplification: The subject of predestination has caused confusion in the lives of Christians, and division among some denominations. As in all controversial theological subjects, we need to look to Scripture for a clear understanding of truth. Our key verse, “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son...” (Romans 8:29), begins with “whom He foreknew.” God is not limited by space, time, or knowledge. Before we were ever born He foresaw every detail of our lives and knows how our lives will end. The Bible says:

- **Psalm 139:15** “My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and skillfully wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.”
- **Jeremiah 1:5** “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you [set you apart];”

Because of this foreknowledge, God predestined those whom He knew would trust and love Him to be conformed to the image of His Son. Neither this verse, nor anywhere else in the Bible, will you find anything that suggests God arbitrarily chooses (predestines) some to be eternally lost, while arbitrarily choosing others to be saved. The preponderance of Scripture reveals a totally different nature and character of God. We need to be very careful in how we handle our understanding of words like “predestination” by not forcing a meaning that is not supported by other Scripture.

For Discussion: As believers, we are predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ, though sometimes we may feel we are far from achieving that goal in our earthly state. What can we do this side of Heaven to move the process of sanctification and spiritual growth forward in our lives?

Amplification: Consider, if Christ was indeed all man and all God (which He was), and as such was not limited by time, space, or knowledge, then when He uttered these words on the cross, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do” (Luke 23:34), He had your name on His lips 2,000 years ago!

For Discussion: What do you think you might tell someone who believes that he or she has no chance of salvation?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

During your personal devotions this week, make it a point to think on God’s love and how He will never allow anything to separate Himself from His love for you. You might want to pray a prayer of thanksgiving to Him for His unfathomable love, and for working in your life for a purpose that He will see through to completion.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, we will praise You because You have become our salvation. You are our strong tower and refuge that keeps us safe and secure in the midst of the storm.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE TO STUDY

The two verses clarify the essence of predestination; that we are to be conformed to the image of Christ for the purpose of performing good works that have been prepared for us to walk in. As you meditate on these passages, ask the Holy Spirit to guide your steps to accomplish God’s purpose for your life.

Romans 8:29 “For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.”

Ephesians 2:10 “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

As you read Paul’s declaration of confidence in God’s unfailing love, ask the Holy Spirit to impart that same confidence and understanding into your life.

Romans 8:38-39 “For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

In reading the verse, evaluate for yourself how much you desire and hunger for the Word of God. Do you spend more time in the Word than you do surfing the internet, watching TV, or playing video games?

1 Peter 2:2 “...as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,”

Meditate on the powerful significance of the verse by considering the unfathomable love the Father has for us and how our love for Him is an extension of the love He has for us.

1 John 4:19 “We love Him because He first loved us.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Arthur Pink, “The Doctrine of Justification,” (Bottom of T.H.E. Hill Publishing, 2011)
- Paul Enns, “The Moody Handbook of Theology,” (Moody Press, 2014)
- Thomas M. Cucuzza, “Secure Forever; God’s Promise, or Our Perseverance? True Salvation and its Relationship to the Christian Life,” (Xulon Press, 2007)

LESSON THREE: HOW TO BE SURE YOU ARE ETERNALLY SECURE

SESSION THREE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the third of four sessions that explain what the Bible has to say about the security of our salvation. In this session, Pastor Rogers will introduce the next two of eight very specific reasons why he believes in the eternal security of the believer. All Christians should understand the biblical authority behind the assurance of their salvation in order to live fruitful and productive spiritual lives.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON THREE | SESSION THREE

INTRODUCTION

It has been said that a little fly aboard Noah's Ark was just as safe and secure as the mighty elephant. It was not the elephant's strength or size that made him safe, it was the Ark which delivered them both. In the same way, it is not our works or righteousness that save us, it is the completed and sufficient work of Calvary and our position in Christ that save us. In this session, Pastor Rogers will provide two more biblical reasons why we have security in our salvation.

OUR KEY PASSAGES

Hebrews 10:14 "For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified."

2 Corinthians 5:17 "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new."

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How do you think God works to perfect those who are being sanctified (set apart) for Him?

- What does it mean to have old things pass away, and all things become new? How does that play out in our daily lives?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to Be Sure You Are Eternally Secure”

AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

“When you get saved, God doesn’t just give you a fresh start, He gives you eternal perfection.” —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: The world would have us believe that we need only to put on decent clothes and have a good outward appearance to be accepted and respectable. In Matthew 23 and again in Luke 11, Jesus warned the religious people of His day about such thinking and behavior, referring to them as “whitewashed tombs,” painted clean and white on the outside, but on the inside full of decay and rotten bones. He further described them like “cups and dishes” that were clean on the outside, but the insides were left filthy. In 1 Samuel 16:7, the Lord said to Samuel, “... the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.” God does not just look upon our outward appearance; He looks into the heart to identify those who are truly His.

Christ’s all-sufficient sacrifice provides an inner cleansing for believers that no amount of personal work or acts of righteousness can accomplish. In addition, the Bible says that those who believe have been sealed by the Holy Spirit as a guarantee for the day of redemption (2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:13, 4:30). The word “guarantee” is an accounting term that provides assurance of a payment that is due.

By Calvary’s perfect provision, our sin debt has been paid in full, and we are sealed by the Holy Spirit as confirmation of that guarantee. Christ’s sacrifice is sufficient to cleanse any person’s sin no matter how foul, and the proof (guarantee) of that cleansing is the presence of the Holy Spirit in that redeemed person’s life. That does not mean we are made instantly perfect in this world, but it does mean that God no longer sees our sins and failures when He looks upon us. He now sees us through His Son’s cleansing sacrifice, and the Holy Spirit indwells us to guide us toward sanctification, the process of spiritual growth and separation unto God. The mark of a true believer is not that he or she never sins, but that there is a change in the heart to want to avoid sin. And when the believer does sin, the Holy Spirit brings conviction and a desire to repent.

For Discussion: How do you think we can know that we are being perfected (made complete, mature)? Are there specific things that we can do to help accomplish the end goal of becoming like Jesus?

Amplification: As believers, we become new creations from the inside out. It is not a matter of changing our clothes or our outward behavior for appearances sake; it is a matter of a changed heart.

D.L. Moody told the story of a man dressed in ragged clothes who had been down on his luck and came to one of his worship services. After receiving Christ as his Lord, the man testified that he was a new man dressed in old clothes. That is how it should be when we come to Christ. A simple verbal profession does not transform anyone. A thief and liar may put on good clothes, but he is still a thief and liar! However, when a thief comes face-to-face with the living Christ, a transformation takes place within the inner man. Consider Zacchaeus the chief tax collector, a thief by trade. When he was confronted by Jesus, he said, “Look, Lord, I give half of my goods to the poor; and if I have taken anything from anyone by false accusation, I restore fourfold,” (Luke 19:8). Or consider Matthew, another despised tax collector, who became one of Jesus’ twelve disciples, and then later wrote the book of Matthew in the Bible.

For Discussion: How does becoming a “new creation” impact our lives and the lives of others around us? Share with the group any personal examples from your life that might encourage others.

Amplification: In a previous session, we discussed Ephesians 2:8-9, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” The next verse in that passage, verse 10, says, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” Our good works do not save us, but we are saved *for* good works already prepared for us to accomplish for Him.

For Discussion: How can we deal with the “old things” of our past that the enemy may try to use to discourage our Christian walk?

For Discussion: What do you think God’s reaction must be to the idea that He is incapable of keeping secure those He has saved?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week in your personal time of devotion, make a list of all of the things that have changed in your life, especially those things of the heart, since becoming a “new creation” in Christ. Meditate on those changes and how God has been working in your life to sanctify you (set you apart) for Himself. Be sure to thank and praise Him for what He has done.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, we ask you to sanctify us by Your truth. Lead us by Your Word, which is truth, to become all that You want us to be.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE TO STUDY

Many Old Testament stories are analogies and foreshadows of spiritual truths; such is the case with Noah’s Ark which pictures the divine salvation and protection that God provides by His own hand. Notice God said, “Come into the ark,” (where He was), as opposed to “Go into the ark,” (where He was not).

Genesis 7:1, 16 “Then the LORD said to Noah, ‘Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation.’ ... So those that entered, male and female of all flesh, went in as God had commanded him; and the LORD shut him in.”

As you meditate on this verse, make a conscious list of “*old things*” that have passed away from your life since coming to Christ. What remaining things need to be removed?

2 Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.”

Ancient seals were used to mark one’s authority over a property or possession. They served as legal notice and guarantee of ownership. Does the Holy Spirit reside in your heart? Are you fully His?

2 Corinthians 1:22 “who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.”

Ephesians 1:13 “In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,”

Ephesians 4:30 “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- D.L. Moody, Ed., “Thoughts for the Quiet Hour,” (Fleming H. Revell, 1900)
- Lewis Sperry Chafer, “He That Is Spiritual; A Classic Study of the Biblical Doctrine of Spirituality,” (Zondervan, 1983)
- William Law, “A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life,” (Griffith Farran, 1111)

LESSON THREE: HOW TO BE SURE YOU ARE ETERNALLY SECURE

SESSION FOUR

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the fourth and final session on the topic of How to be Sure You Are Eternally Secure. In the previous three sessions, Pastor Rogers first provided a biblical foundation for the security of the believer, and then he began to introduce eight specific biblical promises which provide assurance of that security. In this session, Pastor Rogers will discuss the final three promises.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON THREE | SESSION FOUR

INTRODUCTION

In the previous three sessions of this series, Pastor Rogers provided a biblical foundation for the security of the believer, and then he introduced the first five of eight specific biblical reasons that provide assurance of that security. We have so far examined God's Sacred Promise, His Determined Purpose, His Sovereign Predestination, Calvary's Perfect Provision, and The Saints' New Position. In this session, Pastor Rogers will discuss the final three scriptural promises that provide believers assurance of the eternal security of their salvation.

OUR KEY PASSAGES

John 5:24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life."

John 17:15 "I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one."

1 Peter 1:3-5 “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How do you think we can know for sure that we have eternal life?
- Why do you think believers are left in the world instead of being instantly “beamed up” as in “Star Trek,” at the moment of their salvation?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to Be Sure You Are Eternally Secure”

AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

“You’re kept by the power of God. It’s not a matter of your holding onto Him; it’s a matter of Him holding onto you.” —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: A foundational aspect of the security of our salvation is that it does not depend upon our strength or abilities; it is solely dependent upon God. He is the One who possesses the power to save us, *and* to keep us. Our faith is in all-powerful God who loved us enough to humble Himself to take on the likeness of men, was obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross (see Philippians 2:7-8), and who demonstrated power over death by the resurrection (see Romans 1:4). The New Testament specifically addresses God’s incredible power 100 times, and that power is also referenced many more times in the Bible. John assures us in 1 John 4:4 that He (God the Holy Spirit) who is in us (believers) is greater than he (Satan) who is in the world. Therefore, it becomes almost an insult to God to think that He who sacrificed so much to save us would be unable to keep us. As Pastor Rogers explained, “*has everlasting life*” from our key passage is written in the present tense, which means that believers enter into everlasting life the moment they believe. Everlasting life is not a future event, but a promise given today for all eternity! We should then live our lives accordingly, rejoicing daily in what God has done for us.

For Discussion: In what ways do you think understanding security of salvation should cause Christians to adjust their lives or attitudes of heart?

Amplification: Another encouraging aspect of our eternal security is the knowledge that Jesus is continually interceding on our behalf before the Father. He is not praying the kind of selfish prayers we tend to pray for ourselves, “Please give me this ...,” or “Please give me that ...;” He prays specifically that we should be kept from the evil one. It should be comforting to know that as we endure trials and temptations, there is no suffering or temptation we face that He Himself did not experience in His humanity, thereby making Him worthy to aid us who are being tempted (Hebrews 2:17-18). A key component of The Model Prayer (commonly called “the Lord’s Prayer”), is “*deliver us from evil,*” or “*deliver us from the evil one*” (see Matthew 6:13 and Luke 11:4). Jesus was fully aware of the temptations and evil we face in this world, and how they work together to corrupt our fellowship with Holy God. He instructed His disciples, as He instructs us, to pray for deliverance from temptation and evil. How reassuring it is to know that He is praying the same for us.

For Discussion: How does knowing that Jesus is effectively interceding on our behalf provide confidence in day-to-day interactions, trials, and temptations?

Amplification: The final biblical foundation for the eternal security of our salvation is God's almighty power, which could be considered a summation of all of the previous reasons provided by Pastor Rogers: God's sacred promise, His determined purpose, sovereign predestination, Calvary's perfect provision, our position in Christ, God's eternal provision, and Jesus' interceding prayer. But God's power to keep us for salvation is more than just a summation; it is provided as a specific promise for those who have come to Him through faith.

The story is told of a young man who lay dying. When a pastor came to visit him on his sick bed the man asked, "Pastor, it is very strange: I have done everything I know to do. I have sought to carry out all that the church has asked, and yet I have no peace. How can I be sure that God has put away my sins and that I am eternally saved?" The pastor looked at him compassionately and answered, "Surely the blood of Christ ought to count for something!" As though a flash of divine light had entered his soul, the young man's countenance changed. He looked up eagerly and exclaimed, "Ah, yes, it counts for *everything*. I can trust that!"

For Discussion: How do you think we can put into practice rejoicing in the security of our salvation?

For Discussion: How do trials and temptations strengthen and/or refine our faith?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week in your personal devotions, take time to read through and meditate upon the **Additional Scriptures to Study**, and thank God that He who is able to save you is also able to keep you. If you have never done so, you may consider writing a note to yourself in the flyleaf of your Bible to remind you that you are His when dark times come.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – "Lord, we thank You for Your everlasting power and provision of salvation. You are our strong tower in whom we trust!"

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

As you read and meditate on the promises contained in John 6:47 and 11:25-26, keep in mind the word translated "*believes*" comes from the Greek verb "*pisteuo*" which literally means to trust, have faith in, or to be fully committed to someone or something. This is more than just an intellectual belief or acceptance of a fact.

John 6:47 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life."

John 11:25-26 "Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?'"

Intimacy with Christ is developed through prayer, not just talking to God, but, most importantly, listening to Him. If we do not listen, we cannot obediently follow.

John 10:27-29 "My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand."

As you read and meditate on the following verses, you should take great comfort in knowing that Jesus is constantly interceding to the Father on our behalf. No issue in our lives is either too small or too great for our Savior.

John 17:20 “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who will believe in Me through their word.”

Hebrews 2:17-18 “Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.”

Hebrews 7:25 “Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Arthur W. Pink, “The Sovereignty of God and the Godhood of God,” (Lulu Press, 2016)
- John Bunyan, “The Work Of Jesus Christ As An Advocate For The Benefit Of All Believers,” (Curiosmith, 2010)
- Samuel Dickey Gordon, “Quiet Talks on Power,” (Pinnacle Press, 2017)

LESSON FOUR: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHRISTIAN SINS

SESSION ONE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the first of three sessions dealing with sin in the life of the Christian. Coming to faith in Christ provides forgiveness and restoration with our Holy God for our sins, but it does not give us license to sin. Since none of us can claim perfection, and we all struggle with the reality of sin this side of Heaven, Pastor Rogers will explore what the Bible teaches about sin in the life of a Christian.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON FOUR | SESSION ONE

INTRODUCTION

The previous topics in this series of sessions explained how we know the Bible is the Word of God, how we can have assurance of our salvation, and how God's salvation is eternally secure. This next series of sessions from Pastor Rogers will explore what the Bible teaches about sin in the life of the Christian. As much as we would all like to be "perfected" at the moment of our salvation, that just is not reality this side of Heaven. However, the Bible does have much to say about the consequences of sin in the life of the believer, as well as about how to be cleansed from those sins. In this and the next session, Pastor Rogers focuses on what the Bible teaches about sin's consequences in the life of true believers.

OUR KEY PASSAGES

Psalms 51:1-4 "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever

before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight—that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge.”

Psalm 51:8 “Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which You have broken may rejoice.”

Psalm 51:12 “Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with Your generous Spirit.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What do you think are some of the consequences of sin in the life of a believer?
- What do you think believers can do to avoid, and/or be cleansed from current or future sins?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “What Happens When a Christian Sins”

AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

The most miserable person on earth is not a lost person, but a saved person out of fellowship with God. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: There is a false belief based on a perverted interpretation of the doctrine of the security of the believer that suggests once people are saved they can continue to sin with impunity. Nothing could be further from the truth. A person who has genuinely encountered the living Christ may sometimes fail because of human weakness, but the difference between a saved and a lost person is that the saved person **does not want to** sin. Sin brings with it consequences, and for the believer the consequences are more severe than simple situational consequences. For example, if a believer and a non-believer were each to steal something, there is the situational consequence of them both being arrested and possibly going to jail. But the Christian in that circumstance faces the additional consequence of disappointing God and suffering through the Lord’s chastisement.

For Discussion: How would you define sin?

Amplification: Sadly, we often form our concept of God based on our human fathers. That might be acceptable if all fathers displayed the love, forgiveness, correction and mercy of our heavenly Father. Too often our earthly fathers fail to provide those things in their proper proportion. One human characteristic transcends even the worst of fatherly relationships, and that is the innate desire to have our father’s approval. The pain of disapproval can be devastating in a son’s or daughter’s life, leading to a myriad of behavioral disorders. In the same way for a Christian, to feel the weight of God’s disapproval brings a myriad of spiritual maladies in addition to whatever situational consequences come with the offense.

For Discussion: How can we as Christians, live in such a way as to diminish the power and effect of sin in our lives?

Amplification: In our session today, we learned how sin dirties the soul, dominates the mind, disgraces the Lord, and depresses the heart. These are only the first four of seven spiritual consequences detailed in Psalm 51 that believers face when they harbor unconfessed and unrepented sin in their lives. The other three consequences will be addressed in the next session. What is important to remember is that David, “who was a man after God’s own heart,” tried to hide and cover up his initial sin with Bathsheba, which only led to deeper sin. After being confronted by Nathan the prophet, David wrote this Psalm of confession describing the inner agony he had been experiencing while hiding from the Lord. His behavior is reminiscent of Adam in the Garden of Eden who, after he had sinned, tried to cover his sin and hide from God. The

lesson to learn from both is that we cannot hide from God. Speaking of true believers, Jesus warns us in Mark 4:22 and again in Luke 8:17, that whatever has been kept secret or hidden will come to light.

For Discussion: Why do you think sin has such a deep and damaging effect in the life of a believer?

Amplification: Termites are nearly invisible creatures that will gnaw away at the foundation of a structure, and in time will eat away at everything except the thinnest outer shell of a building. From the outside, an untrained eye may not be able to detect anything wrong until a finger pushes against the outer wall. Then it will be discovered that the wall has been hollowed out and is no longer solid, but a useless outline of what used to be. So it is with unchecked sin in our lives.

For Discussion: Was there a time when sin seemed to have no effect on your life, when it just seemed to be the “normal” thing to do? Share with your group how that has changed.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week in your personal devotions, meditate on those times before coming to Christ when sin had little or no impact on your life, and compare it to how sin affects you now. Spend time praising God for how He has provided the Holy Spirit to bring conviction when we stray from Him.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, we are grateful for the ability to feel pain, both physically and spiritually, that warns us when something is wrong. Let Your Word be a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our paths!

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

As you read the two verses, consider why it is that God always considers our sins as having been committed against Him, even though they were perpetrated against another?

Numbers 32:23b “...you have sinned against the LORD; and be sure your sin will find you out.”

Psalms 51:4 “Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight—that You may be found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge.”

Have you ever experienced the Lord’s correction or chastisement (not just situational consequences), for something you did wrong? If so, take time to recount those incidents and to thank Him and praise Him for His love. If not, you may need to reexamine your relationship with Him.

Proverbs 3:12 “For whom the LORD loves He corrects, just as a father the son in whom he delights.”

People tend to live their lives as though God never really sees what they do. Consider, He not only sees behind closed doors, but He also looks deep into our hearts.

Mark 4:22 (see also Luke 8:17) “For there is nothing hidden which will not be revealed, nor has anything been kept secret but that it should come to light.”

Contemplate the depth of meaning in this verse, that while our sin made us unlovely and repulsive to our Holy God, He still loved us enough to humble Himself by taking on human form to suffer a cruel and demeaning death to accept the penalty of our sins.

Romans 5:8 “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- C. H. Spurgeon, “The Treasury of David,” (Hendrickson Publishers, 1876)
- Lewis Sperry Chafer, “Grace; An Exposition of God’s Marvelous Gift,” (Kregel, 2007)
- R. A. Torrey, ed., “The Fundamentals; A Testimony of Truth,” (Bible Institute, 1917)

LESSON FOUR: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHRISTIAN SINS

SESSION TWO

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

Using Psalm 51 as our key Scripture, this is the second of three sessions exploring what happens when a Christian sins. In the previous session, Pastor Rogers introduced four specific consequences believers face when they sin. In this session, he will continue to develop that theme and will present three more consequences of sin in the life of Christians.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON FOUR | SESSION TWO

INTRODUCTION

King David was “a man after God’s own heart,” yet he suffered through a terrible moral failure, the pain of which he detailed in Psalm 51. Though few of us may ever fall to the depths of depravity that David did, sin is still sin, and it always brings with it spiritual consequences for the believer. The good news is that our salvation is secure in Christ as we previously studied; the bad news is the consequences sin brings. In our previous session, we learned how sin in the life of a Christian dirties the soul, dominates the mind, disgraces the Lord, and depresses the heart. That would certainly seem to be enough to persuade us all to avoid sin, but there are still more consequences that Christians will face when they sin. In this session, Pastor Rogers continues to explore three more damaging effects of sin in the life of a Christian.

OUR KEY PASSAGES

Psalm 51:8 “Make me to hear joy and gladness, that the bones which You have broken may rejoice.”

Psalm 51:10 “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.”

Psalm 51:14-15 “Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What do you think are some of the inner issues or stresses that we, as Christians, may suffer from as a consequence of having sinned?
- Do you believe there any sins that could ever separate us from God’s love and cause Him to abandon us, even though we might have to endure His chastisement?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “What Happens When a Christian Sins”

AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

Folks who are out of fellowship with God are quick to find fault with other people. If you want to, you can always find fault because all of us are just a society of sinners who finally realized it and banded ourselves together to do something about it. —

Adrian Rogers

Amplification: As Christians, we are not exempt from sin. The difference between a saved person and one who is lost is not an absence of sin, but a desire *not* to sin. We need to recognize that it is not just big sins that can be devastating in the life of a Christian. Small sins are just as debilitating when it comes to enjoying an unhindered relationship with our Holy God. Consider the flow of a mighty river. Sometimes a major natural disaster, a rockslide, volcanic upheaval, (etc.) can block the river’s flow. But most often, it is the slow accumulation of tiny deposits of silt that, in time, blocks its flow. So it is with the accumulation of tiny sins in our life that work gradually to obstruct our relationship with God.

For Discussion: What can we do to avoid the accumulation of “little” sins?

Amplification: Fortunately, God brings pressure to bear on our lives to bring us back to Him when we sin. As the Bible tells us, “For whom the LORD loves He corrects [chastens], just as a father the son in whom he delights. (Proverbs 3:12).” We need to remember, He is never the one who leaves us, but we too often are the ones who stray from Him. As Pastor Rogers has shown from Scripture, sin in the life of the Christian brings painful spiritual consequences. It dirties the soul, dominates the mind, disgraces the Lord, depresses the heart, diseases the body, defiles the spirit, and destroys one’s testimony.

For Discussion: How do you think harboring sin in one’s life can hinder their personal evangelism?

Amplification: The story is told of a young girl who stole something of minor value from a home where she had been a housekeeper. Later, when as an older woman she became a Christian, she carried the burden of that theft for years. As she would pray, the memory of that transgression was constantly before her and became a heavy weight upon her soul. She was advised to make restitution, but she made many excuses; “The person is dead,” “My reputation would be ruined,” and so on. She considered placing the value of what she had stolen into the church offering, but realized God neither needs nor wants “stolen” money. The only thing to do was to make restitution, so she sought out a surviving son of the family she had stolen from to give him the value of what she had stolen. Though he was reluctant to receive her restitution and was graciously forgiving, she insisted he take the money. She returned with a joy and peace in her life, and she became a magnificent soul winner who led many into the light of Christ.

For Discussion: How do you think making restitution for a sin made against another works in the life of a believer? Do you have a story to share with the group as a means of encouragement to others who may be struggling in this area?

Amplification: Sin builds up an uncrossable barrier between us and God. A man may be highly respected in the community, and may be a member of a local church “in good standing,” but the real question is, “How does he stand in the sight of God?”

For Discussion: How can we effectively maintain a righteous life before God, and not just in the eyes of other men?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week during your personal devotions, ask the Lord to reveal anything that may be hidden in your heart that you need to confess, repent, or make right. If there is anything wrong in your life, make it right.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, You are holy! Help us O’ God, to be more like you through obedience to Your Holy Spirit, and to Your Word.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

These two chapters detail how sin was able to creep into the life of David, “A man after God’s own heart,” and how God intervened to bring divine chastisement. As you read through these chapters, take note of the issues that caused David to stumble, and commit to keep the same issues from infecting your life (laziness, wandering eyes, lust, covetousness, greed, evil schemes, murder, deceit, etc.)

2 Samuel 11, 12

After Nathan confronted David with what he had done, note the depth of contriteness, confession, and repentance that David experienced.

Psalm 51

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- John Bunyan, “The Pilgrim’s Progress,” (CreateSpace, 2016)
- Martin Luther, “Table Talk [see “Of Sins”],” (Dover Publications, 2005)
- R. A. Torrey, ed., “The Fundamentals; A Testimony of Truth,” (Bible Institute, 1917)

LESSON FOUR: WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CHRISTIAN SINS

SESSION THREE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

Using Psalm 51 as our key Scripture, this is the final of three sessions exploring what happens when a Christian sins. In the previous two sessions, Pastor Rogers introduced seven specific consequences a believer faces when he/she sins. Sin, he said, dirties the soul, dominates the mind, disgraces the Lord, depresses the heart, diseases the body, defiles the spirit, and destroys one's testimony. In this session, Pastor Rogers will share how Christians can overcome and become cleansed from sin when it happens to creep into their lives

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON FOUR | SESSION THREE

INTRODUCTION

In our last two sessions, Pastor Rogers detailed seven specific consequences of sin that befall Christians when they sin. Sin, he said, dirties the soul, dominates the mind, disgraces the Lord, depresses the heart, diseases the body, defiles the spirit, and destroys one's testimony. As painful as these are, God still loves us more than we can fathom, and He always provides a way of restoration through His mercy and grace. In this session, Pastor Rogers provides four biblical practices to restore relationship with God and relieve the pressure God brings to bear when believers fail Him.

OUR KEY PASSAGES

Psalm 51:1-7 "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; according to the multitude of Your tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Your sight—that You may be

found just when You speak, and blameless when You judge. Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me. Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.”

Psalm 51:12-15 “Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners shall be converted to You. Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, the God of my salvation, and my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What do you think God expects from us as Christians, when we sin?
- How do you think believers are restored in their relationship to God when sin enters their lives?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “What Happens When a Christian Sins”

AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

God does not love us because we are valuable, we are valuable *because He loves us!*

—Adrian Rogers

Amplification: The sad truth of life is that as Christians, we still live in a fallen world in fallen bodies with all of “the lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life” (1 John 2:16), with which we must contend. The good news is that Jesus has redeemed us (bought us back) with His shed blood, and that He died “*once for all*” (Hebrews 7:27; 9:12; 10:10). His sacrifice was sufficient for all our past and future sins. As has been previously emphasized, that does not give Christians license to sin (see Romans 6:15). True believers do not want to sin. However, sin remains an inevitable part of this fallen world. That does not mean it should be accepted or tolerated, which is why sin always brings spiritual consequences in the life of a genuine Christian.

The good news is that along with the pain of the consequence of sin, God provides a way for us to be cleansed and restored, not by crucifying Christ again, but by our possessing a contrite spirit given to us by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Pastor Rogers discussed four basic practices that Christians can follow to be cleansed and restored to a right relationship with God. The first is to have **confidence** in the fact that we are loved. The Bible says, “... neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 8:39-39). It further declares, “... that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God” (Ephesians 3:17-18).

For Discussion: What do you think it means to have a broken and contrite spirit, or heart? What can we do to cultivate a broken and contrite spirit before God?

Amplification: The confidence we have in the trustworthiness of God’s Word and in His unfailing love is what allows us to **confess** (agree with Him) when we sin, which literally means “to miss the mark” with God. We need to remember the many ways in which we sin. There are sins of commission (doing what is wrong), sins of omission (failing to do what is right), sins of the tongue (saying what God would not have us say), and as if that were not enough, there are sins of our thought life. Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount that to even lust after a woman is equal to adultery, and to hate is equal to murder.

Confession is the first step in “spiritual breathing,” where we “exhale” our sin, then “inhale” God’s **cleansing** by appropriating by faith the refilling of the Holy Spirit. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). The Bible also commands, “... be filled with the Spirit” (Ephesians 5:18). In the original language, this verse literally says, “... be being [constantly] filled with the Spirit.” The problem is that each of us is like a leaking vessel. Each time we sin, we grieve the Holy Spirit and hurt our relationship with God. We need to be in a constant state of contriteness regarding our sin, and to be consciously seeking forgiveness and cleansing when we fail.

For Discussion: What attitude do you think we should have toward sin and God’s gift of forgiveness?

Amplification: When we are faithful to confidently approach the throne of God, confessing our sin and seeking His face for forgiveness and cleansing, then we can be **consecrated** (set apart) to be used by Him for His glory. The Bible says, “Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter [iniquity], he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work” (2 Timothy 2:21).

The story is told of a young child who disobeyed his father. The little boy came to the father and said, “Papa, I did that naughty thing you told me not to do.” The father said, “I see that you are sorry for what you did, and I am thankful that you have confessed it to me. You are forgiven.” The next day the boy returned and again asked the father for forgiveness for what he had done. The father said, “My son, were you not forgiven yesterday?” The boy replied, “Yes, but I want you to forgive me again.” How it must break the heart of God to have us repeatedly ask for forgiveness for that which we have already been forgiven!

For Discussion: How should we respond to God’s forgiveness when we sin?

For Discussion: What can we do to teach others about God’s love and forgiveness? Can we effectively share those truths if they are not real in our own lives?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week during your personal devotions and throughout the week, try to put into practice “spiritual breathing” each time you find yourself having fallen short of what God expects of you. Be quick to immediately confess to Him any shortcoming, then by faith, receive His forgiveness and filling of the Holy Spirit. You may want to journal and make a record of the results.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, we are so needy and daily fall short of Your glory. Help us to be sensitive to sin whether in thought or deed, and help us to quickly confess and receive the infilling of Your Holy Spirit.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

As you reflect on the truths contained in the following verses, ask the Holy Spirit to give you a broken heart and contrite spirit for sin. Make that a routine prayer as you face the daily issues of life.

Psalm 34:18 “The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit.”

Psalm 51:17 “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart—these, O God, You will not despise.”

Isaiah 57:15 “For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: “I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.”

Isaiah 66:2b “But on this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word.”

It is important to remember that nothing can be hidden from Almighty God. The verses not only remind us of that fact, but they testify of the Lord’s mercy and willingness to forgive and restore when we confess our sins.

Proverbs 28:13 “He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy.”

Isaiah 1:18 “Come now, and let us reason together,’ says the LORD, ‘though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool.’”

Romans 5:8 “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

1 John 1:7-9 “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Being a Christian does not give one a license to sin. It does, however, provide a way to escape the temptation of sin if we choose to follow the prompting of the Holy Spirit, and be obedient to the Word of God for “the way of escape.”

Romans 6:15 “What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!”

1 Corinthians 10:13 “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Andrew Murray, “Divine Healing” (Whitaker House, 2019)
- R. Kent Hughes, “Disciplines of a Godly Man,” (Crossway, 2019)
- Samuel Dickey Gordon, “Quiet Talks on Following the Christ,” (Kessinger Publishing, 2008)

LESSON FIVE: BELIEVER'S BAPTISM

SESSION ONE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

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ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the first of three sessions dealing with the subject of biblical baptism. In this Session, Pastor Rogers reviews what the Bible teaches about the method of baptism, along with providing the historical context for the word “baptism” that is used in English translations of the Bible.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

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As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON FIVE | SESSION ONE

INTRODUCTION

The subject of baptism has, in modern history, become a source of contention, or at least some division, among different denominations of the Christian faith. This should never be so because baptism is a foundational act of obedience for every believer who sincerely identifies himself/herself with the Lord Jesus Christ. In this, the first of three sessions on the subject of baptism, Pastor Rogers explores the biblical method of baptism as practiced by Jesus and the early church, and will also provide the historical context for the word, “baptism,” which is used in our English translations of the Bible.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

Matthew 28:19-20 “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. Amen.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What is your view of baptism? Does it matter if one who claims to be a follower of Christ is ever baptized or not? Why?
- Does it matter whether one is baptized by immersion, or by sprinkling? Why?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “What the Bible Teaches about Baptism”**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

Baptism is not incidental, it is fundamental! Don't ever minimize what God has so maximized. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: Baptism is a crucial, but too often downplayed ordinance of the New Testament Church. As Pastor Rogers pointed out, baptism was important enough for our Lord Jesus Christ to personally require Himself to be baptized by John the Baptist at the beginning of His ministry. It was also important enough to be the last command He gave to His disciples before ascending to Heaven after His resurrection. As followers of Christ, we should place importance on what the Lord has obviously deemed to be important.

As we previously studied, we are saved by grace, through our faith, not by any works we do (Ephesians 2:8, 9). Therefore, we are not saved by the act of baptism. However, because the Lord modeled baptism for us, and then commanded us to baptize and to teach the nations (all peoples) to observe (obey) all things He commanded, baptism becomes an important act of obedience essential for spiritual growth for everyone who claims the name of Christ. “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments” (1 John 2:3), and “Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us” (1 John 3:24). Genuine salvation results in an inward desire to do what pleases our Lord. As previously discussed, none of us is totally immune from sin, but the mark of true believers is that they do not want to sin; they want to live by the Lord's example, and they want to follow (obey) what He taught and what the Bible teaches.

For Discussion: How important do you think it is to obey what the Bible teaches, and what the Lord Jesus Christ modeled, concerning baptism?

Amplification: Convenience and culture have severely weakened the church over the centuries to the point that many things considered absolutes in the early church have become almost rewritten to accommodate convenience. Among these has been the method of baptism. Originally practiced as full bodily immersion, sometime around the thirteenth century sprinkling was introduced as a matter of convenience within the Roman Catholic Church. However, we know from the biblical record, as well as from the writings of the early church fathers that this was not the practice of the early church:

- **Tertullian** (AD 200): “We are immersed.”
- **Hippolytus** (AD 235): “When the person being baptized goes down into the water, ...”
- **Cyril**, Bishop of Jerusalem (AD 348): “The body is dipped in water.”
- Further, many of the founders and early leaders of denominations that now practice sprinkling acknowledged in their writings that immersion was the biblical method of baptism:
- **George Whitfield** (Methodist) on Romans 6:4: “It is certain that the words of our text are an allusion to the manner of baptism by immersion.”
- **Conybeare and Howson** (Episcopalians) on Romans 6:4: “This passage cannot be understood unless it is understood that the primitive baptism was by immersion.”
- **John Calvin** (Presbyterian): “The very word ‘baptize,’ however, signifies to immersion, and it is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church.”

- **Martin Luther** (Lutheran): “I could wish that the baptized should be totally immersed according to the meaning of the word.”
- **Philip Schaff** (Lutheran): “Immersion and not sprinkling was unquestionably the original normal form of baptism. This is shown by the meaning of the Greek word and the analogy of the baptism of John which was performed in Jordan.”

For Discussion: Should culture and/or convenience trump the authority and commands of Scripture? Why or why not?

Amplification: In addition to the biblical record, the writings of church fathers, and the writings of early denominational leaders, we also have the archeological and historical record of baptism by immersion as having been the method of baptism for followers of Christ for many centuries. One can still visit in Europe Roman Catholic cathedrals built before the thirteenth century where there are baptistries similar to those used by churches today which practice baptism by immersion. Historians document sixty-seven immersion-type baptistries in Italy alone that date from the fourth to fourteenth centuries.

The challenge before the Bible believing Christian is simply this, “Am I to be obedient to what the Bible teaches concerning the method of baptism, or am I going to allow convenience and culture to dictate my response?”

Sir Cliff Richard has said, “Baptism seemed such an integral part of New Testament Christianity that I couldn’t imagine a droplet of water dribbled on my head when I was a baby could be a proper substitute for that adult symbol of submission and obedience.”

For Discussion: Why do you think it is hard for someone who was baptized by sprinkling to submit to baptism by immersion?

For Discussion: What would you say to someone who sincerely desires to follow Christ, but has never been baptized, or was baptized by sprinkling?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week in your personal devotions, meditate on Romans 6:4, and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any aspect of your life that does not align with you having put the old man to death in order to live in newness of life to the Father’s glory. Determine to adjust any aspect of your life that does not reflect that reality, and journal your thoughts.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, You submitted to John’s baptism not because you needed repentance, but in order to fulfill all righteousness! Forbid that we should fail to do the same.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

As you study the following verses, note how carefully Scripture records baptism by immersion “**in** the Jordan ... **coming up from** the water”, that more than a cup of water was needed “because there was **much water** there”, and that they “went **down into** the water”.

Mark 1:9-10 “It came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.”

John 3:23 “Now John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there. And they came and were baptized.”

Acts 8:36-39 “Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, ‘See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?’ Then Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.’ And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’ So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing.”

There is a reason why baptism by immersion is so important. It provides a clear depiction of a death and burial by use of a watery grave, along with a resurrection to “newness of life” empowered by the Holy Spirit. Question: Is your baptism on the right side of your salvation, and for the right reason?

Romans 6:4 “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- T. Robertson, “Word Pictures in the New Testament,” (Broadman Press, 1930)
- “The Outline Bible Five Translation Practical Word Studies in The New Testament,” (Leadership Ministries Worldwide, 1998)
- William Smith, L.L.D., “Smith’s Bible Dictionary,” (Thomas Nelson, 2004)

LESSON FIVE: BELIEVER'S BAPTISM

SESSION TWO

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the second of three sessions dealing with the subject of biblical baptism. In the previous session, Pastor Rogers reviewed what the Bible teaches about the method of baptism, and he further explained the historical context for the word, "baptism," that is used in English translations of the Bible. In this session, Pastor Rogers discusses the biblical meaning of baptism, and why it is an important act of obedience for every Christian.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON FIVE | SESSION TWO

INTRODUCTION

Baptism is somewhat downplayed in numerous churches today, with many churches never even stirring baptismal waters. Along with a general decline of baptisms, several mainstream denominations practice sprinkling as opposed to immersion, thereby changing the picture of baptism's biblical intent and meaning. In our previous session, Pastor Rogers discussed the method of baptism as detailed in the Bible. In this session, he will examine the biblical meaning of baptism, and why baptism by immersion is important in the life of every true believer.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

Romans 6:4-7 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of

sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Why, as Christians, are we to be baptized? What does it signify?
- Why do you think Jesus, in His last words to His disciples, commanded them to “Go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,” (Matthew 28:10)? Do you believe that is an important command? Why?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “What the Bible Teaches about Baptism”

AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

The meaning and the method [of baptism] are inextricably interwoven. If you change the method, you will destroy the meaning. The method and the meaning are bound together. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: As we learned in our previous session, the biblical method of baptism was always by immersion. It is not just because the Greek word we translate “to baptize” literally means “to dunk,” “to dip,” or “to completely immerse,” it is because the act of baptism carries with it the picture of our death, burial, and resurrection in identification with the Lord Jesus Christ. As testified by the early church fathers, and as confirmed by the writings of the founding leaders of denominations which today practice baptism by sprinkling, our key verse, Romans 6:4, clearly explains that submission to baptism by immersion pictures a death and burial via a watery grave, followed by a symbolic resurrection by coming up out of the water.

For Discussion: Does it matter if someone is baptized by immersion in a swimming pool, in a pond, or in a church baptistry? Does the location make a difference in the worthiness of the baptism?

Amplification: There are three important truths contained within this verse that every follower of Christ should understand. First, baptism by immersion is an open declaration of one’s identification, by faith, with Jesus Christ; “We were buried with Him through baptism ...,” (Romans 6:4). When we are baptized, we are publically testifying to all who witness the event that we have made Jesus Christ our Lord. We are proclaiming to the world that “... our old man was crucified with Him [Christ], that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin,” (Romans 6:6). As was presented in our previous sessions on “How to be Saved and Know It,” we are not saved by works, but by grace, through our faith (Ephesians 2:8, 9). The act of baptism, whether by sprinkling or immersion, never saves anyone; but baptism by immersion serves as an outward proclamation of what has taken place inwardly in the life of a true follower of Jesus. This is not to suggest that every person who has been baptized is a true believer. However, for every sincere Christian, baptism by immersion as commanded and modeled for us by our Lord, carries significant meaning.

For Discussion: Do you think sprinkling or pouring water over someone who has come for baptism adequately pictures a death, burial, and resurrection? Is that even important? Why or why not?

Amplification: Second, not only does baptism by immersion testify of one’s personal identification, through faith, in Jesus Christ’s burial, it also testifies of our identification, through faith, in His resurrection; “... that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father ...” (Romans 6:4). The greatest truth of Christianity is the resurrection of Christ. Without

the resurrection, our faith would be in vain, we would have no hope; “For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection” (Romans 6:5). Jesus said, “In My Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2). The resurrection of Jesus Christ and the promise of our resurrection to be with Him is the cornerstone of our faith. Baptism by immersion is a picture of not only our eventual physical death just as Jesus endured a physical death, but also of our eventual resurrection in a glorified body as He was raised “by the glory of the Father” (Romans 6:4).

For Discussion: Does the biblical method, coupled with the biblical meaning as explained in this and the previous session, change your understanding of baptism? If so, in what way?

Amplification: The third truth contained in the symbolism of baptism by immersion is a declared determination to, “... walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4). Our salvation delivers us from the captivity of sin in the fallen world in which we live, but it does not deliver us from the temptation or influence of sin. We are set free from sin’s chains, but we must still endure its presence and must practice the cleansing and filling of the Holy Spirit on a daily, and even sometimes moment-by-moment basis. “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it” (1 Corinthians 10:13). Our determination to live a righteous life **because** of what God has done for us is what separates a true believer, from a false. Works never save us, but a Christian’s works are the result of a grateful heart for the salvation God has graciously provided.

For Discussion: In your opinion, what does it mean to “walk in newness of life”?

Amplification: Martin Luther said, “Baptism signifies that the old Adam in us is to be drowned by daily sorrow and repentance, and perish with all sins and evil lusts; and that the new man should daily come forth again and rise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.” Submission to baptism by immersion carries a very significant meaning associated with its method. To dilute or change the biblical method because of culture or convenience, as Pastor Rogers has said, destroys its meaning.

For Discussion: How important do you believe it is to follow the dictates of Scripture and the commands of our Lord in the midst of a culture that is openly hostile to Christianity?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

In your personal devotions, ask the Holy Spirit how you might offer yourself as an instrument of righteousness to God and to others this week.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, help us to always walk in newness of life, to live righteously not out of fear or obligation, but out of genuine love for You.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

Consider as you read the following, how God has made all believers one by a spiritual baptism (immersion) in His Spirit which is symbolized by our physical baptism.

1 Corinthians 12:12-13 “For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”

Following Christ is a daily practice of rejecting sin which no longer holds us captive.

Romans 6:6 “...knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin.”

Ephesians 4:22 “...that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts...”

As you read the following verses, take time to praise God for the wonderful gift of salvation, grace, and forgiveness He has provided. Commit to live your life by faith in Him, allowing the resulting good works to shine through in praise to Him.

Colossians 2:11-14 “In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses, having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”

James 2:17-22 “Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, ‘You have faith, and I have works.’ Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe--and tremble! But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Charles Hodge, “The Way of Life,” (Patala Press, 2016)
- William Evans, “The Great Doctrines of the Bible,” (Moody, 1974)
- James Orr, “The Christian View of God and the World,” (Kregel Publications, 1989)

LESSON FIVE: BELIEVER'S BAPTISM

SESSION THREE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the final of three sessions dealing with the subject of biblical baptism. In the previous sessions, Pastor Rogers reviewed what the Bible teaches about the method of baptism, he explained the historical context for the word, "baptism," and he discussed the meaning of baptism by immersion. In this session, Pastor Rogers discusses the motive that should be in the heart of every Christian before being baptized.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

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As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON FIVE | SESSION THREE

INTRODUCTION

Baptism is not some random ritual used to join a church as if it were a club or exclusive society. Baptism carries a very determined meaning which should be in the heart and mind of every person who comes to stir baptismal waters. Sadly, in this era of watered-down biblical truth, baptism for many is something that is expected of them, and holds little more meaning than what is required of them to "fit in" to their families, peer groups, or churches. In this session, Pastor Rogers concludes this biblical study of baptism by examining the proper motive for baptism.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

Romans 6:4-7 "Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of

sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What do you think should be the underlying reason(s) that Christians should be baptized?
- Why do you think a person who is genuinely trusting in Christ would balk at baptism? What are some of the things that might work against people being willing to be baptized?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “What the Bible Teaches about Baptism”

AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

While baptism is not necessary for salvation, it is necessary for obedience, and obedience is necessary for joy and fruitfulness in the Christian life. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: We have discussed the biblical method for baptism and the biblical meaning of baptism. The method and meaning are important, but without certain inward convictions on the part of the believer, they become meaningless. Without the correct motives for baptism, a person is doing nothing more than taking a public bath. Baptism does not save, and there is no magic attached to the act. However, baptism is essential in the life of a true believer who comes to the baptismal waters with the proper convictions.

For Discussion: What do you believe are some of the different motives people may have when they come to be baptized?

Amplification: The first motive for being baptized is to proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord; but not just Lord, which He is, but one’s personal Lord. In other words, “my” Lord. The Psalmist said, “The Lord is my shepherd” (Psalm 23:1). As discussed previously, baptism by immersion testifies of a person’s identification with Jesus Christ through the biblical picture of a death and burial in a watery grave, followed by the biblical picture of a resurrection to live a new life. Baptism by immersion is often called, “believer’s baptism,” because it requires a conscious understanding and commitment to follow Jesus as one’s Lord. This is why it is crucial to make sure young children fully understand sin and their need of a Savior, and what Christ did for them by dying on the cross and by rising from the grave **before** they are allowed to come for baptism. Without providing them a full comprehension of the Gospel and what it means to allow Jesus to become Lord of their lives, we are in danger of fostering a false or weak faith that can have eternal consequences. There is no evidence in Scripture where unbelieving individuals or infants were ever baptized.

For Discussion: How important do you believe it is for a person to possess the correct heart-motive before stirring baptismal waters. Does the act of baptism by itself, override issues of the heart?

Application: Not only does baptism serve as a public declaration that Jesus is one’s personal Lord, it serves as a mini-sermon of the Gospel. By picturing one’s death, burial, and resurrection in identification with Jesus as Lord, baptism by immersion actually proclaims the Gospel to all who are present to observe. As Paul said in (1 Corinthians 15:1-4), “Moreover, brethren, I declare to you the gospel which I preached to you, ... that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.”

Without words, the visual picture of the Gospel during baptism is a powerful message to believers and unbelievers, alike.

Last, but certainly not least, baptism is commanded by our Lord. Not only was it the first act of His public ministry where He said, "Permit it [My baptism] to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15), but He personally commanded His disciples to, "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). His first act of public ministry, and His last commanding words before ascending to Heaven should not be taken lightly. As Christians, we have an obligation; nay, we have a requirement, to be obedient to our Lord's commands.

For Discussion: Does the "Great Commission" (Matthew 28:19) where Jesus commands His disciples to teach "all the nations" (meaning all peoples), to make disciples of them, and to baptize them, apply to modern-day Christians? If so, does it only apply to those who are "called" to be missionaries? Explain your thoughts.

Application: The only way to fully enjoy and maximize the blessings of a spirit-filled life, is to learn to obey the commands of our Lord. No one can experience a genuine spiritually fruitful life without being obedient. A Christian who lives in open rebellion may materially or socially prosper for a season, but is doomed to inward spiritual misery. As Pastor Rogers has said, "The most miserable person on earth is not a lost person, it is a saved person out of fellowship with God." Failure to obey what you know to do is sin, and it short-circuits one's relationship with God. "Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin" (James 4:17). Adrian Rogers was fond of saying, "The way to understand the part of Scripture you don't understand is to obey the part of Scripture you do understand. When you begin to obey the part you understand, you'll be surprised how much more new light [understanding] will break into your life."

For Discussion: What would you tell a person whose baptism:

- Was not done by the correct biblical method (by immersion)?
- Did not reflect the correct biblical message (salvation by grace, not by the act of baptism)?
- Did not possess the correct biblical motive (was done without understanding the Gospel)?

For Discussion: Do you believe it matters if a church requires individuals presenting themselves for membership to be baptized by immersion, with the correct biblical message having been conveyed (i.e., that it represented a picture of identification with Christ and that it was **not** necessary for salvation), and that it was done with the right motive of declaring Jesus as their Lord? Why or why not?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week in your devotions, ask the Holy Spirit to review the history of your personal baptism to make sure, for the benefit of your personal spiritual growth, that you have been faithful to follow the right baptismal method, message, and motive.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – "Lord, help us to always honor You by our obedience to your commands, that through our obedience we may be sanctified and set apart for Your service."

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

The following list of Scripture details the historic, symbolic, and spiritual importance of baptism. Study them well to solidify your understanding of this most important act of obedience in the life of the Christian.

Matthew 28:19-20 “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.’ Amen.”

Mark 16:15-16 “And He said to them, ‘Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.”

Romans 6:4-7 “Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.”

Acts 2:38-41 “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.’ And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation.’ Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.”

Acts 8:12 “But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.”

Acts 8:35-38 “Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, ‘See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?’ Then Philip said, ‘If you believe with all your heart, you may.’ And he answered and said, ‘I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.’ So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.”

Acts 10:43-48 “‘To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.’ While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, ‘Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?’ And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.”

Acts 18:8 “Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.”

Acts 19:3-5 “And he said to them, ‘Into what then were you baptized?’ So they said, ‘Into John’s baptism.’ Then Paul said, ‘John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.’ When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”

Galatians 3:26-27 “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Alfred Edersheim, “The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah,” (Eerdmans, 1984)
- Elyse M. Fitzpatrick, “Found in Him; The Joy of the Incarnation and Our Union with Christ,” (Crossway, 2013)
- John MacArthur, “The Love of God; He Will Do Whatever It Takes To Make Us Holy,” (Word Publishing, 1939)

LESSON SIX: HOW TO HANDLE TEMPTATION

SESSION ONE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the first of three sessions dealing with the topic of temptation. In this session, Pastor Rogers will identify the subjects and sources of temptations. This serves as the foundation for the subsequent sessions that will discuss how to actually handle temptations.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON SIX | SESSION ONE

INTRODUCTION

Temptations are something that we all face in life. As Christians, sometimes temptations can cause us to stumble, thereby hurting our intimacy and walk with Christ while allowing the enemy to try to shame and overwhelm us with feelings of guilt. As we will learn in this series of sessions, being tempted in and of itself is not sinful; what matters is how we deal with temptations when they occur. Understanding the origins of temptation and how the enemy uses them against us is the first step in knowing how to effectively deal with them. In this session, Pastor Rogers will discuss the subjects and sources of temptations.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

1 Corinthians 10:12-13 “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- In what ways do you believe temptations can affect the lives of believers?
- Are temptations the same for believers and for nonbelievers? How so, or how not so?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to Deal with Temptations”

AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

We are all subject to temptation so that we can learn how to depend on the Lord Jesus Christ and know victory. There is no Christian who does not know temptation.

—Adrian Rogers

Amplification: Every human alive knows the pull of temptations whether they are in the realm of ethical behavior, sensual fulfillment, materialism, pride, or greed. Christians are not immune from temptations, but unlike the person who is without Christ, believers have a source of help that always provides a “way of escape” (1 Corinthians 10:13). Whether or not we choose to take the way of escape becomes the inherent challenge.

We all have a tendency to tackle problems in our own strength, to use our intellect or personal strengths to overcome life’s countless obstacles, including temptations. That may appear to work for a while, but eventually, in the area where we perceive ourselves to be the strongest, we are bound to stumble. That is why 1 Corinthians 19:12 contains the warning, “Therefore let him **who thinks he stands** take heed lest he fall.”

For Discussion: How would you define “temptation”?

Amplification: The famous Chinese general, Sun Tzu, who wrote the “Art of War,” is famous for having said, “Know thy enemy.” But the full quote is, “Know thyself, know thy enemy.” As we become subjects (meaning the recipients) of a multitude of temptations that are thrust upon us, it is imperative that we understand our personal vulnerabilities, and that we not rely upon our inner strength to overcome temptations. The prophet Jeremiah provides a significant warning when he said, “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it” (Jeremiah 17:9)?

In addition to understanding our individual vulnerability as the recipients of temptation, it is important to understand where temptations originate. Pastor Rogers identified three sources which he labeled the “External Foe” (the world), the “Inner Foe” (the flesh), and the “Infernal Foe” (the devil). We can be, and often are, assaulted by each of these. Sometimes, we might even be assaulted by more than one simultaneously, making the temptation particularly challenging to overcome.

For Discussion: What are some specific temptations of the world that we tend to face? How can we readily recognize them when they occur, and what are some ways we can defend ourselves against worldly temptations?

Amplification: As with knowing ourselves, it is important to understand the enemy we face and how he operates. The world, from the Greek word “cosmos,” represents the order and system of life that surrounds us. The lure of material wealth, social prestige, political or corporate power, etc., all work to take our eyes away from the Lord. Remember the seed that was choked by the thorns and weeds which Jesus said represented “the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches” (see Matthew 13:22; Mark 4:19; Luke 8:14). In that parable (repeated by three Gospel writers validating its importance), Jesus clearly warned His disciples of the power of the world to sway followers away from His kingdom.

In addition to external temptations, we face the internal temptations of the flesh. Too often we may relegate fleshly temptations to the arena of sexual lust or sensuality, when in fact, the

word “flesh” translated from the Greek word “psuche,” encompasses much more. As Pastor Rogers explained, “psuche” is the word from which we derive the English word “psyche.” Our psyche embodies our feelings and a wide range of other passions.

The Bible declares, “Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:19-21). In this list hatred, envy, jealousy, murder, drunkenness, wild behavior, and even drug abuse (the Greek word “pharmacia” translated as “sorcery”) are all included to represent acting out fleshly temptations.

For Discussion: Discuss some specific temptations of the flesh. How can we readily recognize them when they occur? What are some ways we can defend ourselves against fleshly temptations?

Amplification: The third source of temptations comes directly from the devil himself, not to say that the other sources are not satanically inspired, but these infernal temptations are aimed directly at the believer. As a true Christian, one has in essence, “drawn a line in the sand” and stepped over it away from Satan. All people suffer consequences for their sins, but they are never direct targets of the devil until they choose to follow Christ. At that point, a believer becomes his enemy. Satan cannot take away a person’s salvation, but he will earnestly work to keep a Christian defeated, feeling guilty, and fruitless.

Our ultimate delivery from temptations comes from Jesus Himself; this delivery will be expanded upon in succeeding sessions. Until then, consider the following story that illustrates a significant truth:

A dog trainer would place a bit of meat on the floor near a dog he was training and say, “No!” The dog knew he must not touch the meat, but he also learned to never look at it. He seemed to feel that if he did, the temptation to disobey would be too great, so he instead looked steadily at his master’s face. The lesson here is, “Always look up to the Master’s face when facing temptation.”

For Discussion: Share with one another ways in which the Lord provides “the way of escape” when we are tempted.

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week in your personal devotions, consider how the enemy has used temptations in your life. Acknowledge your weaknesses, thank God for His forgiveness for any failures, and commit to always look to Him for the way to overcome temptations.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, You are our strong tower. Help us to learn to run to you when we find ourselves under siege by the enemy.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

As you study the following verses, ask the Lord to confirm in your heart how you are to be wholly separated unto Him, and that you are not to be controlled by the world, but by the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 12:1-2 “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

1 Corinthians 6:19 “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?”

Satan, “the prince of the power of the air” (see Ephesians 2:2), is the enemy of every believer, but he no longer holds us captive to sin. It is important for every true follower of Christ to recognize where temptations and spiritual assaults come from, and to combat temptation through prayer and submissive obedience to the Lord and His Word.

Ephesians 2:1-5 “And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, ³among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. ⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).”

Ephesians 6:12 “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

James 4:4 “Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.”

The term “adulterers and adulteresses” is used to express the unfaithfulness of those claiming to be Christ’s, but who are more devoted to the world than they are to the things of God. Ask the Lord to reveal anything in your life for which you hold more devotion than you have for God.

1 John 2:15-16 “Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Beverly Carradine, “The Old Man,” (First Fruits Press, 2016)
- C.I. Scofield, “The New Life in Christ; Messages of Joy and Victory,” (Palala Press, 2016)
- Samuel Dickey Gordon, “Quiet Talks About the Tempter,” (Wentworth Press, 2019)

LESSON SIX: HOW TO HANDLE TEMPTATION

SESSION TWO

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the second of three sessions dealing with the topic of temptation. In the previous session, Pastor Rogers identified the subjects and sources of temptations. In this session, he continues to identify the seats (locations), and the seasons of temptations in the life of every believer. This material is foundational for the next session which will deal with subduing temptations.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON SIX | SESSION TWO

INTRODUCTION

In our previous session, we acknowledged that temptations are common to all men, and that temptations by themselves are not sin. We further explored the subjects (the recipients) of temptations, and the sources of temptations (the world, the flesh, and the devil). In this session, Pastor Rogers will discuss the seat of temptations and their seasons in the life of a believer. These first two sessions lay the groundwork for the third and final session which will deal with how we can have victory in subduing our temptations.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

1 Corinthians 10:12-13 “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- The Bible says that we are made in the image of God (see Genesis 1:27). What do you think that means?
- How would you describe the difference between a person's soul and his spirit?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: "How to Deal with Temptations"**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

With my body I have physical life and can know the world beneath me. With my soul I have psychological life and can know the world around and within me. With my spirit I have spiritual life and can know the world above me. ... When my body is right, I am healthy. When my soul is right, I am happy. When my spirit is right, I am holy. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: Temptations are a reality of life. For a believer who has become sensitized to sin, temptations are always a source of tension as one endeavors to lead a holy and sanctified (separated) life. For the unbeliever or lost person, temptations barely register on the radar screen. Temptations by themselves are not sin, but they can certainly lead to sin. Understanding who is tempted (the subject or recipients of temptations), the sources of temptations (the world, the flesh, and the devil), the seat of temptations (our body, soul, and spirit), along with the general seasons of life in which we typically face certain temptations, helps us to better prepare to handle temptations when they occur.

All temptations, whether they emanate from the world, the flesh, or the devil himself, serve as distractions to believers for the purpose of causing them to take their eyes off of Jesus. Like the Illustration in our last session of the dog who looks steadfastly at his master's face to avoid being tempted to take the morsel he wasn't supposed to have, we need to likewise recognize how the temptations in our lives serve to entice us to take our eyes off the Lord.

For Discussion: What are some of the worldly temptations that tend to manifest themselves in one's "youth"; in one's "mid-life?" Are there things one can do to help mitigate those temptations when they occur?

Amplification: Fleshly temptations, especially when we are young (but certainly not limited to our youth), are easy to recognize. The urge to fulfill passions and physical drives, whether it is in the area of sexual desires, food, drugs or alcohol, physical fitness, or any other activity that abuses or perverts the good God has intended for our lives, becomes sin when those things draw us away from Him and His law. Sex, food, and physical fitness are gifts from God given to us to enjoy happy and healthy lives. It is the abuse and perversion of these gifts that become sin and hinder a fruitful relationship with God.

Generally speaking, as we grow older, maturity sets in and helps us to better manage "youthful lusts," but those temptations are still there and can still strain the life of a believer. This is especially so if giving into a fleshly temptation has become a habit or addiction. We know from science, for example, that pornography and sexual perversion create neural pathways in the brain that release dopamine which, along with other neural chemicals, bonds the individual to the images (or experiences).

For Discussion: What are some of the spiritual temptations that you believe tend to manifest themselves in "older age?" Are there things one can do to help mitigate those temptations when they occur?

Amplification: Pastor Rogers identifies a second seat of temptation which is the soul. Unlike the body (the flesh) which is visible and which obviously reacts to physical pain and/or pleasure, the

soul is invisible and reacts more in the realm of emotions. Though the two can at times be tied together, the soul is that part of us that defines our personality. It is that unique part of us that makes us different from one another in attitude, goals, and aspirations.

That is why worldly temptations dealing with pride, possessions, and power seem to be prevalent during adulthood, or middle age. That is generally the time in our lives when we are attempting to secure our futures through professional accomplishments, awards, or prominence in social standing or business achievements. Again, the danger with these types of temptations is that they can quickly divert one's attention away from God. Jesus said, "For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul" (see Matthew 16:26; Mark 8:36; Luke 9:25)?

For Discussion: What advice or counsel do you think you might give to a believer who is consumed with career or material success? What would you say to an unbeliever?

Amplification: The third seat of temptation works against the spirit of man and originates from the devil himself. Like the soul, the spirit is invisible. Though inextricably linked, the soul and spirit are distinct. The soul is that part of us that is "God conscious" and allows us to commune with God. The spirit within us is what makes us distinct from the animal kingdom. Animals have souls as demonstrated by their different personalities and temperaments, but they are not conscious of God, eternity, holiness, or sin.

The Bible tells us that before we came to faith we, "... were dead in trespasses and sin, ... in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience" (Ephesians 2:1-6). All men have a consciousness of God, even atheists.

Paul, referring to disobedient unbelievers writes "For since the creation of the world His [God's] invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened" (Romans 1:19-21).

The devil would have us remain disconnected from God, not believing in His love and trustworthiness. That is why he, as the "infernal foe," makes direct assaults on our spirit. Though his assaults can come at any time, they usually occur when we are most vulnerable which can be in our latter years. Old age, illnesses, uncertainty over the future, and loss of a loved one are all vulnerabilities that can open the door for spiritual attacks on our faith.

We need to be fully conscious of the schemes of the devil that purposefully assault our faith. That is why the Bible says, "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand" (Ephesians 6:11-13).

For Discussion: What do you think are some of the steps believers can take to bolster their faith when facing times of spiritual crisis?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week in your personal devotions, consider how temptations may have come at you from different sources during the different stages of your life. As with last week, continue to acknowledge your weaknesses, thank God for His forgiveness, and commit to look to Him to overcome all temptations.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, You are our shield. We need Your protection to overcome the temptations around us. Teach us to follow Your ways and to honor You with our lives.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

As you study the verses, consider how the Holy Spirit of God interacts with our spirit to allow us to have communion with Him, as well as with fellow believers.

John 4:23-24 “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Romans 8:16 “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”

Consider the difference between the “spirit of this world,” and the Holy Spirit of God who works in us for righteousness, as you read the following:

Ephesians 2:1-6 “And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

1 Thessalonians 5:23 “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

A key way to help sensitize oneself to the work of the Holy Spirit in one’s life is to make it a priority to study and apply the Word of God.

Hebrews 4:12 “For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- C.C. Mitchell, “Let’s Live,” (Revell, 1975)
- Chad Meister and James K. Dew, eds., “God and Evil; The Case for God in a World Filled with Pain,” (InterVarsity Press, 2012)
- James Orr, “The Christian View of God and the World,” (Scribners’s Sons, 1908)

LESSON SIX: HOW TO HANDLE TEMPTATION

SESSION THREE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the last of three sessions dealing with the topic of temptation. In the previous two sessions, Pastor Rogers identified the subjects, sources, seats, and seasons of temptations. In this final session, he will discuss how we can subdue temptations.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON SIX | SESSION THREE

INTRODUCTION

In our previous two sessions, we identified the subjects (recipients) of temptations, the sources of temptations (the world, the flesh, and the devil), the seat of temptations (the body, soul and spirit), and the seasons of temptations in the life of believers. Those first two sessions prepared the groundwork for this, the third and final session in which Pastor Rogers explains how we can overcome and subdue temptations.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

1 Corinthians 10:12-13 “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Do you think it is of any importance that the temptations Christians face are common to everyone? Why?
- How do you handle temptations? What are some of the things you do to overcome temptations when they come your way?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to Deal with Temptations”**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

When you understand how the devil is working and how the flesh is working and how the world is working, then you can understand how to get victory over these three areas. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: As we learned in the previous sessions, temptations are common to all men (and women), and they originate from three specific sources, the world, the flesh, and the devil himself. We also learned that the sources of temptations attack three specific parts of our being, our soul, body, and spirit, and that in general, temptations tend to manifest themselves during certain periods of our lives. It is also important to remember that experiencing temptations is not by itself sinful; it is how we react to a temptation that is important. Pastor Rogers lists three very specific actions, faith, flight, and fight, which we should employ when facing each of the three sources of temptations.

When facing temptations that originate from an ungodly world system, we are to exercise our faith. In reality, it is our faith that is the foundation for the other two defenses, flight, and fight. Faith is essential to understanding that, “God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape” (1 Corinthians 10:13). Without faith, we are most helpless while facing any temptation. Psalm 1 provides excellent guidance for combating temptations that come from worldly pursuits. It says, “Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful” (Psalm 1:1). This Psalm provides advice for fighting against the pull of the world by refusing to act on advice from the ungodly, associate with sinners, or adopt a scornful (self-serving) attitude. The Psalm also tells us how to shore up our faith by meditating on God’s Word. It continues, “But his [the one who is blessed] delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night” (Psalm 1:2). Placing our faith in God, His Word, and the reality of His kingdom, is our best defense against assaults from the world.

For Discussion: What specific actions or practices do you think we can engage in to strengthen our faith in order to survive in a fallen and hostile world?

Amplification: When facing temptations of the flesh, the solution is to flee. A good practice is to identify “contingency responses” to various situations of potential temptation. In other words, think through the different possibilities of fleshly temptations that might be encountered, and then decide in advance what action to take. Job said, “I have made a covenant with my eyes; why then should I look upon a young woman” (Job 31:1)? It is much easier to deal with a temptation of the flesh when you have already committed to an action of flight. It is also better to make decisions in advance to avoid situations or circumstances that would tend to put you in a place of temptation. The press publicly excoriated former Vice President Pence for declaring that he would not eat a meal alone with a woman other than his wife. His commitment is not only wise for appearances sake, but it is sensible to avoid temptation before it even germinates. Determining what to do in advance of a potential situation (i.e., “I will not allow myself to be alone with someone of the opposite sex other than my spouse”) deflects the awkwardness of trying to properly deal with temptation when caught by surprise.

For Discussion: How would you respond to the statement, “Life is 10% of what happens to you and 90% how you respond to what happens to you?” Do you agree, or disagree? Explain.

Amplification: Overcoming the third source of temptations, from the devil himself, again requires faith by knowing who you are in Christ. To believers, John writes, “You are of God, little children, and have overcome them [evil spirits], because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4). When by faith we know we are secure in Christ and harbor no unconfessed or unrepented sin, we are able to wage war against the enemy with incredible power. When Peter confessed to Jesus, “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God,” Jesus responded by saying, “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:16-18).

In the above statement, Jesus used a play on words to demonstrate an important theological truth. By using, *petra*, meaning “unmovable rock,” referring to Peter’s declaration of, “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God,” He was acknowledging the weakness of man while declaring the power of Christ. It is by this unmovable rock, “*the Son of the Living God,*” that the church is being built, and “*the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*” This is not a defensive statement; it is a declaration of aggression against the very gates of Hell which have no power to stand against Christ and His church. We are given the power, the authority, and even the directive to fight the devil head on. We never need to fear, or to allow him any quarter in our lives through the power of Christ!

For Discussion: What are some of the things we can do in the church to help guard against temptations from the world, the flesh, and the devil?

Amplification: It has been said that when a wolf is confronted by an enemy, he first ascertains the earnestness of his opponent. If he detects even the slightest fear or hesitation on the part of the adversary, he will attack aggressively. However, if the adversary shows determination, the wolf will scurry away.

For Discussion: Why do you believe God allows us to face temptations? Have you found any value, or learned from any of the temptations you have experienced?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week in your personal devotions, make it a point to acknowledge and give thanks for the power to overcome temptations that God has provided. Review your life’s history and ask the Lord to show you “*the way of escape*” He provided in times of temptation, whether you took the way, or not.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, thank you for the grace you pour into our lives, even when we may fail you. We acknowledge our need for You, and ask for Your continued guidance in our lives.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

Read Psalm 1 and take note how assaults upon our lives and on our walks with God can be divided into three specific categories; our actions (walking in the counsel of the ungodly), our associations (standing in the path of sinners), and our attitudes (sitting in the seat of the scornful). Note also the remedy, (taking delight in the law of the Lord, and meditating on it day and night).

Ephesians 6:12 “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”

It is important to understand and to remember that temptations and enticements to sin all emanate from this fallen world and its prince, the devil. Notice the principle of “faith, flight, and fight” in the following verses.

1 John 5:4-5 “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”

2 Timothy 2:22 “Flee also youthful lusts; but pursue righteousness, faith, love, peace with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.”

Revelation 12:11 “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Charles G. Finney, “Power from on High,” (CLC Publications, 1989)
- D.L. Moody, “Secret Power; The Secret of Success in Christian Life and Christian Work,” (Revell, 1881)
- S.D. Gordon, “Quiet Talks on Power,” (Revell, 1903)

LESSON SEVEN: HOW TO BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

SESSION ONE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the first of three sessions dealing with the topic of living the Spirit-filled life. In this session, Pastor Rogers begins to discuss the **reasons** why we are to live Spirit-filled lives. In subsequent sessions, he will continue to expound on those reasons, along with discussing the **requirements** of the Spirit-filled life and the **results** that come from living a Spirit-filled life.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

At the beginning of the session, read the **Introduction** to your group, then open discussion by asking the **Reflection Questions** before viewing the video segment. After viewing the video together, you may want to ask for comments before next leading your group through the **Amplification and Discussion** section. Feel free to add your own commentary if needed, but be cognizant of time and do not personally dominate the session. As you read through the **Amplification** section, engage your group by using the provided **Discussion Questions** to stimulate additional dialogue.

As you prepare to conclude the session, review the **Personal Application** for the week and encourage participants to engage in the suggested activity, as well as to read and study the **Additional Scriptures to Study** section. The **Additional Scriptures to Study** section contains questions or reflections intended to guide participants in their respective personal studies. This is best presented as a positive activity designed to help everyone in the group to grow spiritually through the week (as opposed to being presented as homework).

Allow participants to share prayer requests and lead your group in prayer using any of the suggested formats in the **General Leadership Guide**. Remember to provide an atmosphere of confidentiality within the group as participants share.

LESSON SEVEN | SESSION ONE

INTRODUCTION

Many Christians, meaning those who have genuinely placed their faith and trust in Jesus Christ, tend to go through their lives without ever understanding or truly knowing the power of the Spirit-filled life. Even mature saints can find themselves spiritually floundering at times when the pressures of life distract or overwhelm them. In this session, Pastor Rogers explains the power available to every believer through the presence of the Holy Spirit of God, and discusses why they should avail themselves of this God-given blessing.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

Ephesians 5:18-19 “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- In your opinion, what does it mean to be “filled with the Spirit?”
- Are there any particular evidences of someone being filled with the Spirit? What do you think they are?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to be Filled with the Spirit”**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

When we are filled with the Spirit, the Christian life will not be a burden, but a blessing. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: Sadly, many Christians never fully appropriate the spiritual power given to them at the point of their salvation. They may appreciate a changed life and have a new sense of ethical or moral conduct by which to live, but too often that can easily confine the Christian life to rules or expectations that they feel they must somehow live up to. In time, those rules or expectations become burdensome and can frustrate one’s walk. In truth, it is impossible to successfully live the Christian life without the power of God as manifested through the presence of His Holy Spirit in the individual life of the Christian. Pastor Rogers’ story of the shiny new automobile that a man buys without understanding the power of the engine that comes with it is an apt illustration of the Christian who fails to understand and appropriate the power of the Holy Spirit in his life.

For Discussion: In what ways do you believe living a Spirit-filled life can make a difference in the decisions you make, the activities in which you engage, or the people with whom you choose to associate?

Amplification: The Bible doesn’t just suggest that we **should** be filled with the Spirit. In the original Greek language it **commands** that we be filled by using the imperative mood (meaning it is a direct order). Not only that, but the unique complexity of the Greek actually translates, “be being filled with the Spirit,” which denotes that this is an ongoing and continuous process. We can be filled with the Spirit in one moment, but if we are not careful, in an instant we can find ourselves drained of our spirituality like a leaky vessel. Consider what happens to your spiritual life and attitude when someone cuts you off on the freeway! Further, the command is in the passive voice which means that someone else performs the action of the filling, meaning the filling comes from God, Himself. We cannot fill ourselves with the Holy Spirit of God, we can only acknowledge our need of Him, and accept His filling by faith.

For Discussion: Pastor Rogers stated that from his experience as a pastor, people trying to “do the work of God” in their own strength without being Spirit-filled can cause great harm in the church. What do you think about that idea; do you agree, or disagree? Can you give any examples?

Amplification: The first reason to be filled with the Spirit is because it is a matter of obedience; it is a biblical command of God. The second reason to be filled with the Holy Spirit is to be able to fulfill our God-given obligations. Not only do we need to know what those obligations are, but we need the power of the Holy Spirit in order to properly fulfill those obligations. We need to be filled with the Spirit in order to properly worship. Jesus said, “God is Spirit, and those who worship Him **must** worship in spirit and truth,” (John 4:24). Paul later writes, “For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh” (Philippians 3:3). Worship is often confused with church attendance, or even singing during church, but it is much more than that. True worship is communing with God by our spirits connecting with His Spirit. When that happens, we begin to understand His unfathomable

love, mercy, glory and power. As Pastor Rogers noted, “Perhaps you have been in a boring church service, but never a boring worship service ... real worship is invigorating!”

For Discussion: What would you say matters most to God concerning personal, and corporate (church) worship? What can you do to help promote a proper spirit of worship in your personal life, as well as in your church or group?

Amplification: Another obligation highlighted by Pastor Rogers was the need to live the Spirit-filled life in our marriages. Neither the man, nor the woman in a marriage can adequately fulfill the God-directed obligations of marriage without the help of the Holy Spirit. Neither can effectively understand the sacrificial role owed to the other, nor sufficiently fulfill the role apart from the filling and power of the Holy Spirit. Our fallen natures are too self-centered to allow a meaningful and cohesive relationship between two uniquely different created beings (a man and a woman) without the presence of the Holy Spirit dominating the relationship.

For Discussion: In what ways do you think the Holy Spirit can, by dominating the lives of a married couple or a couple yet to be married, positively impact the relationship? How would the absence of the Spirit in either the life of the man or the woman, or both, negatively impact the relationship?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week in your personal devotions be still before the Lord and just worship Him for Who He is.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Help us to fully understand what it means to live Spirit-filled lives. Help us to seek You and to obey You in all we do.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

When Jesus spoke the words to the woman at the well in Samaria, keep in mind that both the Samaritans, as well as the Jews were very religious people who faithfully practiced a form of worship in their separate temples. Make sure your worship is not based on a routine formal practice or cultural tradition but truly emanates from the heart.

John 4:23-24 “But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

Philippians 3:3 “For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.”

Physical circumcision is superseded by a circumcision of the heart, where one worships God in the Spirit, rejoicing in Christ Jesus as Savior and Lord, and who holds no confidence in his/her own ability to live the Christian life.

James 4:17 “Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.”

James reminds us that it is not just what we do wrong that is sinful. Failing to do what we should is sinful and pits us against God. It is important to live a Spirit-filled life so that we can know what we should do and have the power, or spiritual authority, to accomplish it.

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Henry and Richard Blackaby, “Spiritual Leadership,” (B & H Publishing Group, 2011)
- J Oswald Sanders, “Spiritual Leadership; Principles of Excellence for Every Believer,” (Moody Press, 1967)
- Lewis Sperry Chafer, “He That Is Spiritual,” (Moody Press, 1918)

LESSON SEVEN: HOW TO BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

SESSION TWO

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

To help you be more effective in leading your small-group discipleship study, we have prepared the **General Leadership Guide** to help steer you through the basics of facilitating a small-group study. If you have not already done so, please read the Guide.

ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the second of three sessions dealing with the topic of living the Spirit-filled life. In the previous session, Pastor Rogers talked about **why** we are to live Spirit-filled lives—it is necessary for **obedience** and to fulfill our God-given **responsibilities**, including those related to worship and marriage. Pastor Rogers continues now to discuss additional God-given responsibilities that require a Spirit-filled life.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

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LESSON SEVEN | SESSION TWO

INTRODUCTION

In the previous session, Pastor Rogers talked about **why** we are to live Spirit-filled lives—it is necessary for **obedience** and to fulfill our God-given **responsibilities**, beginning with those related to worship and marriage. In our session today, Pastor Rogers continues to discuss additional responsibilities that require Spirit-filled lives, including work, spiritual warfare, and effective witness.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

Ephesians 5:18-1 “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How do you think being filled with the Spirit serves to impact our daily lives? Provide some practical examples to discuss.

- How do you think **not** being filled with the Spirit can impact our daily lives? Provide some practical examples to discuss.

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to be Filled with the Spirit”

AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

Every day that you live without being filled with the Spirit is a wasted day. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: For many people, going to work every day under the authority of unbelieving employers, or working surrounded by other employees who possess domineering spirits or unethical work habits, can be a trying experience. The stress of such working conditions is amplified significantly when the employers, or the other employees, claim to be Christians. Yet, when Paul wrote in Ephesians 6:5 two thousand years ago, “... be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh,” circumstances were much worse. Much of the commerce in those days was accomplished by slave labor. The bondservant (slave) had no personal rights, and there were few, if any, laws designed to safeguard their treatment. Their masters could work them as many hours and as hard as they wanted. There were no wage protections, benefits, or unions to oversee the slave’s care or concerns. Though life today is much better, the stress created by a demeaning employer or difficult peers can still quickly cause us to “get in the flesh” in our attitudes and conversations. The solution to this dilemma is to be filled with the Spirit. Only the love that God has for the lost can effectively carry one through such circumstances.

For Discussion: How do you feel when your employer demonstrates ungodly conduct (foul language, unfair treatment, unethical business practices, etc.) How should you, or have you, dealt with such situations?

Amplification: For the Christian, meaning one who has truly surrendered his life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, spiritual warfare is an everyday reality. Though it is unseen, the spirit world it is nevertheless very, very, real. Scripture makes it clear that our daily battles are primarily spiritual: “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 6:12). The only way to survive the spiritual warfare that rages around us is to allow the Holy Spirit of God to fight our battles for us. When we are filled with the Spirit, we are able to fight “spiritual hosts of wickedness” through the Holy Spirit. If we engage in spiritual battles while we are abiding “in the flesh,” we will lose every time. The Apostle John wrote these comforting words, “You are of God, little children, and have overcome them [the spirits of this world], because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world” (1 John 4:4). The key to understanding this verse is, “He who **is in** you.” To claim the name of Christ but to fail to be filled with the Spirit is like a soldier charging into battle with no ammunition. Only when we are filled with and walking in the Spirit are we able to overcome “he who is in the world.”

For Discussion: What kind of spiritual battles have you fought? Did you recognize these battles as spiritual at the time? What did you do right? What did you do wrong?

Amplification: Pastor Rogers said we need the Holy Spirit in our witness life. In this area, the Holy Spirit performs two functions. First, He empowers us to share the truths of our faith. To attempt to witness to a lost person while not filled with the Spirit is like spitting into the wind; the words just bounce right back in our faces. The old adage, “Witness in the power of the Holy Spirit, and leave the results to God,” still holds true. As Pastor Rogers said, “Anything you can talk a person into, someone else can talk him out of.” It is not persuasive words but the Holy

Spirit of God that teaches truth and brings conviction. Paul said, "... my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power" (1 Corinthians 2:4).

The second function of the Spirit as we share our faith is to serve as an internal witness to truth. "... And it is the Spirit who bears witness, because the Spirit is truth" (1 John 5:6). When we are filled with the Holy Spirit of God, we are equipped to recognize false teaching, false prophets, and false doctrine. This is not a matter of how we may **feel** about something; it is a matter of the Holy Spirit in us discerning truth, especially the truth of Scripture.

For Discussion: How would you say being filled with the Spirit has impacted your witness? Where have you benefitted from being Spirit-filled, and where have you maybe failed by witnessing in your own power, or by attempting to use persuasive words?

Amplification: The third and final reason we are to live Spirit-filled lives is because of our God-given opportunities. Without the filling of the Holy Spirit we will never know the Lord's will for our lives, or His will in any given circumstance. Our time on this Earth is short. Each life is but a vapor in the economy of God's time. James writes, "... For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away" (James 4:14). Therefore, all believers must make the most of their lives for the Kingdom of God while they are able. To miss what the Lord would have you do during your life will not take away your salvation, but it will lessen the rewards that could have been otherwise available. Remember the parable of the talents in which the Lord expects a return for what He has given to His servants. Recognizing and seizing God's opportunities for our lives only comes through a Spirit-filled life.

For Discussion: How has the Holy Spirit provided direction in your life? Have there been times when you have responded to His promptings, and what was the outcome? Have there been times when you failed to respond, and what were those outcomes?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week in your personal devotions, confess any missed opportunities you may have had to serve Him or times you failed to respond to the Holy Spirit's prompting. In faith, accept His love and forgiveness, then ask Him to help guide you in your obedience, obligations, and opportunities.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – "Lord, we will hope in You continually, and we praise You for Your righteousness. Help us to go in Your strength, speaking of Your love and salvation all the day."

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

John 15:5 "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing."

Living the Spirit-filled life means we are living a life connected to Jesus and that we are abiding in Him. As you meditate on this verse, consider what kind of fruit you are producing. Is there more you could do by more conscientiously abiding in Him?

Acts 5:32 "And we are His witnesses to these things, and so also is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him."

Sharing one's faith can be intimidating, especially if it is done out of obligation and without the filling of the Holy Spirit. Being Spirit-filled empowers us to state boldly the truths of God.

Ephesians 6:19 “...and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,”

The following verses should be committed to memory and placed deep in the heart for all who are either employed, or for those who hold responsibility over others.

Ephesians 6:5 “Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ;”

Ephesians 6:9 “And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.”

As believers, we are constantly engaged in an invisible battle against forces of evil. As you study the following verses, check to be sure you are covered in the **whole** armor of God.

Ephesians 6:10-18 “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with **truth**, having put on the breastplate of **righteousness**, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the **gospel of peace**; above all, taking the shield of **faith**, with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the **word of God**; **praying** always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.”

1 John 4:4 “You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.”

Additional Reading Resources

- Andrew Murray, “The Master’s Indwelling,” (Chicago; New York; Toronto: Fleming H. Revell, 1896)
- L.S. Chafer, “He that is Spiritual,” (Moody Press: Chicago, 1918)
- P. E. Little & J. F. Nyquist, “Know what you believe,” (Westmont, IL: IVP Books, 2009)

LESSON SEVEN: HOW TO BE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

SESSION THREE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

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ABOUT THIS SESSION

This is the third and final session dealing with the topic of living the Spirit-filled life. In the previous two sessions, Pastor Rogers explained the many **reasons** why we are to live Spirit-filled lives. In this session, he discusses the **requirements** for a Spirit-filled life, along with the **results** of a Spirit-filled life.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

Read through the **Session Guide**, and watch the video in advance of the session. Review the **Additional Scripture to Study** at the end of the **Guide**, along with the suggested **Personal Application**. Make sure you print out enough copies of the **Student Handout** which mirrors this **Leader's Guide**.

CONDUCTING THE SESSION

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LESSON SEVEN | SESSION THREE

INTRODUCTION

In the previous sessions, Pastor Rogers introduced the many reasons why we are to live Spirit-filled lives. He organized them into three categories; our obedience, our obligations, and our opportunities. In this final session, Pastor Rogers discusses the **requirements** for a Spirit-filled life, and the **results** that come from a Spirit-filled life.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

Ephesians 5:18-20 “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.”

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What does it mean for you to be filled with the Spirit – what does that look like in a practical sense?
- In your opinion, what do you believe is required of you to be filled with the Spirit?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to be Filled with the Spirit”**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

It is not your responsibility to persuade God to fill you with the Holy Spirit, but to permit Him to do so. God wants to fill you with the Spirit. He longs for you to live with power and victory. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: Many people seek out Christianity because they have an inherent desire to be good people and to associate with other good people. They attend the church that “meets their needs” in terms of music, programs, childcare, and messages that give them comfort. Amir Tsarfati, a born-again Jew, and evangelist who lives in Israel, made a harsh observation about modern-day churches in his book, “The Last Hour” (Chosen Books, 2018), when he said, “Many churches are no longer about searchers looking for Jesus; instead, they offer a comfortable, happy place to semi-believers who are looking for good people who like to do good things.” What might be the cause of this situation? Pastor Rogers emphasized the point that the first requirement for living a Spirit-filled life is a **complete commitment** to Jesus Christ. Jesus had multitudes who followed Him during His earthly ministry. They liked being fed (Matthew 14:13-22; Mark 6:30-46; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-15), they liked being healed (Matthew 8:2-4; Mark 1:40-45; Luke 5:12-16), they liked having the dead raised (Luke 7:11-17; Matthew 9:18-26; Mark 5:21-43; Luke 8:40-56; John 11:17-44), but when it came to being committed to Him and what He taught, they fell away in droves. So much so, that He even asked his own disciples once, “Do you also want to go away?” (John 6:67). Commitment is hard, it is costly, but it is the first requirement to truly know the Spirit-filled life.

For Discussion: What do you think churches, and Christianity in general, would look like if they were made up of people genuinely committed to Jesus Christ and filled with His Spirit? How would that impact church activities and programs, families, local communities, and even the world?

Amplification: Pastor Rogers shared the illustration known as, “My Heart, My Home,” which demonstrates how we tend to limit the Holy Spirit’s involvement in our lives. The point is that there are “rooms,” or areas in our lives that we want left alone and untouched by God. It could be our finances, it could be our sex lives, it could be hurts we are unwilling to forgive, or a host of other things we choose not to surrender to the Lord. These hidden things, these “secret rooms of our hearts,” that we are unwilling to allow God to enter and clean, hinder our ability to be Spirit-filled. There is a misconception evidenced by our behavior that suggests we can be partially filled with the Spirit. It manifests itself by thinking, “I have changed my attitude on certain things, or I am doing good things and participating in church, so I am living in the Spirit.” This is a false understanding of spirituality because it relies on works, not faith. It is by faith, the commitment to trust God for **all** aspects of our lives, that we can enjoy the true presence of the Holy Spirit.

For Discussion: “Secret rooms” tend to be very personal. If you feel comfortable, share with your group any victories you may have had in allowing the Holy Spirit to clean up areas of your life. If comfortable, share with your group where you may still be struggling.

Amplification: The second requirement for living the Spirit-filled life is **continual control**; meaning who, or what will you choose to have control over your life? Life is full of choices. Like forks in a road, we are faced with countless decisions to either “turn to the left,” or “turn to the right.” Satan actively tries to distract us from “the right path” by offering counterfeit enticements intended to mimic the blessings God wants us to have. In the Garden of Eden, Satan

told Adam and Eve that their “eyes will be opened, and you will be like God” (Genesis 3:5) to substitute their walking with the Lord in the Garden. Today Satan may use the influence of drugs and alcohol as an exchange for the Spirit-filled life. Satan is constantly throwing counterfeit lures in front of us to keep us from God’s blessings. We must be steadfast in our **complete commitment** to follow Christ, and we must choose to give Him **continual control** of our lives.

Further, it is imperative that we **consciously claim** the Spirit of God by faith, in the same way we consciously claimed Jesus as Savior by faith at the point of our salvation. We have the assurance of the presence of the Holy Spirit by the Lord’s own words (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7), so we need not proceed with an attitude of trying to persuade God to give us the Spirit; we simply need to appropriate what He has already made available.

For Discussion: Why do you think it is so easy for mankind to be enticed away by counterfeit spiritual experiences? Consider the history of the Israelites, cultic movements, or even some churches that emphasize unbiblical manifestations of the Spirit.

Amplification: The Spirit-filled life allows God to work through us as we engage the world around us. As Pastor Rogers pointed out, we all have three basic relationships in our lives; our relationship to God, our relationship to the circumstances around us, and the relationship we have with others. Man was made unique at creation in that he was given a spirit, which is that part of us that communes with God. Scripture tells us our spirits remain dead due to sin, but at the point of salvation when our sins are forgiven and we are redeemed, our spirits are “quickened” (made alive) by God’s Spirit (Ephesians 2:1-5). Only when God’s Spirit genuinely unites with our spirits can we truly worship and enjoy Him (John 4:23,24). That is also when we can see the world and others as God sees them. Danger comes when we focus more on our circumstances (a horizontal view), than we focus on God (a vertical view). Being Spirit-filled helps us to keep our focus vertical and to see God working, even in the most difficult of times. Closely associated with our relationship to circumstances is our relationship to others. As we walk in the Spirit, we assume the attributes of Christ and we desire to serve others as He did.

A building may have electricity circling throughout its internal wiring, but lights can only come on when someone decides to turn on the light switch. In much the same way, the Holy Spirit of God is invisible, but ever present and available to empower the lives of those who have trusted Christ: “The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you” (John 14:17). But the filling of the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, and the Spirit-filled life, are accomplished only when we yield our total beings to Him so that He might enable His power to work in and through us.

For Discussion: Why do you think it is that so many “Christians” seem to go about their lives without being filled with the Spirit? What is the cause, and how can that be corrected?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week in your personal devotions, take time in prayer to sincerely yield yourself to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Open “every room” of your heart and allow Him to enter and have preeminence over all aspects of your life.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, without You we can do nothing. As a vine attached to a branch, we need Your daily sustenance to survive and thrive in this fallen world. Fill us with Your Spirit, teach us, and lead us in the way we should go.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

John 14:17 “the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.”

Consider the depth of meaning of the promise that the Lord has sent His Holy Spirit to dwell in us. How wonderful a gift of love and personal concern that is for us!

1 Corinthians 6:19 “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?”

This above passage in 1 Corinthians is a constant reminder of how we are to keep our bodies, hearts, and souls consecrated (separated) unto the Lord. We are to be holy, as He is holy.

As you review the key passage for this series of sessions, take time to note its application to your personal life. You may want to journal your thoughts on what you may need to do to meet the requirements of this passage (complete commitment, continual control, conscious claiming), and you may want to carefully evaluate whether you are reaping the results (proper relationship with God, to circumstances, and with others).

Ephesians 5:18-20 “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another in the fear of God.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Henry Blackaby and Richard Blackaby, “Spiritual Leadership: Moving People on to God’s Agenda,” (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2001)
- J. Oswald Sanders, “Spiritual Leadership: Principles of Excellence for Every Believer,” (Chicago: Moody Press, 1967)
- St. Ignatious of Loyola, “The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola,” trans. Elder Mullan, (New York: P. J. Kenedy & Sons, 1914)

LESSON EIGHT: How to Know THE WILL OF GOD

SESSION ONE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

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ABOUT THIS SESSION

During this series of sessions, Pastor Adrian Rogers will provide biblical insight in how to know the will of God in our daily lives. Nothing can be more important to our Christian walk than to know that we remain in step with our Lord as we determine how best to serve Him. In this first session, Pastor Rogers explains the three different types of will that we see exercised by God. Our biblical understanding of how God's will functions will help us better understand how to apply His will to our daily lives.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

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CONDUCTING THE SESSION

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LESSON EIGHT | SESSION ONE

INTRODUCTION

One of the most important aspects of the Christian life is knowing and obeying the will of God. This pertains to our daily moment-by-moment decisions and to the long-term purpose of our lives. How does one discern the will of God from one's own personal will? In this first session, Pastor Rogers will explain the three different types of will that we see exercised by God. Our biblical understanding of how God's will functions will help us better understand how to apply His will to our daily lives.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

Acts 9:6 "So he, trembling and astonished, said, 'Lord, what do You want me to do?' Then the Lord said to him, 'Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.'"

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- Why is it important to discern God's will for your life? How does that impact your daily activities, your choice of career, your family, or even your church?
- How would you measure or determine whether or not you are living out God's will in your life? What would you say are the markers or indicators that serve to confirm you are on course, or not?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: "How to Discern the Will of God"**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

Your great desire ought to be to know His will. Your great delight will be to do His will. Your great danger is to refuse His will. Nothing is right for you if it is not God's will. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: We learned in this session that God does promise guidance for our lives. Jesus told His disciples, "When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come" (John 16:13). This promise, the sending forth of the Holy Spirit to guide into all truth, was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost and remains true for us today. God is never trying to hide His will from us, but He sovereignly reveals His will in three specific ways.

The first type of will we need to understand is what is called God's "sovereign will," or His "prevailing will." This refers to His overarching purpose which can never be thwarted. We may not understand how or when God's purpose will come to pass, but we can be certain it will. The rotation of the stars and planets throughout the universe is an example of God's sovereign will. So is the sovereignty and immutability of His Word. Here are some examples:

Proverbs 19:21 "There are many plans in a man's heart, nevertheless the LORD's counsel—that will stand."

Isaiah 55:11 "So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; It shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it."

Matthew 5:18 "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled."

Matthew 24:35 (cross reference Mark 13:31; Luke 21:33) "Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."

For Discussion: How does the sovereignty of God's will impact your view of world events? Does it strengthen your faith, or do you feel things are spinning out of control?

Amplification: The second type of will that we see God exercise is called His "general will," or His "permissive will." Many people question the existence or goodness of God when they ask, "Why do bad things happen to good people?" Or, "Why does God allow evil to be in the world?" God certainly does not desire for bad things to happen to good people, or for evil to run unchecked, but He has sovereignly given mankind, beginning with Adam, the ability either to follow Him in obedience or to suffer the consequences of sin and death. This permissive will is foundational to understanding how we have a free will to either choose or reject obedience. Here are some examples:

Deuteronomy 30:19 “I call heaven and earth as witnesses today against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that both you and your descendants may live;”

Joshua 24:15 “And if it seems evil to you to serve the LORD, choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve, whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the River, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land you dwell. But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

2 Peter 3:9 “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”

For Discussion: How would you handle a conversation with someone who rejects God because of “All the starving children,” or some other such evil in the world?

Amplification: The third form of will that God exercises is His personal will for every believer. He has a general will for each believer’s sanctification, to be set apart unto Him. But, there is a specific will for each of our lives. Again, we can either choose to obey Him in His plan for our lives, or we can be disobedient. Some people believe God’s plan or “calling” has to be something significant; like being a CEO of a great company, an important politician, a preacher, or a missionary. Although those are certainly possibilities, sometimes the most significant thing we can ever accomplish is just to be faithful in our day-to-day devotion and obedience to Him. We may never know the significance of the part we play in the great mosaic of God’s providence this side of Heaven, but our steadfast commitment is what He seeks.

Psalms 37:3-5 “Trust in the LORD, and do good; dwell in the land, and feed on His faithfulness. Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the LORD, trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass.”

For Discussion: Do you feel that you are fulfilling God’s plan for your life? Why, or why not?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week in your personal devotions, ask the Lord to help you know more of who He is and what He would have you do. Make that a daily prayer of your life.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Lord, we are grateful for Your providential, permissive, and personal will. Help us to be ever mindful that You do have a plan for each of our lives, and help us to obediently follow that plan.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

If you have children that you are raising, you know what it is to guide them with your eye. One look to a child who is inherently intent on pleasing a parent can correct their behavior without a word. That is how our relationship with the Lord should be. Our trust and commitment to Him should be such that He does not have to harness us with “bit and bridle.”

Psalms 32:8-10 “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye. Do not be like the horse or like the mule, which have no understanding, which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, else they will not come near you. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; but he who trusts in the LORD, mercy shall surround him.”

Proverbs 3:5-6 “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths.” Proverbs are not promises, but are principles by which we are to live. The best way to discover God’s will for your life is to fully trust and be committed to Him with all of your heart, and by so doing, not to trust in your own understanding or abilities.

Ephesians 2:10 “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

As you meditate on the depth of meaning of this verse, consider for yourself what the “good works” are that God has prepared for your life. You may want to list them in a journal and make certain determinations to actively fulfill them.

Additional Reading Resources

- Charles Caldwell Ryrie, “A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth,” (Moody Press, 1999)
- Jerry Bridges, “The Pursuit of Holiness,” (NavPress, 1996)
- Timothy Winters, “Discovering David’s Destiny; Insightful Expositions to Help Christians Discover Their Personal Destiny,” (Mount Carmel Books, 2004)

LESSON EIGHT: How to Know the Will of God

SESSION TWO

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

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ABOUT THIS SESSION

During this series of sessions, Pastor Adrian Rogers provides biblical insight in how to know the will of God in our daily lives. Nothing can be more important to one's Christian walk than to know that we remain in step with our Lord as we endeavor to serve Him. This session will expose six specific myths that often confuse our understanding of the will of God in our personal lives.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

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CONDUCTING THE SESSION

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LESSON EIGHT | SESSION TWO

INTRODUCTION

In this session, Pastor Rogers exposes six myths that serve to confuse our understanding of how to discern the will of God in our personal lives. He will also begin to explain more of the requirements associated with God's provisional will.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

Acts 9:6 "So he, trembling and astonished, said, 'Lord, what do You want me to do?' Then the Lord said to him, 'Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.'"

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What, in your understanding, are some of the ways that God reveals His will in our lives?
- Do you feel it is, or has been, difficult for you to discern God's will in your life? What do you think may have served to hinder, or helped you to discover, His will?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to Discern the Will of God”**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

If He is your Lord, there will be no rebuttal, no refusal, no rival. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: Pastor Rogers outlined six myths concerning the will of God. They were:

1. The “Map Myth” – That God will provide a road map of His will for you.
2. The “Misery Myth” – That if you do His will, it will result in pain and difficulty.
3. The “Missionary Myth” – That God’s will is only for a select group of people.
4. The “Miracle Myth” – That something dramatic must take place in your life in order to reveal God’s will.
5. The “Missed-It Myth” – That you missed God’s will, and it is too late to ever fulfill it.
6. The “Mystery Myth” – That God hides His will and challenges you to discover it.

For Discussion: In what ways may you have fallen victim to any of these myths? Is there any one particular myth that has plagued your life more than another? Explain.

Amplification: Many people struggle to know the will of God in their lives, and much of that struggle may be traced back to a lack of faith. Pastor Rogers identified the first principle in knowing God’s will is to understand that His guidance is promised. To accept God’s promise of guidance is an act of faith. “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him” (Hebrews 11:6). The Lord and His promised guidance for us is not some figment of man’s religious imagination but is what Jesus Himself promised. “When He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come,” (John 16:13). We can choose to either believe in the things of the world because we can see and touch them, or we can accept by faith His promised guidance which often flies in the face of the ways of the world.

For Discussion: How would you counsel someone who is making a radical decision for their lives that appears to be outside the norms of the world or of common-sense behavior? How would you respond to a claim that “God has told me to do this?”

Amplification: The second principle of knowing God’s will is to understand that guidance is provisional. The Lord will not reveal His will to those unwilling to receive His guidance. The Lord knows what is in a man’s heart, and therefore responds to each of us, accordingly. “But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man” (John 6:24,25). Too often we ask God to bless the plans we have made after-the-fact, instead of asking Him what He would have us do before we act. Being willing to “do it God’s way” is the first step in understanding that the Lord’s guidance is provisional.

For Discussion: Would you be willing to share with your group if there has ever been a time in your life when you might have engaged in a great plan for something, only to discover you left God out of the plan? How did that manage to take place? What did you do about it? What did you learn from the experience?

Amplification: In addition to being willing to know the will of God, we must also approach knowing His will with an attitude of meekness; meaning the desire to be submissive and teachable before the Lord. Pastor Rogers said, “If He is Lord, there will be no rebuttal, no refusal, no rival.” How many times have we desired to learn and participate in God’s will for our lives,

only to be thwarted by inner arguments, a spirit that just chooses not to obey, or by other worldly distractions?

For Discussion: How do you suppose God must feel when one of His children pleads for knowledge of God's will for his life, but harbors in his heart greater devotion to the things of the world? (Consider the story of the Rich Young Ruler in Luke 18:22, 23.)

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week in your personal devotions, take time to praise and thank the Lord for His mercy and patience. Ask Him to specifically direct your steps, but be certain there is a determined spirit of obedience when you do so.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – “Jeremiah prayed, ‘...the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps. ...Correct me, but with justice; not in Your anger, lest You bring me to nothing.’ Help us, Lord, as needy people, to know how to walk in Your steps.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

The word “meek,” or “humble,” implies submissiveness, or a teachable spirit. God will teach any person His ways if that person is truly willing to learn and obey.

Psalm 25:9 “The humble [‘meek’ - KJV] He guides in justice, and the humble He teaches His way.”

As you meditate upon this verse, is your devotion and intimacy with God such that He can guide you with His eye, or does He have to get your attention in more direct and painful ways?

Psalm 32:8 “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.”

The story of the Rich Young Ruler is preserved in all three of the Synoptic Gospels (Matthew 19:16-22; Mark 10:17; Luke 18:18) which signals its importance in the teachings of our Lord. Read one or more of these passages and determine why it was that this religious young man, desirous of following Jesus, was unable to bring himself to obedience.

Matthew 19:21, 22 “The young man said to Him, ‘All these things I have kept from my youth. What do I still lack?’ Jesus said to him, ‘If you want to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow Me.’ But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful, for he had great possessions.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Erik Raymond, “Chasing Contentment: Trusting God in a Discontented Age,” (Crossway, 2017)
- Lewis Sperry Chaffer, “He That Is Spiritual,” (Moody, 1918)
- William Law, “A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life,” (Paulist Press, 1978)

LESSON EIGHT: How to Know THE WILL OF GOD

SESSION THREE

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

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ABOUT THIS SESSION

During this session, Pastor Adrian Rogers continues to provide biblical insight toward knowing and applying the will of God in our daily lives. Staying within the will of God as we endeavor to serve Him is the only way to know fulfillment and to experience a maturing spiritual walk. This segment will continue to expound upon God's provisional will in our personal lives and will introduce practical ways in which we can know God's will.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

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LESSON EIGHT | SESSION THREE

INTRODUCTION

In the previous session, Pastor Rogers introduced six myths that serve to confuse our understanding of the will of God. He also explained the need to be willing to know the will of God for your life, and the need to be meek (humble, teachable, compliant) in receiving the will of God. In this session, Pastor Rogers continues to develop God's provisional will and the actions required of us if we are to stay in step with His will for our lives. He will also begin to introduce practical ways in which we can know God's will.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

Acts 9:6 "So he, trembling and astonished, said, 'Lord, what do You want me to do?' Then the Lord said to him, 'Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.'"

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- In what specific ways do you think God might reveal His will in your life?

- How can one discern the difference between what might be a personal will, desire, or ambition, and the actual will of God?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to Discern the Will of God”

AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION

God will speak, but you must hear His voice. **Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: An aspect to experiencing the provisional will of God in our lives is openness. Openness implies a willingness to do whatever, or to go wherever, God may direct. It means that we do not put restrictions on God; “Lord, I will do this or go there **if** you do this, or **if** You do not allow this to happen.” If we are truly open to God’s leading in our lives, we will place no limitations on Him for our obedience. Pastor Rogers also emphasized the need for us to be listening for God’s still, small, quiet voice during our daily quiet times.

For Discussion: How can we be expected to know God’s will for our lives if we are not devoting adequate time to hearing His voice?

Amplification: It is not enough to know the will of God, and it is not enough to hear the will of God, one must be willing to yield to (meaning to actually **do**) the will of God. The true level of our faith is manifested by our obedience, that is, the work we do as we yield to the will of God in our lives. We must be careful not to confuse our personal will, or our desire to do good things in the name Jesus or for the cause of religion, with the actual will of God for our lives. Too many people go to the mission field, stand in pulpits, or serve in different capacities in the church because of personal ambition rather than God’s direction. Others have run from the will of God because of fear; fear of the responsibilities God is asking them to assume, or fear of the difficulties they may face. Consider Moses who asked God to send someone else to speak to Pharaoh and deliver His people. Also consider how Moses ultimately yielded to God’s will and accepted the challenge.

For Discussion: What are some of the different fears one may experience in yielding to the will of God? How does one overcome those fears?

Amplification: As Pastor Rogers has stated, is knowing the will of God is promised (in Scripture), provisional (dependent upon our willingness, openness, and yieldedness), and practical. There are several practical ways in which God may reveal, or confirm, His will. He may choose to use one or a combination of these to make clear the path He wants us to follow. Understanding these principles and applying them correctly can help us avoid much pain and frustration in trying to discern God’s specific will for our lives. The first practical way God may reveal His will is through miracles. Miracles are rare and unique manifestations of God’s supernatural intervention and should not necessarily be expected or anticipated. However, God is certainly not limited in His ability to reveal His will through dreams, signs, or wonders. The second practical method God uses to reveal His will is through His Word. The Word of God is the surest test or confirmation of God’s will. The Bible will not necessarily tell you precisely what to do, but it certainly will tell you what not to do. As Pastor Rogers stated, “Never seek the will of God concerning something that God has commanded or something that He has clearly forbidden. ... If God has said it in His Word, that is His will for you!” That is not a license to take the Word of God out of context, and then by using a weak or false interpretation to arrive at a false or inappropriate application (just because the Bible speaks of shaving the head when making a vow does not mean you must shave your head). But the Bible remains the bedrock of our faith and is “living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart,” (Hebrews 4:11).

For Discussion: How would you counsel someone who claims it is God's will for them to do something or to participate in a behavior that is clearly prohibited by Scripture?

Amplification: Another practical way that we can know the will of God is from other godly people. The Bible says in Psalm 1:1, "Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly..." The word "ungodly" literally means those "without God." The Scriptures warn us that to take counsel or advice from those who do not have God in their lives will cause us to miss His blessings. Conversely, to receive counsel and advice from godly people will cause us to reap blessings as we take advantage of their spiritual wisdom and maturity.

For Discussion: How would you recognize and identify godly people in your circle of relationships? What would be their identifying marks or traits, and would you feel comfortable approaching them for counsel or advice? Why, or why not?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week during your quiet time with the Lord, ask Him to reveal to you if you have in any way missed the mark with respect to His requirements of being willing, open, and yielded to His will. Confess any failure, receive His love and forgiveness, then commit to surrendering to His will.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – "Lord, help us this week to know your perfect will, and to remain obedient to your 'still, small,' quiet voice."

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

Read Exodus chapters 3 and 4. As you do so, place yourself in Moses' shoes as he struggles with yielding in obedience to God's awesome task of freeing His people from Egypt. Note Moses' inner fears of inability and unworthiness, yet how he bowed in obedience to the Lord. Examine your own heart with respect to how you might respond if God were to call you to a seemingly impossible task.

Read Psalm 1. As you meditate upon this verse, evaluate those in your circle of relationships who are ungodly (have no relationship with God), are sinners (willfully disobey the commands of God), or who are scornful (ignore the instructions of God), and determine to:

1. Refuse to follow their counsel - Action
2. Limit your involvement - Association
3. Reject their thinking - Attitude

Be careful not to judge others, but place your delight in the law (the Word) of God so that you might know His blessings.

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Andrew Murray, "Absolute Surrender," (Fleming, 1897)
- Brother Lawrence, "The Practice of the Presence of God," (H.R. Allenson, 1906)
- Dwight L. Moody, "Secret Power, or the Secret Success in Christian Life and Work," (Fleming, 1881)

LESSON EIGHT: How to Know THE WILL OF GOD

SESSION FOUR

TO THE LEADER/FACILITATOR

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ABOUT THIS SESSION

This session concludes Pastor Adrian Rogers' biblical study of how to know and apply the will of God in our daily lives. This segment will continue to expound upon the practical ways in which we can know God's will, and thereby live fulfilled lives.

PREPARING TO LEAD/FACILITATE THIS SESSION

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LESSON EIGHT | SESSION FOUR

INTRODUCTION

In the last session, Pastor Rogers began to discuss practical ways that we can discern the will of God. He shared that we could know God's will through miracles, His Word, and through the counsel of godly people. In this session, Pastor Rogers introduces three additional practical ways that God uses to communicate His will to believers.

OUR KEY PASSAGE

Acts 9:6 "So he, trembling and astonished, said, 'Lord, what do You want me to do?' Then the Lord said to him, 'Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.'"

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- How can a Christian discern the difference between the persuasion of the Holy Spirit and one's own personal will, or even demonic influence?
- In what ways does God express His wisdom to us, and how do you think we can come to know it?

PRESENTATION OF VIDEO CLIP OF: “How to Discern the Will of God”**AMPLIFICATION AND DISCUSSION**

The Holy Spirit never shoves; He guides and leads. If you find a hand between your shoulders blades just shoving you, that’s not the Holy Spirit. —**Adrian Rogers**

Amplification: A forth practical way to know the will of God is through the influence of the Holy Spirit. But we need to remember that the Holy Spirit persuades gently, He never forces. We always have the ability to disregard or disobey His gentle influence which will tend to lead to the unfortunate circumstance of missing the Lord’s blessings (see Psalm 1). When discussing spiritual truths, all human analogies tend to fall short, but one possible way to understand the work of the Holy Spirit is to consider the needle of a compass. We cannot see, touch, or even feel the effect of magnetism on the compass, yet the needle spins around to give direction in the way one should go. An experienced woodsman or soldier knows how to navigate using a compass, but he must **trust** and **obey** the compass needle. There are times when, deep in unfamiliar woods or jungle, surrounded by darkness, the strong human instinct is to turn to the left, but the compass indicates the way to go is to the right. Despite what he may **feel** is right, the woodsman or soldier must choose to trust and obey the direction given by the compass in order to safely reach his destination.

For Discussion: Have there been any times in your life when you experienced an inner struggle where you “felt” something was the thing to do, but the Holy Spirit seemed to be leading you in another direction. If you are willing, share the experience with your group and what you learned from it.

Amplification: The fifth practical way we can know the will of God for our lives is through His wisdom. A true born-again believer has access to the wisdom of God through the renewing of the mind. We are told in Romans 12:1,2: “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”

Also in Ephesians 5:15-17, we read: “See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”

So, the question then becomes, “How can we know this wisdom?” One obvious way to receive God’s wisdom is to be a student of God’s Word. The Bible says in 2 Timothy 2:15, “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” A very practical way to become filled with godly wisdom is to make a habit of reading a chapter from the book of Proverbs every day. A simple way to do this is to read the chapter corresponding to the day of the month. By the end of the month, you will have read through the entire book of Proverbs. Repeating the practice month after month will begin to cement godly wisdom into your daily thought processes.

Another obvious way to know God’s wisdom is to simply ask Him for it. James 1:5 tells us, “If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.” However, in asking, we must approach God with a willingness to hear, and to obey. James warns us in the next three verses to ask in faith, and to not be “double-minded” (literally two-souled), wavering and unstable.

For Discussion: How important do you feel it is to know, and practice, godly wisdom? Is biblical wisdom still applicable today; how so, or why not?

Amplification: The sixth practical way to know the will of God is through God's providence. This is sometimes difficult to grasp because it requires an absolute surrender to, and acceptance of, God's will. The age-old question of "Why do bad things happen to good people?" is only correctly understood in the light of God's providence. God does not wish anyone harm, nor is He the cause of bad things (meaning all the evil that is in the world). He is deeply grieved over every wickedness that has befallen mankind since Adam, and that is why Jesus came into the world. Though we live in a fallen world and all must deal with the effects of sin, God providentially allows us to choose to look to Him for salvation (deliverance), and to trust in His providential care. That does not mean we can live our lives without problems, frustrations, illness, or even physical death, but it does mean that we can trust Him because, "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28). We tend to see life and our world like the backside of a tapestry with all of its knots and myriad of colored threads that appear as a tangled, meaningless, mess. Yet, on the opposite side of the tapestry is an intricately woven design that reveals a magnificent landscape or tells a wonderful story. We may not understand or like what may befall us, but we can trust Him to make it into something good.

For Discussion: Has there been a time in your life when you questioned what God was doing? How did you approach the situation at the time, and what did you learn from the experience?

PERSONAL APPLICATION

This week during your quiet time with the Lord, review any notes you have taken during these sessions and focus your attention on any areas that you might want to develop further to better understand God's will for your life.

GROUP PRAYER REQUESTS

Suggested group prayer – "Lord, we are grateful for Your love, and for how You desire for us to know and respond to Your will. As we conclude this study, help us to live for You so that You may be glorified through our lives."

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES TO STUDY

Read I Kings 19:11-18. As you do so, place yourself in Elijah's shoes as he struggles to understand God's will for his life. Meditate on how the Lord was not in the dramatic manifestations of fire, wind, and earthquake, but that He spoke to Elijah in a "still small voice." Consider also how the Lord directed Elijah to return to the city of Damascus where Ahab and Jezebel were waiting to kill him, and how Elijah despaired at the thought of being all alone, yet the Lord had preserved seven thousand who had not bowed to Baal.

Readings from Proverbs

The subject of wisdom is found addressed in the book of Proverbs more than 50 times, and usually in the context of understanding or discerning God's will. Consider the verses and determine to make it a priority to seek and apply the wisdom of God in your personal life.

Proverbs 3:13-18 "Happy is the man who finds wisdom, And the man who gains understanding; for her proceeds are better than the profits of silver, and her gain than fine gold. She is more precious than rubies, and all the things you may desire cannot compare with her. Length of days is in her right hand, in her left hand riches and honor. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, and happy are all who retain her."

Proverbs 4:5-7 "Get wisdom! Get understanding! Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth. Do not forsake her, and she will preserve you; love her, and she will

keep you. Wisdom is the principal thing; therefore get wisdom. And in all your getting, get understanding.”

Proverbs 9:10–11 “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For by me your days will be multiplied, and years of life will be added to you.”

ADDITIONAL READING RESOURCES

- Carolyn Nystrom, “Listening to God,” (IVP Connect, 2015)
- C. I. Scofield, “The New Life in Christ Jesus,” (The Bible Institute Colportage Association, 1915)
- Matthew Henry, “Secret of Communion with God,” (Solid Ground, 2005)