

## WEEK NINE

### Week Nine, Day One

#### What the Bible Says About...

Let's move past the actions and attitudes of a Christian and discuss some basic Bible doctrine, or "teachings" that every follower of Christ needs to know and understand. Don't let the word "doctrine" scare you. Understanding what the Bible says about a certain subject will help you know more about it and know how to talk about it to other people when they ask questions.

#### God

There is only one God, but that God exists in three distinct persons. We call that three-in-one Godhead the "Trinity" (a word not found in scripture, but useful in describing this difficult idea of three in one). The "Trinity" is made up of God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Though all three persons of the Trinity have the same power and character, we understand each uniquely. It is not that God the Father created Jesus and then Jesus created the Holy Spirit; God has always been three and He has always been one. Jesus is not God Jr. and the Holy Spirit is not God the Third. (Does your head hurt yet? It will). When discussed as a whole, we refer to the Trinity simply as God, using the pronouns He, Him, and His. The Holy Spirit is not "it" while Jesus and God are "He." In fact, the Holy Spirit is sometimes referred to as the Spirit of God and sometimes as the Spirit of Jesus or sometimes another name (like the Counselor or Spirit of truth).

**Keeping what you've just learned in mind, study John 16:5-15.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- **Praise God for being too amazing for you to fully comprehend and so completely worthy of your worship.**
- **Ask God to give you insight into His truth and an understanding of scripture that makes you want more.**

*FOR FURTHER STUDY: Keeping in mind what you've learned today, study I John 1:1-7, 2:23.*

### Week Nine, Day Two

#### More about God

As human beings, we are limited in our knowledge and understanding of an infinite God, but the Bible gives us some insight into His character and nature. We will never know everything about God, but we can know some things about God from the Bible.

We know that God has existed from the beginning and that nothing existed before Him.

**Study Genesis 1:1.**

When you see creation, you know there must be a creator. Everything that exists must have a cause. God is the creator of everything we see, smell, understand and touch. Everything. Not even time or space existed before God created it. The hard part to understand is that God was not created, he has always existed. God is not a created being, he is the creator.

**Study Romans 1:18-20.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- **Thank God for His creation and for creating you.**
- **Tell God why He deserves to sit on His throne and you don't.**

*FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study Acts 17:24-30.*

## Week Nine, Day Three

### The Nature of God, not God is nature

*“When things went bad, I used to think that I had done something wrong, that God was punishing me. I’ve learned that is not always true. It’s just that He has so richly blessed me that I’ve become spoiled and expect every day to be hassle free and happy. Every believer should expect trials and hard times...that’s just part of living here on this earth full of sinful people....But, because I know my gracious and merciful Heavenly Father and know how much He loves me, I can live a life of joy in the good times and the bad. Now I can appreciate a normal day for the blessing that it really is.”*

*April, Sunday school teacher*

Here are some more truths that you need to know about God, and this is just the tip of the iceberg!

God is everywhere.

**Study Psalm 139:7-12.**

God is sovereign. That means that He decides what happens.

**Study Ephesians 1:3-5.**

God is unchanging.

**Study James 1:17.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- **Tell God that you trust Him with your life.**
- **Thank Him for being steadfast and unchanging in a very uncertain world and for being with you wherever you go.**

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** *Study Romans 11:33-36.*

## Week Nine, Day Four

### The Nature of God

God is truth. Remember as you read the following verses that all parts of the Trinity share the same character and power.

**Study John 14:6.**

God is just, or “fair.”

**Study Acts 17:31.**

God is holy, or “righteous, perfect.”

**Study 1 John 1:5.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- **Thank God for being the truth upon which all believers can agree and be unified.**
- **Ask God to make you holy as He is holy (1 Peter 1:16).**

**FOR FURTHER STUDY:** *Study Psalm 139:11-12.*

## Week Nine, Day Five

### What is God like?

God is full of mercy and grace. In other words, He is compassionate and forgiving.

**Study Ephesians 2:4-5.**

God is love.

**Study 1 John 4:16.**

God is our Provider.

**Study 1 Timothy 6:17.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- **Thank God for His grace and mercy. Praise Him for His love.**
- **Praise God for His provision for you. List to Him the things that He has provided.**

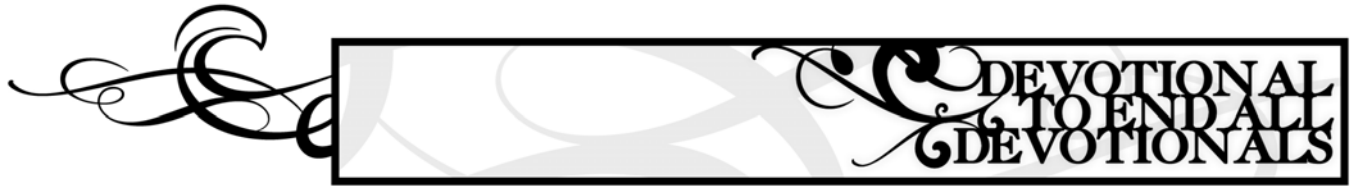
***FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study Psalm 57:1-3.***

## The Weekend

**Suggested Reading: Genesis 22:1-18.**

This is the story of Abraham and his son Isaac. As you study this passage, consider what you learned yesterday about God's mercy, grace, love, and provision. You'll find that this story isn't so much about Abraham and Isaac as it is about God. What encouragement do you find in this story?

**Make sure that you have a firm hold on Psalm 119:11 and Proverbs 4:23-27. We will learn a new verse this week!**



## WEEK TEN

### Week Ten, Day One

#### God the Father of Jesus

God is the Father of Jesus. But, Father and Son does not mean that God has a wife and Jesus is His child. Jesus has always existed, just like God the Father has always existed. Jesus did not come after God the Father. Prepare to have everything explained and then still be confused.

**Study Colossians 1:16-20.**

Because He loves us, God himself came to earth to rescue us. Jesus showed us God's love, power, mercy and so much more.

**Study John 3:16.**

Because of that gift, we can be forgiven of our sin and become children of God ourselves.

**Study John 1:12-14.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- Thank God for loving you enough to send Jesus to pay for your sin.
- Thank God for His forgiveness and the chance to be His child.

*FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study 1 John 1:7.*

### Week Ten, Day Two

#### God our Father

God is not just a good father. He is THE Father, perfect in the way He interacts with us.

**Study Matthew 7:9-11 and Hebrews 12:7-11.**

**\*CHALLENGE\***

It's time to memorize more truth. Let's add 1 John 1:9, a very reassuring verse for those of us who make mistakes (that's all of us) and a fantastic verse for sharing hope with those who feel hopeless. What a promise! Read it, write it, and post it.

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- Thank God for the good gifts that He has given you.
- Thank God for loving you enough to discipline you and commit to take that discipline with the right attitude.

*FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study 1 John 5:3-5.*

## Week Ten, Day Three

### Jesus Christ

In the Bible, Jesus is sometimes referred to as “the Word” because He is the embodiment of God’s truth, the Bible. Jesus’ life and words are God’s truth communicated through visible actions and audible words. All events in the Bible lead up to, stem from, and hinge on the existence of Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection, and the redemption (rescuing) of man made possible by Him. So, in essence, He is the Word in living form.

Jesus is God’s Son and was with Him in the beginning. Though He is a part of the Trinity and fully God, He became a man while on this earth, experiencing the same trials and temptations that we do. Only He lived life on earth without ever committing one sin.

**Study Philippians 2:5-8 and Hebrews 4:14-16.**

Because Jesus was without sin, He was the only perfect sacrifice for the sin of all men. His death and resurrection made it possible for us to be forgiven and to become children of God.

**Study 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Romans 5:8.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- Praise Jesus for being a Savior who truly understands what you are going through.
- Tell Jesus how His sacrifice has changed your life.

*FOR FURTHER STUDY: Keeping in mind what you’ve learned today, study Mark 14:32-36. How does it make you feel to know that Jesus faced His death with all of the same emotions that you would have experienced in the same situation and still went through with it?*

## Week Ten, Day Four

*“Without Jesus, I would be a wrecked and miserable person.”  
Melinda*

### The Purposes of Jesus Christ

Jesus came not only to provide the sacrifice for our sin, but also to show us what God is like.  
**Study John 14:8-11.**

Jesus came to be an example of how we should live.  
**Study 1 Peter 2:21-25.**

Jesus came to destroy the devil’s work.  
**Study 1 John 3:7-8.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- Think of all that Jesus gave up in Heaven to spend a difficult time here on earth just for you. Thank Him for His sacrifice.
- Praise Jesus for being a living example for you to follow, and ask Him for the courage to stand up to the devil when he messes in your life.

*FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study Colossians 1:10, 13.*

## Week Ten, Day Five

### **Jesus is with us and He is returning...**

It may sound strange to say that Jesus is already with us and that he is returning, but it is true. When Jesus forgives your sin, the Bible is clear that His Holy Spirit takes up residence in your life. But, the Bible is also clear that there will be a day when Jesus will return for all Christians and time on earth will come to an end. People have waited for Jesus' return for 2,000 years, but we can be certain that He is coming back just like we are certain that He came 2,000 years ago.

#### **Study 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- **Acknowledge that Jesus is coming back and that things will not always be like they are now. Think about how you should live since you know that one day Jesus will return for you.**
- **Thank God for the promise of eternal life with Him in Heaven.**

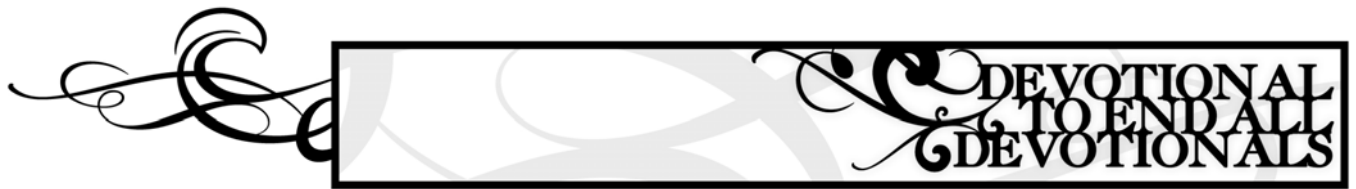
*FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study 2 Peter 3:3-13.*

## The Weekend

**Suggested Reading: Matthew 25:1-30.**

This passage contains two "parables" that Jesus used to describe His future return. Parables are teaching stories that use metaphors to explain or illustrate a point. As you study this passage, see if you can figure out where you fit into each story. What is God trying to tell you through Jesus' stories?

**Remember to practice your new memory verse!**



## WEEK ELEVEN

### Week Eleven, Day One **The Holy Spirit**

It is a difficult thing to understand that when you accept Christ into your life, the Holy Spirit moves within you and takes permanent residence in your life; marking you forever as a child of God and anointing (equipping) you for Christian service. The Holy Spirit is an equal person of the Trinity of God. The Holy Spirit is not “it” or less than God or even the “latest form of God.” God has always been one and has always been three; Father, Son, Spirit.

**Study 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 or Ephesians 1:13-14.**

Once the Holy Spirit comes to indwell (live in) your heart, He never leaves. His presence brings change and new life.

**Study 1 Corinthians 6:19 and 2 Corinthians 5:17.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- **Thank God for the gift of the Holy Spirit and for making His presence in your life a permanent thing.**
- **Ask God to help you understand what it means that His Holy Spirit lives inside of you.**

**FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study Titus 3:5-6.**

### Week Eleven, Day Two **The Indwelling vs. the Filling of the Holy Spirit**

The “indwelling” (coming to live within) of the Holy Spirit happens only once in a person’s life, at the moment you accept Christ. He stays with you through your good decisions and the bad. However, the Holy Spirit’s presence in your heart does not prevent you from sinning. Though the Holy Spirit will guide, teach, and warn you against sin, you still have the ability to sin after you accept Christ. When you make poor choices, it grieves the Holy Spirit within you, interrupts your communication with God and distracts you from following God.

**Study John 14:15-17 and Ephesians 4:29-32.**

God commands all believers to be filled with (controlled by) the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit never leaves you, but you can make decisions to ignore God, not have prayer time with him, not study His word or do something that you know is wrong. When you choose to not walk God’s way or not take in His word, you are choosing not to be directed by God. If you had a drinking glass full of stones, you could fill the glass with water; but you really do not have a full glass of water, most of the glass is full of rocks. If you took the rocks out of the glass you would see that there is much more room for water. That is a simple picture of being filled with the Spirit. Asking God to help you remove anything in your life that distracts you from Him and then filling your life with His power, love, wisdom and presence.

Because being filled with the Spirit is a direct result of your choice whether or not to submit to God’s will for you as a believer, that “filling” can come and go. In the book of Acts, we read about the disciples being filled with (or controlled by) the Holy Spirit long after they initially received the permanent gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:31). You must continually dedicate your life to following God if you want to stay filled with (controlled by) the Holy Spirit and experience God’s power in your life.

**Study Ephesians 5:18 and Galatians 5:25.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- **Ask God for the desire to please Him in your thoughts, actions, and attitudes.**
- **Commit to be filled with the Spirit so that you can experience life in Christ the way that God intended for you to experience it.**

**FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study Romans 12:1-2.**

## Week Eleven, Day Three

### The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

One way that the Holy Spirit enables a believer for service is by giving that believer one or more spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts are not places of service or titles (like a Sunday school teacher, preacher, missionary), but are God-given abilities that are given to each follower of Jesus to help the church function best. God gives the people of each local church a mixture of gifts so that the ministry can be done as the people of the church serve together.

#### Study 1 Peter 4:10-11.

Let's look at some of the spiritual gifts listed in scripture.

#### Study Ephesians 4:11-12.

Note that spiritual gifts are given for the purpose of spiritual service, not for the glory of the one possessing the gift. Though they are given at salvation, spiritual gifts should be developed in order to be used more effectively.

#### Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- **Thank God for your spiritual gifts. If you don't know what they are, ask Him to reveal them to you through your service to the church.**
- **Commit to use your spiritual gifts for God's glory and not your own.**

*FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study 1 Corinthians 12:4-11.*

## Week Eleven, Day Four

*"The Holy Spirit is the framework within which the church exists and moves.... Whatever we seek to accomplish within God's will for the church happens, or should happen, through the power of the Holy Spirit. If we step outside of the Spirit's influence, we then are acting outside of what God has intended and created the church to be."*

*Todd, Youth Pastor*

### The Ministry of the Holy Spirit

Study the following passages of scripture and see if you can determine what some of the other ministries of the Holy Spirit are.

#### Study John 16:12-15, Romans 8:13-16 and Romans 8:26-27.

#### Include the following in your personal prayer time:

- **Thank God for the chance to experience God through the Holy Spirit living inside of you.**
- **Commit to lean on the Holy Spirit for guidance.**

*FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study John 7:37-39.*

## Week Eleven, Day Five

### Angels

Angels are powerful spirit beings created by God for God before the creation of the world. They are not reincarnated human beings. Though it may be comforting to think that loved ones who have passed on may continue to guide and protect us as angels, it simply is not true. We do not become angels when we die; people and angels are distinctly different creations of God.

#### **Study Hebrews 1:1-14.**

Throughout scripture, we see angels doing God's bidding, making announcements, and standing by to be summoned by God. Study the following passages and see if you can determine the value of angels in a believer's life.

#### **Study Acts 27:21-24 and Luke 16:19-22.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- **Thank God for creating you the way that He did, with the ability to become His child, an opportunity that the angels, though powerful, do not have. 1 Peter 1:10-12**
- **Thank God for the ministry of angels in your life.**

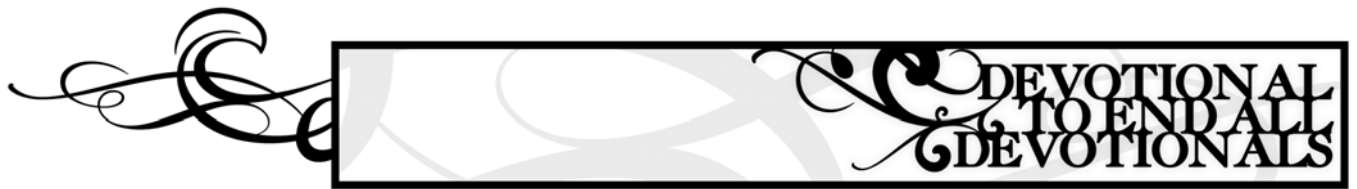
***FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study Luke 2:4-15.***

## The Weekend

#### **Suggested Reading: Judges 13:1-25, 16:1-20.**

This is the story of Samson, a judge of the Old Testament. As you study, think about what you have learned about the Holy Spirit's power in the life of a follower of God. What role does the Holy Spirit play in Samson's life? What happens when a follower of God chooses friendship with the world over his/her relationship with God?

**Remember to work on your scripture memory!**



## WEEK TWELVE

Week Twelve, Day One

### **Why Bother?**

We've talked about the fact that God is the Creator. He created absolutely everything that exists (seen and unseen). Have you ever wondered why? Why would a perfect God, who knows everything before it happens and doesn't need anything from anyone, create the world knowing that mankind would abuse the freedom He gave them to make their own choices to turn away from God? Why would He create the world knowing that a battle between good and evil would be waged within it? The simple answer is, we don't know. Maybe someday God will reveal all of that to us. As it is, our limited understanding draws us closer to a very mysterious God.

Here's what we do know...Creation exists to bring glory to God and God alone. In other words, creation puts the spotlight directly on God. Creation proves that a Creator exists and it is a visible illustration of God's power, majesty, and wisdom.

**Review Romans 1:18-20 and study Psalm 8.**

God alone sustains His creation. If He were to let go for even a second, all would be destroyed. But He doesn't let go. God remains intimately involved with every aspect of His creation, demonstrating His love, His mercy, and His grace so that no one has any excuse to reject Him or His gift of eternal life.

**Study Acts 17:24-28.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- **Take time to thank God for specific things that He created, telling Him what each teaches you about Him.**
- **Ask God to make you sensitive to His presence and what He wants to teach you through His creation.**

**FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study Job 38-39.**

## Week Twelve, Day Two

### Taking Care of God's Creation

God created man and woman (In this study, we may use the term "man" to describe both at the same time.) in His own image. We did not evolve from some lower form of life. Each and every one of us is unique, which shows us that God is smart and creative. He doesn't make clones, but designed us to be genetically diverse as we continue to reproduce the way that He always intended.

As beings created in God's image, all men and women have been given the awesome responsibility of ruling over and taking care of God's Creation. It is our privilege to care for what belongs to God. Adam was assigned this task before sin ever entered the world.

#### **Study Genesis 1:26-2:25.**

Although God allows us to care for and rule over His Creation, we must remember that it doesn't belong to us. We don't get to make the rules. Instead, it is our job to submit to God's authority and carry out our responsibility according to the rules laid out for us in His Word, guiding others to do the same, even if some of God's rules seem inconvenient or unpopular at times. For instance, if God says that it is wrong to take human life (and He does!), then we should care for human life. God is the creator of life and we are the caretakers of life.

#### **Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- **Thank God for the privilege of caring for His Creation and commit to take your responsibility seriously.**
- **Ask God to give you both boldness and sensitivity as you guide others to uphold His law and follow rules they may not fully appreciate yet.**

#### **FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study Psalm 139:1-18 and Psalm 104.**

## Week Twelve, Day Three

### Satan

We know why and when some things were created, but some parts of creation are a mystery to us. For instance, there are many things about the spiritual world that we do not understand. The presence of evil, Satan and demons is a great mystery for certain. From the first moments in the Garden of Eden, we see the temptation of evil (Genesis 3:1). God has the power to crush evil, but He chooses not to destroy all evil yet; though the Bible is clear that there will be a day when all evil will end (Revelation 20:7-10).

The origin of Satan is unclear. We know he was created by God, but we do not know why. We are taught in scripture not to fear Satan, but we should respect his power and understand that we cannot stand up to him without God's authority. Satan is more powerful than any person, but he is not more powerful than God. Satan is the one who accuses us, tempts us and works to destroy us. In his hatred toward God, Satan seeks to destroy all that God loves, especially God's children.

#### **Study Jude 8-10 and 1 John 4:1-4.**

#### **Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- **Praise God as the one true God, the only one worthy of your worship.**
- **Ask God to take away any pride or arrogance in your own heart as you deal with temptation.**

#### **FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study 1 John 3:7-10.**

## Week Twelve, Day Four

### Satan's Limited Power

*"When the devil tries to mess me up, I just think about how he can't take my Jesus from me."  
Hope, second grader*

The Bible tells us that Satan has emotion, will and intelligence. In scripture, he is referred to as; Satan, Devil, Lucifer, Beelzebub, Belial, Evil one, Tempter, Prince of this world, God of this age, Prince of the power of the air, and the Accuser of the Brethren. He appears as the Serpent, the Dragon, and an Angel of Light. Satan is powerful and effective in his attacks. He is also a liar and a deceiver.

However, as a created being, his power is limited. For instance, he does not know everything as God does, nor can he be everywhere at once. God has put limitations on him and he can be resisted by Christians.

**Study James 4:7 and 1 Peter 5:6-11.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- **Acknowledge God as being more powerful than Satan in your life.**
- **Commit to lean completely on God and to resist Satan's attacks.**

**FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study 1 Corinthians 10:12-13.**

## Week Twelve, Day Five

### The Work of Satan

Satan was an active enemy of Christ while He lived on this earth, tempting Jesus and using people like Judas Iscariot to try and keep Jesus from carrying out His mission. The Devil is still at work, trying to distract people from God and God's mission. But, you can stand against the temptations. You do not have to give in. Your faith and consistent walk with God are a constant defense.

**Study Ephesians 6:11-18 and 2 Corinthians 4:4.**

**Include the following in your personal prayer time:**

- **Pray for those who are lost, that they would come to know Christ and be freed from Satan's control over them.**
- **Thank God for rescuing you from the influence of Satan.**

**FOR FURTHER STUDY: Study 1 Thessalonians 2:17-3:5.**

## The Weekend

**Suggested Reading: 1 Kings 18.**

This is the story of Elijah vs. the prophets of Baal. It is a great story about God's power over the enemy. As you study, be encouraged by Elijah's boldness and confidence in God's power. What can you learn from his example?

**When you work on your scripture memory, be sure to review the verses that you have already learned so that you don't lose them!**