

## Section II

## Chapter 1

# ***A Study On Faith***

There are many different religions in the world, and all but one teach that you get to Heaven by some sort of physical **works** that you must do. They just disagree on what **type** of works are necessary. Christianity, being the one that stands alone and different from the others, depends entirely on faith. ***“Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe: ...”*** (Rom. 3:22) Having the faith to believe is enough! (Eph. 2:8 and Titus 3:5)

Therefore, any religion or denomination that teaches you must do anything physically to be saved in today’s times, is not a true Christian group. The apostle Paul deals with those who would pervert the Gospel of Christ in Galatians 1:6-9. Check it out! ***“But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. [9] As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed.”*** (Galatians 1:8-9)

So aside from the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, faith is the mainstay of Christianity. As you will soon learn from this chapter, faith touches many areas of the Christian life that you never realized before. Now, we know the best way to learn about any subject in the Bible is to compare Scripture with Scripture, and check out the verses on that subject. So, to begin the study of faith, let’s start by asking some logical questions about faith, and let the Bible give us the answers:

### **WHAT IS FAITH?**

***“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”*** (Heb. 11:1) There it is !! Faith is believing in something you hope for, and have evidence of, but cannot see! That is what is meant by the term “blind faith.” When you trust Jesus as your Lord and Saviour you are trusting One that you believe in, but have not seen, although you have evidence of His existence from history, and the eyewitnesses that were there and did see Him. Jesus told Thomas; ***“...because thou hast seen me , thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.”*** (John 20:29)

Faith is something you need to be saved. **Have you believed on Jesus without seeing?** If so, He said you are blessed for that faith in “Him whom you have never seen.” Jesus understands that it’s not easy to trust the eternal destiny of your soul on the work of One you have never seen face to face. Nevertheless, He wants you to believe, and accept by faith, that His payment for your sin-debt is all you need to get to Heaven. Nothing more can be done to pay for sin! He said, **“It is finished.”** (John 19:30) Now if God says “It is finished,” my friend, then it is finished! AMEN? What more could you possibly do in addition to what He has done to pay for sin??? Join the church maybe? Get baptized in water? Go to church on a certain day of the week? Do sacraments maybe? Forget it! We’ve already learned those who add something to the simple Gospel are under a curse! It’s what He **did**, not what you **do** that counts. It’s **His** righteousness, not **yours**, that God gives to you at salvation. You will never make it on your own, so trust Him!!

One of the many verses in the New Testament that support salvation by faith is Romans 10:9-10; **“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”** Faith alone!

#### **HOW DO I GET FAITH ?**

**“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”** (Rom. 10:17) You get your faith from hearing the Word of God! Maybe that's why there seems to be such a lack of faith these days. People are not reading and hearing the Word enough. Would you like more faith? Try this. **Spend more time in your Bible** and fellowship with the Saviour through His Word. It is a known fact that the more you expose yourself to the Word of God, the more you will believe what it says and the more God will reveal Himself to you.

**Hear the Word More.** Expose yourself to more Bible believing preaching, and teaching of the Word. Saturating yourself with the Word and being surrounded by others who love, believe, and teach the Word will strengthen your own faith.

**Commune with God more.** You need to spend a great deal of time in prayer and communication with God. However, it’s more than just planned regimented prayer. If you love someone, you fellowship and communicate with them. Do you love Jesus Christ? He desires your love and wants to commune with you. Take

Him with you throughout your day and include Him in all parts of your life! Try that and watch your faith and spiritual life advance in a hurry!

**Witness and teach others.** A great faith builder is witnessing to other people, and teaching the Bible. The more you do that, the more real it is and the more confident you become in your Christian life. Remember, “..the word of God is quick and powerful...” (Heb. 4:12)

**Abide in Christ.** All Christians have the Spirit of Christ, but not all are abiding in Christ and walking in the light of His Spirit. The closer your daily walk with the Lord, the more He reveals Himself to you by working and interacting in your life, thereby greatly increasing your faith in Him. It’s that simple!! The more you trust and believe in Him, the more He manifests himself to you. Remember the song, “I Surrender All?” Try it!! You will be surprised how much better He runs the show than you do!

### THE NECESSITY OF FAITH

**FOR SALVATION:** Faith is absolutely necessary. You cannot be saved without faith. *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”* (Eph. 2:8-9)

The Apostle Paul again says it well in Philippians 3:8-9; *“...that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:”* Like we said earlier, you will never make it by your own righteousness! Faith is connected with the elements of salvation: **Justification** comes from faith; *“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ...”* (Gal. 2:16) Notice it all comes from His faith!

**Righteousness** belongs to Christ and is imputed to us at the time of salvation. *“But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”* (Rom. 4:5)

**FOR PROTECTION:** In Ephesians Chapter 6 the Christian is instructed to put on the “armor of God” for protection against the devil. We are told how to protect various parts of the body such as the loins, head, breast, feet, and then in verse 16 we are told that our faith is a shield against the devil. *“Above all, taking the shield*

*of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”* It is very important that a Christian understand he is no match for the devil. If you were, you would not have been given so much armour. We do however, have a Saviour who can handle the devil, and therefore our faith and trust in Him is our greatest shield. Be sure you depend on Him, and not the energy of your own flesh. We are not dealing with something we can fight with fists, guns, knives, or other earthly weapons. We are dealing with *“spiritual wickedness in high places,”* therefore the war must be fought on spiritual ground and not in the physical realm.

**FOR POWER:** *“And Stephen, full of faith and power, did great wonders and miracles among the people.”* (Acts 6: 8) Stephen’s power came from his great faith. Likewise, if we are to have the power of the Holy Spirit, we must be strong in faith. Jesus rebuked His disciples for their unbelief and told them *“... If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.”* (Mat. 17:20) This statement right from the Master’s mouth is very clear concerning the power of faith.

**FOR YOUR DAILY WALK:** It is necessary to have faith in order to avoid sin. *“....for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”* (Rom. 14:23) *“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.”* (Gal. 3:11) Paul’s instructions to the Galatians were clear on living by faith. *“For we walk by faith, not by sight:”* (II Cor. 5:7)

It’s the unseen power of a Holy and Righteous God that keeps us, and not the things and powers of this world that we can see. Therefore, Christians should walk by faith alone. The greatest Christian that ever lived, the Apostle Paul said: *“I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:”* (II Tim 4:7)

We too, should strive to keep the faith necessary to maintain a strong Christian life and fight the good fight for our Saviour and please Him. *“But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”* (Heb. 11:6) Your faith is necessary to please God, so work on it!

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## IN CONCLUSION

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BEWARE of where you place your faith! The Bible says; *“That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”* (I Cor. 2:5) The Scripture is quick to warn you about trusting man’s wisdom. This of course, includes times when man’s version of salvation is contrary to God’s.

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There are many who will try to convince you that faith is not enough to get you to heaven, and that you need to add something else, or do something in addition to that faith. Be careful of men, and the ways of men! *“There is a way that seemeth right unto man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.”* (Prov. 14:12) A repentant heart and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross is all you need!!

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Look unto Him for your salvation! *“Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; .....”* (Heb. 12:2) Remember how we get our faith from the Bible? Well, Jesus is the Author of that wonderful Book! He is the Author and Finisher, **the beginning and the end of our faith!!** Trust Him!!

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We have studied what faith is, where we get it, how to increase it, the necessity for faith in our Christian life, and the things to beware of. Although this has been a short chapter, hopefully you have learned something and now have a better understanding of the subject. We recommend that you take a concordance and look up all the verses in the Bible on faith that we did not cover, and study them in addition to what we have given you.

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In conclusion, we would like to say again that faith is necessary for salvation. Do you remember a time in the past when you received Christ by faith? If not, won’t you make that commitment now?

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# Notes

# Bread of Life Quiz

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Devotional Series

## FAITH

## Lesson 1

*This is a true or false quiz, in the space provided place T for True or F for False.*

1. Christianity is the only religion on earth that depends on faith alone for salvation. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Any church that teaches you must do something (works) to be saved, is teaching false doctrine. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Heb. 11:1 tells you what faith is. \_\_\_\_\_
4. If you obey the Ten Commandments, you will be saved. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Some churches think the Blood of Jesus isn't good enough to save them, they must be baptized  
In water to be saved. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Romans 10:9-10 tells you that believing and confessing Jesus will save you. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Rom. 10:17 says you can have faith by hearing the Word of God. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Some people are so good and righteous they don't need Jesus to save them. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Eph. 2:8-9 explains how to be saved by doing good works. \_\_\_\_\_
10. In Heb. 12:2 we learn that Jesus is the Author of our faith. \_\_\_\_\_
11. You will want to fellowship with your Savior and get to know Him better if you truly love Him. \_\_\_\_\_
12. In Eph. 6:16 we learn that once we are saved, the devil leaves us alone. \_\_\_\_\_
13. Your relationship with God is your business and you need to keep it to yourself. \_\_\_\_\_
14. When you are saved, you receive the righteousness of Christ. \_\_\_\_\_
15. Christians will have more faith if we fellowship with other Believers, study our Bibles and pray. \_\_\_\_\_
16. When you accept Jesus as your Savior, you are stronger than Satan. \_\_\_\_\_
17. Christians need to witness and teach others about Jesus. \_\_\_\_\_
18. Faith is necessary for salvation. \_\_\_\_\_
19. Acts 16:31 tells us what to do to be saved. \_\_\_\_\_
20. Phil. 3:8-9 explains how to be saved by your own righteousness. \_\_\_\_\_

## Section II

## Chapter 2

# ***Understanding Prayer***

Someone said God's telephone number is Jeremiah 33:3: ***“Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and shew thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not.”***

Sad to say, few of God's people call on Him as often as they should, and not many have a prayer life that is pleasing to our Lord. Likely, this is because most don't understand the **need for**, or the **power**, and **reward** associated with a good prayer life. God is anxious to hear from you! Have you called on Him lately? The Bible says: ***“I will therefore that men pray every where.”*** (I Tim. 2:8)

Hopefully you have. However, many Christians today use prayer for a “spare tire.” They seldom pray unless they want something or need God in times of trouble. It is amazing that folks expect God to give what they ask for under these conditions. It's also sad that these type of Christians spend their whole life and never experience the awesome power of prayer. Neither do they experience the nearness to God it brings. If you are saved and your prayer life needs improvement, this chapter is for you. Hopefully, it will help you better understand the various aspects of prayer and what God expects of you. If unsaved, read on to find out how you can be.

### **What is Prayer?**

Prayer is the medium through which we express our feelings, needs, desires and thanks to our God as well as the way He has provided for us to make intercessions for others. Prayer and the Word of God, are without question, the two most powerful things in the universe. James 5:16 says; ***“...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”*** So, obviously there is much power available to a Christian through prayer. However, we must understand that there is much more to it than simply asking for something we want. How we pray is important to our Lord, and the Child of God should be anxious to learn what God expects and then strive to please Him.



## Importance Of Prayer

Prayer is important for several reasons. First of all it is God's will that we Spiritually come into His presence and communicate with Him! ***"I will therefore that men pray every where."*** (I Tim. 2:8) ***"Pray without ceasing."*** (I The. 5:17) ***".....Men ought always to pray and not faint."*** (Luke 18:1) These verses make it plain that God desires, and expects us to pray on a regular basis.

The Bible says David was a man after God's own heart! Would you like God to say that about you? Well, one of the reasons that David found favor in the eyes of the Lord was because of his prayer life. Read through the Psalms David wrote to get an idea how he communicated with the Lord. David thought prayer was important and prayed at least three times a day: ***"Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice."*** (Ps. 55:17)

## The Way To Pray

One of the disciples asked Jesus: ***"Lord, teach us to pray...."*** (Luke 11:1). That is how you too should begin. Ask for His help! Here are some things that can serve as a guide, however, the **Lord is the real teacher.**

**1) CONFESSION:** Christians sin, and that sin separates you from fellowship with God! ***"If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."*** (I John 1:10) It is absolutely necessary that you repent and confess any sins of word, thought or deed that you have committed. **If you are saved, you belong to Him. Then, when you sin you lose fellowship (not salvation) with the Father, so sincere repentance and confession is necessary to restore that fellowship.**

The first chapter of I John is about fellowship with God. It says in verse 7: ***"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."*** Walking in the light means not sinning! But if we do sin, He gives us a promise of forgiveness in V 9 if we confess that sin: ***"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*** Notice that He said **ALL** unrighteousness.

**2) THANKFULNESS:** ***"In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in***

*Christ Jesus concerning you.*” (I The. 5:18) We should give thanks to God for the many blessings of this life. A few of those blessings that we often take for granted are our health, our family, our job, our success in life, our homes and our possessions which God has so generously provided. And don’t forget the most important blessing of all, our salvation and our Saviour the Lord Jesus Christ. Notice the word **“everything”** in the verse. That word covers all the good and all the bad. Give thanks for the bad as the verse says, and even take it a step farther and praise Him for it. Sound strange? This is discussed more in the next section.

**3) PRAISE:** Always, always, remember to praise God. He loves to be worshipped and praised for what He is, and what He has done for us! David says in Psalms 34:1 **“I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth.”** Praise Him not only for all the good things in your life and for our Saviour, but praise Him for the hard times, troubles and setbacks in life! Yes. That’s right!

These are building blocks. Know that nothing happens in a Christian’s life that God doesn’t orchestrate Himself or at least allow it to happen for a reason. Although praising Him in these cases may be hard to do, it lets God know that you are in submission to Him and His will in your life. In so doing you have opened the door for spiritual growth, and to be molded and shaped by God for His purpose and use. Remember, there is always a reason why Christians suffer (see lesson 5). So praise Him for the bad and the good, knowing that your Lord is trying to prepare you for something He has in store for you in the future.

**4) SUPPLICATION:** **“....but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God.”** (Phil. 4:6) This is the “request part” of your prayer. It should include your **wants, needs,** and the **desires** of your heart. Ask for what you want, but don’t ask for something you know is wrong or that you know may be bad for you in the long run. Simply express your feelings (He knows them anyway) and leave it up to the Lord’s will. It’s also important you remember to put others on the top of your prayer list. In other words, don’t just always be praying for yourself! Rather, be generous in your prayer for others. **We are to be intercessors for those in need, asking God to intervene and help them.** You should even pray for those who have done you wrong, and be **quick to forgive** them. The Bible says: **“And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any...”** (Mk. 11:25)

Although it may be hard, you need also to **pray for your enemies**. “.....*Bless them that curse you...*” (Mat. 5:44) Also, we must **pray in faith**, believing God will deliver. “*But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive anything of the Lord.*” (Ja. 1:6-7) See also Hebrews 11:6: “*...for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*”

Next, your requests should always be concluded with the request that **God’s will** and not yours be done in the matters you petitioned for. Jesus prayed, “*Not my will, but thine be done.*” If you need more grace to handle “no” for an answer, then ask for it. In addition, **pray out loud**. Not for others to hear, but a quiet communication between you and God. Remember, Jesus created the earth and universe with the spoken Word. So, obviously, there is great power in the spoken word!

Finally, your prayers should always be **in the Spirit** (Eph. 6:18) **directed to the Father** (Acts 12: 5) **in the name of Jesus Christ**. (John 14:13)

**5) LISTEN TO GOD:** When you are praying you are speaking to God. Be aware that He may be speaking back to you, so listen with your heart as He impresses on you His desires. It is important at these times to be sure you are hearing the Holy Spirit and not an unclean counterfeit spirit. Be aware that Satan will try to interfere with your prayer life because he doesn’t want you praying and receiving it’s benefits. So, “*..try the spirits whether they be of God*” (I John 4:1) Remember, the Holy Ghost will never contradict the Word of God. Therefore, anything contrary to the Word is the wrong spirit.

Secondly, prayer is **the way to unleash the power** we have in Christ through the Holy Ghost. Our God is a God of miracles, and is eager to release that power within His will. However, be careful what you ask for. God may give it to you just about the time you realize that your request was the last thing in this world you really needed!!

### **Why Prayers Are Not Answered**

Actually, prayers are always answered, it’s just that many times the answer is NO! We tend to think that if we don’t get an affirmative answer, then we didn’t get one

at all. This of course is not the case. Here are some reasons we don't have our prayers answered our way.

**DISOBEDIENCE:** *"The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry."* (I Pet. 3:12) If you do not obey God and try to live a life that is pleasing to Him, how can you expect Him to give you what you want? If you have children of your own do you give them everything they want? Of course not! And when they are disobedient you are not likely to give them much of anything! Amen? Why should God treat you any differently? The Bible says: *"And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight."* (I John 3:22)

Are you keeping His commandments? Here is another one. *"But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."* (Isaiah 59:2) If you have any unconfessed sin forget it! Don't waste your breath. That is, until you get rid of the sin! How do you get rid of the sin? The entire chapter of 1 John 1 is on fellowship with God. If you have unconfessed sin of word, thought, or deed, then repent, confess, ask for His forgiveness to get it under the Blood! Read "# 1) about Confession" again.

**WRONG REASONS:** Do not expect God to honor your request if you are asking for self-serving reasons. Most of your prayers should be for others anyway. Some people seem to think that God is some great big "Santa Claus" just waiting to give you wealth and all the rich blessings of this life. The "name it and claim it" garbage being taught today by some people is unscriptural. In fact, it is totally opposite of what the Word of God teaches. Jesus said not to lay up treasures on earth but rather in Heaven. (Mat. 6:19-20) Sure, God promised He would answer your prayers, but you need to read the rest of the Bible to understand the conditions for having those prayers answered the way you requested. For example: *"...Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."* (James 4:3)

**DON'T ASK:** The other side of asking amiss is not asking at all! People don't ask because they simply don't have the faith that God will grant the request. This is just as dumb as asking for something amiss. It is important to note that often God will not move until He receives a request from us! *"..ye have not because ye ask not.."* (James 4:2) And, remember the verse *"Ask, and it shall be given you;*

*seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:...*” (Mat. 7:7)  
So ask!

Just examine your motive before you ask! Wouldn't it be sad if you got to heaven and found out you could have had something if you had only asked? So ask!! But as indicated above, the key is to ask in God's will and for unselfish reasons.

**TO IMPRESS OTHERS:** We have all seen those who when engaged in group prayer, always try to pray louder and longer than everyone else. They usually do this to appear more spiritual than those around them while in reality they are less spiritual. *“Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven.”* (Mat. 6:1)

When praying in group or public prayer you should **concentrate on being in God's presence and speaking to Him**. Forget what others think. They should be praying instead of listening to you anyway. So be alone with Him if you want the prayer answered.

**DOUBLE-MINDED:** The Lord wants you to be consistent. He cannot stand a “wishy washy” Christian, who is back and forth, on and off, “hot” and “cold” in their relationship to Him. *“A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways.”* (James 1:8) Are you with Him, or against Him? Hot or cold? Make up your mind!

**HIS WILL NOT YOURS:** Your prayers should be a humble and unselfish petition to God. It is imperative that we trust Him and His judgment for what is best in our lives. If the Lord gave us everything we asked for it would be a disaster for us. There are so many things that we cannot see or understand with these “eyes of flesh,” while the Lord in His wisdom and foresight is looking at the complete picture. He knows what is in the future for you. He's a giving God, but He gives what is best, and what pleases Him, not us.

For example: If the Lord refused your prayer to go on a certain trip, you may be disappointed for sure. However, after you learned the plane had crashed and all aboard were killed, your disappointment would turn to joy and praise for Him. Truth is, you should praise Him even if the plane did not crash, because God's will is always perfect. He doesn't make mistakes. You do. Even Jesus Himself prayed:



# Notes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Bread of Life Quiz

## Devotional Series

## UNDERSTANDING PRAYER

## Lesson 2

*This is a true or false quiz, in the space provided place T for True or F for False.*

1. Many people don't understand they need, power, and rewards that prayer can give them. \_\_\_\_\_
2. You only really need to pray if you need God to do something for you. \_\_\_\_\_
3. A saved person needs to confess their sins to God and repent or they can lose fellowship with God. \_\_\_\_\_
4. According to 1 John 1:9, God doesn't have to forgive us when we sin. \_\_\_\_\_
5. The Lord doesn't teach us to pray. \_\_\_\_\_
6. God always answers prayer, but sometimes the answer is no! \_\_\_\_\_
7. We should thank God and praise Him for everything that happens in our lives. \_\_\_\_\_
8. We can talk to God but we can't listen to Him in our heart. \_\_\_\_\_
9. When we pray we must always want God's will to be done. \_\_\_\_\_
10. We are only human, so God doesn't expect us to love our enemies. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Isaiah 59:2 says that our sin can separate us from God and he will not hear our prayers. \_\_\_\_\_
12. If we pray for money, fame, and other worldly things we only want to satisfy our lust, our prayers are not pleasing to God. \_\_\_\_\_
13. We need to be in a very close relationship with God and keep his Commandments, as it says in 1 John 3:22. \_\_\_\_\_
14. Your prayers should be directed to the Holy Spirit, in the name of the Father, through the power of Jesus Christ. \_\_\_\_\_
15. God doesn't have to hear lost people's prayers because they don't belong to Him, but he will always hear a repentant sinners prayer to be saved. \_\_\_\_\_
16. God knows our past, present, and future. \_\_\_\_\_
17. God knows what is best for us, and wants us to pray for what pleases Him, not us. \_\_\_\_\_
18. The Lord wants our constant fellowship. \_\_\_\_\_
19. Jesus never had to submit to God the Father . \_\_\_\_\_
20. God wants to hear from our hearts more than loud, long, and impersonal formal prayers. \_\_\_\_\_



## **Forgiveness**

One of the greatest attributes a Christian can have is a forgiving heart. To forgive is simply to pardon, or to overlook an offense by another and **treat** the offender as **not guilty**. God was the first to forgive and set the example for us.

### **God Forgiving Man**

The first act of forgiveness was when God forgave Adam and Eve for their disobedience and provided a way for them to regain their salvation. From then forward, through 4,000 years of Old Testament times, God was consistent in forgiving those sinners who repented and were obedient. From the Jews as a nation in and out of apostasy, to individuals such as Moses, David, Jonah, Samson, and Abraham, who together were guilty of murder, disobedience, adultery, fornication and lying.

Fortunately, His longsuffering has continued through the Church Age for almost 2,000 more years as God still provides a way for the lost, as well as the saved who have strayed, to be reconciled back to Himself through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. *“My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our’s only, but also for the sins of the whole world.”* (I Jn. 2:1-2)

Thank God He is still forgiving today!! Thank God the Lord Jesus Christ loved us enough to suffer, and bleed and die for us, that we through Him, may find forgiveness for our sins. Even after all the pain and suffering Jesus went through, His prayer from the cross in behalf of those who crucified Him was for forgiveness! *“...Father forgive them; for they know not what they do....”* (Luke 23:34)

And today He is still forgiving!! *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* (I Jn. 1:9) Notice the word **all**. Isn't it great to know that when God forgives a repentant heart, that every last one of those sins are covered, not just a few of them? God

takes it a step further when He promises that forgiveness is eternal and we can **know** that we have eternal life. Do you know for sure you are saved ?

***“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”*** (1 Jn. 5:12-13) So, God’s people can take great comfort in knowing that His forgiveness, through Christ, is complete (Col 2:10) and that they have an eternal home in heaven.

### **Man Forgiving Man**

When it comes to man forgiving man, we find that for the most part, man is far from being as forgiving as God. However, when God gave instructions on prayer He said: ***“.....And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.....”*** (Mat 6:12) If God forgives us **AS** we forgive our debtors, then we are going to receive the same medicine we dish out to others when it comes to forgiveness!! That’s certainly an encouragement to be a little more longsuffering with others, isn’t it?? This verse does not apply to present day salvation, but there is a point here.

And just in case you missed the point, Jesus made it plain to those he told: ***“For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”*** (Mat 6:14) and, ***“For he shall have judgment without mercy, that hath shewed no mercy; and mercy rejoiceth against judgment.”*** (Ja 2:13) There’s another case you better be glad your are a New Testament Saint!

Now it’s hard to be any more plain than that and we used those verses to show you how serious God was about us forgiving others! Of course, the "forgive to be forgiven" aspect here is doctrinally under the Old Testament covenant, and not a requirement for Church Age salvation where you are saved by faith, but it still has spiritual application in the Church Age. Your unforgiving heart can affect your fellowship with God. The point is, God obviously wants us to be forgiving and show mercy to our fellow man. ***“..Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”*** (Ja 2:8)

Not only does our Lord want us to be quick to forgive others, but He wants to do it over and over if necessary as evidenced by His reply to Peter. ***“Then came Peter***

*to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.”* (Mat. 18:21-22) Another scripture on forgiving men: *“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.”* (Eph. 4:31-32) So be careful how you judge others and be quick to forgive as you would have people forgive you.

### **Forgiving Yourself**

The part of forgiveness that many have a considerable problem with is forgiving Themselves. Many times in life we do something that we know is terribly wrong and although one may go to God and ask for forgiveness, it’s almost like we feel that we do not deserve to be forgiven. Have you been there and felt that way? Most have at one time or another. Problem is, this is a direct contradiction, not only of Scripture, but of God’s very nature. God said if we would confess a thing as sin, that He would forgive us!! *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousnes.”* (1 Jhn. 1:9)

So, for us to assume that a particular sin of ours is too evil even for God to forgive is the same as calling God a liar! If our Lord is willing to forgive even the most terrible sin imaginable, then we must learn to put that sin behind us and move on in our Christian life. No one who is moping around feeling guilty for sin already confessed is of any use to the cause of Christ! So put it behind you and move forward as a soldier of Christ.

David set a good example for us in this respect in II Samuel 12:21-23 concerning the death of his child, which was a result of his own sin. *“Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live? But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again?.....”*

David felt guilty because the child’s death was caused by his own sin (read chapter 12 and also Psalms 51). However, he repented of that sin and fervently asked for forgiveness, vowing to proclaim the Lord’s righteousness. In other

words, David knew it was over and done with, and after asking God's forgiveness he forgave himself. He then promised to serve God. ***"Then I will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, o God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise."*** (Ps. 51:13-15)

With that David wisely put it all behind him and God blessed him with another child, Solomon, ***"and the Lord loved him."*** So remember, if you are saved, forgive yourself after confessing your sin! It has already been paid for on the cross!!

### **Man Forgiving God**

It may sound crazy and disrespectful to some for a person to be mad at God or to hold a grudge against Him. However, there are those who blame God for some past misfortune or tragedy in their life. In fact, many people get a little mad at God every now and then, even knowing that God is always right, and always knows best.

It's easy to blame God for our troubles when, in reality, we bring most of our problems on ourselves. If a person is saved, that person is the blood-bought child of God and every thing that happens in that persons' life is either directed by God or He simply allows it to happen. He may allow it to happen based on the rule of ***"reaping and sowing"*** as chastisement for sin, or He may allow problems, or even tragedy, to enter our lives so that we may learn and grow to be better Christians.

**Much of this life is a training ground to help Christians grow in grace and develop spiritually , that with that experience we may help others while Christ gets the glory.** So it is foolish for us to be mad at God for something in our life that we think is unfair or undeserving. God may simply be preparing us for something special in the future that we could not accomplish without having gone through some rough times first. Place your trust in Him and be confident that nothing will happen that He does not allow.

The greatest Christian that ever lived, the Apostle Paul, was given a thorn in the flesh that God would not remove but left there for a reason. ***"...there was given to***

*me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.” (II Cor 12:7-10)*

The difference in Paul and many people, is that he did not hold a grudge against God because of his problem. He forgave God, realizing it was in his best interest, and continued on with the course set before him.

Thank God he did, because Paul was the apostle God chose to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. Because of his faithfulness in the face of that and many other trials, tribulations, and hardships, millions have received Jesus Christ as Saviour, and were born again as a result. He was “stoned” by unbelievers, thrown in jail when innocent, shipwrecked and more, yet he forgave God and submitted to His will on every occasion, eventually giving his life for his Lord. What a tremendous example he set for you and I to live by!

# Notes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Bread of Life Quiz

## Devotional Series

## FORGIVENESS

## Lesson 3

*This is a true or false quiz, in the space provided place T for True or F for False.*

1. The Bible teaches we should forgive other people if expect God to forgive us. \_\_\_\_\_
2. If we forgive someone we need to feel in our heart that they are not guilty. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Adam was the first example of forgiveness when he forgave Eve. \_\_\_\_\_
4. In 1 John 5:12-13 God shows us His forgiveness is eternal. \_\_\_\_\_
5. There are some people who are so awful to us that God doesn't expect us to forgive them. \_\_\_\_\_
6. A person needs to tell you they are sorry before you should forgive them. \_\_\_\_\_
7. If we sin once, and ask God to forgive us, then, we do the same sin again, he will forgive us again. \_\_\_\_\_
8. After God cleanses us, we still need to show how sorry we are by moping around, being sad, and dwelling on our past. \_\_\_\_\_
9. If we forgive others, God will also forgive us even though we do not repent. \_\_\_\_\_
10. If God is faithful to forgive us as He promised, we should be able to forgive ourselves. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Sometimes we have tragedy in our lives so we can learn and grow in the Lord. \_\_\_\_\_
12. When we do wrong to another person we are also doing wrong to God! \_\_\_\_\_
13. When we do something that hurts someone we need to tell them we're sorry, and ask them to forgive us. \_\_\_\_\_
14. All of our sins are paid for through the blood of Jesus Christ. \_\_\_\_\_
15. Old Testament individuals such as Moses, Abraham, and David never sinned. \_\_\_\_\_
16. On the cross, Jesus said "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." \_\_\_\_\_
17. When we are saved we can know for sure we are going to Heaven. \_\_\_\_\_
18. If we sin after we are saved, we will go to hell. \_\_\_\_\_
19. If we sin and think it is too evil for God to forgive, then we are calling God a liar. \_\_\_\_\_
20. The only sin that God won't forgive is murder. \_\_\_\_\_

## Section II

## Chapter 4

# ***Armor Of God***

One of the first things a new Christian should do is learn about the Armor of God and how to use it. There will be spiritual warfare with the world, the flesh and the Devil in the Christian's life, and how we respond to those battles will determine our own Spiritual condition, as well as our service to the Lord. The Devil is determined to mess up your Christian life through Spiritual warfare. You must prepare yourself for these attacks.

It would be extremely foolhardy for a soldier to go into battle without any armor and the proper training. From the beginning of organized armies, soldiers have undergone some form of training to prepare them to do battle. First, one must go to "boot camp" to get properly conditioned (physically, mentally, and emotionally) to fight, and to learn the fundamentals of discipline, and teamwork. Next, is the more advanced training in the armor, different weapons, and tactics for the type war for which you are training. Eventually, one is assigned to a special group or unit that matches his own talents and training. Now, the soldier is ready for battle.

The Christian soldier engaging in Spiritual warfare will have much the same experience as that of the regular soldier engaged in physical combat. God has a special place and will for your life. If you are properly trained, you will win battles and do well, but if you just jump into the fight with no experience or training, you will fail and likely drag others with you. The Lord has given instructions and lessons all through the Bible on "**fighting the good fight.**" However, the Bible gives us specific instruction concerning the armor we are to use for the Spiritual battles that are sure to come in our Christian life. These instructions are found in Ephesians 6:10-18.

### **The Warrior's Power**

V10. "***Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.***" We must rely on the Spirit of the Lord and His power and not on the energy of our flesh to do battle with the "**powers of darkness.**" It will take the proper use of the armor God has furnished for us to overcome the Devil's attempt to destroy our Christian life.



## The Armor Of God

The warrior's armor: [11] *"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."* The armor described in the coming verses is the armor such as the Roman soldier used for battle in Christ's day. They were trained for battle and then put on the necessary armor to insure success. The child of God today is no different. He must be trained in the way of a Christian soldier and put on the armor correctly if he expects success in his Christian walk and service to the Lord.

## The Warrior's Foes

[12] *"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places [13] Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."* The enemy here is not your normal enemy! He is not a flesh and blood adversary. This is the "roaring lion," the devil himself and his demonic partners of deception! You are no match for the devil and without the whole armor of God your Christian life will be fruitless and of no use as a vessel to be used by God.

Note that you were instructed to stand! That is, don't back up, don't slow down, and don't stop! The armor gives you both offensive and defensive weapons with which to fight. It will enable you through the power of the Spirit to continue forward and to be winning the battle until the Lord calls you home!

## Truth And Righteousness

[14] *"Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;"* A man's strength is in his loins and you are told to girt them about with truth. A **truthful man** is a man of integrity. He is honest, dependable, upright, and respectable. He is a strong man!

The breastplate protects the heart, lungs and vitals in the warriors' upper body as a Christians' **righteousness** protects him from the world, flesh, and traps set by the devil. The characteristics of a righteousness man are one who is good, virtuous, just, pure, and moral. If you are saved you are already declared righteous by God (doctrinally), but you need to live it in the flesh (put it on) to do battle. Although none of us are perfect, we must be faithful enough to try! *"Sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy: for I am the Lord your God."* (Lev. 20:7)

## Preparation Of The Gospel

[15] *“And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;”* The foot soldier moves around a lot over some rough territory and absolutely must be shod with a good pair of boots. The implication here for the Christian is obviously to be well prepared to spread the Gospel wherever his feet take him! As the soldier must go to boot camp to prepare physically, mentally, and learn discipline and how to use his weapons. The Christian must also prepare Spiritually in much the same way. Trying to bring the Gospel to the lost sinner can result in disaster if you are not properly prepared, trained, and led by the Holy Ghost.

As the lord of the house said in Luke 14:23 *“...Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.”* The Christian soldier is to move against the enemy and spread the Gospel to the uttermost part of the earth that our Lord’s house may be filled. (Acts 1:8)

Once a person is saved, they are reconciled back to God by Jesus Christ and given the ministry of reconciliation. As new ambassadors of Christ they now have an obligation to witness to others so they too may be saved. (II Cor. 5:17-20)

## Shield Of Faith

[16] *“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.”* No sensible Roman soldier would ever go into battle without a shield! The shield, properly used, would deflect the flaming arrows and spears of the enemy. The Christian, without faith in his Savior is without any shield to deflect (quench) the fiery darts of the devil.

These fiery darts come in many forms. It may be sickness, suffering, loss, controversy, disloyalty of others, false doctrine, etc. The devil will use anything to destroy your Christian life, make you lose your testimony, and discourage you to keep you from serving God. It makes no difference what form the “fiery darts” come in, or what trick the Devil uses, you have already lost without faith. Faith is absolutely essential! Without faith it is impossible to be saved (Rom. 3:22), and impossible to please God. (Heb. 11:6) So obviously you can’t deal with the Devil without faith! (See chapter on Faith)

## Helmet Of Salvation

**[17] “And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:”** No one would last long in combat without a helmet. You can survive a lot of damage or even loss of human body parts, but injuries to the head can kill quickly. Without the helmet of salvation (not saved) there is no chance to defeat Satan. You will burn with him in hell!

The Roman soldier sharpened his sword on both sides to a “razor edge.” It was a formidable weapon in that day and was the ultimate weapon in close combat. The Christian’s sword is even sharper. In fact, it is infallible! **“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”** (Hebrews 4:12)

This is the Christian’s main weapon! That old “66 caliber Book” that has won more victories than any weapon on the face of the earth. Without it you have nothing to fight with. Along with the power of prayer you have the two most powerful weapons the world has ever known! This “sword” is your “smart missile,” your “laser gun,” your “nuclear bomb” all wrapped up in one weapon!

**It absolutely must be your final authority** in all matters of faith and practice! Not to have it and use it is to be weak, ignorant, and defeated as a Christian before you even get started! Therefore, a Christian soldier’s strength and success in the fight is directly related to his knowledge and use of this indispensable weapon, **the “Living Word of the Living God!”**

## Praying in the Spirit

The warrior’s resource: **[18] “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all**

**saints;”** This is the other half of your arsenal of weapons. David (in the Old Testament) was a great warrior and he prayed three (3) times a day. **“Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice. [18] He hath delivered my soul in peace from the battle that was against me: ...”** (Psalm 55:17-18)

**The Christian’s greatest weapons are his King James Bible and his fervent prayer!!**

Prayer is the medium by which we unleash the power we have in Christ through the Holy Ghost. **If you do not pray regularly, fervently, and in the Spirit**, you are not using the full power God has placed at your disposal through Christ. (See Lesson on Prayer)

A nuclear missile is harmless if it has no delivery system to propel it to the enemy. Consider the Word of God as your training and tactical manual. It is a powerful weapon without an equal. However, what you have learned about Christian combat from the Book must be put to use. It is like your nuclear missile but you must have a way to propel it to the enemy. Prayer is your delivery system. It puts in motion God's will and activates all weapon systems found in the Word.

If you want to win the Christian battle God has set before you as an individual, you will walk in the Spirit, fellowship with Him, study the Bible faithfully, and pray fervently, putting on the whole armor of God. Many, many people are saved and never enter the fight because they simply don't realize that once saved they are engaged in Spiritual warfare whether they like it or not. If there was no war, there would be no need for the training, the weapons, or the armor God has supplied us. Will you fight for Him?

Probably the best way to end this lesson is to ask yourself this question. "Am I in the fight, and if so do I have on my armor?" If not you should get on your knees and seek the Lord's face, and prepare for battle! This has been a lesson for Christians. If you are not saved, you are not in the Family Of God, and are not part of His Army. Yet, you also are being attacked, and probably don't know it. The Devil is working constantly to blind you to the truth. The Bible explains it. ***"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: [4] In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."*** (2 Cor. 4:3-4)

You have been deceived! The Devil is the god of this world and he wants you in hell with him. Is that what you want? It is not necessary, because God provided a way for you to get rid of your sins. You just have to trust Him and do it His way. ***"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. [10] For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth***

*confession is made unto salvation.*” (Romans 10:9-10)

If you believe Jesus died for your sins, and that **His shed blood alone** is enough to save you, pray and ask Him for the free gift of salvation in your own words. Something like this: **“Lord I confess that I am a sinner and that Jesus paid for my sin on the cross. I now repent of those sins and receive Jesus Christ as my personal Savior.” Amen**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Bread of Life Quiz

## Devotional Series

## ARMOR OF GOD

## Lesson 4

*This is a true or false quiz, in the space provided place T for True or F for False.*

1. It is not necessary for a new Christian to worry about being trained as a soldier for Christ. \_\_\_\_\_
2. The warrior gets his power from his education. \_\_\_\_\_
3. We need most of the armor of God to stand against the wiles of the devil. \_\_\_\_\_
4. You don't need the armor if you really know the Bible well and have been to Bible School. \_\_\_\_\_
5. The Christian must prepare himself for physical warfare. \_\_\_\_\_
6. If you are saved you have authority over the devil but the armor helps against the world. \_\_\_\_\_
7. A man's strength is in his arms and legs. \_\_\_\_\_
8. God expects us to be holy as He is holy. \_\_\_\_\_
9. You need to be properly trained and prepared to be successful at winning souls. \_\_\_\_\_
10. You fight the fiery darts of the devil with the gospel of peace. \_\_\_\_\_
11. A Christian's final authority in matters of faith and practice is his Christian training. \_\_\_\_\_
12. The shield of faith is the Word of God. \_\_\_\_\_
13. A Christian has no obligation to tell lost people about Jesus and His saving grace. \_\_\_\_\_
14. Witnessing to others is good but not a commandment of God for Christians. \_\_\_\_\_
15. The Sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. \_\_\_\_\_
16. David prayed morning, noon and night. \_\_\_\_\_
17. If you don't pray regularly, and fervently, you are not using the full power of God.. \_\_\_\_\_
18. Many saved people never realize they are in a spiritual battle and never get in the fight for the Lord. \_\_\_\_\_
19. The warrior's foe is not flesh and blood. \_\_\_\_\_
20. A righteous man is a man of integrity, and he is honest, dependable, upright, and respectable. \_\_\_\_\_

## Section II

## Chapter 5

# ***Why do Christians Suffer?***

One of the most frequent questions asked by saved people is: **“why does God allow some Christian people to suffer so much?”** This is a good question and a great deal can be learned from how God deals with His children through their suffering. Most people have never thought of it this way, but nothing happens to a saved child of God that the Lord does not either direct Himself, or at least allow it to happen! The question we will deal with in this lesson is “why”?

Some have falsely taught for years that when a Christian is sick or suffers in some way that it is always God punishing that person for some sin. This is not true, as many of the most Godly and clean living saints that ever lived seemed to have suffered the most. ***“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.”*** (Heb. 12:6)

He said every son! So if you are saved, you are going to be chastised sooner or later. Although, sin naturally brings suffering in some form, there are several other reasons in our Bible that indicate why God allows the righteous to suffer. As a child of God, you may suffer to:

### **Show God’s Grace**

God’s wonderful grace can often be seen in Christian suffering. The Apostle Paul, likely the greatest Christian that ever lived, got an answer to the reason for his suffering directly from God in II Corinthians 12:7-9. ***“.....there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. 8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. 9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”***

Paul was God’s chosen vessel to bring the New Covenant, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to the world. He realized that for Christ to be glorified, he himself, could not be overly exalted. Therefore, the suffering was worth it for Paul that he may have the power of Christ and that the grace of God be manifest in him for others

to see.

God, in His foreknowledge, knew Paul would be faithful to his calling before He ever chose him for such an important job. You and I have the true Gospel today because God's grace was manifested in this faithful Apostle. And of course, we see this same grace in our modern times. For example; Have you ever witnessed a really good Christian suffer one sickness, one heartache, one tragedy after another and still maintain that sweet spirit of Christ, still witness, and still praise God in spite of the suffering? Have you ever wondered how they do that? How can someone who has been through so much pain still love God and praise Him?

**What you are seeing in these cases is the grace of God through His children.** It's a testimony to all, especially the lost. **It is God letting us know, like He did Paul, that His Grace is sufficient. And whether you realize it, or for that matter even believe it, His grace is all we need.**

### **Make You Sympathetic With Others**

A Christian's job is to live righteous, witness and minister to others. How can we minister to one who is beset with pain, suffering, and problems unless we know how they feel? The apostle Paul makes it plain in his letter to the Corinthians that our sufferings and tribulations make us able to comfort others in times of trouble even as our Lord has comforted us in our time of suffering. *"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; 4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."* (II Cor. 1:3-4)

Remember the old saying, "don't judge another until you have walked a mile in their shoes?" There's a lot of truth in that because we cannot possibly know how someone feels unless we ourselves have been there

**There it is in plain English right from the Living Word of the Living God! He comforts us during times of trouble so that we may do the same for others!**

and felt the same or a similar pain. However, when you have hurt and suffered, like another, naturally, you are better equipped to sympathize with, and minister to them. So we see from this chapter that the sufferings in our Christian life may well be to prepare our hearts so others can benefit from our compassion and help,



that ultimately, Jesus Christ will be glorified.

In addition, for this cause, we as Christians in fact become partakers of Christ's sufferings. Note Paul's comments on this: ***"For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ. 7 And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing, that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation."*** (II Cor. 1:5 & 7)

The Christian that endures the sufferings for the cause of Christ will reap the reward later. The Bible says: ***"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."*** (Rom. 8:18)

### **Make You More Christ Like**

God's desire is for all His born again children to be "Christ like." The Bible says: ***"As obedient children, not fashioning yourselves according to former lusts in your ignorance: 15 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."*** (I Pet 1:14-16)

Unfortunatualy, few Christians in this day and time make any real effort to be holy and walk in Spirit and fellowship with their Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, in these modern times there seems to be little change in many who profess to be saved, and it is hard to tell the saved from the lost sometimes.

It should not be that way. Once baptized with the Holy Spirit you are a new creation! ***"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."*** (II Cor. 5:17)

God expects to see a definite change in us. He wants to be the Potter and us the clay so He can mold us and make us like Christ. The more like Christ we are, the better testimony to the lost world we are. So, when we fail to grow spiritually, or when we backslide, we know the Lord is watching.

You can accept the free gift of salvation and then become a disobedient child of God, but He can, and will, get our attention when He wants it. Sometimes a child of God can be so preoccupied with himself and the world, the Lord may allow

tribulation to come in his life to draw him closer to Christ. On the other hand, of course, there are some who are already near to their Lord that are brought even closer through suffering.

Either way, God can take the bad and make something good come out of it. The Psalmist had the right idea in Psalm 119:71: ***“It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes.”***

For this cause, many times in life a Christian may suffer great affliction, loss or tragedy. It could be great physical affliction, or a loss of “things” such as losing all one’s possessions to a fire or storm, or maybe the loss of a loved one, or any number of things. Regardless of the magnitude or nature of the loss or problem, the child of God must realize that the Lord may very well be allowing this thing to happen that the Christian may be drawn nearer to Him as a result. **That certainly makes a good case for staying close to Him all the time doesn’t it ?**

Therefore, in such times it is important that you don’t get mad at God, which will not do any good anyway, but rather seek Him out for comfort. Don’t bother trying to find help from the world. You should know by now that there is no peace or comfort the world can give which will be of much help. Jesus said: ***“...My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”*** (Jn. 14:27)

So, to be “Christ like” in these times we must put our complete trust in Him as He trusted the Father during His suffering. The apostle Paul, by choice, suffered the loss of everything that he may be (Christ like), knowing the power of His (Christ’s) resurrection and the fellowship of His suffering. ***“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, being made comformable unto his death:”*** (Phil. 3:7-10) Of course, the more “Christ like” you are, the more use you are for the cause of Christ and to draw others to Him. (Not to mention the joy that fellowship with Him can bring.)

## **Make You Heavenly Minded**

We often get caught up in the things and cares of this world and neglect to focus on our Lord and heavenly things. This, of course, should not be the case as things down here are temporary and can do little but give us temporary pleasures in the flesh, while heavenly things are holy and eternal.

It is not surprising that a lost person would love the world and be enslaved by the flesh, but for a blood bought child of the living God to do so is truly sad. It must grieve the heart of our Saviour who suffered, bled and died for our sins, for His own to be more interested in the world than they are in Him and that Heavenly City He has prepared for us.

His instructions were clear: ***"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth."*** (Col 3:1-2)

What will God have to do to take your mind off the things of this world and get them focused on Him and heavenly things? This is the question you should consider very carefully. Are the thoughts and intents of your heart focused in the right direction so as to please God?

I am reminded of a friend of mine who several years ago was lost and on his way to hell. Along with his family I prayed and labored over him for ten years, using everything the Holy Spirit gave me to win him over to Christ. But he simply would not get saved. Then, unexpectedly, his wife became ill and in four days was dead. Thank goodness she was already saved. Her sudden death was what it took to get my friend's attention and mind on heavenly things and he was saved by the grace of God the following Sunday. Her death, although painful, probably kept him out of the Lake of Fire. What an expensive lesson!

So, some reasons a Christian may suffer are: to show God's grace, to make you more sympathetic with others, make you Christ like, and make you heavenly minded. Learn from this lesson: ***"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not onto thine own understanding."*** (Prov. 3:5)

# Notes

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Bread of Life Quiz

Devotional Series

WHY CHRISTIANS SUFFER

Lesson 5

*This is a true or false quiz, in the space provided place T for True or F for False.*

1. When Christians suffer, it's because God allows it to happen. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Heb. 12:16 says that like any father, God will punish His children. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Paul, probably the greatest of Christians, had a lot of suffering. He was beaten, stoned, ship wrecked, put in prison, etc. etc. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Sometimes we suffer so that others can see the grace of God in us. \_\_\_\_\_
5. God would never comfort us during times of trouble and he doesn't want us to comfort each other either. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Some people become bitter toward God when they lose a loved one. They don't think about God sacrificing His own Son to give us eternal life. \_\_\_\_\_
7. God wants us to yield ourselves to Him so He can mold us and make us more like Christ. \_\_\_\_\_
8. In John 14:27, God says we should not be afraid. \_\_\_\_\_
9. True joy is yours only if you're saved and have true fellowship with God. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Jesus never even had a house, or a place to stay here on earth. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Suffering can make us think more about Heaven and our Savior. \_\_\_\_\_
12. God can take something bad and make it turn out good! \_\_\_\_\_
13. If we suffer, we are better able to help others who suffer because of what we've been through. \_\_\_\_\_
14. We should give God the glory for everything in our life, including the bad. \_\_\_\_\_
15. Rom. 8:18 says that we won't have to suffer here on earth. \_\_\_\_\_
16. As a child of God you should never have to suffer because "by His stripes we are healed." \_\_\_\_\_
17. Suffering makes some people bitter and they blame God. \_\_\_\_\_
18. The more "Christ-like" you are, the more Jesus can use you. \_\_\_\_\_
19. Many people who call themselves "Christians" have never been saved at all. \_\_\_\_\_
20. If you've never accepted Jesus as your Lord and Savior, then you will wake up in Hell. \_\_\_\_\_

# Bread of Life Quiz

## Master Answer Sheet # 2

### Devotional

A Study On Faith	Understanding Prayer	Forgiveness	Armor Of God	Why Do Christians Suffer
Chapter 1	Chapter 2	Chapter 3	Chapter 4	Chapter 5
1. _____	1. _____	1. _____	1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____	2. _____	2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____	3. _____	3. _____	3. _____
4. _____	4. _____	4. _____	4. _____	4. _____
5. _____	5. _____	5. _____	5. _____	5. _____
6. _____	6. _____	6. _____	6. _____	6. _____
7. _____	7. _____	7. _____	7. _____	7. _____
8. _____	8. _____	8. _____	8. _____	8. _____
9. _____	9. _____	9. _____	9. _____	9. _____
10. _____	10. _____	10. _____	10. _____	10. _____
11. _____	11. _____	11. _____	11. _____	11. _____
12. _____	12. _____	12. _____	12. _____	12. _____
13. _____	13. _____	13. _____	13. _____	13. _____
14. _____	14. _____	14. _____	14. _____	14. _____
15. _____	15. _____	15. _____	15. _____	15. _____
16. _____	16. _____	16. _____	16. _____	16. _____
17. _____	17. _____	17. _____	17. _____	17. _____
18. _____	18. _____	18. _____	18. _____	18. _____
19. _____	19. _____	19. _____	19. _____	19. _____
20. _____	20. _____	20. _____	20. _____	20. _____

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