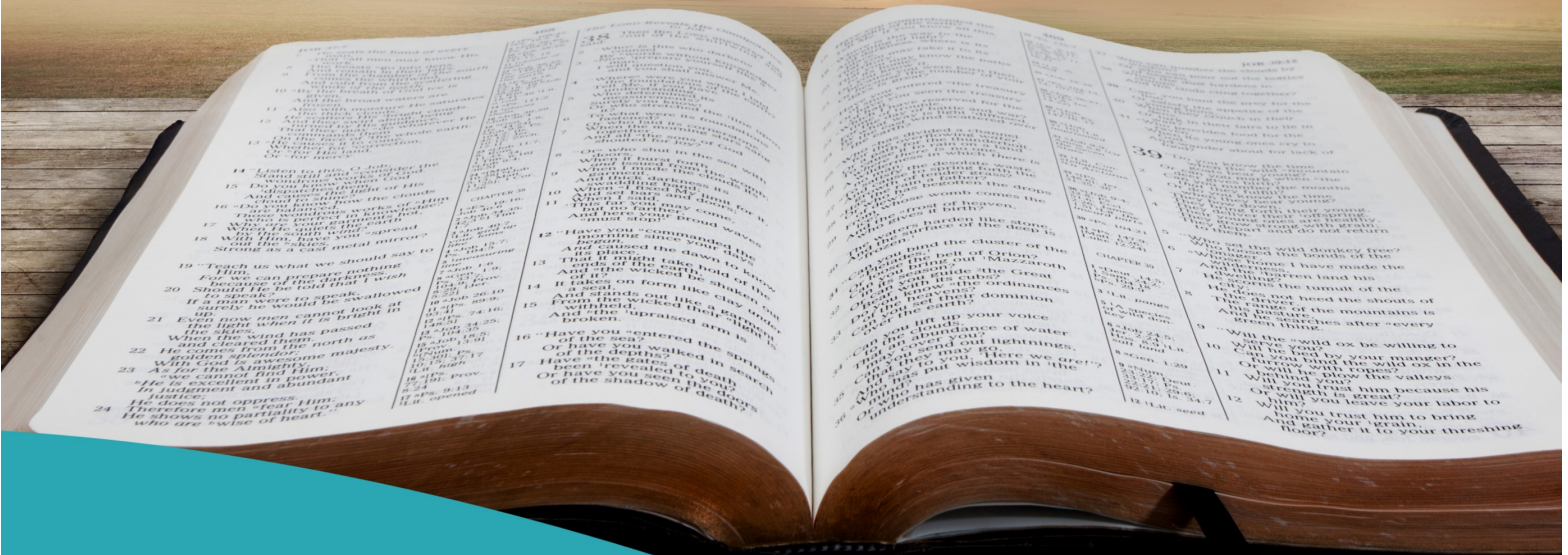


JEHOVAH MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

2024 Second Quarter



BIBLE STUDY

Every Wednesday

7:00 pm



YouTube

**2024 THEME: KINGDOM CITIZENS MOVING FROM EARTHLY
CONFORMATION TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION
(ROMANS 12:1-2)**

APRIL EMPHASIS: KINGDOM CITIZENS BECOMING TRANSFORMERS IN MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT

THOUGHT: Kingdom Citizens know that spiritual transformation is an ongoing process. They must recognize that transformation is for spiritual fulfillment and not for personal convenience.

KEY WORDS/PHRASES: Motive, Right Direction, Spiritual Healing

LESSON FOURTEEN: TRANSFORMED BY ENCOURAGEMENT

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. Think of someone that you consider to be a Christian and explain what evidence you have for believing so.
2. When was the last time you felt persecuted or ostracized/shunned because of your faith in Christ?
3. What specific spiritual gifts are you using to help others grow the church or advance the Kingdom of God?

TEXT: ACTS 11:19-24

HEART OF THE LESSON: THE GOSPEL IS FOR EVERYONE.

INTRODUCTION: The message of Acts 11:19-24 is about the first preachers of the gospel at Antioch. After the death of Stephen, to avoid persecution, many fled to other places, spreading and carrying their religion along with them so that they could share it with others. However, because of their prejudices against others and their belief that the offers of salvation were to be made only to Jews, they would not share the gospel with Gentiles. However, in spite of this, Acts 11:19-24 gives an account of some Christians deliberately and effectively evangelizing and preaching the gospel to the Gentiles in Antioch.

1. KINGDOM CITIZENS SHOULD PREPARE THEMSELVES AND BE READY TO MOVE WHEN GOD DIRECTS AND GIVES THEM THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO SO.

Throughout the Scriptures, God has warned us to be prepared and ready (**Luke 1:17, Luke 12:35, 1 Peter 3:15**) When the leaders of the church at Jerusalem got word that the Gentiles at Antioch were being converted and transformed by the teaching of the good news of Jesus, they sent Barnabas to investigate the situation. (**V 22**) **The name Barnabas means the son of consolation.** Barnabas was willing and ready to go to Antioch, which reflects an attitude that is pleasing and acceptable to God. (**Luke 9:59, Mark 16:15**) He was equipped with the gifts necessary for the work: the gift of teaching, discernment, and encouragement. (**Eph. 4:12-13, Acts 4:36**). Barnabas had the right spirit and attitude when he came and saw that the men who preceded him to Antioch were blessed by God and effective in evangelizing the Gentiles.

Rather than being envious or trying to take over, he was glad about what they were doing; he joined in with them and added his spiritual gifts of encouragement and teaching to theirs. He encouraged both the evangelists and the evangelized. Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and strong in faith. Many people were brought to the Lord through him. He was enthusiastic, confident, and guided by the Holy Spirit. **(V 24)** Barnabas already had a good reputation for caring and a great spirit of compassion. Through the teaching of Paul and Barnabas, many people were brought to the Lord. **(V 25)** Barnabas gave the new believers at Antioch the encouragement they needed.

2. KINGDOM CITIZENS UNDERSTAND THAT A TREE IS KNOWN BY THE FRUIT IT BEARS. (Matthew 12:33-37)

Barnabas was a bearer of good fruits as is evident by his work, attitude, character, and spiritual gifts. Barnabas had already stood by Paul when the church in Jerusalem would have nothing to do with Paul after his conversion. Barnabas used his influence and connection to cause Paul to be accepted and in fellowship with the church in Jerusalem. **(Acts 9:27)** Barnabas had already given proof of his Christian love by his generosity to the needy. **(Acts 4:36-37)** Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and strong in faith, enthusiastic and confident. **(V 24)** Evangelists and preachers, with the right attitude and spirit, working together are still very much needed. There are so many people who do not know the Word of God; have not accepted Jesus as their personal Savior; and have backslidden or have lost touch and fellowship. Many say that they have been called into the ministry, but they are not chosen because they do not meet the qualifications to do so. **(1 Tim. 3:8-13)** “...and how can anyone preach unless they are sent”? **(Romans 10:14-15)**

3. KINGDOM CITIZENS SHOULD ALWAYS SEEK TO FIND OTHERS TO WORK IN THE “VINEYARD.” (Matthew 9:35-38)

We should work to advance the Kingdom of God by using our influence, resources, and spiritual gifts to help restore, encourage, uplift, and transform the lives of others. As the number of the believers and the work of the church grew, Barnabas realized that it would be beneficial to get someone else who was strong in faith, prepared, ready, and able to assist with the work of the ministry in Antioch. So, he went to Tarsus and solicited Paul’s help. He was confident enough to bring Paul to Antioch knowing that Paul was likely to outshine him. Paul was a great speaker and a more recognizable and popular preacher than he was. **(Acts 14:12)** Because Barnabas was not selfish, he was willing to be outshined if doing so would advance the Kingdom of God and benefit the saints. If others appear to have more gifts, abilities, and opportunities than we have, we should be happy and rejoice that there are more workers for the Vineyard. Paul and Barnabas worked together in Antioch for a year, preaching the gospel and strengthening the churches at Antioch. **(VV 25-26)** More lives could be saved, more people could be helped, and more could be done to advance the Kingdom of God if more people would care less about who is going to get the credit. All glory and honor belong to God. **“Without God, we can do nothing”.** **(John 15:5)** Barnabas and Paul worked together and effectively taught a great many people at Antioch. The effects of their teaching ministry were so effective that those whom they taught were converted, transformed, and became so fully identified with Christ that the people of Antioch began to call them Christians. **(VV 24-26)** The word “Christian” means to be Christ-like or associated with Jesus. There are many who claim the name of Jesus, yet they exhibit no characteristics of Jesus or Christ-like behaviors. **(Matthew 7:21)** If we are truly Christians, then our lives will reflect overwhelming evidence of our testimonies to others.

**2024 THEME: KINGDOM CITIZENS MOVING FROM EARTHLY
CONFORMATION TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION
(Romans 12:1-2)**

**APRIL EMPHASIS: KINGDOM CITIZENS BECOMING TRANSFORMERS IN
MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT**

THOUGHT: Kingdom Citizens know that spiritual transformation is an ongoing process. They must recognize that transformation is for spiritual fulfillment and not for personal convenience.

KEY WORDS/PHRASES: Motive, Right Direction, Spiritual Healing

LESSON FIFTEEN: HEALED AND TRANSFORMED!

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. How can we recognize if something is demonic?
2. What demonic powers can you identify that are prevalent today?
3. What testimony of healing or deliverance can you give?

TEXT: LUKE 8:30-39

THE HEART OF THE LESSON: THE BLESSINGS OF BEING TRANSFORMED

Luke 8:30-39 tells the story of Jesus healing and transforming a demon-possessed man in the region of Gerasenes and the people's reactions to the miracle of that healing. The demon-possessed man had not worn clothes or lived in a house but in tombs for a long time. Though this man was chained hand and foot and kept under guard, he had broken his chains and had been driven by demons away from his home and community. Demons had destroyed this man's life and caused pain to those who loved him. This lets us know demons are real, and they have power.

1. KINGDOM CITIZENS REALIZE THAT DEMONS ARE REAL AND HAVE POWER.

A famous statement often said by comedian Flip Wilson on his popular 1970's TV show was, "**The devil made me do it.**" This statement often brought about much laughter and applause from the viewers. However, there is nothing comedic about demons or the harm that they do to the lives of people. We should realize that demons are real and still active today. They can make you crazy, destroy you, cause you to do and think irrationally, causing harm to yourself and others. All demons were once holy angels and a part of the angelic hosts dwelling in the presence of God. Now demons are fallen angels who work under the rule of Satan, to lead people away from a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. **(Isaiah 14:12, Ezekiel 28:16, Luke 10:18)** Demons are never to be "toyed with" or invoked into our lives through palm reading, Tarot cards, séances, witchcraft, or any underworld activities. Demons seem to have different amounts of power. A powerful demon overpowered all seven sons of Sceva, ripped off their clothes, and gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding. **(Acts 19:13-16)**

One person's demons may be bad habits, lying, fear, overeating, rage, or something else that brings torment to him and his family. Though demons are real and have the power to cause harm to us, we don't have to be afraid of them because "*He who is in us is greater than He who is in the world*". (1 John 4:4)

2. KINGDOM CITIZENS SHOULD KNOW AND TRUST THAT JESUS IS SOVEREIGN AND OMNIPOTENT. (LUKE 8:31-33)

Demonic spirits know who Jesus is and recognize His authority. Demons know and will acknowledge and confess what many humans will not: "*We know who you are. You are the Son of the Most High God.*" (V 28, Mark 1:24) "*The devils also believe, and tremble.*" (James 2:19) This demon-possessed man lived in a cemetery, wore no clothes, and was uncontrollable. Jesus asked him, "*What is your name?*" And he said, "*Legion.*" They begged Jesus to let them enter a herd of pigs nearby. So, Jesus gave them permission to do so. According to Mark 5:13, the number of demons in the man was so many that they destroyed the herd of about two thousand pigs. When the demons came out of the man and entered the pigs, the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and drowned. When the herdsman saw what had happened, they fled and told it in the city and country that the demon-possessed man had been healed. When the people came to see what had happened, they saw the man sitting at the feet of Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, and they were afraid. In fear, the locals ask Jesus to leave. It's not clear if the people are afraid because of Jesus' power over the demons or if they are concerned for their remaining livestock. However, it appears that they would rather have the presence of Satan and their economy, the pigs, than the presence of Jesus and a man transformed and at peace. The man from whom the demons had been driven out begged Jesus to allow him to go with Him, but Jesus told him to return to his own home and tell how much God had done for him. Then Jesus got into the boat with His disciples and left. The man went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him. (VV 31-38) It was far better for Jesus to leave the once demon-possessed man behind than to have him come along with Him. The city needed the testimony of that formerly possessed man more than that man needed to go with Jesus.

3. KINGDOM CITIZENS ARE TRANSFORMED BELIEVERS.

After the demon-possessed man had an encounter with Jesus, he became an entirely new man. He was transformed. He was no longer what he had previously been. At one time, no man could control him; he was controlled by thousands of demons. After his transformation, he was found sitting at the feet of Jesus. At one time, he did not wear clothes; now, he was clothed and in his right mind. At one time, he lived in tombs; now, he was returning to his home with a mission and a testimony. Like the herders, sometimes it appears as if some of us would rather keep the things we like or cherish rather than the presence of God. We don't want to pay the cost of losing those things that we value. If we really want Jesus to drive out the demonic presences in our lives, it will cost us something. Financial greed is demonic. Do you want Jesus to drive it out, or do you like it? Pornography and the lust of the flesh are demonic. Do you want Jesus to drive them out, or do you like them? Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the answer for you.

2024 THEME: KINGDOM CITIZENS MOVING FROM EARTHLY
CONFORMATION TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION
(Romans 12:1-2)

**APRIL EMPHASIS: KINGDOM CITIZENS BECOMING TRANSFORMERS IN
MIND, BODY AND SPIRIT**

THOUGHT: Kingdom Citizens know that spiritual transformation is an ongoing process. They must recognize that transformation is for spiritual fulfillment and not for personal convenience.

KEYWORDS/PHRASES: Motive, Right Direction, Spiritual Healing

LESSON SIXTEEN: GUARD YOUR HEART

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. Share a time or an instance when, if you had been more careful and paid closer attention, you could've saved yourself heartaches.
2. What issues or things do you have to guard your heart against most often because you are prone to allow them to enter your heart?
3. How does "guarding our spiritual heart" affect our physical health and whole body?

TEXT: PROVERBS 4:20-27

HEART OF THE LESSON: PAY ATTENTION, LISTEN, AND LEARN.

INTRODUCTION: The Bible has much to say about the heart. The Bible warns us to avoid a double heart (**Ps. 12:2**), a hard heart (**Eze. 36:26**), a proud heart (**Prov. 21:4**), an unbelieving heart (**Hebr. 3:12**), a cold heart (**Matt. 24:12**), an unclean heart (**Ps. 51:10**), and the deceitful heart. (**Jere. 17:9**) *"The Lord searches, weighs, and looks on the heart".* (**1 Sam. 16:7** and *"Trust in the Lord with all your heart..."* (**Prov. 3:5-6**) In this chapter, Solomon, who has been credited as being the author, is speaking to his son. He repeatedly urged his son and the readers to listen and pay close attention to his words. Then he recommended to his son and us to do three things: (1) get wisdom because it will protect you; (2) get understanding; and (3) above all else, guard your heart. (**VV 20-27**)

1. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT THERE ARE TIMES WHEN THEY NEED TO BE STILL AND LISTEN.

As Kingdom Citizens, we recognize that God wants to fellowship with His children. With our ears inclined toward God, we should daily be in prayer and fellowship with Him. We should do this, not so we can speak uninterruptedly to Him, but so that we can clearly listen and understand what He is saying to us. Some information is so serious and crucial to the well-being of the hearers that it requires full and undivided attention. Simply hearing wise counsel is of no benefit unless the listener pays close attention to it. Solomon begins Psalm 4:20-22 with these words, *"My son, give attention to my words; Incline your ear to my sayings.... For they are life unto those that find them and health to all their flesh".* *"Give attention to my words"* implies that vital information can be given, and yet never received. *"Incline your ears"* brings forth an image of the listener leaning in closer toward the speaker.

Solomon was directing his son to **lean in closer** to him, to give him his undivided attention, and to listen because the information that he was going to give him was very important. It will save his life, affect his happiness, and impact his relationship with God and others. He said, “What I am giving to you is a treasure; it is our heritage and legacy that need to be guarded and strictly adhered to. It was given to me by my father, David, a man after God’s own heart.” (**Acts 13:22**) Then Solomon gives the lifesaving legacy to his son, “***Above all else, guard your heart with all diligence...***” (**V 23**) When you are talking to your children or spouse, are they listening to you, or are they preoccupied with their cell phones, reading, watching TV, or gaming? Most of us can think of an instance where had we been more careful and paid closer attention, we could have saved ourselves from heartaches.

2. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT OUR HEARTS CAN BECOME POLLUTED AND MUST BE REGENERATED.

Every sin starts in our hearts, and our character and speech reflect our hearts. We can only pretend and fool people that we are different for a short time; then what is in our hearts will come out. (**Matt.15:18-19, Mark 7:20-22**) When we sin, our hearts need to be cleansed and regenerated. David said, in **Psalm 51:10**, “***Create in me a clean heart, and renew in me the right spirit.***” The lyrics of a popular song say, “**Search me, Lord, if you find anything that shouldn’t be, take it out and strengthen me....**” Your heart determines your life. Allowing sinful thoughts, anger, resentment, or envy toward others to take root in our hearts will cause our hearts to become toxic and polluted. Reading, studying, and meditating on the Scriptures will help us to secure and maintain a pure, clean heart. If we get our hearts right, righteous actions will follow. (**Psalm 119:9-11**)

3. KINGDOM CITIZENS UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF GUARDING THEIR HEARTS AND HOW TO DO SO. (VV 22-27)

Proverbs 4:23 says, “***Above all else, guard your heart with all diligence, for everything you do flows from it.***” Guarding our hearts should be done daily to make sure that our hearts and heads are aligned with our faith and godly values. In guarding our hearts, we must be mindful of what and who we allow into our hearts. The people that we allow in our lives have a direct influence on how we perceive ourselves. When we allow our hearts to care for the wrong people, we are doing ourselves an injustice. Without guarding our hearts, we are prone to love the wrong people, desire the wrong things, have the wrong motives for our actions, and develop unhealthy habits, as well as to become corrupt. (**V 22**) We need to keep our hearts from doing hurt and getting hurt. In verses 24-27, Solomon gives four directives on how to safely guard the heart: (1) “***Keep your mouth.... keep corrupt talk far from your lips***”; (2) ***Let your eyes look straight ahead....***” We tend to go where we are looking. If we focus forward, we will go forward. If we keep our focus on Jesus, we will follow Him and never get lost. (3) “***Give careful thought to the paths for your feet; and be steadfast in all your ways***”. We must accept and know that the Bible is the true word. We are to be firm and committed in our walk with God. We are not to “***walk in the counsel of the ungodly....***” (**Psalm 1:1-3**); and (4) “***Do not turn to the right or the left; keep your foot from evil***”. As Kingdom Citizens, we are to stay away from evil people and sinful desires. If we find ourselves *drifting* off-center, we must immediately repent and *turn* around.

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CONFORMATION TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION
(Romans 12:1-2)**

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KEY WORDS/PHRASES: Motive, Right Direction, Spiritual Healing

LESSON SEVENTEEN: BE TRANSFORMED WITH RIGHT MOTIVES

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. How can you draw near to God and resist the devil in your life this week?
2. How can you practice the humble repentance that God requires of us?
3. Identify two issues that cause conflicts and fights today in homes, schools, churches, and workplaces.

TEXT: JAMES 4:1-10

HEART OF THE LESSON: AVOIDING SELFISHNESS AND SPIRITUAL ADULTERY

INTRODUCTION: James begins chapter four with a question, “**What causes conflicts?**” Then, he answers the question and proceeds by offering remedies to avoid conflicts, fighting, and killing. Today, it appears that everywhere, people are in conflict or fighting for something or against something. Fights and conflicts occur within families, among nations, racial groups, ministries, and within ourselves. These conflicts and fighting can be lengthy, short, shallow, trivial, or catastrophic. Whenever and wherever conflicts, and fighting occur, there will be casualties; some will get hurt, some killed, and others destroyed, but in every case, God is not pleased with any of this.

1. KINGDOM CITIZENS NEED TO REALIZE INTERNAL WARFARE MAY LEAD TO UNANSWERED PRAYERS.

Living according to the wisdom and values of the world has led to great conflicts, weaknesses, and unanswered prayers among Christians. Satan wants Christians to focus on fighting each other so that they are not fighting him. Ephesians 6:12–13 says, “... *We are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world*”. Conflicts arise between people because there are conflicts inside of them. Their inner turmoil between what they want and what is right springs outward and causes conflict. “... *fights and quarrels.... come from your desires that battle within you? ...you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You desire but do not have, so you kill. (VV 1-2)* The word kill in this statement refers to the inward condition of the heart shown outwardly through anger, evilness, and bitter hatred toward others. **(Matt. 5:21)** We can kill people in many different ways – with a nasty look, and hateful or slanderous words. Negative words can hurt and destroy people and their lives.

Writing negative online comments about people, as well as not coming to the defense of someone when they are being untruthfully maligned can ruin lives and reputations. If we are not speaking of people in a way that builds them up and honors God, we have sinned. In Ephesians 4:29, God warns us against slanderous and evil speaking; ***“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers”***. Whenever you find yourself killing someone with your actions or inactions, immediately and humbly repent, submit to God, draw near to Him, and be forgiven and transformed.

2. KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST STILL REALIZE THAT NO ONE CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS. (MATT. 6:24-26)

Each of us makes hundreds of decisions each day and thousands during our lifetime. One of the most important decisions that anyone can and must make is whether to live and be a servant of God or of the world. Though many people try to have the sinful pleasures of this world and the security of heaven, it is impossible to do so. The Scriptures tell us that “No one can have both. ***“...you will hate the one and love the other....” (Matt. 6:24-26) “... a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God....” (V 5)*** God identifies people who try to have both the world and Him as unfaithful and adulterous. ***“You adulterous people” (V 4)***. This means that we are to sanctify ourselves and make the decision to either live for God or the world. The term “adultery” was used in both the Old and New Testaments as a rebuke and to show people their idolatry and hypocrisy. **(Jeremiah 3:8-9, Ezekiel 6:9 and 16:32, and Hosea 3:1, (Matt. 12:39, 16: 4)**. We become adulterous people when we claim to be in a relationship with God, but then like an unfaithful spouse, we try to fulfill our desires elsewhere. We cannot look to the world or our own desires to ultimately satisfy us and still be fully faithful to God. Despite our unfaithfulness, idolatry, and adultery, we can come before the Almighty God in humble repentance and be forgiven and restored to Him.

3. KINGDOM CITIZENS SHOULD UNDERSTAND HOW TO AVOID FIGHTS AND SPIRITUAL ADULTERY. (John 10:10-29)

There are many things that we can and should do to avoid conflicts and fights with one another, and they are: (1) we must understand, accept, and remember that the root cause and core of our anger, hostility, and fighting is Satan. He wants to destroy us and separate us from God. (2) Humility is the path to resolving conflict. (3) “Submit to God”. Our submission must be a conscious, deliberate, continuous, and daily act. At first, it may be a struggle to do so, but doing so is effective and worth all the effort. It will be your support and defense to aid you in your fight against being attacked by Satan. (4) Resist the devil. As Kingdom Citizens, we have the assurance that if we resist the devil, though he returns again to tempt us again, he will flee from us because of what Jesus has done for us at Calvary. **(V 7)** We can never be conquered by Satan unless we consent or submit to him because ***“....He who is in us is greater than he who is in the world....” (1 John 4:4)*** (5) Come near to God and he will come near to you. Come close enough to hear and do His every command, and (6) ***“Wash your hands.... purify your hearts... grieve, mourn, and wail... Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom.”*** Without any reservations, we must humble ourselves before God, confess, and be genuinely sorry for every sin that we have committed to the point of repentance. Then we should ask God to transform us into the person and for the purpose that He created us to be.

**2024 THEME: KINGDOM CITIZENS MOVING FROM EARTHLY
CONFORMATION TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION
(Romans 12:1-2)**

**MAY EMPHASIS: KINGDOM WOMEN EMPOWERED TO FACE THE
CHALLENGES OF LIVING TRANSFORMATIONAL LIVES**

THOUGHT: Kingdom Women must strive to appreciate, accept, and live spirit-filled lives, passing on the power of transformational living to young women and girls.

KEY WORDS/PHRASES: Trust, Endow, Reflect, Teach

LESSON EIGHTEEN: JUST A TOUCH

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. How might being in a crowd cause someone to pause or be hindered from reaching out to Jesus to be blessed, healed, or saved?
2. On the national level, what are some political, moral, racial, social, or leadership problems and issues that we need to “Touch” and bring before Jesus?

TEXT: LUKE 8:43-48

THE HEART OF THE LESSON: THE POWER OF FAITH

INTRODUCTION: On the way to Jarius’ house with His disciples, a very large crowd of people surrounded and followed Jesus. From among the crowd was a woman who interrupted Jesus’ journey by touching Him. The woman, for twelve years, had an illness of hemorrhaging. Luke 8:43-48 records the miracle and tells how and why Jesus stopped and took the time to heal this woman.

1. KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST ALWAYS STRIVE TO HOLD ON TO THEIR FAITH AND MAKE THE DECISION TO REACH OUT AND TOUCH JESUS.

We must make the decision to reach out to Jesus in faith if we are to have the desires of our hearts fulfilled. To reach out our hands and touch Jesus is a faith decision that produces great results. *“He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.”* (**Hebr. 11:6**) The apostle Paul tells us that keeping our faith strong is sometimes hard to do. So, he advises us in **1 Timothy 6:12** to *“Fight the good fight of faith....”* That is to fight against worrying, doubting, temptations, negative thoughts, the advice of the ungodly people, and “the crowds.” It is easy for us to sometimes get so lost in the crowd or in the noise of the crowd that we don’t reach out to Jesus, but be in awe of the crowd and simply just conform to them. Can you think of a time when you may have missed a blessing or the opportunity to be blessed by God because you conformed to the majority or were overwhelmed by the “crowd”? A woman with a hemorrhaging illness that no one could heal had faith in the power and authority of Jesus. Her faith was so strong that she believed that if she could get close enough to just touch the edge of His garment, she would be healed from 12 years of suffering, isolation, and being considered unclean.

Our faith should propel us into action. **“...faith without works is dead being alone.” (James 2:26)** So she pressed her way through the crowd, reached out her hands, and touched the hem of Jesus’ garment, and immediately her bleeding stopped. **(V 44) “Faith comes by hearing...” (Romans 10:17)** She heard herself speak as she spoke her faith to herself. **“If I could only touch the hem of his garment, I would be healed. (Matt. 9:21 KJV) “Who touched me, Jesus asked? When they all denied it, Peter said, Master, the people are crowding and pressing against you. But Jesus said, someone touched me; I know that power has gone out from me.” Then the woman, seeing that she could not go unnoticed, came trembling and fell at his feet. In the presence of all the people, she told why she had touched him and how she had been instantly healed. Then He said to her, Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.” (VV 46-48)** It is our faith that saves us, heals us, and gives us the ability to please God, move mountains, and stop our hemorrhaging. As a result of the woman’s confession that it was she who had touched Jesus, she was immediately transformed from just being a sick, broke, and scared woman in the crowd to being a blessed and healed woman with a powerful testimony. It was her faith, not her hand, that touched Jesus and caused the healing power to flow from Him to her. **“... your faith has healed you.” (V 48)** Even when we can’t or don’t say a word, Jesus can detect our faith.

2. KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST STAND STRONG IN FAITH AGAINST ALL ODDS.

The woman with the hemorrhaging illness in Luke 8: 43-48 had endured many hardships and challenges in her life. She also had to face and overcome many obstacles in order to touch Jesus and be healed. Among the many challenges and obstacles, she endured are: (1) without any success, she had spent all of her money on doctors hoping to be healed. Now, she was broke. **(Mark 5:26)**; (2) Because of her hemorrhaging sickness, she was considered to be unclean and was not allowed in the synagogue, even to worship or pray **(Mark 5:26)**; (3) Twelve years had passed, therefore, she was now losing hope and getting worse, and (4) There was a very large crowd of people surrounding and moving along with Jesus which made it almost impossible for her to get through to Him. We are all prone to some type of hemorrhaging. This woman was hemorrhaging in many ways: financially, she had spent all she had on physicians; socially, she was alone, shunned, and not allowed in the synagogue; reputationally, she was thought of as being unclean. At times, we may also find ourselves hemorrhaging. The great news for us is that as Kingdom Citizens, we have the assurance that regardless of how long a situation has existed, how dire the situation is, or how urgent the needs of others are, Jesus can bless us and change our situations immediately.

3. KINGDOM CITIZENS SHOULD KNOW AND BELIEVE THAT THERE IS NOTHING TOO HARD FOR GOD TO DO.

Scriptures tell us that **“God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us.” (Eph. 3:20)** What all the doctors could not do for this woman in twelve years, Jesus did it freely and instantly without even touching her. Be reminded that Jesus didn’t touch the woman; she touched Him. There is nothing too hard for God to do. The woman expected the flow of blood to stop, but Jesus did much more than that for her. He gave her peace, **“...Daughter,.. Go in peace.” (V 48)** Now, her faith is forever recorded in the Scriptures.

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(Romans 12:1-2)

MAY EMPHASIS: KINGDOM WOMEN EMPOWERED TO FACE THE CHALLENGES OF LIVING TRANSFORMATIONAL LIVES

THOUGHT: Kingdom Women must strive to appreciate, accept, and live spirit-filled lives, passing on the power of transformational living to the young women and girls.

KEY WORDS/PHRASES: Trust, Endow, Reflect, Teach

LESSON NINETEEN: DO WHAT MAMA SAID (MOTHER'S DAY)

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. Recall a time when you acted or were encouraged to act or make a decision before you were ready or felt that it was not profitable to do so. What was the outcome?
2. What are some of the reasons you think that Jesus responded to His mother as He did in John 2:4?
3. Some people have said that the wine that Jesus made was non-alcoholic. Do you agree or disagree with this? Why?

TEXT: JOHN 2:1-10

INTRODUCTION: During Jesus' lifetime on earth, He performed a diversity of miracles. *"...many more things that Jesus did. If all of them were written down...the world itself would not have space for the books that would be written."* (John 21:25) However, the first recorded miracle that Jesus publicly performed was at a wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. (John 2:1-10). To help us better and more easily determine the spiritual implications and words of wisdom that these passages of the Scriptures hold for us, we will focus on and analyze four interactions and occurrences that took place at the wedding: (1) The interactions between Jesus and His mother; (2) the interactions between Jesus' mother and His disciples; (3) the interactions between Jesus and His disciples; and (4) the response of the master of the feast after he tasted the wine.

1. KINGDOM CITIZENS REALIZE AND ACCEPT THAT THERE IS A TIME AND A SEASON FOR ALL THINGS. (Ecc. 3:1-11)

Weddings were a festive time of great celebrations and feasting with family and friends. Jesus, His mother, and His disciples were attending a wedding in Cana of Galilee when, in the midst of the celebration and feasting, all of the wine ran out. (VV 1-2) For a host to fail to provide adequate hospitality, food, and drink for the guests was a great dishonor and would bring shame to the couple for a long time. Therefore, when the wine at the wedding ran out, Mary, the mother of Jesus, was concerned. To solicit help, she brought the matter to Jesus and shared her concern with Him. She simply said to Him, *"They have no more wine."* (V 3) Jesus responded to His mother first with a rhetorical question, *"Woman, what does your concern have to do with me?"* He then gave an explanation, *"My hour has not yet come."* (V 4) Jesus' response to His mother was in no way a reprimand or any sign of disrespect.

Jesus was establishing and informing Mary that in His public ministry, the relationship between them would be different. Thus, Jesus was correcting and adjusting the way that Mary was to think of Him. He was also letting her know that though He was her son, He more importantly, was the Son of God. As the Son of God, He would not do anything without first consulting with His heavenly Father for His approval and His will. ***“...I can of Myself do nothing... I do not seek My own will, but the will of the Father who sent Me.” (John 5:30)***

2. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT IT IS AN HONOR AND A BLESSING TO BE USED BY GOD. (VV 8-9)

Among the many things that we should take special note of from the interactions between Jesus and the servants are: **(1)** Jesus allowed the servants to be involved in the miracle so that they would be a part of the blessing at the wedding. He said to them, ***“Fill the water pots with water”.*** **(V 7)** Jesus could have filled the water pots himself by merely speaking the word. Sometimes, Jesus will allow and use us to be a blessing to others, as well as to witness and be involved in His miracles. **(2)** Our faith should lead us to understand that whenever Jesus directs us to do something, He expects us to do it faithfully and completely. Jesus instructed the servants to ***“Fill the water pots with water; so, they filled them to the brim”.*** **(V 7)** Filling the water pots to the brim implies that there would be no space left over for anything else to be added. Jesus didn't need to add anything to the water; He transformed it. Sometimes in our lives, we don't need to have anything added in or to our lives. What we need is a **“brim”** level transformation. Are you following God's directives and receiving a full “brim” measure of blessings? **(3)** Obeying and following Jesus takes faith and courage. As soon as the servants had filled the water pots, without first tasting or testing the water to see if it had actually been transformed into wine, Jesus ordered the servants to immediately take action. He said to the servants, ***“Draw some out now, and take it to the master of the feast.”*** **(V 8)**. This took strong faith on the part of the servants. Imagine how angry the master of the feast would be if the servants brought him water to taste.

3. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT GOD ALWAYS GIVES US HIS BEST. (V 10)

Everything that comes from God is better than anything a man can produce. ***“You have kept the good wine until now.”*** **(V 10)** If we apply the sentiments of this statement to our lives, we could infer that for the people of God, the best is yet to come. Even in the height of our joys or in the depth of our despair, we can find peace and comfort in knowing that even the best things that we have in this life do not compare with what God has as the “last” for those who accepted His Son, Jesus. ***“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for them that love him.”*** **(1 Cor 2:9)** As Kingdom Citizens, we know that our “Best” is beyond the grave.

**2024 THEME: KINGDOM CITIZENS MOVING FROM EARTHLY
CONFORMATION TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION**
(Romans 12:1-2)

**MAY EMPHASIS: KINGDOM WOMEN EMPOWERED TO FACE THE
CHALLENGES OF LIVING TRANSFORMATIONAL LIVES**

THOUGHT: Kingdom Women must strive to appreciate, accept, and live spirit-filled lives, passing on the power of transformational living to young women and girls.

KEY WORDS/PHRASES: Trust, Endow, Reflect, Teach

LESSON TWENTY: SOME FINAL INSTRUCTIONS (PENTECOST)

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. Why do you think the disciples interrupted Jesus while He was speaking? How do you feel, or what is your response when you are in the midst of speaking or doing something “most” important, and you are interrupted?
2. In what ways do you participate in sharing your resources, skills, money, and time so that the expansion of God's kingdom is not hampered?
3. What are two reasons why it is imperative to wait on the Holy Spirit in order to effectively witness in our “Jerusalem,” “Judea, “Samaria,” or “ends of the earth”? Which of the three have you been more effective in witnessing? Why?

TEXT: ACTS 1:4-9

**HEART OF THE LESSON: EMPOWERED AND TRANSFORMED TO ADVANCE
THE KINGDOM OF GOD**

INTRODUCTION: Acts 1:4-9, tells of Jesus’ last earthly conversation with His disciples. He informed them that He was going to physically leave Earth, but He was not taking them with Him; they needed to remain on Earth. Then He reiterated that they were going to receive the Promise of the Father, but they needed to wait for Him to come. Without any prior notice to them, Jesus ascended back to His Father. This lesson will highlight the boldness and some of the changes that occurred in the disciples after they were transformed and empowered by the Holy Spirit to do good works and expand the Kingdom of God by spreading the Gospel.

**1. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT IT IS PERMISSIBLE TO SEEK
KNOWLEDGE. (James 1:5)**

“Then they gathered around him and asked him, ‘Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?’ He said to them: ‘It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority.’” (VV 6-7) The disciples knew of the prophetic promise of Israel’s restoration. They had also learned that a messiah would come and set up his kingdom. (Eze. 11:17) Therefore, they had come together and were anxiously waiting for Jesus to inform them when He was going to set up the Kingdom. (V 6) The disciples understandably were expecting the kingdom to be set up immediately; they were so excited. Though they were excited that the Kingdom of Israel was going to be restored, they were also looking forward to their own ambitious placement in the Kingdom. (Mark 10:35-37)

To answer the question that the disciples asked concerning the restoration of the Kingdom, Jesus said to them, ***“It is not for you to know times which the Father has fixed by His own authority.”*** (V 7) Jesus, our compassionate Savior, didn’t rebuke them; instead, He told them that He had something else in mind which needed to be said so that they would be able to complete their task. As it was with the disciples, we (believers) seek to know when Jesus is going to return. Some people have tried to guess when the end of time will come. Some religions have set specific dates when the world will come to an end. However, they have found themselves to have been wrong. The fact is no one knows except the Father. It is not our business to know when the end will come. Instead, our focus should be on what Jesus has left for us to do and to be ready when He comes.

2. KINGDOM CITIZENS ARE EMPOWERED TO DO GREAT WORKS AND TO BE WITNESSES FOR JESUS WHILE WE ARE IN THIS WORLD.

Jesus’ final words to His disciples indicate to us that Jesus did not take His disciples with Him when He ascended into heaven but left them on earth so that after being transformed and empowered, they could advance the Kingdom of God by witnessing and doing good works, ***“... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses...”*** (V 8) As converted believers, we have also been commissioned and empowered to advance the Kingdom of God by witnessing and doing good works. One day, we will have to give an account to God for the work that we have done and the work that was left undone. Jesus has commanded us to go and make more disciples. (Matt.28:19-20) Transformed people are to help effectuate spiritual transformation in others.

3. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW OBEDIENCE IS BETTER THAN SACRIFICE.

During the three years that Jesus was with His disciples, they were always obedient to Him. Now that obedience was again required. But first, they needed to lay aside their ambitions and hopes for the Kingdom restoration of Israel and follow the directives that Jesus had given to them: ***“Stay in Jerusalem and wait for the promise of the Father (the Holy Spirit); and afterward, “... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*** (V 8) ***“...but tarry.... until you are endued with power from on high”*** (V 49). Because the disciples were obedient and followed the directives of Jesus, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came and indwelt them, transforming them into great men of power. As a result, they became very powerful and effective witnesses for Jesus. Evidence of the transforming power of the Holy Spirit working through them were: (1) The disciples became fearless and bold in speech (Acts 4:13); (2) Peter preached and thousands were saved and indwelt with the Holy Spirit; (3) As he passed by, Peter’s shadow healed sick people who were brought and laid in the streets. Also, those tormented by impure spirits were healed (Acts 5:12-16); (4) Paul’s handkerchiefs and aprons that touched the sick and diseased healed them; (Acts 19:12), and (5) Peter and John healed a man crippled from birth at the Temple gate. (Acts 3:1-10) You have been redeemed, transformed, and empowered. Do you know that as spirit-filled transformed believers, you can speak to your mountains, and they will move?

**2024 THEME: KINGDOM CITIZENS MOVING FROM EARTHLY
CONFORMATION TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION**
(Romans 12:1-2)

**MAY EMPHASIS: KINGDOM WOMEN EMPOWERED TO FACE THE
CHALLENGES OF LIVING TRANSFORMATIONAL LIVES**

THOUGHT: Kingdom Women must strive to appreciate, accept, and live spirit-filled lives, passing on the power of transformational living to the young women and girls.

KEY WORDS/PHRASES: Trust, Endow, Reflect, Teach

LESSON TWENTY-ONE: TRANSFORMED BY MOTHERLY LOVE

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. How often do your children see you reading or studying the Bible?
2. When and how can you know that a person has been taught enough of the Scriptures and, therefore, it is no longer necessary to continue teaching them?
3. According to the Scriptures, who is ultimately responsible for teaching the Scriptures to their children?

TEXT: 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17

THE HEART OF THE LESSON: HOLDING ON TO WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED

INTRODUCTION: Timothy 3:14-17 is part of a letter written by the apostle Paul to Timothy encouraging him in his pastoral ministry, telling him the necessity of boldly and firmly teaching the Scriptures as he leads and cares for the church. In this letter, the apostle first reminds Timothy of how well Timothy had known him and of his faith and endurance during his persecutions and suffering in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. Through it all, God was with him and always rescued him. In verses 12 and 13, He then warned and prepared Timothy for what lay ahead for him and why. “... *everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.*” (2 Timothy 3:14-18) Apostle Paul reminded Timothy that he is different from the ungodly and, therefore, he should remain steadfast in what he has learned.

1. KINGDOM CITIZENS SHOULD ESTABLISH A FIRM FOUNDATION OF FAITH FOR THEMSELVES AND THEIR CHILDREN.

Parents need to prepare themselves and their children for life by establishing a solid foundation of faith by making sure they and their children are grounded in the Word and will of God. This can be best accomplished when parents themselves study, believe, and live according to the word of God and then teach it to their children. (2 Tim. 2:15) In 2 Timothy 3:14-15, Apostle Paul encourages Timothy by telling him that he had faith and confidence that Timothy was ready and equipped with everything that was needed for him to be successful in the ministry. Then Paul gives and explains to Timothy four reasons why he had strong faith and confidence in him: (1) “....you have learned, firmly believed, and have been acquainted with the sacred writings.” (VV 14-15)

Timothy was taught and had learned the Scriptures from his mother and grandmother (**2 Tim. 1:5**), and later, he was personally taught by the apostle Paul and other Christians. (**Gal. 1:18**) Teaching children the Holy Scriptures has been understood by the Jews to be one of the most important and fundamentally required duties of parents. (**Deut. 6:6-7**) Today, there is still a great need for children to be taught beginning at an early age and brought up in the fear and knowledge of the Lord. (**Deut. 4:10**) *“Fathers...bring them up in the knowledge and fear of God.”* (**Prov 22:6, Eph. 6:4**) One of the greatest things parents can do is to teach their children and attend Bible Studies along with them (**2 Tim. 2:15**); (2) He not only knew the Scriptures, but he also *believed it.* (**V 14**) Just Knowing the Scriptures is not enough to propel us into righteous living, nor does it prepare us for it. We must believe; (3) Timothy had the wisdom of God which allowed him to know and understand the purpose and power of the Scriptures. The purpose is *“it is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness....”* The power of the Scriptures is *“so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work”* and *“are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.”* (**VV 16-17**)

2. KINGDOM CITIZENS UNDERSTAND THAT SPREADING THE WORD OF GOD IS URGENT AND SERIOUS.

The word of God, whether preached, taught, sung, or written is a very serious matter and is not to be taken lightly. Before putting our hands to **“the gospel plow,”** we need to first understand the seriousness and the urgency of doing so and that we do so in the presence of the Almighty God. We will be held accountable by Him for how we handle that which is holy. Therefore, in 2 Timothy 4:1-5, Paul informed Timothy of both the urgency and the seriousness of ministry work. *“I charge you...before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom...”* **Preach the word! For the time will come when they** (people, including your own children) **will not endure sound doctrine,...and they will turn their ears away from the truth,... But you be watchful...do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry”.** It appears that some people enjoy reading and quoting the Bible, but their words and actions do not reflect that they understand or believe in it. *“There are some people who are always learning or studying but never able to come to a knowledge of the truth”* (**2 Tim. 3:7**)

3. KINGDOM CITIZENS MUST SANCTIFY THEMSELVES BY THE UNADULTERATED WORD OF GOD.

As Kingdom Citizens, we are to avoid and reject worldly ideas and things, as well as association with evil people. *“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers....”* (**2 Cor. 6:14**) We must understand and believe that the Bible is the infallible Word of God. *“All Scripture is God-breathed.”* (**VV 16-17**) The Bible was written by inspired men divinely appointed by God and sealed with a warning and a promise. *“If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book.”* (**Revelation 22:18**) Paul told Timothy that the **“time will come”** when people will not want to hear or accept the truth of the Gospel, **“but as for you”** and every other Kingdom Citizen, stand firmly in faith and what we have been taught from the Holy Bible. We are not to compromise, debate, or “sugarcoat” the word of God because we know God’s Word is settled in heaven (**Ps. 119:89**), and therefore, there can be no private interpretations of it. (**2 Pet. 1:20-21**)

2024 THEME: KINGDOM CITIZENS MOVING FROM EARTHLY
CONFORMATION TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION
(Romans 12:1-2)

**JUNE EMPHASIS: KINGDOM MEN EMPOWERED TO FACE THE
CHALLENGES OF LIVING TRANSFORMATIONAL LIVES**

THOUGHT: Kingdom men must strive to appreciate, accept, and live spirit filled lives, passing on the power of transformational living to young men and boys.

KEY WORDS/PHRASES: Wise Instruction, Discipline, Brotherly Love

LESSON TWENTY-TWO: MEN DELIGHTING IN GOD'S WAY

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. What does it mean to delight in someone or something?
Consider Psalm 37:4.
2. What are some of the pleasures of life that men enjoy?
3. Why are there so few men running hard after God?

TEXT: PSALM 1:1-6

THE HEART OF THE LESSON: MEN WHO DELIGHT IN THE LORD FIND GREAT PLEASURE AT HIS RIGHT HAND.

INTRODUCTION: Psalm 1 contrasts the destructive “way of sinners” (V 1) with the successful “way of the righteous” (V 6) and extols the blessings of godliness. According to the psalmist, happiness, joy, and success come to those “whose delight is in the law of the Lord” (Psalm 1:2, ESV). The righteous man “walks not in the counsel of the wicked” (V 1). In other words, he does not follow the world’s advice but takes pleasure in obeying God and His Word. The word law here means “a collection of teachings, instruction, or direction.” The “law of the Lord” is often associated with the Ten Commandments or the books of Moses (the first five books of the Old Testament called the Pentateuch). Yet the term can also encompass the whole revelation of truth in the Word of God, as in Psalm 119:1: “*Blessed are those . . . who walk according to the law of the LORD*”; the “law” here broadly refers to “the precepts and revealed will of the LORD,” according to the Amplified Bible. The author of Psalm 1 appears to have the same expanded meaning in mind. A godly man receives instruction and direction from the full counsel of God’s Word. The original Hebrew word translated as “delight” indicates “a feeling of extreme pleasure, satisfaction, or joy.” Reading, studying, and applying God’s truth to one’s life is the pleasure and joy of the righteous. **As a KINGDOM MAN, what does the Word of God mean to you?**

1. KINGDOM MEN LONG TO MEET WITH GOD IN HIS WORD. (V 2)

A godly man’s relationship with the Word of God should be like being in love. People who are in love delight in each other. They want to spend time together. They drink in every word they speak to each other. When they are apart, they long to be in each other’s company.

That is an illustration of how a godly man should feel about God’s Word. Believers delight in the law of the Lord by meditating on God’s Word day and night ([Psalm 1:2](#); [Joshua 1:8](#)). We consult it often, letting it become a guiding light and roadmap for our journey ([Psalm 119:35, 105](#)). We delight in God’s Word because we know it has the power to sustain us with joy through times of despair ([Psalm 119:92](#)), to give comfort ([Psalm 23:4](#); [27:13–14](#)), hope ([Psalm 119:81](#)), protection ([Psalm 119:114](#)), victory over sin ([Psalm 119:11](#)), and to lead us securely to our eternal home ([Psalm 32:8](#); [37:23](#)). **How can men demonstrate that they long for God’s word? How do women and children do the same?**

2. KINGDOM MEN DELIGHT IN THE WORD OF GOD BECAUSE OF ITS MANY BENEFITS. (V 2)

Delighting in the law of the Lord means honoring and cherishing God’s Word ([Psalm 119:47–48, 159](#)) because it is an irreplaceable treasure more precious than “thousands of pieces of silver and gold” ([Psalm 119:72](#)); an ever-present companion and friend ([Proverbs 6:20–22](#)); the theme of our song throughout life ([Psalm 119:54](#)); sweet and satisfying nourishment for the soul ([Psalm 119:103](#)); [Job 23:12](#)); a light in the darkness ([2 Peter 1:19](#)); “my heritage forever” and “the joy of my heart” ([Psalm 119:111](#)); and a life-giver ([Psalm 119:25, 93](#)); [1 Peter 1:23](#)), life-sustainer ([Matthew 4:4](#)), powerful force ([Hebrews 4:12](#)), liberator ([John 8:32](#); [James 1:25](#)), and teacher of wisdom ([Psalm 119:66, 98–100](#)).

We delight in the law of the Lord by making God’s Word a daily part of our lives; by receiving its “message with great eagerness” ([Acts 17:11](#)); reading our Bibles ([2 Timothy 3:16](#)); studying and searching “the Scriptures day after day” ([Acts 17:11, NLT](#)); letting the Word “correct us when we are wrong” and teach us “to do what is right” ([2 Timothy 3:15–17, NLT](#)); hiding it in our hearts to keep us from sinning ([Psalm 119:11](#)); trusting in it ([1 Thessalonians 2:13](#)); and obeying it ([Psalm 119:4](#); [James 1:22](#)). **In what ways are these multifaceted ministries of the Word of God making a difference in your life as a KINGDOM MAN or CITIZEN?**

3. KINGDOM MEN ARE FIRMLY PLANTED BY A STREAM OF FRESH WATER. (V 3)

Trees are frequently mentioned in the Bible and often have significance as a metaphor. In [Psalm 1:3](#), a person who steers clear of the ungodly and delights in God’s Word is like “a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.” Likewise, the book of Jeremiah says that those whose confidence is in the LORD are “like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit” ([Jeremiah 17:8](#)). To be like a tree planted by streams of water is to be one who has a regular supply of nourishment and refreshment. Plants growing near water are easily sustained and can thrive. Water is the ultimate source of life for a tree, so to be planted by water is to have a regular supply of life itself. This means that a tree planted by the water will grow to be strong and sturdy and have a good root system. Also, such a tree will consistently bear fruit, which is one of its primary purposes. Finally, the well-watered tree has the ability to provide shade (and therefore rest) to anyone who is in need. **Brothers, in what ways does this third point describe the Christian men you know? In what ways does it describe you?**

**2024 THEME: KINGDOM CITIZENS MOVING FROM EARTHLY
CONFORMATION TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION
(Romans 12:1-2)**

JUNE EMPHASIS: KINGDOM MEN EMPOWERED TO FACE THE CHALLENGES OF LIVING TRANSFORMATIONAL LIVES

THOUGHT: Kingdom men must strive to appreciate, accept, and live spirit filled lives, passing on the power of transformational living to young men and boys.

KEY WORDS/PHRASES: Wise Instruction, Discipline, Brotherly Love

LESSON TWENTY-THREE: DELIGHT IN WISE INSTRUCTION

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. In what ways have listening to your parents blessed your life?
2. How can keeping God's Word cover your life, even while sleeping?
3. What are some examples of correction and discipline you experienced?

TEXT: PROVERBS 6:20-23

THE HEART OF THE LESSON: FOLLOWING GODLY DISCIPLINES

INTRODUCTION: We are living in the "information age", but we certainly aren't living in the "age of wisdom". Some people are wizards with computers, but amateurs when it comes to success in life. Computers can store data and obey signals, but they can't give us the ability to use that knowledge wisely. In today's society, we need God's anointing and wisdom. The book of Proverbs is about godly wisdom, how to get it, and how to use it. It's about priorities and principles, not get-rich-quick schemes or success formulas. It tells us not to make a living, but how to live a skillful God centered life. God desires us to embrace His wisdom and seek His power to live skillful and successful anointed lives. It is not so important of how long we live as it is how we live, not the length but the depth of life. "Fools wade in the shallows, but wise people launch out into the deep and let God give them His very best." (**The Transformational Study Bible NLT**) The very nature of the book of Proverbs is so impactful that every proverb has the potential to be transformational at some point in the kingdom citizen's life. Every kingdom citizen can be an instrument for reflection, meditation, and action. More importantly, everyone could receive a message of explanation and instruction. Proverbs is a book of wisdom from God and will help people become more skillful in dealing with the affairs of life. Following God's wisdom is a full-time endeavor.

1. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THE IMPORTANCE OF RECEIVING WISDOM.

The truth of God's Word is important to everyone, especially children. God's Word is true and is filled with wisdom. When kingdom citizens, especially men, trust and obey God's truth, He keeps them from believing the enemy's lies. The enemy most times attacks the head of the family which is the man and tries to destroy the family through the head. However, when the head is spiritually in tuned and uses wisdom from the word of God, the family is stronger. Also, it is important for the entire family to be anchored in the Word of God. When we consider the writer of most of the proverbs Solomon, we find him teaching people how to attain wisdom, discipline, and a prudent life, and how to do what is right, just, and fair.

In short, Solomon is giving divine wisdom for everyday life and providing moral instruction to everyone. The text says: ***“My son, keep your father’s command and do not forsake your mother’s teaching.”*** (V 20 NIV) This verse alone is wise instruction from a father to a son; it also includes the teaching of a mother. It also implies that if someone is struggling with a decision or looking for insight, it is wise to check with parents or older adults. Their years of experience probably have given them wisdom that you may need. Kingdom citizens know that as they receive wisdom from kingdom minded men, they are bringing glory to God.

2. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THEY MUST KEEP GOD’S WORD ALWAYS.

The text says: ***“Bind them upon your heart forever; fasten them around your neck.”*** (V 21 NIV) Solomon in this verse gives even more wise instruction to this son. He makes the point to always keep God’s Word in his heart. The heart in the Bible “is regarded as being the seat of the intellect, the feelings and the will.” (Zondervan’s Compact Bible Dictionary) The heart is also seen as the innermost place where God in the person of the Holy Spirit resides in the believer. Therefore, Solomon suggests that we keep God’s Word in our hearts always. Solomon, this man of God, goes on to say we ought to “tie them around your neck.” This encourages kingdom men and kingdom citizens to keep this life transforming word close to us always. The Word of God is powerful and sharper than a two-edged sword. In Psalm 119:105, it says: “Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.” (NLT) That’s why Solomon goes on to say in verse 22: ***“When you walk, they will guide you; when you sleep, they will watch over you; when you awake, they will speak to you.”*** (NIV) This is a powerful declaration of the Word of God because it informs us that even while we sleep, He watches over us. The Word of God is God covering us at all times! Psalm 121:4 says: ***“Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.”*** (KJV) Kingdom citizens have a powerful promise that God is watching over us always!

3. KINGDOM CITIZENS SEE THE WORD OF GOD AS THE WAY OF LIFE.

The text says: ***“For these commands are a lamp, this teaching is a light, and the corrections of discipline are the way of life.”*** (V 23 NIV) The Word of God should be a lamp and a light giving guidance to a person’s conduct. It keeps a person on the right path, leading the kingdom citizen in the way of eternal life.

**2024 THEME: KINGDOM CITIZENS MOVING FROM EARTHLY
CONFORMATION TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION
(Romans 12:1-2)**

**JUNE EMPHASIS: KINGDOM MEN EMPOWERED TO FACE THE CHALLENGES
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THOUGHT: Kingdom men must strive to appreciate, accept, and live spirit filled lives, passing on the power of transformational living to young men and boys.

KEY WORDS/PHRASES: Wise Instruction, Discipline, Brotherly Love

LESSON TWENTY-FOUR: THE POWER OF DISCIPLINE

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. How does God's discipline compare to a father's discipline?
2. How does God's discipline shape us into holiness?
3. Who is the earthly person that trained you for right living?

TEXT: HEBREWS 12:7-11

THE HEART OF THE LESSON: SHAPED BY GODLY DISCIPLINE

INTRODUCTION: This week's lesson is taken from the book of Hebrews. The writer of this letter does not identify himself, but he was obviously well known to the original recipients. The key theme of the book is for kingdom citizens to press on to maturity in spite of any adversities. This is a good letter for men and boys to study because of its encouragement to press on and its instruction of enduring faith. Possibly the best approach to studying Hebrews is to notice five characteristics in this letter. It is a book of evaluation, a book of exhortation, a book of examination, a book of expectation, and a book of exaltation. The book of Hebrews exalts the person and work of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. When we realize all that we have in and through Him, we have no desire for anyone else or anything else! Kingdom men and boys need this kind of instruction and direction as they learn to live as kingdom citizens. As we, as kingdom citizens, study Hebrews, we must keep in mind that we shouldn't get lost in doctrinal details. Our purpose must be to hear and obey the Word of God.

1. KINGDOM CITIZENS ENDURE EARTHLY AND HEAVENLY DISCIPLINE.

In life, we must understand the importance of discipline. Discipline in life at times can be very difficult, however, we must understand the power and necessity of discipline. Even though discipline may be difficult, we must realize that people and God must use it to shape our lives. Paul tells Timothy: *"Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving as a soldier gets involved in civilian affairs- he wants to please his commanding officer."*

(2 Tim. 2:3-4 NIV) Just as the soldier wants to please his or her commanding officer, kingdom citizens should strive to please God. The text says: ***“Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? (V 7 NIV)*** The verses that proceed verse 7 explain why the kingdom citizen should endure discipline saying: ***“And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said, “My child, don’t make light of the Lord’s discipline, and don’t give up when he corrects you. For the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child.” (Hebrews 12:5-6 NLT)*** It’s because of God’s love for us that He disciplines and corrects us. His love and discipline make us better kingdom men and kingdom women. Actually, the discipline we receive many times causes us to make the necessary transformation in our lives. God’s discipline proves to us that we are very special to Him and that He loves us enough to bring us back into right relationship with Him.

2. KINGDOM CITIZENS REALIZE DISCIPLINE IS SHAPING US.

Everyone has to undergo discipline by someone in life, however, it appears to be more effective when a father disciplines a child, especially when it’s the discipline of a father to his son. It seems as if a son has more respect for a father when it comes to discipline. The text says: ***“Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best, but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in His holiness. Discipline is the evidence of the father’s love. Satan wants us to believe that the difficulties of life are proof that God does not love us, but just the opposite is true. Sometimes God’s discipline is seen in his rebukes from the Word or from circumstances. At times he shows His love by punishing us with physical suffering. Whatever the experience, we can be sure that His hand of discipline is controlled by His Loving Heart.” (The Transformation Study Bible)*** Kingdom men and Kingdom citizens are always learning the shaping process God uses as He transforms us into the vessels He plans for us to be. **HOW IS GOD SHAPING YOUR LIFE?**

3. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT DISCIPLINE ENCOURAGES RIGHTEOUSNESS.

The text says: ***“Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live?” (V 9 NIV)*** From this verse, we should notice how God’s discipline helps us as kingdom citizens live a more spirit filled life and leads to righteousness. The text also says: ***“No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. (V 11 NIV)*** It may not feel good going through stuff, but God is shaping and training us to live righteously!

**2024 THEME: KINGDOM CITIZENS MOVING FROM EARTHLY
CONFORMATION TO SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION
(Romans 12:1-2)**

**JUNE EMPHASIS: KINGDOM MEN EMPOWERED TO FACE THE CHALLENGES
OF LIVING TRANSFORMATIONAL LIVES**

THOUGHT: Kingdom men must strive to appreciate, accept, and live spirit filled lives, passing on the power of transformational living to young men and boys.

KEY WORDS/PHRASES: Wise Instruction, Discipline, Brotherly Love

LESSON TWENTY-FIVE: TEAMWORK FOR A GOOD RESULT

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. What are some challenges of worship in a crowd?
2. Who are the people that will help you show brotherly love and why?
3. How receptive are you to receive discipline and wise instruction? Explain.

TEXT: MARK 2:1-5

THE HEART OF THE LESSON: BROTHERLY LOVE IN ACTION

INTRODUCTION: Our lesson this week is taken from the Gospel of Mark. John Mark was not one of the twelve disciples, but he accompanied Paul on his first missionary journey. Mark was probably the first Gospel written. The other Gospels quote all but thirty-one verses of Mark. Mark records more miracles than does any other Gospel. The purpose of his Gospel is to present the person, work, and teachings of Jesus. In our lesson this week, we find Mark's account of Jesus healing a paralytic. It is not unusual for Jesus to heal, but our verses this week show us teamwork, brotherly love, and faith working together. The fact that this narrative takes place in Capernaum is significant. Jesus is on somewhat of a healing venture. He's moving about and when He gets back to Capernaum, the people start to gather to hear Him preach but also to witness His next healing. The text purposefully mentions that there was such a crowd that there was not room in the place nor outside the door. This lesson points out several spiritual insights that we should pay close attention to. Just to name a few, we should look at Jesus' willingness to heal, Jesus' willingness to forgive, the teamwork of the men, and the faith of the men. A question may be: **How do any of these affect your life?**

1. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THAT CERTAIN SITUATIONS CAN CAUSE CHALLENGES.

In this narrative, we find some men who observed a situation that needed to be addressed. The men saw a paralytic that needed healing, and they knew that Jesus could heal this man. The challenge was the crowd was such that they could not easily get him to Jesus.

The text says: ***“Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on.” (V 4 NIV)*** The fact the crowd presented a challenge to these men wasn’t primary. These men saw a need and knew who to present the need to. It takes teamwork. Another thing we should take note of is the fact that crowds can sometimes be more than a physical hinderance, but also an emotional hinderance because of what others may think or say. Even in worship at times some may not express themselves or take action because of what someone in the crowd may think of them. This was not the case with these men. They worked together to get this paralyzed man to Jesus in spite of the crowd and the challenge of getting him on the roof on a mat. This action took kingdom minded teamwork and faith!

2. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THE IMPORTANCE OF BROTHERLY LOVE.

This text gives us good insight on Brotherly Love and the actions needed to display true brotherly love. In this narrative, these men put their personal agendas aside and even their egos aside to work together as brothers in Christ to help this helpless man. Many times, in life people and even kingdom citizens are so concerned about who will get the credit, or whose idea it was or something else that they can’t work together. Kingdom men and kingdom citizens must have a transformational mindset in order to help each other in time of need. Not only in times of need, but as kingdom citizens, we need each other to work together for kingdom assignments to be effective. The text says this man was a paralytic implying that he was unable to walk. These kingdom minded men who had brotherly love knew that and they carried him on a mat. The spiritual connotation to these men carrying him is that they did for him something he couldn’t do for himself. **What have you done lately for someone when they were unable to do?**

3. KINGDOM CITIZENS KNOW THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FAITH AND FORGIVENESS.

The text says: ***When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, “Son, your sins are forgiven.” (V 5 NIV)*** Jesus noticed the determination and effort of these men as faith in action. Jesus realized that these men knew of His power to heal and deliver. Jesus did not rebuke the interruption of His preaching and teaching but said to the paralytic “Son” (an affectionate term), your sins are forgiven. This is a powerful example of Jesus’ wisdom because He met this man’s spiritual need before He met his physical need. Note that Jesus says “sins” not sin, and He addressed the one who needed help. **Do you need help today? Call Jesus!**

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LESSON TWENTY-SIX: MEN HELPING MEN

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. What are some ways men can help each other?
2. What are rewards of sowing into other men you have received?
3. What are some reflections of your character that others experience?

TEXT: PROVERBS 27:17-19

THE HEART OF THE LESSON: MEN BUILDING CHARACTER IN EACH OTHER

INTRODUCTION: The book of Proverbs is a powerful book of wisdom and is intentional about growing kingdom men especially men in the Lord. Although this book begins with a title ascribing it as the Proverbs of Solomon, it's clear by some chapters that Solomon was not the only author of the Proverbs. Proverbs was written to give "prudence to the simple, knowledge and discretion to the young", and to make wise men wiser. In Proverbs, there are several references to "my son" which implies that it's intended for the spiritual growth of a younger person. It emphasizes instructing the young and guiding them into a life of wisdom and prosperity. This powerful book will help all people to acquire wisdom and knowledge on how to live and avoid pitfalls of life. Although it is a practical book dealing with the art of living, it bases wisdom solidly on the fear of the Lord. One of the key verses in Proverbs is ***"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline."*** (Proverbs 1:7 NIV) In fact this verse is where the book gets its overall theme of "Wisdom." In order to receive wisdom from God, the believer must have a reverence for God that includes submission to His leadership and the obedience to His Word.

1. KINGDOM CITIZENS REALIZE THAT MEN CAN HELP EACH OTHER.

The text says: ***"As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."*** (V 17 NIV) The phrase "sharpens another" points to the idea of development and molding the character to be like God. Kingdom men know the importance of men helping men, and they realize that this process takes mental and spiritual enlightenment. Mental sharpness comes from being around good people. A meeting of minds can help people see their ideas with new clarity, refine them, and shape them into brilliant insights. This requires partners who can challenge one another and stimulate thought- people who focus on the idea without involving their egos in the discussion; people who know how to attack the thought and not the thinker.

Two friends who bring ideas together can help each other become sharper. **(Life Application Study Bible)** The text uses iron as an example because when iron is rubbed against iron, it shapes and sharpens. Kingdom men can help each other improve when they discuss, pray, critique, suggest, and share ideas to help each other. Kingdom men must realize that just because a person does not agree with them doesn't mean they are against the person. New and different ideas can be effective in the transformational process. Kingdom men and kingdom citizens must realize that the ultimate goal is to improve and that takes transformation! **Who are you helping to transform into the likeness of Christ?**

2. KINGDOM CITIZENS REALIZE THE INVESTMENT OF SOWING.

In the Bible, we learn a spiritual principle of "sowing and reaping." The Bible says "Do not be deceived. God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows." **(Galatians 6: 7 NIV)** The text says: "*He who tends a fig tree will eat its fruit, and he who looks after his master will be honored.*" **(Proverbs 27:18 NIV)** Kingdom men and leaders deal with lots of problems and concerns, and it can be easy to overlook people who labor and seem insignificant but have fruitful input and abilities. They are like the example of the fig tree in the text. They need attention! Kingdom men and leaders realize that some people work in the background, work hard, and are helpful and deserve to enjoy the fruit of their labor. We must be sure that when we plan, organize, and work that we don't forget the people who help the plan or event to be successful!

3. KINGDOM CITIZENS REALIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF GODLY CHARACTER.

The text says: "*As water reflects a face so a man's heart reflects the man.*" **(Proverbs 27:19 NIV)** In this verse, the writer uses "water" and its ability to reflect as an example to show the reflection of one's heart. The condition of a man's heart indicates his true character. Kingdom men understand that godly character must first come from the heart. The Bible says: "*For as he thinks in his heart, so is he...*" **(Proverbs 23:7 NKJV)** The heart is the core of where the Spirit of God reflects Himself to the world. Just as water reflects a person's face, so does a person's heart or mind reflect the true character of a person. **As kingdom citizens, we must always reflect the character of God!**

QUARTER 1: APRIL - MAY - JUNE

Kingdom Citizens Becoming Transformers In Mind, Body and Spirit

APRIL 7	TRANSFORMED BY ENCOURAGEMENT
APRIL 14	HEALED AND TRANSFORMED
APRIL 21	GUARD YOUR HEART
APRIL 18	BE TRANSFORMED WITH THE RIGHT MOTIVES

Kingdom Women Empowered To Face The Challenges of Living Transformational Lives

MAY 5	JUST A TOUCH
MAY 12	DO WHAT MAMA SAID
MAY 19	SOME FINAL INSTRUCTIONS
MAY 26	TRANSFORMED BY MOTHERLY LOVE

Kingdom Men Empowered to Face the Challenges of Living Transformational Lives

JUNE 2	MEN DELIGHTING IN GOD'S WAY
JUNE 9	DELIGHT IN WISE INSTRUCTION
JUNE 16	THE POWER OF DISCIPLINE
JUNE 23	TEAMWORK FOR A GOOD RESULT
JUNE 30	MEN HELPING MEN