



ASCENT PROJECT CHURCH

GRAY BOOK

INTRODUCTION

The goal of this Bible study is to help put new believers in Christ on a path of success in their walk with the Lord. Putting the following things into practice are vital to that end.

PRAYER

Your Heavenly Father desires to talk with you about everything. Four components to effective prayer are: faith (Hebrews 11:1-6); perseverance (Luke 11:1-13); a thankful attitude (Philippians 4-6); and a listening ear (Galatians 3:1-5).

STUDY OF THE BIBLE

The Bible is the most tested and trusted source of God's Word in the world. If you ever hope to mature spiritually, you must renew your mind with the Word of God. Romans 12:2 says, "*Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is.*"

OBEDIENCE TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

You will never be able to live the Christian life in your own strength. Here are four steps to help you walk in the grace of God:

1. **Acknowledge** God's Word to you when you hear it, even if you don't like what it says.
2. **Admit** that you cannot perform His will in your own strength.
3. **Ask** the Lord to give you His strength.
4. **Act** on your faith now, trusting that He is working in you (Philippians 4:13, Proverbs 3:5-6).

These points have been adapted from *For Such a Time as This* by Dr. Ron Woodworth.

JOINING A CHURCH

The moment you became a Christian, you also became a part of the family of God. Our Father has provided a home for each of us. It's called the Church and God places us in His church according to His will (Ephesians 2:19-22).

"But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired." -1 Corinthians 12:18

SHARING YOUR FAITH WITH OTHERS

Your testimony, the story of how you gave your life to Jesus, is a powerful tool which can be used to advance God's kingdom on the earth. The Bible says that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy (Revelation 19:10), which means it will bring conviction to others and encourage them to believe in Him as well.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes." -Romans 1:16

BAPTISM IN WATER & BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

These are foundational steps for every new believer. Baptism in water is a burial of the old life you surrendered to Jesus (Romans 6:3-11; Colossians 2:9-14). Baptism with the Holy Spirit gives you the power to live your new life in Christ and to be a bold witness for Him (Acts 1:8 & 2:1-12).

In Acts 2, the apostle Peter preached his first sermon after the resurrection of Jesus. When he was finished, the people were so convicted by his words they asked, "What shall we do?" The rest of this booklet contains four chapters on the four things he told them do (Acts 2:38-40).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1

Repent

Surrendering Your Life to Jesus Pg. 1

Chapter 2

Be Baptized

Burying the Old Life Pg. 6

Chapter 3

Receive the Gift of the Holy Spirit

Empowering the New Life Pg. 10

Chapter 4

Be Saved from this Perverse Generation

Finding Your Place in Christ's Body Pg. 16

CHAPTER 1

REPENT

SURRENDERING YOUR LIFE TO JESUS

OUR NATURE BY BIRTH

The Bible talks about the nature of man, as compared with the nature of God. Many believe that man is essentially good, that he is born innocent and then sins at some point. The Bible paints a very different picture of man's depravity.

Read Romans 5:12-14.

WHAT IS THE SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF EVERY HUMAN BEING?

Read Psalm 14:2-3 and Isaiah 64:6.

HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE GOOD ENOUGH TO MEET GOD'S STANDARDS?
WHY?

WHAT GOOD OR RELIGIOUS ACTS MAKE US RIGHTEOUS?

OUR TUTOR WHICH LEADS US TO CHRIST

The Ten Commandments

The basic foundation of the Old Testament Law is the Ten Commandments. God gave them to Moses on Mount Sinai, engraved on stone tablets.

The 10 Commandments are found in Exodus 20:3-17. Write them out below:

Commandments Relating to God:

1. "You shall have no _____.
2. You shall not make for yourself an _____, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments.
3. You shall not take the _____, for the Lord will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.
4. Remember the _____ day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work, you or your son or your daughter, your male or your female servant or your cattle or your sojourner who stays with you. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day and made it holy.

Commandments Relating to Man:

5. _____, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the Lord your God gives you.
6. You shall not _____.
7. You shall not commit _____.
8. You shall not _____.
9. You shall not bear _____ against your neighbor.
10. You shall not _____ your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that belongs to your neighbor."

What are idolatry and vanity?

Idolatry = The worship of idols, images, or anything made by hands, or which is not God. Excessive attachment or veneration for anything, or that which borders on adoration.

Vanity = Emptiness, worthlessness, the quality of having no substance, value, or importance.

Read James 2:10-13.

DOES GOD SHOW ANY PARTIALITY IN THE BREAKING OF HIS LAW?

CAN ANYONE GET TO HEAVEN BY FOLLOWING THE TEN
COMMANDMENTS?

God's purpose in giving us the Commandments is not to exclude us from a relationship with Himself. Rather, it is to open our eyes to exactly how much we have failed to live up to God's standard; and to make clear to us how futile our own efforts are so that we will be ready to receive His free gift of life.

Read Galatians 3:19-24.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW?

HOW DOES IT DO THIS?

Read Romans 7:1-6.

IN ORDER TO NO LONGER BE BOUND TO THE LAW, WHAT MUST WE JOIN OURSELVES TO?

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S GRACE

God offers His grace and mercy to us in Jesus Christ. We are guilty of sin according to the Law, but God offers us new life. Jesus died in our place and rose from the grave to give us new life. This still requires, however, that we make a decision. We must humble ourselves and accept the offer of life or choose to reject it. If we accept God's grace, then it means that our lives will change.

Grace = Getting something we don't deserve.

Mercy = Not getting something we do deserve

Repentance is the word used in the Bible for the change that happens when we leave our sin behind. Repent means to change direction or to change your way of thinking.

Read Matthew 3:1-10 and Luke 3:1-14.

WHAT DID JOHN MEAN WHEN HE USED THE WORD "REPENT"?

Read 2 Corinthians 7:9-10.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE REPENTANCE WITHOUT REGRET?

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WORLDLY AND GODLY SORROW?

Paul says in Galatians 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the son of God, who loved me and delivered Himself up for me.”

WHAT DO YOU THINK PAUL MEANS BY THIS?

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.

WHAT IS THE RESULT OF REPENTANCE?

OUR NEW IDENTITY IN CHRIST

When we accept Jesus as Savior, we are placed in Christ. This phrase summarizes our new identity. We receive a new name, “Christian,” which means Christ-like. We are identified completely with Christ.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE “IN CHRIST”?

Read John 3:1-8.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE “BORN AGAIN”?

Read Colossians 3:3-10, Romans 6:11, 1 Corinthians 2:16, Ephesians 2:13, Galatians 3:28, Colossians 2:9-10 and Ephesians 2:4-6.

ACCORDING TO THESE VERSES, WHAT BENEFITS DO WE DERIVE FROM BEING “IN CHRIST”?

CHAPTER 2

BE BAPTIZED

BURYING THE OLD LIFE

Just before Jesus ascended into Heaven after His resurrection, He commissioned His disciples to preach the Gospel to all nations. Acts Chapter 2 records the Apostle Peter's very first sermon in fulfillment of this commission. When he was finished, thousands of people were "pierced to the heart" and asked Peter what they should do. Write down the four things Peter told them to do in response to their question (Acts 2:38-40).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

When you surrendered your life to the Lordship of Jesus, you did the first of these four things. The focus of this chapter is the second thing Peter told the people to do, "*be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.*"

BAPTISM DEFINED

The word "baptize" comes from the Greek language and means "to dip, to plunge, to immerse." In classical Greek, it was used when describing the dyeing of fabric or the sinking of a ship.

Read Acts 10:44-48.

WHAT SUBSTANCE ARE PEOPLE IMMERSSED INTO WHEN THEY ARE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST?

BAPTISM IN WATER IS A BURIAL CEREMONY

There are two main passages of scripture that describe the significance of baptism in water.

First, read Romans 6:3-11.

Verse 4 says that “*we were therefore _____ with Him through baptism.*”

Before something can be buried, it must be dead. Compare Romans 6:6-8 with Galatians 2:20 and Colossians 3:3. From these passages, identify what has died that needs to be buried in baptism.

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
1. Have you been baptized in water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Was your life surrendered to Jesus prior to your baptism?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. If you answered “yes” to the first question and “no” to the second question, was your baptism a true spiritual burial as described in Romans 6?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

BAPTISM IN WATER IS A CIRCUMCISION

The second passage of scripture dealing with water baptism is Colossians 2:9-15. Read that passage and fill in the blanks below.

11 and in Him you were also _____ with a circumcision made without _____, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of _____; 12 having been _____ with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

In addition to describing baptism as a burial, this passage says that in baptism a circumcision takes place. Generally speaking, circumcision is a cutting away of something that is unclean.

ACCORDING TO VERSE 11, WHO IS DOING THE CIRCUMCISING IN WATER BAPTISM?

WHAT DOES THE PHRASE, “MADE WITHOUT HANDS,” IN VERSE 11 MEAN?

REFER BACK TO ROMANS 6:6, AND COMPARE IT WITH COLOSSIANS 2:11. WHAT SPECIFICALLY IS BEING CUT AWAY SUPERNATURALLY BY CHRIST IN WATER BAPTISM?

BAPTISM IN WATER IDENTIFIES YOU WITH CHRIST

Taken together, Romans 6 and Colossians 2 paint an awesome picture of what takes place in water baptism:

- | <u>Jesus</u> | <u>You</u> |
|--|---|
| 1. Jesus took up His cross and died to pay for your sins. | 1. You take up your cross to follow Jesus and put your old life to death (repentance). |
| 2. Jesus was taken down from the cross and buried in a tomb. | 2. You are baptized in water and buried with Christ. |
| 3. Jesus rose from the dead with a glorified body. | 3. You come up out of the waters of baptism in the newness of life, having left the old man behind. |

When a person is submerged in the waters of baptism, a miracle takes place.

The old self which was put to death in repentance must be cut away and buried. Jesus performs this sanctifying work for you when you are baptized. In fact, baptism in water is one of the first steps in a lifelong process of sanctification through which God transforms us into the image of His Son. The issue of water baptism is so important that we are commanded to be baptized (Matthew 28:19, Acts 2:38, Acts 10:48).

JESUS HAS CANCELLED YOUR CERTIFICATE OF DEBT

One other powerful picture in Colossians 2 is that of the “certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us” (v 14). When you get baptized, it is a healthy exercise to remember some of the specific sins that were recorded on your certificate of debt and were hostile to you. Jesus has paid your debt with His death on the cross. That payment was credited to your account when you surrendered your life to Him. You can rejoice in the fact that Jesus has nailed your certificate of debt to the cross.

AN EXAMPLE OF BAPTISM

There is the story of a man who learned about baptism in water as you are now. Read it in Acts 8:26-39.

WHEN PHILIP CAME TO THE SUBJECT OF WATER BAPTISM IN HIS PRESENTATION OF THE GOSPEL, HOW DID THE ETHIOPIAN RESPOND?

AS YOU ARE DOING THIS BIBLE STUDY, IS YOUR RESPONSE TO THE ISSUE OF BAPTISM SIMILAR TO OR DIFFERENT FROM THE ETHIOPIAN? WHY?

CHAPTER 3

RECEIVE THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

EMPOWERING THE NEW LIFE

In Acts chapter 2, after hearing the Apostle Peter's first evangelistic sermon, the people asked him, "What shall we do?" Peter told them to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. He also told them they should receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Finally, he exhorted them to be saved from "this perverse generation." This chapter will examine what it means to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

"GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT" = "BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT"

What did Peter mean by "the gift of the Holy Spirit?" To answer this, read Acts 10:44-46, the only other place in the Bible where that exact phrase is used.

HOW DID PETER KNOW THE PEOPLE HAD RECEIVED THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT?

This event is the second time in the book of Acts when people spoke in tongues after an experience with the Holy Spirit. The first time was just before Peter preached his sermon in chapter 2.

Read Acts 2:1-4.

Compare chapter 2:1-4 and chapter 10:44-46.

WHAT DIFFERENT PHRASES ARE USED TO DESCRIBE THIS EVENT?

1. *They were _____ with the Holy Spirit (2:4)*
2. *the Holy Spirit _____ all those who were listening (10:44)*
3. *the _____ of the Holy Spirit had been _____ the Gentiles (10:45)*

There are two other phrases used to describe this event. In Acts 1, Jesus told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit, which is what they were doing in Acts 2:1-4 when they were filled with the Holy Spirit.

Read Acts 1:4-5.

WHAT PHRASES DID JESUS USE TO DESCRIBE THIS EVENT?

4. *wait for what the Father had _____ (1:4)*
5. *you shall be _____ with the Holy Spirit not many days from now (1:5)*

It is clear that when Peter told the people in Acts 2:38 that they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, he was referring to the same thing that Jesus called being baptized with the Holy Spirit. In fact, right after Peter told the people they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, he said, “for the promise is for you and your children, for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God shall call to Himself” (2:39). This is exactly what Jesus was referring to when He said, “wait for what the Father has promised” (1:4).

It is important to note that baptism with the Holy Spirit is separate from the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit that occurs when a person is born of the Spirit, i.e. born again (John 3:3-6).

In John 20:19-31, Jesus appears to His disciples for the first time after His resurrection. During their conversation, He breathes on the disciples and tells them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.” It was at this moment that the Holy Spirit came to dwell within them and give them new life (Ephesians 2:5, 2 Corinthians 5:17). Approximately 40 days later, Jesus gathered His disciples and instructed them not to leave Jerusalem until they had been baptized with the Holy Spirit.

This giving of the Holy Spirit was for a different purpose than the first. It was to give the disciples the power to be witnesses for Jesus. Sometimes both works of the Holy Spirit can happen simultaneously which seems to be the case in Acts 10:44-48.

PURPOSE OF BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

In the Baptism in Water Bible study, you saw that the purpose for water baptism is to bury the old self which was put to death (crucified with Christ) in repentance. What is the purpose of baptism with the Holy Spirit?

Read Acts 1:8.

WHAT DID JESUS SAY THE PEOPLE WOULD RECEIVE WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT CAME UPON THEM?

Jesus said, “*You shall receive power...and you shall be My*

_____.”

As Christians, we are to be witnesses to the world of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Just as a witness in a courtroom tells a story, we are to tell the story of what God has done in our lives so that others might experience salvation as well.

It is impossible to be an effective witness for Jesus in your own strength and ability. That is why Jesus told the disciples to wait for the power of God which would come through the baptism with the Holy Spirit before they began to proclaim the Gospel to the world.

HOW CAN SOMEONE BE BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT?

There are four times in the book of Acts that people received this baptism. You have read two: Acts 2:1-4 and Acts 10:44-46.

Read Acts 8:14-17 and Acts 19:1-6.

WHAT WERE THE TWO WAYS PEOPLE WERE BAPTIZED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ACTS?

1. _____ (Acts 2 & 10)

2. _____ (Acts 8 & 19)

WHAT SIGNS ACCOMPANIED THE BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT?

1. _____ (Acts 2, 10 & 19)

2. _____ (Acts 10)

3. _____ (Acts 19)

To exalt God means to give Him praise and honor, but what does it mean to “speak in tongues” and to “prophecy”?

Read 1 Corinthians 14:1- 5.

WHEN ONE SPEAKS IN A TONGUE, TO WHOM DOES HE SPEAK?

DOES ANYONE UNDERSTAND HIM?

WHEN ONE PROPHESES, TO WHOM DOES HE SPEAK?

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF PROPHECY?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF SPEAKING IN A TONGUE?

The word, “edify,” means to build up, to strengthen. This same word appears in another passage of scripture relating to speaking in tongues.

Read Jude 20-21.

The phrase, “praying in the Holy Spirit,” is another way to say praying in tongues (see 1 Corinthians 14:14-15).

WHAT SPECIFICALLY IS BEING BUILT UP WHEN ONE PRAYS IN A TONGUE?

Read Luke 11:9-13.

God wants to empower you to live an overcoming life. He also desires to give you spiritual gifts which will enable you to be continually strengthened and which you can use to strengthen other believers. Because He is a good Father, God will freely give you the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts if you ask Him.

CHAPTER 4

BE SAVED FROM THIS PERVERSE GENERATION

FINDING YOUR PLACE IN CHRIST'S BODY

In Acts 2:38-40, Peter responded to the question, “Brethren, what shall we do?” Those who asked the question had just heard the Gospel and wanted to know how to become Christians. Peter told them to do four things: repent, be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and be saved from this perverse generation. It is the last of these four issues which this chapter addresses.

WITH WHICH GROUP DO YOU IDENTIFY?

The Greek word that is translated “perverse” means “crooked” or “not straight morally.” The Greek word for generation is *genea*. Vines Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words says that *genea* can signify “a race of people, possessed of similar characteristics, pursuits, etc.” The Bible divides the human race into two distinct groups.

Read 2 Corinthians 6:14-18.

Write down the words that the Bible uses to describe these two groups.

Godly

Ungodly

v. 14 _____

v. 15 _____

v. 16 _____

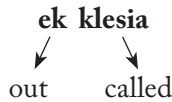
WHAT PROMISE DOES GOD MAKE TO THOSE WHO SEPARATE THEMSELVES FROM THE UNGODLY GROUP?

Read John 15:18-19.

WHAT WORD DOES JESUS USE TO REFER TO THE UNGODLY?

HAVE YOU BEEN CALLED OUT?

Each one of us is born into the world. The Bible says that we are all sinners (Romans 3:23) and that we were born into sin (Psalm 51:5). Thankfully, God invites us to Himself. He calls us to come out of the world and be separate. Those who have been “called out” make up the second group of people in the earth - the church. In fact, the Greek word for church is ekklesia:



The word “church” literally means, “those who have been called out!” Returning to Acts 2, it is clear that the people who responded to Peter’s words in faith indeed came out of their perverse generation and into the very first church.

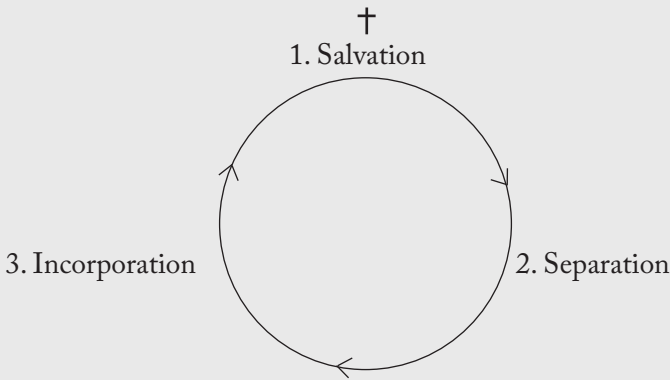
Read Acts 2:41-47.

WHAT FOUR THINGS WERE THE MEMBERS OF THE FIRST CHURCH DEVOTING THEMSELVES TO (v 42)?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

WHAT OTHER CHARACTERISTICS MARKED THE FIRST CHURCH (v 43-47)?

In summary, we see the following pattern emerge from the Scriptures:



When we repent and are saved, God begins an internal work of separation in our hearts. God's desire is for us to embrace this separation from the world and be incorporated into His body, which is the church. In the church, we are to be equipped and trained to reach out to others and bring them into God's kingdom.

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IS NOT MEANT TO BE LIVED ALONE

God did not intend for His followers to live their lives alone, isolated from other believers.

Read Ephesians 4:14-16.

In this passage, the term "body" refers to the body of Christ, or the church (Colossians 1:18).

In verse 16, it says that the body, or the church, is *“fitted and held together by what every _____ according to the proper working of each _____”*.

The joints are the relationships between individual members of the church. When there are healthy relationships and when each member of the church is functioning properly, the result will be growth of the body.

Being a member of a church involves much more than simply attending a worship service each week. God wants His people to be connected in intimate relationships, the same way that your individual body parts are connected together.

GOD’S APPOINTED AUTHORITY

Read Ephesians 4:8-12.

When Jesus ascended to sit at the right hand of the Father, he gave gifts to men.

WHAT ARE THESE GIFTS (V 11)?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

God has delegated His authority to men and appointed them to lead His church for the purpose of _____ (v. 12).

Read Hebrews 13:17.

We should _____ our leaders and _____ to them for they keep _____ over your _____.

The Greek word for pastor is *poimen*, which literally means shepherd. Jesus referred to His followers as sheep (John 10:1-30). As long as sheep are in the fold, they are under the watchful eye of the shepherd and protected from wolves and other predators. It is when a member of God's flock gets separated from the church that he or she is susceptible to attacks from the enemy.

WHERE IS GOD ADDING YOU?

God's will is for every Christian to be a member of a local church, both for the believer's spiritual well-being and for the glory of His son Jesus. The question becomes, "Which local church should I join?"

Read 1 Corinthians 12:18.

ACCORDING TO THIS VERSE, WHO DECIDES WHICH BODY OF BELIEVERS YOU ARE TO JOIN?

The decision of which church to be a member of should be considered prayerfully and made as a step of obedience to God's will. Since God knows the gifts and talents He has invested in you, He is the one who knows which local church will be the best place for you to both give and receive ministry.



NOTES

NOTES

NOTES

ASCENTPROJECT.CO