

PART III

GROW UNTO A PERFECT MAN

*And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, **unto a perfect man**, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive (Ephesians 4.11-14)*

The way to grow “*unto a perfect man*” and “*unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ*” is to study the Bible on your own. This section is designed to help you study the Bible by yourself. Try to complete as many steps as possible. If you cannot complete an entire step do as much as you can and go to the next step.

The first step in this section deals with memorizing and meditating on Scripture. There are 139 suggested verses to memorize. If you cannot memorize all of them choose the ones you want to memorize and hide them in your heart. Move on to the second exercise and meditate on as many of the suggested 98 passages as you can.

Remember, these steps are designed to be worked through at the same time. While you are memorizing and meditating on the passages in Step 11 start on Step 12 “How to do an exegetical study.” If you finish Step 12 before you finish Step 11 move on to the next step.

STEP ELEVEN

MEMORIZING AND MEDITATING ON SCRIPTURE

Memorizing and meditating on Scripture is the most important activity any Christian can engage in. Prayer is extremely important, but if a Christian prays a great deal and rarely memorizes and meditates on Scripture his prayers become an abomination to God:

He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination. (Proverbs 28.9)

Prayer warriors read, study, memorize and meditate on Scripture a great deal. A prayer warrior is a student of the Bible.

If a new-born Christian spent a great deal of his time praying and he never studied Scripture he would not grow spiritually. Spiritual growth and faith comes primarily through reading, studying, memorizing and meditating on Scripture. Our faith also grows through trials, tribulations and hardships, but mainly by the intake of Scripture:

So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. (Romans 10.17)

To grow in faith and become a spiritual adult one must memorize Scripture and meditate on It. One form of meditation is to study Scripture. Another form is to memorize a verse or passage and then think about it. Just think and ask the Holy Spirit to give you understanding. You can also ask questions about the passage or verse. You will gain fantastic insights into Scripture when you meditate on It.

Remember, the key to understanding Scripture more than any Bible teacher, preacher, pastor and theologian is to meditate on Scripture:

I have more understanding than all my teachers: for thy testimonies are my meditation. (Psalm 119.99)

Anyone can have greater understanding than all of the giants of the faith if they memorize and meditate on Scripture more than those giants. The only ones you cannot have more understanding of Scripture are those who meditate on Scripture more than you do. Keep in mind that memorizing Scripture is commendable, but without daily meditation on Scripture it will only produce knowledge of the Bible. There are millions of Christians around the world who have great knowledge of Scripture,

but very little understanding and wisdom. There are even millions of non-Christians who have greater knowledge of Scripture than the average Christian, but they do not have much understanding and wisdom. “*Knowledge puffeth up*” (1 Corinthians 8.1). Yet if one meditates on Scripture he will be given understanding and wisdom (James 1.5).

Memorization Exercise

Exercise One

Set up your spiritual fitness program and increase the amount of time you spend in prayer and Scripture. Tear out the copy on page 157 and make copies for your use and for others. You can also go to the book’s website – www.makedisciplesofallthenations.com and print it.

Start your memorization program with the basic salvation verses. Then memorize the verses suggested below or choose your own. Try to memorize one verse per week. If you cannot memorize all of them memorize as many as you can. (Do the following exercises simultaneously.)

1. Salvation – Matthew 25.46; Mark 8.36-37; John 1.12; 3.16, 36; 14.6; Acts 4.12; Romans 3.23; 5.8; 6.23; 10.9-10, 13, 17; 2 Cor. 6.2b; Ephesians 2.8-9; Hebrews 9.27; Revelation 20.15.
2. Eternal security – John 5.24; 6.37; 10.27-29; 20.31; 1 John 5.10-13.
3. Holiness/Sanctification – Psalm 119.11; Proverbs 8.13; Romans 12.1-2; 1 Corinthians 10.31; 2 Corinthians 6.14-18; Galatians 5.13-26; James 4.1-10; 1 Peter 2.15-16; 1 John 2.15-17.
4. Love – 1 Corinthians 13.1-13; 1 John 3.16-18.
5. Blessed hope – 1 Thessalonians 4.16-18; Titus 2.13; 1 John 3.2-3.
6. Peace – Philippians 4.7.
7. Prayer – Matthew 7.7; John 14.13-14; 1 John 3.22; 5.14.
8. Prosperity – Psalm 1.
9. Protection – Psalm 23.
10. Spiritual warfare – Ephesians 6.10-18.
11. Strength – Isaiah 40.29-31; Ephesians 3.16; Philippians 4.13.
12. Sufficiency – Philippians 4.19.
13. Temptation – 1 Corinthians 10.13.
14. Tongue – James 3.1-18.

It will take you almost three years to memorize the above 139 verses if you memorize one verse a week. Stay with it and review them daily.

Meditation Exercises

We are commanded to meditate on Scripture “*day and night*” (Joshua 1.8). True disciples of Jesus “*delight in the law of God*” and they meditate on His Word “*day and night*” (Psalm 1.2). These exercises are designed to help you meditate on Scripture.

Exercise Two

Pick a favorite verse and spend some time just thinking about it. Write down what comes to you. After you have spent ten minutes or more doing this – meditate on that verse or passage asking the following questions and write down your answers:

1. What doctrine(s) is found in this passage?
2. What message is being conveyed to me?
3. How should the message change my life?
4. What does God want me to do?

Passages to meditate on:

Psalm 1	Psalm 23
Psalm 37.1-11	Psalm 119.9-16, 97-104
Proverbs 1.1-7	Proverbs 2.1-12
Proverbs 3.1-12	Proverbs 3.13-18
Proverbs 6.16-19	Proverbs 8.32-36
Isaiah 43.10-12; 44.6	Isaiah 52.13-53.12
Isaiah 55.6-11	Isaiah 65.17-25
Jeremiah 1.4-12	Jeremiah 17.5-11
Matthew 5.1-12	Matthew 5.13-16
Matthew 5.38-48	Matthew 6.9-13
Matthew 6.19-34	Matthew 7.1-5
Matthew 12.1-8	Matthew 28.19-20
John 1.1-14	John 6.32-40
John 8.31-36	John 10.1-15
John 10.27-30	John 14.1-6
John 14.13-18	John 14.23-27
John 15.1-6	John 15.7-14
John 15.15-21	John 16.7-11
John 17.15-23	John 21.19, 22
Romans 3.10-18	Romans 5.1-5

Romans 6.1-23	Romans 8.28-30
Romans 9.10-24	Romans 12.1-2
Romans 12.9-16	Romans 12.17-21
1 Corinthians 13.1-13	2 Corinthians 5.17-21
2 Corinthians 6.14-18	2 Corinthians 9.6-15
2 Corinthians 11.23-33	2 Corinthians 13.5
Galatians 5.13-26	Galatians 6.1-10
Ephesians 2.8-10	Ephesians 4.11-16
Ephesians 6.10-18	Daniel 10.13, 20-21
Philippians 2.2-8	Philippians 3.7-8
Philippians 4.4-9	Colossians 1.9-12
1 Thessalonians 4.13-18	1 Timothy 6.9-12
2 Timothy 2.15	2 Timothy 4.1-5
Hebrews 2.1-3	Hebrews 3.12-13
Hebrews 4.12-13	Hebrews 5.11-6.3
Hebrews 10.32-39	Hebrews 11.1-40
Hebrews 12.1-17	Hebrews 13.1-9
Hebrews 13.15-17	James 1.2-10
James 1.19-20	James 1.22-27
James 2.14-20	James 3.1-18
James 4.1-12	James 4.13-17
1 Peter 1.13-16	1 Peter 2.20-21
1 Peter 3.1-9	1 Peter 5.5-10
2 Peter 1.5-9	2 Peter 1.4-11
1 John 1.6-10	1 John 2.8-11
1 John 2.15-17	1 John 2.27-29
1 John 3.15-24	1 John 5.10-14
Revelation 20.11-15	Revelation 21.1-7; 22.1-5

If you meditate on one of these 98 passages each week you will complete them in less than two years.

Exercise Three

Choose a subject or topic and think about it. Write down the thoughts that come to you. Get your study Bible out and write down several verses that deal with the subject. Meditate on each verse or passage and write down your thoughts about it. Note what you learned concerning this subject and how it affects your life.

Topics and passages to consider meditating on:

1. Grace (Romans 5.2, 15; 11.6; 12.3, 6; Ephesians 2.8-10).
2. Faith (2 Chronicles 20.20; Habakkuk. 2.4; Matthew 17.20; Luke 17.5; Romans 1.17; 10.17; Ephesians 6.16; Hebrews 11; James 2.17; 1 John 5.4).
3. Discipleship (Matthew 16.24; 28.19-20; Luke 14.26-33; John 15.8; 2 Timothy 2.2).
4. Prayer (Ephesians 6.18; 1 Thessalonians 5.17; 1 Timothy 2.1-4).
5. Study of Scripture (Deut. 17.19; 31.12; Isaiah 34.16; Hosea 6.3; John 5.39; Acts 2.42; 5.42; 17.11; Romans 15.4; 2 Timothy 2.15).
6. Fellowship of the brethren (Psalm 119.63; Proverbs 13.20; Acts 2.42; 5.42; Hebrews 3.13; 10.24-25; 1 John 1.7).
7. Love of the brethren (Leviticus 25.35; John 13.34-35; 15.12-13; Romans 12.9, 13; 1 Thess. 3.12; 1 Peter 1.22; 1 John 3.16-18).
8. Love of all men (Leviticus 19.34; Proverbs 25.21; Matthew 5.43-48; Romans 12.17-21; Hebrews 13.2).
9. Hell and the Lake of Fire, and eternity (Psalm 11.6; 140.10; Luke 16.19-31; Matthew 25.41, 46; Romans 12. 20; Revelation 14.9-11; 20.10-15; 21.8).
10. Humility (Proverbs 3.34; 15.33; Romans 12.3, 16; Philippians 2.3-5; James 4.6, 10; 1 Peter 5.5-6).
11. Giving (Exodus 25.2; Leviticus 25.35; Numbers 31.50; Deuteronomy 15.7; 16.17; Proverbs 3.9; 11.24-25; 19.17; 21.13; 22.9; 28.27; Ecclesiastes 5.13; 11.1; Isaiah 58.7; Matthew 5.42; 6.3; Luke 6.38; 12.33; Acts 11.29; Romans 12.13; 2 Corinthians 9.6-15; Hebrews 13.1-2; James 1.27; 1 Peter 4.9).
12. Rewards (Matthew 5.11-12; 25.23; Luke 6.35; 1 Corinthians 3.12-15; 9.25; Ephesians 6.8; 2 Timothy 4.8; Hebrews 11.6, 26; James 1.12; Revelation 3.11; 22.12).
13. Sanctification (Leviticus 11.44-45; 19.2; 20.7; Matthew 5.48; Romans 12.1-2; 1 Peter 1.15-16; 1 John 5.21).
14. Spiritual warfare (2 Corinthians 10.3-5; Galatians 5.13-26; Ephesians 6.10-18; 1 Thess. 5.8; 2 Timothy 2.4; Heb. 4.12).
15. Suffering and persecution (Acts 5.40-42; Romans 8.17; Ephesians 2.21; 4.1, 13; Philippians 1.29; 3.10; 2 Thessalonians 1.5; 2 Timothy 1.8; 2.3, 9; 3.12; 1 Peter 2.20-21; 4.19).
16. Temptation (1 Corinthians 10.13; James 1.13-16).

STEP TWELVE

HOW TO DO AN EXEGETICAL STUDY

Every disciple should know how to do an exegetical study to be able to teach the Infallible, Holy Word of God accurately. Do the exercises and you will learn how to do a study.

The basic hermeneutical principle that should be adhered to with no variation is:

Take everything literally in context, unless the Scriptures say it is symbolic or unless it is physically impossible for it to be or to take place in a literal manner with the exception of miracles.

An example of how this principle works is found in Revelation 12:

And another sign was seen in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew a third part of the stars of heaven, and he cast them to the Earth... (Revelation 12.3-4a)

There never has been nor will there ever be a literal dragon with seven heads and ten horns. Even if there were such a creature it could not sweep a third of the stars in space and cast them down to Earth. Therefore, the dragon and the stars are symbolic. In verse nine it says the Devil, who is called a “*great dragon*,” and his angels were cast down to Earth. We can determine from this that the devil is the dragon and the angels are the stars.

We also know from Daniel 8.9-11 that the “*little horn*” (Antichrist) casts some of the stars of heaven down to Earth. These stars are fallen angels that joined the devil in his rebellion. We see that the Devil and the Antichrist together cast down angels to Earth. We know the “*little horn*” is the Antichrist because in verse eleven of Daniel 8 he claims to be equal to the “*prince of the host*” (Jesus Christ). In 2 Thessalonians 2.4 we see the Antichrist will claim to be “*God*.”

In chapter 9 of Revelation there are two separate groups of demonic creatures mentioned (9.1-11; 16-19). These demonic creatures are real and not symbolic. It is not impossible for there to be creatures as depicted in these passages. They do not do things that are physically impossible for a creature to do.

How to do the study

1. Determine who the message is being given to and why.
2. Determine if the message is to be understood as being literal or symbolic.
3. Determine the context (What is the subject).
4. Determine the dispensation the passage applies to and if the message is for us today or for only those of the Old Testament dispensation or for a later dispensation (Tribulation or Millennial and Eternal Kingdoms).
5. Find as many passages dealing with the subject as you can.
6. Put together the message of all the passages to determine what is being said.
7. Give clear statements far more importance than unclear statements.
8. Base the message of an unclear statement on a clear one.

For an example of an exegetical study go to page 86. Do exegetical studies of the following passages:

1. Zechariah 14.2; Luke 21.24; Revelation 11.2 (When will the times of the Gentiles cease?)
2. Matthew 7.21-23; Luke 13.24; 2 Corinthians 13.5 (Explain if it is possible for a person who thinks they are saved and are serving the Lord to not be saved.)
3. Matthew 12.22-32 (Explain what the blasphemy of Holy Spirit is.)
4. 1 Thessalonians 5.1-6 (Explain what the “*day of the Lord*” is; what will happen prior to it; and if Christians will be here when it comes.)
5. 2 Thessalonians 2.1-3 (Explain what “*the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him*” is. Explain what “*that day*” in verse 3 is, and what two things take place before that day.)
6. Revelation 20.1-3 (Explain whether or not a literal angel takes a literal chain to bind the devil, and if the devil is cast into a bottomless pit.)
7. Revelation 21.10-22.5 (Explain whether or not the description of the New Jerusalem are literal or symbolic and why.)

STEP THIRTEEN

EXEGETICAL STUDIES OF SANCTIFICATION PASSAGES

Do an exegetical study of the following sanctification passages:

Romans 5.3-5
Romans 6.6-18
Romans 12.1-3
Romans 12.9-21
1 Corinthians 13.1-8
Galatians 5.13-26
Ephesians 4.22-32
Ephesians 5.1-12
Ephesians 6.10-18
Philippians 2.1-5
Philippians 3.7-10
James 1.2-8
James 1.12-17
James 3.1-18
James 4.6-10
1 Peter 1.13-19
1 Peter 2.11-21
1 Peter 3.8-17
1 Peter 4.1-4
1 Peter 4.12-19
2 Peter 1.5-11
1 John 2.15-17

STEP FOURTEEN

MISUNDERSTOOD PASSAGES

Do an exegetical study of these following misunderstood passages:

Old Testament

1. Genesis 3.16 – Explain whether Eve was cursed to desire to have Adam rule over her or if she was cursed to be ruled over by Adam and that she would hate it and want to usurp his authority over her.
2. Genesis 22.17; 24.60 – Explain what the “*gates of his enemies*” are.
3. 2 Samuel 7.10-16 – Explain what the prophecy is all about and what place God would appoint for Israel to move to and dwell there. At the time of this prophecy the Hebrew people were living in Israel. Where did the Hebrew people move to where they lived in peace and had rest from their enemies? Also explain who sat on the throne of King David (1 Kings 2.4; Psalm 89.29, 36; Jeremiah 33.17) from the time that the last king of Israel, Zedekiah, was deposed by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings 25.1-7; 2 Chronicles 36.11-23) until today.
4. Isaiah 3.12 – Explain whether or not women should be equal to men in the secular world and be able to hold any position, including political office, judge, police, soldier, etc.
5. Ezekiel 35.10-15; 36.5 (Explain when Edom took possession of the land of Israel and when they were judged or will be judged.)

New Testament

1. Romans 5.12-14 – Explain whether or not the death that Adam brought was only to people or to all living things.
2. Romans 8.26-27 – Explain if the intercession by the Holy Spirit is audible or not and what that means for some denominations.

3. Romans 12.19-20 – Explain if a Christian is kind to one who harms him the result will be greater punishment for that person or none at all.
4. 1 Corinthians 2.9-10, 16 – Explain whether or not it is possible to know what God has prepared for those who love Him.
5. 1 Corinthians 11.20-34 – Explain whether or not the warning is to be careful of the manner of partaking of communion or if one must be living a holy life to take it.
6. 1 Corinthians 14.34 – Explain whether or not women can speak in a worship service and give biblical reasons.
7. 2 Corinthians 10.3-6 – Explain if we are commanded here to take every thought we have captive to Christ or something else.
8. 1 Timothy 2.9-15 – Explain whether or not women can teach men in a church or home Bible study and if they can be a pastor.
9. Revelation 3.20 – Explain whether or not this passage is talking about salvation or fellowship with Jesus.
10. Revelation 4.10 – Explain whether or not all the saints cast their crowns at the feet of Jesus or just the 24 elders.

STEP FIFTEEN

EXEGETICAL STUDIES OF BOOKS

Start with the General Epistles (James through Jude) in the New Testament, and then do the smaller epistles of Paul (Galatians through Philemon), and finally the larger ones (1 & 2 Corinthians, Romans and Hebrews last). Those two letters are the most complex and you will need much experience before you tackle them. You may also want to do some studies in the Psalms and Proverbs while working on the New Testament. You can do studies in any book of the Bible, but we recommend you start with the New Testament, Psalms and Proverbs before tackling the remainder of the Old Testament. You can move on to Steps 16 through 19 while you are working on this step.

When you do exegetical studies do not use commentaries, systematic theology books or any helps, except those noted in Step One. Do your studies using the Bible as your only source relying on the Holy Spirit to teach you (1 John 2.27). Once you have completed your exegetical study you can then compare it with commentaries.

Example of an exegetical study of a book

Revelation Four

The Throne in Heaven

4:1-5 *After these things I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the*

throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.

(4:1) John saw the throne of God in Heaven and described it as best he could. The door is a literal door. He heard a voice speaking to him that sounded like a trumpet. The identity of who is speaking is unclear although the voice is probably that of Jesus (1:10-20). He is invited up to the throne room to see what will take place in the future.

(4:2-3) He was in the Spirit when he entered the throne room. He only describes the throne and God who is seated on it. The throne takes precedent over everything in Heaven, and is the focus of attention. Other men had visions of the throne of God (1 Kings 22:19; Isaiah 6:1-4; Ezekiel 1:26-28; Daniel 7:9-10). The visions are of the throne of God (Revelation 5:6-7).

Daniel saw the throne of God which is on fire and its wheels are a burning fire. A river of fire flows from his throne and millions of beings stand around His throne (7:9-10). Jesus approaches the throne and is given “*dominion, glory and a kingdom*” (7:13-14).

Jesus looks like a jasper stone which is crystal clear (Revelation 21:11) and a sardine stone which is reddish in appearance. The jasper color represents His purity, and the sardine reminds us of His sacrifice on the cross – the shedding of His blood to cleanse the sins of mankind.

(4:4) Twenty-four elders are sitting on thrones around the throne of God. They are clothed in white robes and have crowns of gold on their heads. These 24 elders are thought to be 12 patriarchs of the Old Testament Dispensation and the 12 apostles. They may be, but they could be 24 men from both dispensations. It is hard to imagine Moses and Abraham being left out of this group or Enoch, Noah, Shem, King David, Elijah, Elisha, Isaiah, Jeremiah and John the Baptist. It is possible that these men and Jacob will be the 12 elders representing the believers of the Old Testament dispensation. The 11 apostles and Paul most likely will be the elders representing the believers of the New Testament dispensation.

All believers will wear crowns when we go home (Revelation 2:10; 2 Timothy 4:8; James 1:12) just as the elders do. These crowns are conditional. Those who are faithful to the Lord until they die will receive the crown of life (Revelation 2:10; James 1:12). This crown can be forfeited (Revelation 3:11). Elders (pastors) will receive a crown of glory

if they have fed the flock given to them according to the will of God (1 Peter 5:1-4).

A crown of righteousness is given to all who love and look for the appearing of Jesus (2 Timothy 4:8). Those who are eagerly looking for His return will be given this crown. If you are not looking for Him to return you will not be given this crown. That is one reason why every believer should be studying the Scriptures daily to learn when Jesus will return.

(4:5) Lightning comes from the throne of God along with thunder (11:19; 16:18). This is one of the displays of power that accompanied the Lord when He appeared in the Old Testament dispensation (Exodus 19:16; Hebrews 12:18-19).

The seven lamps of fire which burn before the throne are the seven Spirits of God (the Holy Spirit). The Holy Spirit is always before the throne of God (Revelation 1:4). He also indwells every believer – those on Earth and in Heaven – and He will indwell all of the redeemed throughout eternity (John 14:16). It is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which guarantees no one will sin in Heaven. The Holy Spirit has no form, but takes the appearance of fire in this instance. At the baptism of Jesus He took the form of a dove (Matthew 3.16; John 1.32).

The Four Living Creatures

4:6-11 *And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

(4:6) In front of the throne of God is what appears like a sea of crystal clear glass. The foundation upon which the throne of God rests on is crystal clear. It is unclear what it is made of, but it doesn't matter. The foundation is crystal clear to represent the purity of God. The walls of New Jerusalem are made of transparent gold (Revelation 21:18) as well as the streets (Revelation 21:21). It represents the purity of the dwelling place of God and it is literal. The walls and streets of New Jerusalem are transparent gold and the foundations are made of precious stones (Revelation 21:19-20). It is possible that the crystal clear foundation here is also transparent gold.

The phrase "in the center" means one of the beasts is positioned right in front of the throne of God. The other three are positioned around the throne, presumably on the west, south and east. The living creatures are actual creatures, the ones that Ezekiel saw in his vision (1.5-12). They have eyes all around them (Ezekiel 1:18). The eyes are literal and symbolic of them being able to see a great deal. They are not omniscient like God, but they can see much more than people or angels who have only two eyes.

The living creatures take part in the work of the Lord and are mentioned throughout the Revelation (5:6, 6:1, 6, 7:11; 14:3; 15:7; 19:4). The 24 elders are also seen participating in the events in Heaven (4.10; 5:6, 8, 14; 19:14).

(4:7) The living creatures resemble a lion, a calf, an eagle and one had the face like that of a man (Ezekiel 1:10; 10:14). They represent the four aspects of Jesus.

The lion represents His kingship for He is "*the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David*" (Revelation 5.5).

The calf represents His death on the cross for He was the sacrificial lamb/calf (Hebrews 9:12, 19) "*of God who takes away the sin of the world!*" (John 1:29).

The flying eagle represents His divinity for He is the Son of God (Hebrews 4:14) equal to the Father (John 10:30; Isaiah 9:6).

The creature with a face like a man represents His humanity. He was fully human (John 1:14; Philippians 2:6-8) yet fully divine (1 Timothy 6:5; Hebrews 1:2-5, 8-9; Revelation 1:8; 4:11; 17:14; 19:16).

The four gospels also speak of His kingship (Matthew), His sacrifice (Mark), His humanity (Luke) and His divinity (John).

The living creatures are also symbolic of the four major categories of air-breathing creatures on Earth (insects excluded). The lion is symbolic

of wild beasts, the calf of domestic beasts, the eagle of birds and the man of mankind.

(4:8) The living creatures have six wings the same number that the Seraphim have (Isaiah 6:2). These creatures are classified as cherubim (Revelation 3:24; Ezekiel 1:10; 10:14) which are very similar to the Seraphim. The cherubim seen by Ezekiel only have four wings (10:21). Apparently some have six wings others only four.

The living creatures do nothing but worship Jesus and God the Father. They worship Him day and night without rest. One of the saying they repeat is: "*Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.*" Jesus is perfectly holy (Isaiah 6:3; 1 Peter 1:16), and He is identified at the beginning of the book of Revelation as the One who was, who is and who is to come (1:4, 8).

(4:9-11) When the living creatures worship God and Jesus the 24 elders do likewise and cast their crowns before His throne. They give all glory, honor and power to God and Jesus. They acknowledge that He is the creator of the universe, who created everything (Revelation 10:6; Acts 14:15) and keeps all things going by His will (Colossians 1:16-17). This truth blows away the mockers who peddle the absurd hypothesis of evolution. Anyone who believes in it is deceived and hates the truth.

The casting of the crowns before the throne of God is an act of humility. The 24 elders know that all their rewards were given to them by God and they are not deserving of them. They gladly cast them before their Savior. Jesus apparently gives the 24 elders back their crowns after they worship Him because each time they worship Him they cast their crowns before Him.

STEP SIXTEEN

HOW TO DO A TOPICAL STUDY

Topical studies are easy. Some topics are so extensive it would take a book or two to do a proper study. Determine how large a study you desire to do, and choose specific aspects of the topic to write on. Use your Strong's Concordance to find every passage on the topic. You can also use a Topical Bible to help you get an idea of what to cover. Organize the passages according to sub-topics. Write out an outline and then write down the passages that correspond with each sub-topic. Once you have put together your outline write out your study. If you are a pastor or have been called to be one do not use topical studies for sermon outlines. Go to Step 22 to see how to prepare for a sermon.

Example of a topical study

Disciples' prayer

I. Daily prayer

A. Pray to the Father

1. Open by acknowledging His divinity, holiness, kingship and authority
 - a. His divinity (He is in Heaven)
 - b. His name is holy (Leviticus 20.3; 1 Chronicles 16.10; Psalm 33.21; Ezekiel 20.39; Amos 2.7) (therefore He is holy – Leviticus 11.44; 19.2; 20.7; 1 Peter 3.15-16)
 - c. He has a kingdom (Matthew 16.28; Luke 22.30; John 18.36)
 - d. His will should be done on Earth as it is in Heaven
2. Ask for our daily needs to be met
3. Ask for forgiveness of our sins (1 John 1.9) as we forgive and love those who sin against us (Matthew 18.21-22; Luke 17.3-4; Ephesians 4.32; Colossians 3.13; Matthew 5.38-45).
4. Ask that He keep us from temptation
5. Ask that He deliver us from evil

B. Why we should pray for our needs

1. We are told to here and elsewhere (Matthew 7.7; Luke 18.1-8; John 16.24)

2. We must first seek the Father and His kingdom (Matthew 6.33)
 3. We must also not be anxious about our needs (Matt. 6.31-34)
- C. Why we should pray for forgiveness of our sins
1. We sin many times every day in thought, word, deed, motives
 2. Sin interferes with our fellowship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Psalm 66.18; Isaiah 59.2; 64.7)
 3. We must obviously confess our sins before they are forgiven (1 John 1.9)
 4. We must also forgive those who sin against us
 - a. If we do not forgive others the Father will not forgive us
 - b. When we refuse to forgive others that is a sin
 5. The forgiveness is temporal which is required for fellowship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (1 John 1.9)
 - a. All of our sins were paid for at the cross by the blood of Jesus (Luke 22.20; Romans 3.25; Colossians 1.20; Hebrews 9.12, 14; 10.19, 29; 13.20; 1 John 1.7; Revelation 1.5; 5.9)
 - b. All of our sins were forgiven at the moment we trusted Jesus to save us (Ephesians 1.7; Colossians 1.13-14)
 6. We must keep short accounts with the Father
 - a. We must ask forgiveness immediately after sinning
 - b. A blanket prayer of forgiveness at the end of the day is no good
- D. Close by acknowledging His kingship, power and glory
1. He has a kingdom (Matthew 16.28; Luke 22.30; John 18.36)
 2. He is all powerful (Genesis 1.1; Matthew 19.26; Luke 1.37)
 3. All glory is His (Isaiah 42.8; 48.11)

Disciples' prayer

The prayer that Jesus gave His disciples was a sample prayer intended to show them what should be included in a prayer. He did not intend for them to pray that word-for-word day in and day out.

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. (Matthew 6.9-13)

We should open all public prayers by acknowledging the Father is divine, holy and in charge of everything. We do not have to do that in a formal and structured manner. One can open by saying, “Dear Holy Father, Creator of all, I ask that your will be done in my life.” In our personal prayers we do not have to acknowledge His divinity, holiness and authority. If you feel compelled to you can. We can open by saying, “*Abba Father*” (Romans 8.15) as Jesus did (Mark 14.36). It is a good habit to get into to say at the beginning and or end of our prayers that His will be done in our lives.

We are to ask for our daily needs, but we should not ask for our worldly desires to be fulfilled (1 John 2.15-17). We should not ask for money, a house, a car, a good-paying job, a spouse, etc. Instead we should ask that the Lord provide the job He wants us to have so we can share the gospel with those at work. We should ask for a dwelling where we can reach out to our neighbors and share the gospel. We should ask for a spouse that can help us serve the Lord rather than one that is beautiful/handsome, rich, popular, famous, etc.

We should ask for needs and nothing more. There is nothing wrong with asking for food, clothing, housing, medical care, etc. If you have specific items that you need to survive, ask for them.

We also are to be thankful for everything the Lord has given us. It is good to get into the daily habit of thanking the Lord for the things He has given you. Thank Him for another day to serve Him. Thank Him for your – spouse, children, parents, spiritual brothers and sisters, friends, dwelling place, job, vehicles, bicycle, motorcycle, boat, food, utilities, clothing, furniture, refrigerator, stove, washer and dryer, television, computer, cell phone, DVD player, radio, etc. The sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving is special to God (Hebrews 13.15).

We must also remember that for every request we make we need to submit to the will of the Father as Jesus did (Matthew 25.39). Whether the request is for us or others we should always say, “Your will be done.” We are also to ask according to the will of the Father (1 John 5.14). How do we know what His will is? There is only one way to learn what the will of the Father is for us and others – study His Word daily (2 Timothy 2.15). The more we study His holy Word the more we will know what His will is. We need to be mindful that if we do not study His Word He will not respond to our prayers:

He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination. (Proverbs 28.9)

If your prayers are not being answered or they are being answered with a no, the problem could be you are not studying the Bible. Every Christian should be reading and studying the Bible every day. We should also memorize and meditate on Scripture daily. We are to be immersed in the Word of God. It should be our spiritual food as Jesus said (Matthew 4.4) quoting Moses:

And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. (Deuteronomy 8.3)

No one can live very long without food and water. Moses and Jesus fasted for 40 days and nights (Matthew 4.2), but very few people can do that. Most people eat three meals a day plus snacks. To stay healthy a person must eat food and drink water. The same is true about spiritual health. To grow and remain spiritually healthy a Christian must eat spiritual food every day. That means one needs to daily listen to the Word (Deuteronomy 4.9-10; Proverbs 8.34; Luke 8.15, 21; 11.28; James 1.22; Revelation 1.3), read Scripture (Deuteronomy 17.19; Psalm 42.1-2; 63.1; 143.6; Revelation 1.3), study Scripture (Deuteronomy 8.3; Matthew 4.4; Proverbs 2.1-5; 8.34; 22.17; John 5.39; Acts 17.11; Romans 15.4; 2 Timothy 2.15; 3.15), memorize Scripture (Deuteronomy 6.6; 11.18; 30.14; Psalm 37.31; 40.8; 119.11; Proverbs 2.1; 3.1, 3; 4.1, 21; 6.21; 22.18; Isaiah 51.7; Ezekiel 3.10; Romans 10.8) and meditate on Scripture (Joshua 1.8; Job 22.22; 23.12; Psalm 1.2; 4.4; 19.14; 63.6; 77.12; 104.34; 119.15, 23, 27, 48, 78, 97, 99, 148; 143.5; 1 Timothy 4.15).

Christians should also pray every day throughout the day (Matthew 7.7; Luke 18.1; John 16.24; 1 Thessalonians 5.17; James 1.5). We are to pray for our needs and the needs of others. Fellowship with the brethren as often as possible is important (Psalm 119.63; Proverbs 13.20; Acts 2.42, 46-47; Hebrews 3.13; 10.24-25) along with sharing the Gospel as the Holy Spirit leads (Psalm 96.2; Acts 2.47; 1 Peter 3.15).

Another thing that every Christian should do several times each day is to ask forgiveness for his sins. We all sin every day (1 John 1.8, 10).

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1.9)

The forgiveness and cleansing of our sins on a daily basis is for fellowship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. When we sin we break fellowship with Them. We need to confess our sins to restore that fellowship. The same is true when we sin against each other. We break fellowship with one another. When we forgive one another we restore fellowship. When we do not forgive those who sin against us our fellowship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit remains broken. Our fellowship with Them is the most important thing in our life. That is why we must always forgive those who sin against us, whether they are saved or not saved (Matthew 6.14-15). Along with forgiveness we must not hate those who sin against us or persecute us. We must love them with a holy (*agape*) love (Matthew 5.38-45).

We must forgive our brothers and sisters when they sin against us not only because we are commanded to (Matthew 18.21-22; Luke 17.3-4; Ephesians 4.32; Colossians 3.13), but in order to keep peace and harmony in the church. Those who do not forgive others are guilty of causing dissension and strife in the church. Dissension among people is a deed of the flesh (Galatians 5.20), and causing strife among the brethren is an abomination to God (Proverbs 6.16-19).

If we do not forgive those who sin against us our Father will not forgive us (Mark 11.25-26). It is also a sin to refuse to forgive others (Matthew 18.23-35). Since God has forgiven us of all our sins against Him can we do anything less for those who sin against us? Are we more important than God?

All of our sins were paid for and forgiven at the cross (Luke 22.20; Romans 3.25; Ephesians 1.7; Colossians 1.13-14, 20; Hebrews 9.12, 14; 10.19, 29; 13.20; 1 John 1.7; Revelation 1.5; 5.9). Yet we must have temporal forgiveness by God for continual fellowship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (1 John 1.9). Keep short accounts with God. When you sin ask for forgiveness right there and move on. Blanket prayers for forgiveness at the end of the day are no good.

We not only are to pray for our physical needs but also for our spiritual needs. The spiritual needs we can pray for are – strength (Philippians 4.13), increased faith (Luke 17.5-10; Romans 10.17), help to trust in God (Psalm 37.3-5; 118.8; Proverbs 3.5-6; 16.20; 29.25; Isaiah 26.3-4; 50.10), knowledge, understanding and wisdom (Proverbs 2.6-7; 3.13-14; 9.10; 10.14; 16.20; James 1.5), good and wise friends (Proverbs 2.20; 13.20) and the ability to see the righteous path God wants us to walk (Proverbs 2.20). We must always remember that all of our prayers are an abomination to God if we do not study the Bible

every day (Proverbs 28.9). Speaking to God (prayer), but rarely listening to Him (Bible study) is the height of arrogance. Which is more important – speaking to God or listening to Him?

Every Christian needs spiritual strength. The main way to increase one's spiritual strength is through prayer and study of the Word. It is through these two daily activities that we increase our faith. Since Jesus spent long hours in prayer (Mark 1.35; 6.46; Luke 5.16) then so should we. Sometimes He prayed all night (Luke 6.12). According to Romans 10.17 faith comes by the Word. To increase your faith you must increase your prayer and Bible time.

We should also ask God to help us trust in Him for all things. When we have a decision to make about most anything we should ask for guidance to make the right one. It is also a good idea to get wise counsel (Proverbs 1.5; 11.14; 12.15; 15.22; 20.18; 24.6).

Every time we open the Bible we should ask for knowledge and understanding of the Scriptures (Proverbs 3.13-14; 9.10; 10.14; 16.20). Knowledge and understanding of Scripture is more important than riches, fame or anything you can think of (Proverbs 8.10; 16.16). Along with knowledge and understanding we can ask for wisdom (Proverbs 2.6-7; James 1.5) which is even more valuable than knowledge and understanding (Job 28.12-19; Proverbs 3.13-15; 8.11; 16.16).

The way we obtain wisdom is by wise counsel (Proverbs 13.10). The wisest counsel in the universe is found in the Bible. If you want the best counsel study the Bible (Proverbs 3.1-4). If you cannot find the answer to your question or problem in the Bible, seek counsel from a wise man (Proverbs 12.15; 19.20).

Another way to gain wisdom is to fellowship with wise men (Proverbs 13.20). We can also gain great wisdom by meditation on Scripture (Joshua 1.8; Job 22.22; 23.12; Psalm 1.2; 4.4; 19.14; 63.6; 77.12; 104.34; 119.15, 23, 27, 48, 78, 97, 99, 148; 143.5; 1 Timothy 4.15). When we earnestly pray for wisdom and we treasure the Scriptures more than our daily food we will be given wisdom. Those who obtain wisdom love their own souls (Proverbs 19.8).

We should pray for God to lead us to wise men because it is through fellowship with them that one can become wise (Proverbs 13.20).

Asking God to show us the path that He wants us to walk (Proverbs 2.20) is important. We can also ask Him to keep us from going down the wrong paths.

Keep in mind that none of our prayers will be answered in the positive if we neglect the daily study of Scripture (Proverbs 28.9).

We can also ask our Father to not lead us into testing, but to deliver us from evil. Most Bibles translate the Greek word *peirasmos* as “temptation.” The best translation is “testing” or “trial” with “beneficial purpose and effect” (*Vine’s*, p. 1140). Even though God tests us at times, we are to pray that He does not. We must remember that God knows the end from the beginning (Isaiah 46.10). He tests us to show us how strong or weak our faith is (Ecclesiastes 3.18). When we fail a test it means we need to strengthen our faith. We do that by being in the Word, in prayer and in fellowship more than before.

The evil is a reference to the devil or possibly evil people or evil things. The Greek word *poneros* is used of the devil several times (Matthew 5.37; 13.19, 38; John 17.15; Ephesians 6.16; 2 Thessalonians 3.3; 1 John 2.13-14; 3.12; 5.18-19). It is also used to refer to evil people and things (*Vine’s*, p. 391). We should pray every day that God deliver us from the evil one (the devil), evil people and evil things.

When we conclude our prayers we need to remember that God is King of the universe and in complete control of every atom in His creation. We are to praise Him and give Him all the glory for everything in our lives, whether good or bad.

STEP SEVENTEEN

TOPICAL STUDIES OF FUNDAMENTAL DOCTRINES

Start topical studies of the fundamental doctrines:

1. Sin
2. Salvation (Explain grace, faith and repentance.)
3. Eternal Security (Explain whether or not a believer is eternally secure in his salvation)
4. Baptism
5. Judgment of the righteous and wicked (Explain the bodily resurrection of the righteous and the wicked.)
6. Eternal life and eternal punishment
7. Heaven
8. Hell and the Lake of Fire
9. Trinity
10. Father
11. Son (Include His deity, virgin birth, sinless life and sacrifice, bodily resurrection, equality with the Father.)
12. Holy Spirit.

STEP EIGHTEEN

YOUR STATEMENT OF FAITH

Put together your statement of faith. Statements of faith vary, but they should include fundamental doctrines. The following are doctrines which you should include in your statement of faith. You can add more if you want.

1. God the Father
2. God the Son
3. God the Holy Spirit
4. Trinity
5. Inspiration and infallibility of Scripture
6. Creation
7. Sin
8. Grace and Salvation
9. Judgment
10. Hell (Hades) & the Lake of Fire
11. Tribulation, Rapture, Second Coming, Millennial Kingdom and Eternal Kingdom

A statement of faith is a brief statement concerning a specific doctrine. It is not a study. Keep each statement to a few sentences and use Scripture to support each statement.

STEP NINETEEN

MORE TOPICAL STUDIES

Start topical studies that interest you. Here are some topics you may wish to do studies of:

Angels
Anger
Character studies of Bible figures
Church
Duties of pastors
Duties of deacons
Duties of fathers
Duties of mothers
Duties of children
Election versus Free will
Evangelism
Faith
Fellowship
Gifts of the Holy Spirit
Giving
Greed
Holiness/Sanctification
Humility
Love of God, the brethren and the lost
Marriage
Miracles
Obedience
Prayer
Pride
Rewards
Sovereignty of God
Spiritual warfare
Study of Scripture
Suffering
Temptation
Tongue