

# THE TRUTH SERIES

A guide to understanding 12 Biblical doctrines

By Bob Riddle

# THE TRUTH SERIES

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	
<b>1. Course Overview</b> .....	
<b>2. Sample Promotional Flyer</b> .....	
<b>INTRODUCTORY CLASS – A summary of the whole Bible</b> .....	
<b>LESSON 1 - The Truth about the Bible</b> .....	
<b>Student Handout</b> .....	
<b>Teaching Notes</b> .....	
<b>Answer Key</b> .....	
<b>Lesson 2 – The Truth about God</b> .....	
<b>Student Handout</b> .....	
<b>Teaching Notes</b> .....	
<b>Answer Key</b> .....	
<b>Lesson 3 – The Truth about Christ</b> .....	
<b>Student Handout</b> .....	
<b>Teaching Notes</b> .....	
<b>Answer Key</b> .....	
<b>Lesson 4 – The Truth about the Holy Spirit</b> .....	
<b>Student Handout</b> .....	
<b>Teaching Notes</b> .....	
<b>Answer Key</b> .....	
<b>Lesson 5 – The Truth about Man</b> .....	
<b>Student Handout</b> .....	
<b>Teaching Notes</b> .....	
<b>Answer Key</b> .....	
<b>Lesson 6 – The Truth about Salvation, Eternal Life</b> .....	
<b>Student Handout</b> .....	
<b>Teaching Notes</b> .....	
<b>Answer Key</b> .....	
<b>Lesson 7 – The Truth about Spiritual Growth</b> .....	
<b>Student Handout</b> .....	
<b>Teaching Notes</b> .....	
<b>Answer Key</b> .....	

**Lesson 8 – The Truth about The End Times, Heaven, Hell .....**  
**Student Handout .....**  
**Teaching Notes .....**  
**Answer Key .....**

**Lesson 9 – The Truth about Spiritual Warfare .....**  
**Student Handout .....**  
**Teaching Notes .....**  
**Answer Key .....**

**Lesson 10 – The Truth about Sharing Your Faith .....**  
**Student Handout .....**  
**Teaching Notes .....**  
**Answer Key .....**

**Lesson 11 – The Truth about Defending Your Faith .....**  
**Student Handout .....**  
**Teaching Notes .....**  
**Answer Key .....**

**Lesson 12 – The Truth about Finding Your Life Purpose.....**  
**Student Handout .....**  
**Teaching Notes .....**  
**Answer Key .....**

**APPENDICES.....**  
**Appendix 1 – The Complete Bridge Illustration .....**  
**Appendix 2 – Sample Excel Weekly Tracking Chart .....**  
**Appendix 3 – Helpful Study Tools.....**

**CLASS MEMORY VERSE SHEETS.....**



Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN TO FACILITATOR NEXT WEEK**



***THE TRUTH SERIES – LESSON 7***

**The TRUTH About *Spiritual Growth***

Week 7 Memory Verse: II Timothy 2:21 – “*Be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.*”

[Note: This Lesson focuses on the components of spiritual growth: Prayer, the Church, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.]

**DAY ONE** God wants us to be spiritually mature, totally devoted and fully equipped to serve Him. As you read each of the following verses, write the Key Theme in a simple phrase.

<u>Scripture Reference</u>	<u>Key Theme</u>
I Corinthians 3:16 _____	_____
I Timothy 6:11-12 _____	_____
II Timothy 2:20-22 _____	_____
Titus 2:11-14 _____	_____
II Peter 1:2-4 _____	_____

**DAY TWO** Good nutrition provides for healthy physical growth. To grow spiritually we must enjoy a *balanced spiritual diet*. The “basic food groups” that ensure spiritual growth are: Bible Study, Prayer, The Church, Service and Spiritual Warfare. Bible Study was covered in Week One of The TRUTH Series and Spiritual Warfare in Week 8. Today the focus is on *Prayer – Conversation With God*. For beginners, here is a popular guideline for effective prayer:

- |                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| A – Adoration                        | Read Psalm 145:5; Revelation 4:11; 5:11-13 |
| C – Confession                       | Romans 10:9-10; I John 1:8-10              |
| T – Thanksgiving                     | Psalm 104 – 105:1                          |
| S – Supplication ( <i>Requests</i> ) | Psalm 142:1-2; Philippians 4:6-7           |

**DAY THREE** The word **church** means “the called-out ones.” There are two ways to think of the “church.” The first is a local congregation that meets in a building you know about. This is misleading, however, because the church is not a *building*, but people. The second is called the *universal church*, or all Christian believers worldwide. As a

Student Handout – Lesson 7, SPIRITUAL GROWTH

Christian you are automatically part of the universal church. However, you should also become active in a local church. Here are some reasons why.

Reference

Key Meaning

Acts 2:38-47 \_\_\_\_\_

I Corinthians 12:12-13 \_\_\_\_\_

II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8 \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:15-16; Colossians 1:18 \_\_\_\_\_

Mathew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8 \_\_\_\_\_

**DAY FOUR** Two special acts of worship – called “ordinances” – were established to be practiced by the church. These are (1) Baptism; and, (2) The Lord’s Supper, also called “communion.” Read the following Scriptures and answer the associated questions.

Acts 2:38-41; 8:36-38                      What is necessary *before* baptism?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Matthew 28:19                                  Who commanded us to be baptized?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Romans 6:1-4                                  What does baptism picture?  
\_\_\_\_\_

Mark 14:22-24; I Cor. 11:23-32      What is the purpose of Communion?  
\_\_\_\_\_

**DAY FIVE** Today the focus is on the *purpose* of the church. Read each passage and then write a word or phrase that describes the purpose described.

Reference

Purpose

Ephesians 3:21 \_\_\_\_\_

Ephesians 4:11-16 \_\_\_\_\_

II Tim. 2:2, 15; 3:16-17 \_\_\_\_\_

Acts 2:46-47; I John 1:3 \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 22:19; Acts 2:42 \_\_\_\_\_

I Cor. 15:58; Eph. 4:12; Rev. 22:12 \_\_\_\_\_

---

**WEEKLY BRIDGE ILLUSTRATION**

*(Continuing from the previous lessons) Ask the question: “So how do we allow Jesus Christ to bridge the gap between us and God? The answer is found in Romans 10:9-10, ‘If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart man believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.’”*

## **THE TRUTH SERIES - LESSON 7**

### **The TRUTH About SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

Week 7 Memory Verse: II Timothy 2:21 - "Be a vessel of honor; sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work."

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Becoming a Christian (being *saved*, or *born again*) is a marvelous, life-transforming event. However, it is important to realize that, like physical birth, it is just that: an *event*. In contrast, growth is a *process*. A wedding is an *event*; marriage is a *process*. So it is with spiritual life. We are born into God's family by the miracle of God's grace. We must then acquire the skills needed to grow. This includes learning to walk, to feed ourselves, to develop social skills, to avoid danger and ultimately, to reproduce. These components are the building blocks of the Lesson on Spiritual Growth.

#### **I. THE PURPOSE OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

A beautiful illustration of God's transforming power is the conversion of a caterpillar to a butterfly. The caterpillar is bound to the ground, slow-moving and not particularly attractive. Eventually the caterpillar reaches the end of its designed purpose as a "crawler", fastens itself to a branch, forms a protective cocoon or chrysalis and spends time in darkness, motionless, and to the untrained eye - useless.

But God is at work inside that chrysalis. Life in a new form is taking shape. Potential is being developed. New potential is being prepared in a manner no creepy-crawler could imagine. At just the right time, God displays His miraculous power by the emergence of a *butterfly* – a new creature, a totally different form with a new function. The form is beautiful ; the function is *flight*.

As a butterfly this new creature leaves the earth-bound caterpillar behind. Exercising its wings the butterfly soars to new heights and enjoys a greatly expanded perspective not possible to a caterpillar. Horizons and boundaries are pushed back. Capabilities are expanded . New work is made possible by wings – something a thousand tiny legs could never accomplish.

The Koine Greek word that describes this process is μετανοια (metanoia), translated by the English word *transformation*. This word is much stronger than a mere change in form. The conversion of a caterpillar to a butterfly is a *metamorphosis* – a transformation from one type to a completely new type. Little wonder, then, that this concept is used in Scripture to describe the new Christian. Paul wrote in II Corinthians 5:17:

*"Therefore, if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away;*

*all things are become new.* "

Of interest in this verse are the two contrasting verb forms. The verb translated in the phrase "old things *are passed away*" is in the Greek Aorist tense. This corresponds closely to our past tense, but specifically denotes completed action with ongoing results. The next verb phrase should actually be translated "all things *are becoming new*." This verb tense represents present, continuous action.

What a powerful picture of our life in Christ. At the moment of salvation a *conversion* takes place. There is a change both in form and function. At the *event* of salvation old things (our old, sinful nature) is now declared dead ("passed away"). A new *process* now begins, also made possible by Christ ("all things *are becoming new* ").

Several Scripture passages emphasize this truth.

*" . . . how shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? . . . we were buried with Christ through baptism unto death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life . . . our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin may be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin . . . if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him . . . Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord."* (Romans 6:2-11)

*"Yes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God Who raises the dead, Who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in Whom we trust that He will still deliver us . . ."* (II Corinthians 1:9- 10)

*"I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ 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 gave Himself for me."* (Galatians 2:20)

*"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins . . . but God, Who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ . . . and raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus . . ."* (Ephesians 2:1-6)

*" . . . being confident of this very thing, that He Who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."* (Philippians 1:6)

*" . . . for it is God Who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure. "* (Philippians 2:13)

*" . . . for you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ Who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory."* (Colossians 3:3-4)

An additional concept complements our understanding of this process of transformation . Romans 8:29 reads, "*Whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son . . .*" This is God's ultimate purpose: to remake us so thoroughly that our very existence and being reflects the character of Christ. This *process* begins at the new birth and continues as new spiritual disciplines are developed. We will examine these in detail. For now, however, a key insight is found in Romans 12:2:

*" . . . and do not be conformed to this world [values set against God], but be transformed [metanoia] by the renewing of your minds . . . "* (a process ).

## II. **THE PROCESS OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

There are numerous references in the New Testament comparing the Christian life to the well-known illustration of a human life. Both the *event* and the *process* are illustrated in this way. In John 3 Jesus told the well-educated religious leader Nicodemus that he needed to be "born again." Birth is the event that begins the process of growth. Paul uses the same illustration frequently in referring to Christian church members, both positively and as a criticism (see I Cor. 3:1-4; Eph. 4:17-24; 5:8-10, et al). Peter exhorts believers "as newborn babes" to desire the sincere milk of the Word that you may grow thereby" (I Peter 2:2-3). John makes frequent references to believers as "little children" in I John. This is a term of endearment with insights to the principles of spiritual growth.

With this in mind let us look at the necessary steps for the process of growth to be successful. In a healthy family a newborn child must be taught basic skills to both survive and thrive. These include:

A. **Feeding**. There are three stages to feeding. First, the newborn child must *be fed by someone else*, someone older, experienced and who is committed to the well-being of the child. Second, the child gradually learns *to feed himself*. This is messy at first, but the patient adult helps the child learn the skills required to feed himself. The goal is not only to be neat, but to learn the importance of good nutrition. What the child wants may not always be what the child needs for healthy growth. The responsible adult, therefore, applies loving discipline to ensure healthy growth, risking rejection to do what is best for the child. Third, the child grows sufficiently to eventually learn *to feed others*. The survival of the human race is dependent on the successful continuation of this cycle. This means the mature Christian must be (1) willing to feed others; (2) prepared to endure rejection; and (3) keep the ultimate goal in mind - the maturity of the one being fed.

B. **Walking**. This is a slow process requiring patience on the part of both the teacher and the learner. First steps will be slow, awkward and tentative. There will be many falls, occasionally resulting in skinned knees and stubbed toes. Usually the falls are not dangerous, just frustrating. But the very process of getting up many times is a necessary ingredient to the process of learning to walk.

C. **Social Skills.** These include communication – learning talking, writing and conversational skills; developing an awareness of the needs of others and abandoning the natural tendency toward selfishness of all children; learning to deal with disappointment without acting out; respecting the rights of others – that stealing and violence are not just harmful, but are wrong; learning to obey authority; learning the importance of boundaries; learning accomplishment by completing assigned tasks and other similar skills. These skills are learned best by association with others, not alone. Discipline plays a powerful part in this process. Lack of discipline is not love. Lack of good discipline sets up the individual for much future failure and hurt. Healthy discipline is required for a healthy respect for boundaries of every kind. Therefore, children growing up with siblings often mature in this area faster than single children.

D. **Avoiding Danger.** Children are naturally curious. This is healthy when expressed within certain boundaries. Curiosity is the foundation of all learning, discovery, invention and growth. However, children do not yet have the knowledge to know that exploration can also be risky and dangerous. That is why responsible adults keep children away from sharp objects, electrical outlets, steep cliffs, toxic chemicals and vehicular traffic, to name a few. This is not to suggest the child needs a pain-free environment. Pain can be a powerful learning tool and memory agent, but only within certain limits. The child does not yet understand these limits and must therefore be taught *where* they are, *why* they exist and *how* to avoid crossing safe limits.

E. **Reproduction.** In a normal growth cycle the child eventually matures, discovers that the opposite gender is actually attractive and ultimately attaches himself to a partner through marriage. This is God's plan, regardless of acceptance of alternatives by secular society. The couple forms the nucleus of a new family and bear children of their own, beginning the cycle again.

There are four stages in the natural growth of a healthy human, each covering a general period of time. These can be described as:

1. **Wonder** – the young child's imagination is in high gear, fairy tales are true and the discovery of life is a magic journey. Anything and everything is possible;
2. **Truth** – the older child/teenager discovers that the fairy tales were never true and wavers between skepticism and the search for truth. Imagination is stifled. This character trait may be evident throughout the remainder of one's life to some degree;
3. **Love** – During a person's 20's and 30's the person is looking for romance and, eventually, a stable, long-term relationship with a life partner. The health (or lack of health) in a relationship is determined by the individual's skill in building and respecting the boundaries related to the needs and rights of others. There is also the exciting discovery of how powerfully another human can *complement* one's existence. This occurs on every level: physical, psychological and spiritual;
4. **Security** – Usually beginning in the 40's, people begin to be attracted more to stability and less to risk, especially unmanageable and uncontrolled risk. The older one grows

the more important security and familiarity become. Change is resisted, no new horizons are sought and "sameness" becomes synonymous with security.

Just as God created the family as a major component in the accomplishment of His purposes, so He gave birth to the *church* to be the nurturing agent for his spiritual children. All the above skills are intended to be learned, practiced and perfected within the context of the church.

### III. ***THE PRACTICE OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH***

The New Testament describes the church as the "bride of Christ," the "body of Christ", the "family of God" and similar terms. The term "church" comes from the compound Greek word εκκλησια (ecclesia, pronounced ek-lay-SEE-uh), which literally means "the called-out ones." Christians are *called out* to be not just separate from the values and lifestyles of unbelievers, but to have a powerful impact on the world precisely by the contrast in those values and lifestyles.

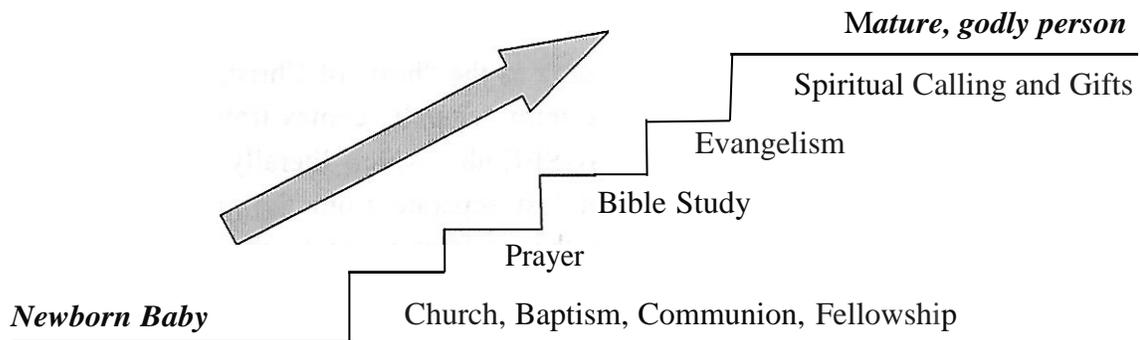
The establishment of the church is recorded in Matthew 16:13-19 and similar passages in Mark and Luke. Taking His disciples to Caesarea Philippi Jesus most likely stood in front of the cave opening of the spring that fed the Jordan River near its headwaters. This area was known in pagan tradition as the "Gates of Hades", or the home of Baal, god of the underworld. Standing on a large bedrock with His disciples in that stream, one can imagine Christ pointing to the cave opening after Peter's confession of Christ and stating, "*On this rock (the bedrock, not Peter) I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*" (Matthew 16:18). Far too many Christians have assumed that this statement pictures the church (all believers) withdrawing into a protective circle, like the circling of the wagons in an old Western movie, while the forces of evil attack. In fact, just the opposite is true: it is the *church* that is on the offensive, attacking the wickedness of evil and prevailing in so powerful a manner that Satan and his demonic forces are ultimately and completely crushed.

The word "church" may refer to both the *universal church* – that is, all believers worldwide for all time, or the *local church* – a local body of believers who have formed a congregation to practice the disciplines of spiritual growth. Ministers and spiritual gifts are provided for the work of the church. Fully one-half of the New Testament was written to either congregations or leaders of a local church. The purpose of the local church is best highlighted in following two Scripture passages.

*"All Scripture is given by God and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be **complete, thoroughly equipped** for every good work." (II Timothy 3:16-17)*

*- "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the **equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying** of the body of Christ." (Ephesians 4:11-12)*

The focus of the church, therefore, may be summed up in the terms *maturity, equipping and edifying*. The entire work of ministry done by God-called servants, which may involve many services, forms and functions, is to be directed toward these three components. Referring to the components of growth in the previous section, the church family should help every "baby" (newborn Christian) achieve maturity in the same way a healthy family grows an infant into a fully functioning adult. Look at the illustration below to consider the steps toward spiritual growth.



In a healthy, growing and thriving local church evangelism emphasizes the *event* leading to spiritual birth, while discipleship focuses on the *process* of spiritual growth. In the process the new Christian learns all the elements required for healthy living outlined above: feeding, walking, social skills, avoiding danger and reproduction. Viewed another way, each component leads to maturity and effectiveness through *equipping* and *edifying* - to use the Biblical terms.

- |                 |   |   |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Feeding         | - | Bible Study, preaching, teaching                          |
| Walking         | - | Church life and fellowship                                |
| Social Skills   | - | Prayer (communication), fellowship, community             |
| Avoiding Danger | - | Church discipline, application of Biblical principles     |
| Reproduction    | - | Evangelism and Discipleship (Calling and Spiritual Gifts) |

#### **IV. THE PROMISE OF SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

In Romans 8:28-30 Paul speaks of the purpose, the process and the promise of spiritual growth. Note the highlighted words.

*"And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His **purpose**. For whom He **foreknew**, He **predestined** to be **conformed** to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He predestined, these He also **called**; whom He called, these He also **justified**; these He also **glorified**."*

Viewed as a formula the process might look like this:

**The Word of God + the Worship of God = the Work of God**

As the new believer moves from infancy to maturity he also demonstrates the power of God in his life by leaving behind the *selfishness* so natural in all children, to be replaced by *servanthood*, the chief characteristic of a mature believer. Children are naturally selfish, crave attention and are constantly seeking approval. Adults, in contrast (especially in the spiritual realm), seek to meet the needs of others, gives others the praise and assists others in the accomplishment of their life's purpose. Children act out (misbehave) when they don't get their way, get the attention they desire or the approval to which they believe they are entitled. This is normal *in children*. In adults, however, this behavior is dysfunctional, even when it may be common in some adults.

The promise of spiritual growth is that, having been *justified* by the act of Christ's atonement through saving grace, God is leading us through the process resulting in our *sanctification* (being made holy, set aside and equipped for His service) and ultimately to our *glorification* -the end result of being made "in the image of Christ." Along the way we become more and more like Him; our dominant desire becomes pleasing Him alone and the focus of our gifts and calling is to accomplish His purpose for our lives. Entering the perfect environment of heaven, therefore, should not be a grand leap across a great chasm, but just the next natural step in an upward journey toward Christ. We become less enthralled with what this world has to offer and long more and more to be with Him and to be like Him.

Additionally, the longer we live, the more friends and family we know who have "gone before us" into heaven. I remember a conversation I had years ago with my godly grandmother. Her life was characterized by an intense love for the Lord and faithful service to Him. The more conversations I had with her, however, the more she talked about *longing to go "home."* I was in my 30's at the time and striving to accomplish what I then thought was important in life. I could not understand her fascination with heaven; it seemed a little morbid to me.

One day I finally confronted her with my concern. Her answer was so immediate and so straightforward, I have never forgotten either the words or the impact it had on my thinking. She said, "When you get to be my age you know more folks over there than you do here. It only makes sense to want to go home."

The Apostle John, author of the Gospel and three letters bearing his name and the Revelation, had among his protégés a faithful and godly man named Polycarp. During the purge of the Christian community under the Roman emperor Hadrian, Polycarp (and thousands of other Christians) was given an ultimatum: deny Christ or suffer torture and death for not worshipping Caesar. Polycarp refused to deny his Lord. Threatened with execution by being tied to a pole and being burned alive he said, "For 86 years my Lord has been faithful to me. We are closer today than ever before. He has never failed me. How could I possibly deny the One Who loves me so. Do what you must; I gladly await the privilege of seeing Him face to face.

Spiritual maturity is also seen in the consistent observation of rapid church growth during intense times of persecution. Throughout church history the greatest persecution of the church in

an effort to stamp out Christianity has always resulted in the most rapid expansion of the church. This is true today. The areas of fastest growth and expansion among Christianity worldwide are to be found in China, Iran and other Muslim countries, and Russia. China and Russia take great pride in their atheism. Iran is ruled by men intent on imposing harsh Islamic rule and punishment of "infidels" – anyone not submitting to their brand of Islam. Torture and death of Christians, especially Christian leaders, is commonplace. And yet the church is thriving and expanding faster than in so-called "Christian" countries of the West, like the United States.

Could it be that the believers in these areas of harsh conflict have been forced to make a clear choice not often required in more "tolerant" societies? They must either deny Christ or serve Him faithfully; there is no middle ground. Maturity, therefore, comes at a cost, but it dominates the spiritual lives of those in such intense environments.

The Bible makes clear that pressure to compromise and deny the principles of Christ will increase as we near the end of this age. Conflict will increase, not decrease. With that in view it is *imperative* that followers of Christ be committed to the work of spiritual growth, leading people to Christ (evangelism) and ensuring they become *complete, fully equipped for godly service* and *edifying* (building them up) for effective service. This is God's *purpose*.

A beautiful portrait is provided of an upcoming scene in heaven in Revelation. A huge throng of believers are gathered around the throne of God to praise and honor Him. The chief enemy of Christ, Satan, is forever cast down. Then these words are heard:

*"Now salvation, and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of His Christ have come; for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death."*

Where are you today on your journey of spiritual growth?

END OF TEACHING NOTES FOR LESSON 7



# ANSWER KEY



## THE TRUTH SERIES – LESSON 7

### The TRUTH About *Spiritual Growth*

Week 7 Memory Verse: II Timothy 2:21 – “*Be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work.*”

[Note: This Lesson focuses on the components of spiritual growth: Prayer, the Church, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.]

**DAY ONE** God wants us to be spiritually mature, totally devoted and fully equipped to serve Him. As you read each of the following verses, write the Key Theme in a simple phrase.

<u>Scripture Reference</u>	<u>Key Theme</u>
I Corinthians 3:16	<i>we are God’s temple (dwelling place)</i>
I Timothy 6:11-12	<i>flee from sin and pursue righteousness, faith, godliness, love and endurance</i>
II Timothy 2:20-22	<i>strive to be a pure vessel God can use</i>
Titus 2:11-14	<i>God’s grace teaches us to make the right choices</i>
II Peter 1:2-4	<i>His power provides everything we need to live lives that please Him</i>

**DAY TWO** Good nutrition provides for healthy physical growth. To grow spiritually we must enjoy a *balanced spiritual diet*. The “basic food groups” that ensure spiritual growth are: Bible Study, Prayer, The Church, Service and Spiritual Warfare. Bible Study was covered in Week One of The TRUTH Series and Spiritual Warfare in Week 8. Today the focus is on *Prayer – Conversation With God*. For beginners, here is a popular guideline for effective prayer:

- A – Adoration                      Read Psalm 145:5; Revelation 4:11; 5:11-13
- C – Confession                     Romans 10:9-10; I John 1:8-10
- T – Thanksgiving                Psalm 104 – 105:1
- S – Supplication (*Requests*)   Psalm 142:1-2; Philippians 4:6-7

**DAY THREE** The word **church** means “the called-out ones.” There are two ways to think of the “church.” The first is a local congregation that meets in a building you know about. This is misleading, however, because the church is not a *building*, but *people*. The second is called the *universal church*, or all Christian believers worldwide. As a Christian you are

automatically part of the universal church. However, you should also become active in a local church. Here are some reasons why.

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Key Meaning</u>
Acts 2:38-47	<i>together we can be a testimony to God's Way</i>
I Corinthians 12:12-13	<i>we NEED to experience unity because we each have different gifts</i>
II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:23-32; Revelation 19:7-8	<i>marriage is a picture of How Christ loves and gives Himself for the church, His body of believers</i>
Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:15-16; Colossians 1:18	<i>Christ is the HEAD of the church</i>
Mathew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8	<i>We should strive to share Christ with those who don't know Him</i>

**DAY FOUR** Two special acts of worship – called “ordinances” – were established to be practiced by the church. These are (1) Baptism; and, (2) The Lord’s Supper, also called “communion.” Read the following Scriptures and answer the associated questions.

Acts 2:38-41; 8:36-38	What is necessary <u>before</u> baptism? <i>salvation</i>
Matthew 28:19	Who commanded us to be baptized? <i>Jesus</i>
Romans 6:1-4	What does baptism picture? <i>The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus</i>
Mark 14:22-24; I Cor. 11:23-32	What is the purpose of Communion? <i>To remember the sacrifice Jesus made for us</i>

**DAY FIVE** Today the focus is on the purpose of the church. Read each passage and then write a word or phrase that describes the purpose described.

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
Ephesians 3:21	<i>to bring God glory</i>
Ephesians 4:11-16	<i>so we might each accomplish our purpose and grow to spiritual maturity</i>
II Tim. 2:2, 15; 3:16-17	<i>so we can teach others</i>
Acts 2:46-47; I John 1:3	<i>so we can grow as a result of our testimony</i>
Luke 22:19; Acts 2:42	<i>so we might remember together the price that was paid for our spiritual freedom</i>
I Cor. 15:58; Eph. 4:12; Rev. 22:12	<i>God rewards faithfulness</i>

---

---

**WEEKLY BRIDGE ILLUSTRATION**

*(Continuing from the previous lessons) Ask the question: “So how do we allow Jesus Christ to bridge the gap between us and God? The answer is found in Romans 10:9-10, ‘If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart man believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.’”*