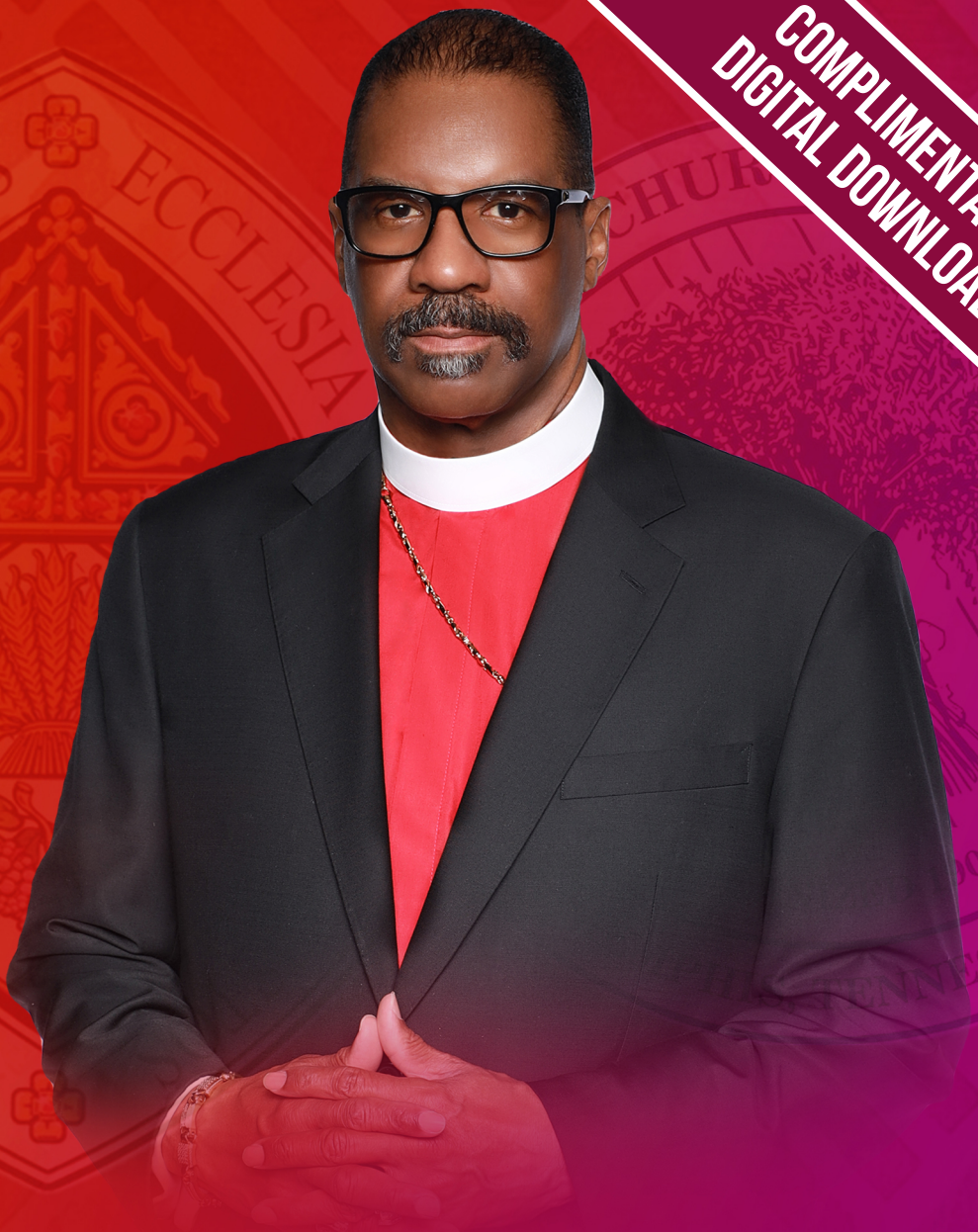
COMPLIMENTARY DIGITAL DOWNLOAD



ANNUAL COMMENTARY 2021-2022

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

LEGACY EDITION

52 BIBLE STUDY LESSONS FOR CHRISTIAN TEACHING
KING JAMES VERSION | AMPLIFIED VERSION PARALLEL SCRIPTURE TEXT

THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST
PRESIDING BISHOP

Bishop J. Drew Sheard

Seeking the Heart of God
Colossians 3:1 -3; Matthew 6:33; 2 Chronicles 7:14

Order materials today from the Power for Living Series:

Church Of God In Christ Publishing House
806 East Brooks Road, Memphis, Tennessee 38116
P.O. Box 161330, Memphis, Tennessee 38116
Toll Free: 1-877-746-8578 | Fax: (901) 743-1555
Website: www.cogicpublishinghouse.net
Email: sales@cogicpublishinghouse.net

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST, INC.
ANNUAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COMMENTARY 2021–2022
INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS
Volume I of II

Copyright © 2021 by UMI (Urban Ministries, Inc.)

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST PUBLISHING BOARD

Chairman
Bishop Uleses C. Henderson, Jr, Esq.
Southern California First Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction

Chairman of Marketing &
Secretary Of The Board
Bishop Reggie Witherspoon, ThM, Doctoral Candidate
Washington Northwest Ecclesiastical Jurisdictional Prelate

Senior Marketing/Sales Consultant Publishing Households
Sandra S. Jones, ThM
Michigan Southeast Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction

Senior Liaison Consultant/UMI
Bishop J. I. Whitehead, Jr., M.Div.
Prelate of Second Jurisdiction of South West Michigan

Content Team: Avery Brown, PhD, Member Second Jurisdiction of South West Michigan; Alonzo Johnson, PhD, Member of South Carolina Jurisdiction; Evangelist Irether Sanford, Doctoral Candidate, Member of Virginia First Jurisdiction; Goldie Wells, PhD, Member of North Carolina Greater Jurisdiction

Bible Art: Aaron and Alan Hicks

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture references are taken from the authorized King James Version of the Bible.
Scripture quotations marked (AMP) are taken from the Amplified® Bible, Copyright © 2015 by the Lockman Foundation
Used by permission www.Lockman.org

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise—without the prior permission of the copyright owners. Lessons and/or readings based on the *Uniform Series International Bible Lessons for Christian Teaching*. Copyright © 2021 by the Committee on the Uniform Series.
Used by permission. Supplementary Lesson Development. Copyright © 2021 by UMI. Printed in the USA.
All proper names mentioned in this publication are fictional unless otherwise indicated.

Item No.: ISBN-13 978-1-68087-512-6 ISBN-10 1-68087-512-4
Large Print Item No.: ISBN 978-1-68087-513-3 ISBN-10 1-68087-513-2
Publishers: COGIC Publishing House, Memphis, TN 38116
To place an order, call 1-877-746-8578 or visit our website at www.cogicpublishinghouse.net

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Greetings From the Presiding Bishop vi
Greetings From the Chairman of the Publishing Board vii
Greeting From the Chairman of Marketing viii
Greetings From the Voice of Marketing ix
Greetings From the COGIC-UMI Sunday School Liaison x
Visionary Leadership Collage *In the Time of Crisis* xi
Greeting From the Publishing Board xvi
2021-2022 COGIC Teaching Tips by Quarter xvii
How to Use This Commentary xviii

Fall Quarter 2021

TRADITIONS AND WISDOM
Quarter-At-A-Glance 19
Teacher's Tips 20
Quarterly Quiz 21

LESSONS
Unit 1 • Teaching and Learning

SEPTEMBER
5 Righteousness and Wisdom
Proverbs 3:1–12 30
12 From Generation to Generation
Proverbs 4:10–15, 20-27 37
19 Teaching Values
Proverbs 15:21–33 45
26 Wisdom and Discernment
Proverbs 25:1–10 53

OCTOBER
3 An Ordered Life
Proverbs 29:16–27 61
10 The Superiority of Wisdom
Ecclesiastes 9:13–18 69
17 Wisdom For Aging
Ecclesiastes 11:9-12:7, 13 76
24 Tradition and Love
Song of Solomon 4:8–5:1a 84

Unit 2 • Jesus Teaches Wisdom

31 Living as God's People
Matthew 5:1–12 92

NOVEMBER
7 Forgiving as God's People
Matthew 5:17–26 100
14 Loving as God's People
Matthew 5:43–48 108
21 Praying as God's People
Matthew 6:5–15 114
28 Facing Life without Worry
Matthew 6:25–34 121

Winter Quarter 2021–2022

GOD ESTABLISHES A FAITHFUL PEOPLE
Quarter-At-A-Glance 128
Teacher's Tips 129
Quarterly Quiz 134

LESSONS
Unit 1 • God's Covenant

DECEMBER
5 A Blessing for All Nations
Genesis 12:1–9 137
12 A Promise to Abraham
Genesis 15:1–6, 12–18 144

TABLE OF CONTENTS

19 The Lord Provides
Genesis 22:1-2, 6-14 151
26 According to the Promise
Luke 1:46–55 158

Unit 2 • God's Protection

JANUARY
2 God Watches Over Joseph
Genesis 39:7–21a 164
9 Joseph Finds Favor
Genesis 41:37-45, 50-52 171
16 God Preserves a Remnant
Genesis 45:3-15 178
23 Joseph Transmits Abraham's Promise
Genesis 50:15-26 185
30 Out Of Egypt
Exodus 15:1-3,19, 22-26 192

Unit 3 •God's Redemption

FEBRUARY
6 Justified by Faith in Christ
Galatians -2:15–21 199
13 Freed From Law through Christ
Galatians 3:1–14 205
20 Heirs to the Promise
Galatians 3:15–18; 4:1–7 212
27 Fruits of Redemption
Galatians 5:22–6:10 219

Spring Quarter 2022

GOD'S CREATIVE WORD
Quarter-At-A-Glance 227
Teacher's Tips 228
Quarterly Quiz 235

LESSONS
Unit 1 • The Word Was in the Beginning

MARCH
6 Wisdom's Part in Creation
Proverbs 8:22–35 238
13 The Word Became Flesh
John 1:1–14 244
20 The Wedding at Cana
John 2:1–12 251
27 God's Word Saves
John 3:11–21 259

APRIL
3 Jesus Testifies to the Truth
John 18:28-37 266
10 The Living Word
John 20:1-10, 19-20 273

Unit 2 • The Word Is Here and Now

APRIL
17 Cleansing the Temple
John 2:13–22 279
24 Woman of Samaria
John 4:7–15, 23–26, 28–30 2886
MAY
1 Healing the Blind Man
John 9:1–17 295

Unit 3 • The Word Will Be
8 The Bread of Life
John 6:22–35 304
15 The Good Shepherd
John 10:7–18 314
22 The Resurrection and the Life
John 11:17–27 322

TABLE OF CONTENTS

29 The Way, the Truth, and the Life
John 14:1–14 330

Summer Quarter 2022

GOD'S CALL FOR JUSTICE
Quarter-At-A-Glance 340
Teacher's Tips 341
Quarterly Quiz 346

LESSONS
Unit 1 • Justice Defined

JUNE
5 Rules for Just Living
Exodus 23:1–9 349
12 Living as God's Just People
Leviticus 19:9–18, 33–37 356
19 Celebrate Jubilee-
Leviticus 25:8–12, 25, 35–36, 39–40,
47–48, 55 365
26 The Heart of the Law
Deuteronomy 10:12–22; 16:18–20 374

Unit 2 • Justice Enacted

JULY
3 Samuel Administers Justice
1 Samuel 7:3–11, 15–17 383
10 David Embodies God's Justice
2 Samuel 23:1-7; 1 Chronicles 18:14 391
17 Solomon Judges with Wisdom and Justice
1 Kings 3:16–28; 2 Chronicles 9:8 399
24 A King Acts on a Widow's Behalf
2 Kings 8:1–6 408
31 Jehoshaphat Makes Judicial Reforms
2 Chronicles 19:4–11 415

Unit 3 • Justice Promised

AUGUST
7 Praise for God's Justice
Psalm 146:1–10 422
14 God Promised a Righteous Lord
Isaiah 9:2–7 429
21 God Promised a Righteous Branch
Jeremiah 23:1–6; 33:14–18 436
28 God Promised To Be with Us
Ezekiel 34:23–31 443

Answers to the Quarterly Quizzes 449
2021 - 2022 Uniform Lesson Series Outline 452
Glossary 468
Affirmation of Faith 471
COGIC Doctrine 473

FROM THE PRESIDING BISHOP'S DESK

Greetings in the matchless name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

2021-2022 is upon us, and we optimistically, yet cautiously, look forward to this next year. The past year has been the most challenging we have ever experienced. A relentless, microscopic virus catapulted the entire world into a tailspin. Schools, malls, airports, and even our churches were forced to close as we sought alternate ways of functioning. Our day-to-day lives were upended, and many of us were faced with the unbearable losses of friends, family, and co-laborers.

How much longer will we be forced to endure, and when will this end? When will normalcy return? These are questions that have been asked but cannot be answered with any amount of certainty. As believers, it is this time that we faithfully place our uncertain futures in the hands of a loving and faithful God. A God who promised never to leave or forsake us. Now is when we must trust in the Lord with all of our hearts and not lean to our limited and finite understanding.

We must continue to dedicate ourselves to trusting God in all circumstances knowing that even when the road is rough and the journey tumultuous, we maintain unyielding confidence in the God of our salvation.

Regardless of the many hardships, we have endured, let us now focus on this next season with hope and anticipation, trusting that God will sustain us. Jeremiah 17:7-8 declares, "Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water that sends out its roots by the stream and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit."

Be encouraged, knowing that no matter what the season may bring, God is with us.

In His service
Presiding Bishop J. Drew Sheard
Eighth in Succession
Church Of God In Christ, Inc.

THE VOICE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE PUBLISHING BOARD

Blessings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ,

2021 has been a transformative year for the world, the various world governments, the church, and, more importantly, the everyday people of this world. This Pandemic transformed the mindset of people all around the world. We have been reshaped against our will and forced to live life on a survivalist level. Yet, while the unpredictable cares of this world have consumed us, God has been faithful to us. The Apostle Paul, in Philippians 2:5, says, "Let this mind be in you as it also was in Christ Jesus." Because we have lost so many leaders and loved ones, taking on the mind of Christ has been the only way we have been able to pick up the broken pieces and continue this journey called life. We are hurt. Our hearts are broken. But with the mind of Christ, we take on the very attributes of Jesus Christ himself. "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). So, we can stand amid our mountain and say, "Be thou there removed" (from Mark 11:23). With the mindset of Christ, we can display the very wisdom of Christ; as the Bible says that "he that winneth souls is wise" (from Proverbs 11:30).

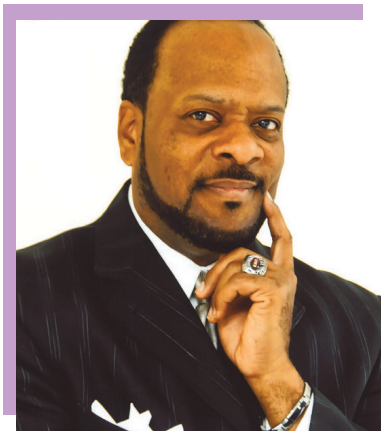
Do you not know my brothers and sisters that there is nothing in this world that can defeat the mindset of Christ? With Christ's mindset and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we become unbeatable in our thoughts, in our actions, and our abilities. I know it seems like we are always going through a lot, but these challenges test our mindsets to see how we perform under pressure: Will we act Christlike or act sinfully? Will we hit the mark or miss the mark and be forced to retake the test? Yes, sometimes we fall short, but when we do, we gain a better understanding of ourselves and an appreciation for Christ as we retake the test. When we learn how to appreciate ourselves, we can share that appreciation with others and connect, not just spiritually but physically and mentally as well. We have to connect with people because if this Pandemic has taught us anything, it has taught us that we waste away without human interaction.

One of Christ's ultimate goals for us is the power of unity. When we are unified, we can accomplish amazing feats as humans and even more mind-blowing feats as Christians. So, the thought that I leave with you in this letter is to let us become better and not bitter. Let us not dwell on the losses but seek out the victory that is still to be obtained because even though we have lost those dear to us, they have already received their reward, and they would want us to keep pushing and striving to obtain ours.

God bless you, and may the Lord continue to abound in your lives.

Bishop Uleses C. Henderson, Jr., Esq.
Chairman of the Publishing Board

THE FOREWORD
FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF MARKETING



Dear Saints of God,

Peace and grace be multiplied unto you.

I would like to give God praise for His goodness, grace, and mercy towards you and me. With great joy, zeal, and excitement, I also would like to congratulate our newly elected Presiding Bishop and Chief Apostle, the honorable Bishop J. Drew Sheard, the eighth in succession. Let us all join together to uphold our leader and the entire Church Of God In Christ in prayer. I am confident I speak for all of us when I say Bishop Sheard; you have our unending love and support!

Without equivocation, this past year was one of the most trying times we have ever witnessed as a country and certainly a denomination. We have lost some great leaders and Saints of God who will never be forgotten. Yet and still, the Church Of God In Christ is alive and well. In these days and times, with everyone and everything pulling for your time and attention, it is essential not to lose your passion for God. Like any healthy relationship, you must work hard at remaining dedicated to passionately carrying out God's mandate for your personal life and that of the Church. Jesus reminds us that we are the "salt of the earth, and the light of the world" (Matthew 5:13-16). I pray you continue to make a difference in your spheres of influence. I believe this excellent Church Of God In Christ material will serve you exquisitely in helping to keep that fire burning within you for passionate ministry.

I implore each of you as you study these lessons to remember that we are called into community. Indeed, we are a community of believers. We need each other. We are much more effective in reaching this sin-cursed world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ when we see ourselves as a body of believers in community with one another. The German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer said, "The church is her true self only when she exists for humanity."

In this 21 century the Church Of God In Christ has not lost our identity. We are still doing the work of ministry and making a difference in our communities. That is why it is so important to keep your church exposed to our Christian Education literature, especially for our young people. It is fresh, vibrant, innovative, and relevant. I sincerely pray that as you study this material, the Holy Ghost minister's life into you and everything that is important to you.

Bishop Reggie C. Witherspoon, Sr.
Chairman of Marketing
Church Of God In Christ Publishing Board

"Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen" (Jude 24,25 NKJV).

THE VOICE OF MARKETING

Blessings in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ,

I greet you with a renewed mind and with a refreshed Spirit. After the 2020 COVID-19 PANDEMIC, I found myself turning to the Word of God more and more, just like a tree that was planted by the rivers of living water. I had to tap into the spring inside of me to keep pressing forward no matter what obstacles came my way. When the George Floyd Murder gripped the entire country and then the world, I found myself finding my strength and my peace in the Lord; I had to put on the mind of Christ. For it is the mind of Christ that gives us peace when everything around us is chaotic. It is the mind of Christ that gives us the wisdom to solve the unsolvable solutions of man. With the mind of Christ, I can push, strive, and move forward with the vision of God.

With the mind of Christ, I obtain wisdom, and I obtain strength, I obtain a more determined faith; it is with the Mind of Christ that the Holy Ghost can speak to my spirit and calm me. It is with the mind of Christ that my love for man continues to grow. To take on the mind of Christ, we become more and more like Christ, and we strive for perfection; we strive for due diligence and justice. Don't you understand, my brothers and sisters, that with the Mind of God, we can stand still and see the salvation of the Lord? Can you not feel Him touch you? Can you not feel Him move within you? Can you not feel Him speaking to your mind and your soul? If the answer is no, then I ask you to put on the Mind of Christ. If the answer is yes that I ask that you grow deeper within Christ so that his presence grows stronger and stronger.

Sunday School is where we learn about the Mind of Christ and how to apply the mind of Christ. So, I ask you that in this 2021-2022 year, promise yourself that you will take on the Mind of Christ. Promise yourself that you will take out the time, spread the teachings of Christ Jesus to other people, and help them take on the mind of Christ because we are stronger together united under the Blood of Jesus Christ.

God Bless you,

Mother Sandra S. Jones
Senior Marketing Consultant
Church Of God In Christ Publishing Board

THE VOICE OF THE COGIC LIAISON

Once more, I want to thank you for your commitment to the literature produced by your own Publishing House. Your support over the years has been appreciated. God has been faithful to us during one of the most unprecedented occurrences in the world. The Coronavirus seized the world and took many lives; however, we do not sorrow as those who have no hope; we trust God's sovereignty.

Your purchase of the Annual Commentary lets me know that you value the wealth of information contained herein. Pastors find they can prepare Sunday morning messages that coincide with the Sunday school lesson, thus reinforcing the subject matter, which helps the believer live out the Word of God. This year's focus of wisdom, the covenant relationship God establishes with His people, the call to justice, and the creative Word of God are needed topics for the body of Christ.

The Fall quarter is directing all our readers to the importance of letting your desire to learn and to know be an essential part of your spiritual experience. The first two months place a priority on wisdom in your Christian walk. You will be studying out of what is called the wisdom books. Wisdom has equal importance to knowledge. Knowledge is of little help if you do not know when, where, and how to apply it. In November, you will focus on the four most important teachings of Jesus, forgiveness, prayer, love, and faith, that exhibit true Christian character.

In the Winter quarter, we examine how God establishes a faithful people through His covenant, protection, and redemptive power. We see God's promise to Abraham and the promises to Abraham fulfilled in Joseph, his great-grandson. Finally, we learn through the Apostle Paul that we are heirs to this promise as children grafted because of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.

In the Spring quarter, the study of God's creative Word became flesh through his son Jesus, who is the bread of life and the good Shepherd. The Word made flesh is the bread of life, the way, the truth, and the life. The Summer quarter addresses God's concern for justice. As we study, we see justice defined, enacted, and promised in Scripture.

As you study through this year's Annual Lesson Commentary, I know you will be blessed.

Until the next time,

Bishop J. L. Whitehead, Jr., M.Div., COGIC Liaison

Review Team,

Evangelist Irether Sanford, Doctoral Candidate, Dr. Adrienne Israel, Elder Scott Bradley, B.A.,

Dr. Harold Bennett, Dr. Avery Brown,

VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

In the Time of Crisis

Presiding Bishop J. Drew Sheard's visionary leadership has provoked phenomenal growth and the implementation of innovative programs in both his local church and the International church. The leaders and citizens of Detroit and throughout the state of Michigan recognize his leadership acumen. Bishop Sheard's ideas have propelled him to the forefront of both the civic and religious community, and have gained him recognition as a "bridge builder" to other denominations. Below are some of the accomplishments through God's guidance he has achieved. This is an excerpt from an interview.

1. What are the civic programs and partnerships that Bishop has with Governor Whitmer, as well as any programs he partnered with the Mayor of Detroit?

   A. Ecumenical Round Table - Executive Board Member - provides advise to Governor Whitmer on religious and community affairs for the State of Michigan.

   B. Urban Alliance of Michigan – founder and sponsor is Wayne County Executive Warren

   C. Evans and the organizational purpose is to unite urban elected officials, clergy and civic leaders in the State of Michigan to address common issues and share information that impact the communities represented by the membership.

2. What were the support efforts to ministries during the COVID-19 pandemic?

   A. Food Distribution Partnerships (1.4 tons of food distributed over last 9 months):

      a. LaGrasso Bros Produce, (liaison State of Michigan)

      b. Prairie Farms Dairy (liaison World Vision)

      c. Compassion International (direct contact)

   B. Personal Protection Equipment (PPE)

      a. TCF Bank - Financial remuneration to individuals for purchases

      b. City of Detroit, Wayne County and DTE - PPE provided for distribution

   C. COVID-19 Testing – Sponsorship of a Detroit Regional Drive-thru program in partnership with Wayne State University and Detroit Medical Center (DMC)

   D. Wayne County COVID-19 Relief Grant Program - $50,000 for:

      a. Food purchases through the use of gift cards and turkey giveaways

      b. Utility, medical and rental payment assistance

3. How was the $100,000 raised for churches suffering during the pandemic? Did local Detroit families benefit?

The funds were raised through STRETCH which is an arm of J.D. Sheard Ministries dedicated to helping pastors pivot and remain relevant in their concepts and ideas in terms of all aspects of ministry in light of the pandemic. The funds were raised through PayPal's Go Fund Me Campaign. Pastors nationwide were eligible to apply for relief and awards were determined by a multi-denominational committee.

4. What other social, or charitable programs in Detroit does Bishop Sheard support/partner with?

    a. DTE Community Liaison Outreach Partner – assisting those who have difficulty paying utility bills.

    b. Detroit Medical Center (DMC) Ministerial Advisory Council (MAC) – objective is to effectively improve health outcomes in Metropolitan Detroit through collaborations with faith-based leaders.

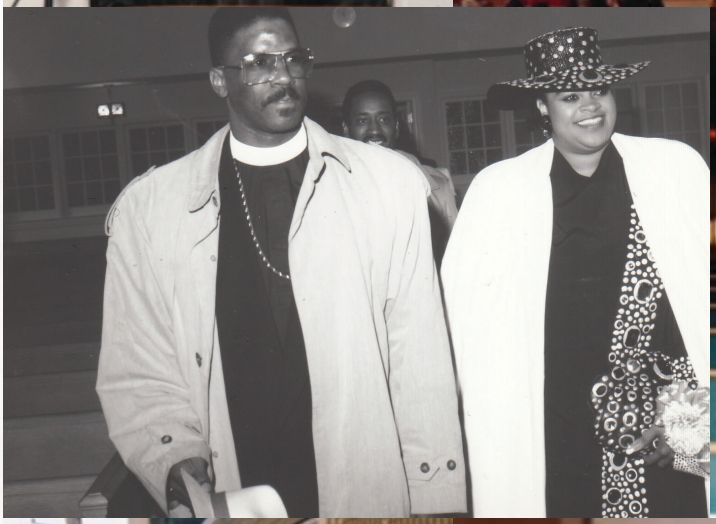
5. Does GEI have any upcoming events, or support programs happening in 2021 such as continued food donations or fundraising for other churches?

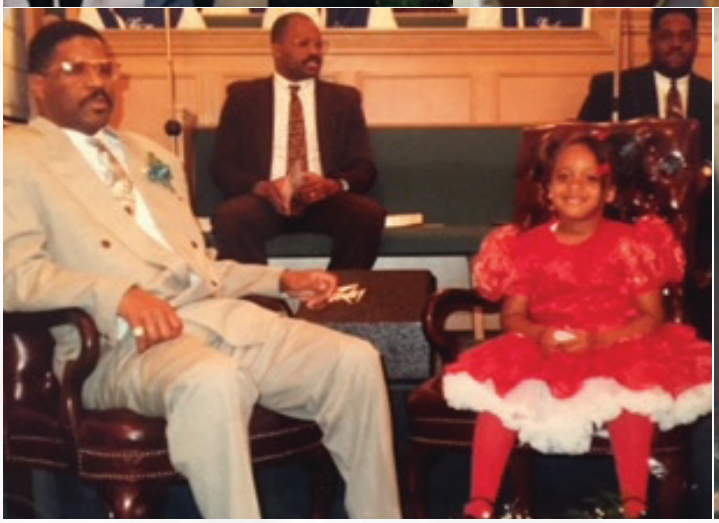
    a. Gleaners and Forgotten Harvest partnership for ongoing monthly food distributions

6. How has Bishop Sheard had an impact on the City?

    Bishop Sheard continues to impact the City of Detroit by continuously seeking to enrich the physical and spiritual lives of residents. Through the employment of creative and innovative methods of ministry individuals are impowered to prosper and have fulfilling lives.

Bishop J. Drew Sheard and Lady Karen C. Sheard & family.





COVID TESTING

PRAYER WALK

FOOD BANK

Greater Emmanuel Institutional COGIC
WOMEN'S DAY WORSHIP

Church Of God In Christ **Publishing House**

806 E. Brooks Rd • Memphis, Tennessee 38116 • 901.744.0477 Office • 901.743.1555 Fax

www.cogicpublishinghouse.net • Toll Free: 1-877-746-8578

Bishop J. Drew Sheard
Presiding Bishop

Bishop Uleses Henderson, Jr.
Chairman

Bishop Reggie Witherspoon
Secretary

Terri L. Hannett
Executive Director

Dear Saints,

We greet you in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

The year 2020 brought many challenges that caused the world to grind to a halt. The lingering effect of the Coronavirus yet has its grip upon the world. As believers, we are confident and secure in the knowledge that our God is Sovereign. We trust Him.

We saw the effects of the Coronavirus on the ministry of the Publishing House ***and felt the constraints of the government-mandated shutdown***. We thank those who were able to continue the support of the Publishing House through your quarterly purchases. Many were not engaged in Sunday school due to the shutdown and because members experienced layoffs and other challenges. As most of us return to our houses of worship, we ask you to continue to support The Church Of God In Christ Publishing House!

The Publishing Board is excited to share with you the new "***Legacy Edition***" of the Annual Lesson Commentary, The Annual Interpretative Expository, and the quarterly curriculum for Fall 2021. The ***Legacy Edition*** follows the ISSL Uniform series of lessons. Additional insights have been added to this series that broaden the scope of the lesson content. As many of you know, we utilize the Uniform Lesson Series outline that most other denominations use. Our COGIC review team reads the lessons and makes changes and adjustments to ensure that the content aligns with our doctrinal belief. ***The Publishing Board wants to ensure that our lessons do not veer from the foundation of the Church Of God In Christ and that the emerging doctrine of inclusion is not a part of our curriculum.***

Because the review team has seen the rise of doctrines that do not line up with Scripture, the Publishing Board is transitioning to writers within our great church to write all lessons based on the ISSL Uniform series outline. To accomplish this, we have to prepare in advance, and therefore, beginning Fall 2021, our books will not be succinct with the current Uniform Lessons series; however, we rest assured in the knowledge that God's Word is evergreen! It never returns void, and it is always relevant and life-changing!

The board, therefore, determined the ***Legacy Edition*** would help us during this transformation. We are thrilled to inform you that following this transition, your Sunday School materials will be authored exclusively by members of the Church Of God In Christ. Likewise, we have added the outline of the 2021-2022 Uniform Lesson Series in the Annual Commentary.

"So will My word be which goes out of My mouth; It will not return to Me void (useless, without result), Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11, AMP).

Again, thank you for your continued support, and I pray that you will journey with us as we transition for transformation.

For the Kingdom,
Publishing Board
Church Of God In Christ, Inc.

2021-2022 COGIC TEACHING TIPS BY QUARTER

Teaching Tips are general principles designed to assist pastors, Sunday school superintendents, teachers, volunteers, small group leaders, Bible study teacher and parents. Thank you to Evangelist Waynell Henson for coordinating this year's writers.

FALL 2021

- **Ministry Beyond the Church Walls,** *Evangelist Sharon Green*
- **Six Ways to "Make it Stick",** *Sister Angela Sims*
- **Yes Lord- Our Anthem and the Key to our Mental Wellness,** *Chantelle Bittings, LCPC*

WINTER 2021 – 2022

- **Teaching Those with Different Learning Styles,** *Sis. Angela Moore*
- **Keeping Your Students Engaged,** *Kacey R. Pringle*

SPRING 2022

- **Ten Tips for Sunday School Excellence,** *Evangelist Patricia Johnson*
- **Pay Attention to What You're Paying Attention To!,** *Dr. Missionary Kishki Kamaranell Hall*
- **Kahoot! A Youth Perspective on The Use of Technology in Sunday School,** *Alyssa Grace Henson*

SUMMER 2022

- **Checking for Understanding,** *Patrick Guy*
- **The Relevant Sunday School – 2021 & Beyond: How to "Keep The Burning",** *Ja'Qyrie Wheeler*

HOW TO USE THIS COMMENTARY

Welcome to the *The Church Of God In Christ Annual Sunday School Lesson Commentary 2021-2022*! This Bible study guide accomplishes the Christian education goals of the International Sunday School Department (ISSD) to equip and edify God's people through a systematic study of God's Holy Word.

In-Depth lessons are divided into four quarters—Fall (September-November), Winter (December-February), Spring (March-May), and Summer (June-August). Each quarter is comprised of three units, which contain four to five lessons that are perfect for Sunday School, weekly Bible studies, small groups or individual study.

Scriptures that are studied in this commentary are based on The International Bible Lessons for Christian Teaching, which is the standard of Scriptures to study the entire Bible over a period of seven years. *The Church Of God In Christ Annual Sunday School Lesson Commentary 20XX-20XX* brings biblical teaching to life with:

- Parallel King James Version with the Amplified Bible
- Contextual exegesis of passages by theologians and Bible scholars
- Background on the people, setting and circumstance of events
- Greek and Hebrew word studies with explanations
- Questions for small group discussions and individual reflection
- Teaching tips by ISSD leadership to enhance your Sunday School
- Challenges for a Spirit-filled relationship with God that results in holy living

EACH LESSON IS ORGANIZED WITH:

Lesson Aims—Teaching and learning objectives based on Bloom's Taxonomy

Light On The Word—Overview of the lesson

Life Need for Today's Lesson—Answers a universal need for believers

Introduction—Summary of the lesson

Bible Learning—Two- or three-point outline of the lesson

Search the Scriptures—Questions and Answers about the previous text

Light On The Word—Commentary on the Scriptures

Bible Application—Practical suggestions to apply the lesson

Students' Responses—Practical steps for personal application

Prayer—Heartfelt entreaty based on the lesson

Dig a Little Deeper—In-depth analysis of an aspect of the lesson

The International Sunday School department guarantees that after diligent study, instruction, and application, no student, teacher, or Sunday School will ever remain the same!

Fall 2021
QUARTER AT-A-GLANCE

QUARTERLY COMMENTARY

TEACHER'S TIPS

" MINISTRY BEYOND THE CHURCH WALLS"

Evangelist Sharon Green

"SIX WAYS TO 'MAKE IT STICK' "

Sister Angela Sims

"YES LORD- OUR ANTHEM AND THE KEY TO OUR MENTAL WELLNESS"

Chantelle Bittings, LCPC

QUARTERLY QUIZ

MINISTRY BEYOND THE CHURCH WALLS

By Evangelist Sharon Green

"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me." - Matthew 25:34-36

As we look at the role of the church, there are times that we get stuck "having church" instead of "being the church." As I sought the Lord on what work He would have our congregation accomplish in our community, He took me to a familiar scripture. In Matthew 35:31-33, the Word of God tells us when the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left." He mentions six (6) areas of ministry that those on the right had performed:

1. Food ministry

2. Water ministry

3. Housing the Homeless ministry

4. Clothing closet

5. Sick and Shut-in ministry

6. Prison ministry

This tells us that the work of the church is outside of the church walls. Therefore, it is critical that we are observant of our environment. I believe that 2020 has ushered in greater opportunities for ministry within our neighborhoods. Our homeless numbers have continued to increase annually nationwide. The increase in rent prices is makes housing less affordable, thereby placing many more at risk of becoming unhoused. The pandemic not only added to the numbers of at-risk residents but has also increased food disparities for many others living in the "country of abundance" having to consume unsafe drinking water. In attempting to address these issues, Jesus said it best in Matthew 9:37 when He said to his disciples, "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest." He has done so; it is you and me.

Higher Praise Tabernacle is located in the High Desert Region of San Bernardino County. The community that we reside and worship in has the second-highest homeless population in our county. Therefore, our church felt it was critical to join the fight against homelessness, and in 2009, Victor Valley Family Resource Center, a 501(c)3 nonprofit to provide temporary housing, case management, Life Skills, Work Readiness, and other supportive services to assist in eradicating homelessness in our community. We began by opening a four-bedroom house to provide temporary housing for up to twenty-four months to those experiencing mental health challenges. Since that time, we have opened three additional homes to expand our housing to those exiting

incarceration and college students experiencing homelessness. As a result, Victor Valley Family Resource Center has a 93% success rate in assisting our clients' transition back into society.

Our newest project is the James A. Lewis Sr. Senior Housing Project (in honor of the late Bishop James A. Lewis) and Cross/Green Senior Center. Both projects are single-family residences that will house up to 16 people. These homes provide housing to active seniors from the age of 55 and over. In addition, it provides affordable, permanent housing and meals to those living on a limited income or that choose not to live alone. With seniors becoming our most vulnerable population, resources provided by our nonprofit are critical to the senior's success.

Since the current pandemic is creating a health and economic crisis in America and around the world, it creates a wealth of ministering opportunities for the body of Christ. With seniors becoming our most vulnerable population, resources provided by our nonprofit are critical to our client's success.

The Lord has blessed us to win souls by fulfilling our assignment outside of the walls of the church building. He has allowed VVFRC to be the vessel He used to change Fair Housing Laws nationwide (Victor Valley Family Resource Center vs. The City of Hesperia.) We are now one of the leading transitional housing agencies in San Bernardino County. We are now a multi-million dollar organization through providing the six service ministries in Matthew chapter 25.

Evangelist Sharon Green is the Administrator/Teacher of Higher Praise Tabernacle North. She is the Founder and Executive Director of Victor Valley Family Resource Center (VVFRC), the nonprofit service center of Higher Praise Tabernacle. VVFRC provides transitional housing for those experiencing homelessness with a focus on those exiting prison. Sharon Green is the proud wife of Pastor Christopher Green. She is a member of Southern California First Jurisdiction - Bishop Joe L. Ealy, Prelate, Mother Barbara Bryant, Supervisor.

SIX WAYS TO "MAKE IT STICK"

CREATIVE IDEAS TO MAKE THE SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON COME ALIVE IN THE HEART OF THE LISTENER

By Sister Angela Sims

Sunday School teachers have the rewarding task of presenting life-changing biblical lessons. We pray, study, and thoroughly prepare so that each lesson can impact the lives of our students. We teach as a mission to share the Word of God and aid others in their walk in Christ. It's a calling! However, I believe every teacher has had a time where they walked away from their class wondering, "Did they get it?" Therefore, I've compiled six creative ways to "Make it Stick" or make a lasting impact in the hearts of your students.

1. Make it Personal – Individuals could read the amazing Sunday School lessons themselves. Still, the benefit of having you as a teacher is the ability to hear YOUR experiences and YOUR perspective. Share a personal story. Express what that scripture means to you. Forget the PowerPoint and just speak from the heart. Someone may not remember what's on page 17, but they will remember the story of how a particular scripture got you through a dark time in your life.

2. When in doubt, Act it out – A great way to make the Word come alive is to act out the story in the lesson, and the possibilities are endless. Here are a few examples:

- If you are studying the last supper, set the table and actually re-enact the whole scenario.
- Kids are taught that Christmas is Jesus' birthday. Have an actual birthday party with cake and balloons. It will help them connect the significance of birth with Christmas.
- Create jail bars and portray Paul and Silas' experience in the jail.

3. Games create excitement – Games are for more than just kids. They can be great learning activities for all ages.

- When studying the crucifixion of Jesus – set class up like an episode of CSI and "investigate" the facts and timeline of the crime.
- Create a puzzle. Make large puzzle pieces and place a part of the lesson on each piece. When the class has read each part of the lesson, they get that puzzle piece, ultimately gaining all the "pieces of the puzzle" or the whole lesson.
- Recreate any TV game show. For example, you could play Let's Make a Deal, and behind curtain, #1, #2, and #3 are choices you can make in life, but only one choice is the actual biblical way, and that's the prize.

4. Make it musical – Music has a way of transcending cultures, generations, languages and is a

great learning aid. Write a catchy phrase or song that you sing every Sunday. Play a gospel song each week that is complimentary to the lesson. Melodies and rhymes are easier to remember. For example, growing up, we learned bible scripture songs in Sunshine Band. Several decades later, I can still quote those scriptures Word for Word.

5. Repetition is Key – Some of the best praise and worship songs are simple yet powerful due to repetition. One idea is to go around the room and have each student say the same scripture allowing the entire class to hear it many times. The repetition helps retention. Say this with me, With HIS stripes, we are healed. With his STRIPES, we are healed. With his stripes, WE are healed. With his stripes, we are HEALED. Now imagine a room full of believers declaring this promise from God over and over again. It's POWERFUL!

6. Follow-up during the week – Sunday School doesn't have to end when the bell rings. Connect with your class during the week. Text, email, or use social media to reiterate the week's lesson. Share how you've applied the lesson in your life that week. Sharing experiences also helps to create community and a sense of support among the group.

No matter what delivery method you choose, if you seek God and follow His direction, your delivery will be just right! Let's Pray…I pray that each teacher experiences the supernatural power of the Holy Spirit in their class. Lord, let each lesson captivate the ears of the listener and initiate a desire for more of God. I declare miracles, signs, and wonders to flow. Lord, teach our minds and nurture our hearts. In Jesus' name. AMEN.

Sister Angela Sims is a member at Mt. Carmel Church of God in Christ under the leadership of her brother, Pastor Jason Sims. She is the full-time Church Administrator. The daughter of the late Bishop Ervin J. Sims and Supervisor Mary K. Sims, she is an Author, Marketing and Administration Consultant. She is the owner of PurpleCraftDiva.com - "Where Encouragement and Creativity Meet." Angela is a member of Missouri Western Second Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction – Bishop John Mark Johnson, Prelate, Mother Mary K. Sims, Supervisor.

YES LORD- OUR ANTHEM AND THE KEY TO OUR MENTAL WELLNESS

By Chantelle Bittings, LCPC

It is our call to action, our acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God, and our ultimate surrender to His will for our lives. Yes Lord, allows us to reset our priorities. We are saying yes to the people and things that are important to God for our lives. We are saying yes to strength. We are saying yes to joy. We are saying yes to peace. We are saying yes to being whole in our bodies, our spirits, and our minds.

Isaiah 26:3- Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

How do we maintain peace of mind when so much is going on in the world around us? Mental wellness is something that we do not talk about often in the church. However, it is vital for the wholeness of every believer. As a mental health clinician, I feel that we must be careful how we separate issues of the mind from the rest of the body. As Christians, we are quick to judge people with mental health issues as if the mind is disconnected from the rest of the body. When people have high blood pressure or diabetes, we do not question the need to see a doctor. The pulpit and the professional counselors are not in competition. We must learn to partner in order to promote wellness in our congregations. Of course, we all know that God is the Master Physician, but please know that He has equipped therapists, social workers, psychologists, and psychiatrists to help the people of God.

As we teach our Sunday School classes, we must remember that some people struggle with mental wellness. For far too long, the church has propped up the misconception that Christians are immune to issues of mental illness. Whether the excuse given was a lack of faith or spiritual warfare, too often, we have written off mental health issues and, as a result, turned our back on our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ in their time of need. The ramifications of 2020 will be studied for years to come. We are one year into a pandemic that has completely changed how we work, go to school, and even have church. There has been social injustice and unrest. We have lost some of our nearest and dearest. People are hurting, confused, depressed, and full of anxiety. The counselors' virtual offices are full. People are searching for answers. Depression and anxiety rates are increasing. We must be equipped to help those who we fellowship with, worship with, and with whom we attend Sunday School.

The first step is that we must realize that this conversation is necessary. We must have conversations in our classes. Every Sunday School teacher should be able to refer to a mental health professional in the area of their church. We must continue to promote mental wellness with love. We must continue to say Yes Lord.

Y: Yield to His plan

E: Execute by His power

S: Submit to His process

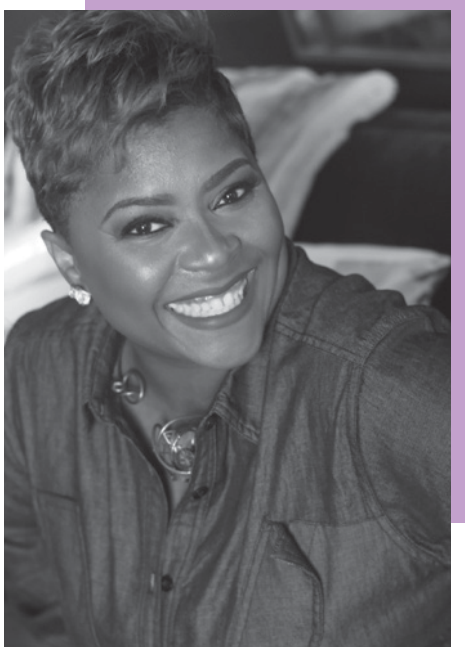
L: Listen to your Sisters and Brothers

O: Offer support and mental health services

R: Receive one another with love

D: Discuss mental wellness in our classes

For more information on mental wellness, please visit my website: www.cbittingstherapy.com.



Chantelle Bittings is a lifetime member of the Rehoboth Ministries Church of God in Christ, in Park Forest, IL. She serves in various positions in the church, including district Youth Chairlady and chair of First Jurisdiction of Illinois Mental Health Council. She is a devoted wife to Elder Thomas Bittings and the mother of two sons, Thomas and Gaston Bittings. She is a Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor and finds great joy in helping others. Chantelle is the author of "I am Enough: 14 days of Self-Worth, Strength, and Encouragement." She is a member of Illinois First Jurisdiction – Bishop Ocie Booker, Prelate, Mother Shirley Hughes, Supervisor.

DIG DEEPER WRITERS
FALL QUARTER

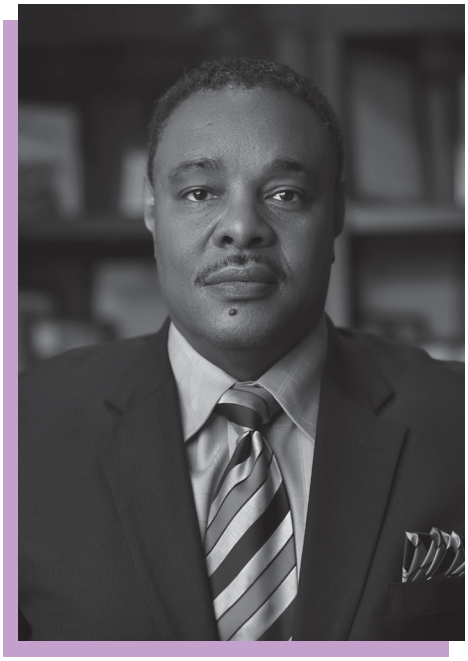
Adrienne Israel

Biographical Sketch

Missionary Dr. Adrienne Israel is a member of Wells Memorial Church of God in Christ in Greensboro, NC., where the Pastor is Superintendent Dr. Herman G. Platt. Wells Memorial is part of the Greater North Carolina Jurisdiction, Prelate is Bishop Leroy Jackson Woolard and Supervisor, Mother Harrizene Keyes. Dr. Israel has been a member of Wells Memorial since she was saved through the ministry of the late Bishop Ithiel Clemmons in 1983. She is the author of Amanda Berry Smith: From Washerwoman to Evangelist (1998) which chronicles the life of the Methodist Holiness Movement leader who inspired Bishop C.H. Mason. She is coauthor with Dr. Goldie Wells of Women in Ministry, the textbook for the Jurisdictional Institutes. She currently teaches Sunday School, is a member of the Business and Professional Women's Federation, and Chair of the Wells Memorial Board of Trustees.

A native of Massillon, Ohio, Missionary Israel earned a Bachelor's Degree in English and Master's degree in African Studies from Howard University, and a Doctorate in History from the Johns Hopkins University. She taught African and African American History at Guilford College for 38 years where she was the Vice President of Academic Affairs and Academic Dean for 13 years before retiring in May 2019.

Arthur A. Porter Sr.



Degrees: BA Management and Psychology, Master of Divinity Old Testament and Psychology of Religion, Doctor of Ministry Leadership

- **Title:** Admin. Asst.
- **Local church:** Senior Pastor New Nation Church Of God In Christ
- **Jurisdiction:** Montana
- **Jurisdictional Prelate:** Bishop Phillip Henry Porter
- **Jurisdictional Supervisor:** Missionary Katherine Porter

Arthur A. Porter Sr., is married to First Lady Donna Porter, father and Senior Pastor of New Nation COGIC in Aurora, Colorado. Administrative Assistant, author, and former adjunct faculty at Iliff School of Theology, and Denver Seminary.

QUARTERLY QUIZ

These questions may be used in two ways: as a pretest at the beginning of the quarter; as a review at the end of the quarter; or as a review after each lesson. Questions are based on the Scripture text of each lesson (King James Version).

LESSON 1

1. Whose path is directed (Proverbs 3:6)?

_____

_____

2. Who does the Lord correct (Proverbs 3:12)?

_____

_____

LESSON 2

1. According to Solomon's teaching, what would give life (Proverbs 4:13)?

_____

_____

2. What flows out of the heart (Proverbs 4:23)?

_____

_____

LESSON 3

1. What does God do to the "house" of the proud (Proverbs 15:25)?

_____

_____

2. Whose prayers are of particular interest to God (Proverbs 15:29)?

_____

_____

LESSON 4

1. Whose glory is it to conceal a thing (Proverbs 25:2)?

_____

_____

2. What happens when the wicked is taken from before the king (Proverbs 25:5)?

_____

_____

LESSON 5

1. What are the benefits of disciplining a child (Proverbs 29:17)?

_____

_____

2. What is the biggest problem with hasty and rash words and actions (Proverbs 29:20)?

_____

_____

LESSON 6

1. What method of war did the powerful king attempt to use against a small city (Ecclesiastes 9:14)?

_____

_____

QUARTERLY QUIZ

2. Who or what can destroy the peace brought about by wisdom (Ecclesiastes 9:18)?

_____

_____

LESSON 7

1. "Childhood and youth are_____" (Ecclesiastes 11:10).

_____

_____

2. "Remember now thy _____ in the days of thy _____, while the evil_____ come not, nor the years _____ _____, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Ecclesiastes 12:1).

_____

LESSON 8

1. Which lands and features of these territories are used to describe the pre-marriage distance of this couple (Song of Solomon 4:8)?

_____

_____

2. What major metaphor is used to describe a woman's body (Song of Solomon 4:12, 16, 5:1a)?

_____

_____

LESSON 9

1. "Blessed are the _____: for they shall obtain _____" (Matthews 5:7);

_____

_____

2. "Blessed are the _____: for they shall be called the children od God" (Matthew 5:9).

_____

_____

LESSON 10

1. Based on Matthew 22-24, what can Christians do to help serve as peacemakers in the workplace and church?

_____

_____

2. If we expect or want people to forgive us when we hurt someone or inadvertently make a mistake, why is it so difficult for some Christians to repay the same kindness to persons who offend us? Please include yourself if applicable.

_____

_____

LESSON 11

1. God sends rain on the just and the unjust (Matthew 5:45). Why do you think He gives certain blessings to all and not just a few? Do you think there are some examples in our society where people exercise the "right" to limit certain blessings or opportunities to only a few? Explain.

_____

_____

2. What does Matthew 5:48 say about how we should act because of who God is?

_____

_____

LESSON 12

1. What did Jesus say about why hypocrites pray (Matthew 6:5)?

_____

_____

2. What does Matthew 6 tell us happens if we do not forgive others (Matthew 6:15)?

_____

_____

LESSON 13

1. "But seek ye _____ the _____ of _____, and his _____; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:33).

_____

_____

2. Take therefore no _____ for the _____: for the _____ shall take _____ for the things of itself. _____ unto the day is the _____ thereof" (Matthew 6:34).

_____

_____

*Answers to Quarterly Quiz Can be found on page 449

RIGHTEOUSNESS AND WISDOM

BIBLE BASIS: Proverbs 3:1–12

BIBLE TRUTH: Trusting in God's wisdom helps develop strong faith.

MEMORY VERSE: "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5, KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of the lesson, we will: IDENTIFY God's principles for living purposeful lives; TRUST that God's wisdom reveals purpose and meaning of life; and SEEK God's wisdom when making choices in daily life.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Proverbs 3:1 – 35—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

TEACHER PREPARATION

MATERIALS NEEDED: Bibles (several different versions), Quarterly Commentary/Teacher Manual, Adult Quarterly, teaching resources such as charts, worksheets/handouts, paper, pens, and pencils.

OTHER MATERIALS NEEDED / TEACHER'S NOTES:

_____

_____

LESSON OVERVIEW

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON
To recognize the relationship between righteousness and wisdom.

BIBLE LEARNING
To understand how wisdom protects and preserves God's people.

BIBLE APPLICATION
To use biblical principles of wisdom in our lives.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES
Students will identify God's principles for living purposeful lives.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

PROVERBS 3:1-12, KJV

1 My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

PROVERBS 3:1-12, AMP

1 My son, do not forget my teaching, But let your heart keep my commandments;

2 For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee

3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

4 So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

7 Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.

8 It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones.

9 Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase:

10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine.

11 My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction:

12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

2 For length of days and years of life [worth living] And tranquility and prosperity [the wholeness of life's blessings] they will add to you.

3 Do not let mercy and kindness and truth leave you [instead let these qualities define you]; Bind them [securely] around your neck, Write them on the tablet of your heart.

4 So find favor and high esteem In the sight of God and man.

5 Trust in and rely confidently on the LORD with all your heart. And do not rely on your own insight or understanding.

6 In all your ways know and acknowledge and recognize Him, And He will make your paths straight and smooth [removing obstacles that block your way].

7 Do not be wise in your own eyes; Fear the LORD [with reverent awe and obedience] and turn [entirely] away from evil.

8 It will be health to your body [your marrow, your nerves, your sinews, your muscles—all your inner parts]. And refreshment (physical well-being) to your bones.

9 Honor the LORD with your wealth and with the first fruits of all your crops (income);

10 Then your barns will be abundantly filled And your vats will overflow with new wine.

11 My son, do not reject or take lightly the discipline of the LORD [learn from your mistakes and the testing that comes from His correction through discipline]; Nor despise His rebuke,

12 For those whom the LORD loves He corrects, Even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. Depart (Proverbs 3:7) *cuwr* (Heb.)—Avoid, shun.

B. Firstfruits (v. 9) *re'shiyth* (Heb.)—Beginning, best, chief.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

The first chapters of Proverbs provide an introduction that explains the book's scope, intention, and background. In most Bibles, **Proverbs 1** is labeled as "The Purpose of Proverbs," chapter two is an invitation to the benefits of wisdom, and chapter three outlines the benefits of applying this wisdom by trusting God.

TEACHING THE BIBLE LESSON

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

AIM: That your students will recognize the need to honor God in all things.

INTRODUCTION

Spiritual Wisdom for Today

Though many regard the book of Proverbs as primarily a collection of wise sayings by King Solomon, we would do well to regard the Holy Spirit as the ultimate source. The proverbs are just as timely to be practiced today as when they were first given.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will be able to identify the benefits of God's Word.

I. SOLOMON ADVISES HIS SON (Proverbs 3:1-6)

The first ten chapters of Proverbs give advice from King Solomon to his son. Solomon knew that if his son kept a persistent and continual regard for God's precepts, promises, and provision, he would lead a life of unspeakable advantages.

Listen, My Son (verses 1-6)!

1 My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments; 2 For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee. 3 Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart: 4 So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man. 5 Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. 6 In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Chapter 3 begins with the affectionate and familial language of endearment, "my son." Like the son, we are admonished not to forget the "law" or the teachings and commandments that begin in **verse 3**. "Forget" refers to willful, deliberate neglect and diversion of attention **(cf. Proverbs 2:17)**. With the same deliberate intention of not forgetting, the son is admonished in the same verse to "keep" or "retain" the commandments. Although this passage applies to the Scripture as we now have it, the law and commandments to which the writer alludes are those listed from **verse 3** onward.

According to **verse 2** the reward of obedience is a long and peaceful life. The expression, "length of days" signifies the prolonging life to the duration of its appointed limit. It is important to note that "length of days" is represented as a blessing in the Old Testament that depended on the fulfillment of certain conditions. This is life in a qualitative sense—a life worth living, the good life, indicated by "peace." Peace is more than just a matter of inner tranquility or absence of trouble.

"Mercy" and "truth" are the two basic covenant terms in Israel. However, the exhortation in **verse 3** to hold on to mercy and truth is more than emphasizing trust in God's fidelity to the covenant. It includes internal character. It is firmness and constancy in keeping and executing one's promise. The command is to "bind (mercy and truth) about thy neck." We are to "write (mercy and truth) on the table" of our hearts. This further indicates that the character is in view rather than the behavior of the reader. By "binding" and "writing" the teachings become a part of the disciple's

nature and an indelible part of his/her character.

The fourth verse states the outcome and provides the final motivation for obedience explained in **verses 1** and **3**: "Favour and good understanding" by God and by people. The Hebrew word for "understanding," refers to "regard and reputation". Both God and humans will approve such a person. To find favor "in the sight of God" is to be acceptable to God and enjoy a sense of His approval. Favor "in the sight of . . . man" is that which others feel toward those whose character can be found blameless.

There are two commands in **verse 5**. The first is to trust God with all one's heart. "Trust" carries the force of relying on someone for security; one's confidence is to be in the Lord and not in human understanding. To trust in God is to believe that He can and will do what He has promised. The call here is for a trust characterized by total commitment—"with all your heart" **(verse 5, NIV)** and "in all your ways" **(verse 6, NIV)**. We are to commit all our concerns to Him so that we can be directed, ordered and overruled as His infinite wisdom sees best. "Trust in God" means giving up confidence or trust in your own understanding exclusively. The command to trust God "with all your heart" **(Proverbs 3:5)** means that the total personality is to be committed to God's care, although it emphasizes the mind and volition. **Verses 5b and 7a** prohibit depending on one's own understanding and intellectual pride. We are to use our understanding, but we must not transfer to our intellect any measure of dependence that should be placed on God alone. These expressions call for absolute obedience and surrender in every realm of life. Relying on one's own human (natural) understanding, or setting a high value on one's own wisdom are the opposite of a trusting dependence on God. The commitment of the heart to God means that all the beliefs and decisions of life are to be submitted to God. Human wisdom is inadequate, but divine wisdom is sufficient for guidance in life.

Verse 6 literally translates as "in all your ways, know Him." To know God in all our ways means giving constant attention to the divine will and presence in all things, even in those areas that we sometimes consider minor. When obedient faith is present, the Lord will direct or "make straight" the believer's paths in spite of difficulties and hindrances. We are to acknowledge God:

(1) by referring everything to Him; (2) by praying for and expecting His divine guidance; and (3) by consulting and applying His will as revealed in His Word. We must think well, consult wisely, act diligently, and trust wholly. God will direct our lives and enable us to reach our destination.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

What are the advantages of keeping God's Word in the heart?

God will give long life, peace, favor, and recognition for good character in the sight of God and man.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Taking Solomon's Lesson to Heart

Solomon admonished his son to do more than memorize the Scriptures. He encouraged his son to keep God's commandments in his heart. While the mind records words, the heart paints pictures with detail and emotions, and gives purpose and inspiration to mere words. The heart retains what the mind forgets. In order to depend on God's promises and faithfulness during difficult times, we must wear them as a treasured necklace that must never be removed.

II. THREE EXHORTATIONS (Proverbs 3:7-12)

Solomon was an exhorter, one who inspired others to action through encouragement. In **verses 7 through 12,** he gave his son three exhortations, each enforced with a good reason.

The Benefits Of Wisdom (verses 7-12)

7 Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil. 8 It shall be health to thy navel, and marrow to thy bones. 9 Honour the

LORD with thy substance, and with the first-fruits of all thine increase: 10 So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine. 11 My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: 12 For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth.

Verses 7 and 8 are essentially a repetition of **verses 5 and 6,** where the writer urges the reader to trust in the Lord. Here the author urges us not to take ourselves too seriously, but to reverence the Lord and avoid evil. The admonition is a warning against self-sufficiency, self-conceit and self-reliance. To be "wise in thine own eyes" is to be in an utterly hopeless situation. Trust in God means giving up confidence in yourself and allowing God to become both teacher and father. Even when a person acquires wisdom, he or she must hold to humility and not allow confidence in intellect and learning to displace the demand for faith and confidence in God.

Verse 9 emphasizes an important element in a person's relationship with God. We must honor Him with our wealth and first fruits as a sacrifice in recognition that God is our source. This admonition reminds the faithful of their religious duties to God. "Honour," as in this Scripture, sometimes implies giving gifts or benefits **(Numbers 22:37; 24:11; Judges 9:9).** This refers to our "substance" or literally the product of one's righteous labors. "First fruits" refers to topmost, first in its kind, or simply, the best. "Increase" or abundance refers to the produce of the earth— one's own crops and husbandry. The implication of these words is that we must give to the Lord from the entire range of our possessions. Our profession of faith in Christ is a mockery unless it affects how we spend our money as well as all other concerns of life. Our possessions ought to be consecrated to God, spent in conscious obedience to His will and used for His glory. This includes the sustenance of worship, the support and extension of missions, the relief of the poor, the sick, the needy, the widow and orphan **(cf. James 1:27).**

The command to give is followed by the promise of blessings in the "barns" or storehouses and the wine "presses." When one honors God with a portion of one's increase, he or she will receive material blessings. We can and should trust God with our gifts and for our material needs. **Verses 9 and 10** explain a principle of stewardship rather than a guarantee of material wealth and prosperity. The promise echoes the language of Moses in **Deuteronomy 28:1–8,** where God promises that in return for full obedience, He will command a blessing upon the "storehouses" **(verse 8)** and industry.

The final instruction of **verse 11** warns not to rebel against the Lord's discipline, because it is evidence of His love. The verb "despise" is "to reject" and "to condemn." "Chastening" means "correction" not by reproof only (as in **Proverbs 6:23; 8:30)** but by punishment also **(Proverbs 13:24; 22:15).** To "be weary" means to loathe, abhor, feel disgust or vexation toward someone. So the expression "neither be weary" reinforces the previous phrase "despise not" and represents a more deeply seated aversion to God's plans. The word "correction" is here used to mean "chastening" or "punishment." To loathe the correction of God is to allow the aversion to estrange us completely from Him. If we are spiritually "weary of his correction"—if we "resent his rebuke" **(Proverbs 3:11, NIV)**—we are rejecting a belief in the truth that "all things work together for good to them that love God" **(Romans 8:28).**

The final verse of our lesson provides the motive for submissiveness to God's corrections—they are the corrections of covenantal love. The writer employs the familial relationship of father and son in order to reconcile us to God's corrections. God corrects those He loves after the same manner as a father corrects the son he loves—an idea that is taken from **Deuteronomy 8:5.** When we learn the truth of this passage, we shall be drawn to, rather than repelled from God by His corrections. We must not engage in indignant questioning, scornful rebellion and proud efforts of indifference to pain or pleasure. We must accept suffering as an act of divine love, not repudiate it and rebel against one's condition.

QUESTION 2

What is the importance today of this section of Scripture, beginning with "Be not wise in thine own eyes"**?**

The admonitions to give to God of our first fruits and to embrace God's chastisement might be seen today as unusual and even foolish. Verse 7 reminds us that we should not look for wisdom on our own. Instead we must look to God for understanding and His principles will become clear.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Spiritual Therapy: Navel and Bone

Compliance with the wisdom of these verses is therapeutic: obedience will bring health to the body and nourishment for the frame. The healing that the fear of the Lord and avoidance of evil brings, is first spiritual. The benefit of true wisdom is physical health and vigor. The navel and the bones are symbols for the whole body. Knowledge of God that leads to spiritual well-being has its effects on psychological and physical aspects of human personality. As health to the navel and marrow to the bones represent physical strength, so the fear of the Lord is the spiritual strength of God's children.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will accept King Solomon's wisdom for modern society.

Accept Responsibility

The cares of life are choking the strength out of families. Financial challenges, underemployment, depression, and addictions are just a few of the things that pull families apart. Today, many parents are too worried, too busy, and too overwhelmed to take time with their children. As a result, we find many children sexting, murdering, failing school, doing drugs, and having babies. In **Proverbs 3,** Solomon models the importance of making time to teach his son how to live. How can the Church and members of its spiritual community empower parents to become active participants in their children's lives, in spite of life's challenges? How can the total community accept responsibility for life-instruction of our youth? This is critical and we must all work to make it happen.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will identify areas in their lives where Solomon's words are needed.

If it is not us personally, then we all know people who are struggling to raise their children. Try your best not to judge yourself or them as bad parents, commit to do better yourself, or to help them do better. Pray for direction, and ask God for help. This week, engage in one of these activities or encourage someone else to do so:

- Find a counselor
- Attend a parenting support group
- Talk with your pastor or other godly parents
- Get active in your child's school
- Talk to and spend time with your child

With God, it is possible to restore and resurrect parent-child relationships. In fact, that is the best way to model God's parental care for us as we learn His righteousness and wisdom.

PRAYER

Dear Lord, help us to be obedient as sons and daughters who desire to please You and to help our children honor You as well. In Jesus' name. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

Christian consultant, Larry Julian, has helped many business leaders put Proverbs 3:5 into practice by discovering how to make decisions based on God's principles rather than the "bottom line." As a result, they fostered work-place environments of excellence and respect in which employees are content and genuinely striving to serve others. As customers and clients realized their corporations had their best interests at heart, these businesses flourished.

Following God's principles yielded good results because the leaders lined up the purpose of their companies with God's purpose for their lives. Trusting God equipped them to make wise decisions when faced with hard choices. As a result, they succeeded without becoming "slaves" to "the bottom line."

If someone observed your life, who and what would they say you trust? What would you say is your purpose in life? Is it the same as the work you do or the business you run? How can you determine to be successful by following God's principles even when they conflict with the demands of the "bottom line"?

[1]Larry Julian, God is my CEO: Following God's Principles in a Bottom-Line World (Avon, MA: Adams Media Corporation, 2002), Introduction and pp. 8-12.

HOW TO SAY IT

Chronicles. KRON-ih-kuhlz.

Septuagint. SEP-too-uh-jint'.

PREPARE FOR NEXT SUNDAY

Read **Proverbs 4:10-15, 20-27** and study "From Generation to Generation."

Sources:

Baltes, A. J., ed. Biblespeech.com. http://biblespeech.com (accessed July 6, 2010). Clarke, Adam. Clarke's Commentary, Vol. 2: Job–Malachi. Nashville, TN: Abingdon,
n.d.

Clifford, Richard J. Proverbs. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999. Garrett, Duane A. Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs. New American Commentary,
Vol. 14. Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1993.

Hebrew and Greek Lexicons. Bible Study Tools.com. http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons (accessed September 16, 2010).

Horton, Robert Forman. The Book of Proverbs. New York: A.C. Armstrong, 1891. Kidner, Derek. Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary. Downers Grove, IL:
InterVarsity Press, 1964. 64.

Merrim-Webster Online Dictionary. Merriam-Webster, Inc. http:// www.merriam-webster.com (accessed July 6, 2010).

Moffatt, James. A New Translation of the Bible: Containing the Old and New Testaments.
London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1935. 695.

Strong, James. New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Seattle, WA: Biblesoft, and International Bible Translators, 1994.

DAILY HOME BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY
The Sun of Righteousness
(Malachi 4:1–6)

TUESDAY
Remember All the Commandments
(Numbers 15:37–41)

WEDNESDAY
God Is Our Help and Shield
(Psalm 115:3–11)

THURSDAY
God's Abundant Blessings
(2 Corinthians 9:6–12)

FRIDAY
Wisdom in Relationships
(Proverbs 3:27–35)

SATURDAY
The Profit from Wisdom
(Proverbs 3:13–26

SUNDAY
Trust in the Lord
(Proverbs 3:1-12)

COMMENTS / NOTES:

FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION

BIBLE BASIS: Proverbs 4:10–15, 20–27

BIBLE TRUTH: To live life to the fullest, we must make good choices and keep a righteous path.

MEMORY VERSE: Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life (Proverbs 4:13, KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of the lesson, we will: EXPLAIN how the teachings from the proverb promote wise living; CONSIDER living wisely and following a straight path; and DEVELOP a strategy for making good choices and living a godly life.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES:

Proverbs 4:1-27—Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

TEACHER PREPARATION

MATERIALS NEEDED: Bibles (several different versions), Quarterly Commentary/Teacher Manual, Adult Quarterly, teaching resources such as charts, worksheets/handouts, paper, pens, and pencils.

OTHER MATERIALS NEEDED / TEACHER'S NOTES:

LESSON OVERVIEW

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON
To develop a strategy for making good choices and living a godly life.

BIBLE LEARNING
To learn the instructions of Proverbs 4.

BIBLE APPLICATION
To use Proverbs four as a blueprint for positive living.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES
Students will discern how this biblical advice benefits each generation—past, present and future.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

PROVERBS 4:10–15, 20–27, KJV

10 Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many.

PROVERBS 4:10-15, 20-27, AMP

10 Hear, my son, and accept my sayings, And the years of your life will be many.

11 I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths.

12 When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble.

13 Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life.

14 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men.

15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

PROVERBS 4:20-27, KJV

20 My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings.

21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart.

22 For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh.

23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.

24 Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee.

25 Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee.

26 Ponder the path of thy feet, And let all thy ways be established, years of your life will be many.

27 Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

11 I have instructed you in the way of [skillful and godly] wisdom; I have led you in upright paths.

12 When you walk, your steps will not be impeded [for your path will be clear and open]; And when you run, you will not stumble.

13 Take hold of instruction; [actively seek it, grip it firmly and] do not let go. Guard her, for she is your life.

14 Do not enter the path of the wicked, And do not go the way of evil men.

15 Avoid it, do not travel on it; Turn away from it and pass on.

PROVERBS 4:20-27, AMP

20 My son, pay attention to my words and be willing to learn; Open your ears to my sayings.

21 Do not let them escape from your sight; Keep them in the center of your heart.

22 For they are life to those who find them, And healing and health to all their flesh.

23 Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life.

24 Put away from you a deceitful (lying, misleading) mouth, And put devious lips far from you.

25 Let your eyes look directly ahead [toward the path of moral courage] And let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you [toward the path of integrity].

26 Consider well and watch carefully the path of your feet, And all your ways will be steadfast and sure.

27 Do not turn away to the right nor to the left [where evil may lurk]; Turn your foot from [the path of] evil.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. **Incline (Proverbs 4:20)** *natah* (Heb.)—To stretch out, extend, offer.
B. **Perverse (v. 24)** *lezuwth* **(Heb.)**—Deviant, crooked.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

In our lesson text, we find Solomon teaching his children how to shun peer pressure. It may be hard for us to imagine the kind of trouble children in Solomon's day got into, and we probably don't believe it was anything like the trouble children get into today. But as Solomon wrote in **Ecclesiastes 1:9 (NIV),** "There is nothing new under the sun."

TEACHING THE BIBLE LESSON

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

AIM: That your students will compare the two paths of life.

INTRODUCTION

You Must Choose

The way of wisdom might be synonymous with "the paths of righteousness" identified in **Psalm 23:3,** but it is not an actual path or walkway. It is metaphorical for choosing a godly lifestyle. Everyone must choose.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will identify the benefits and consequences of lifestyle choices.

I. TWO PATHS, TWO DIFFERENT OUTCOMES (Proverbs 4:10–15)

Simply put, Solomon taught that life is a two-way street and that his children could go the right way (the way of wisdom) or in the wrong direction (the path of the wicked).

Solomon allowed his children to choose by telling them in effect, "I have led you in the right paths; the rest is up to you." Solomon taught his children by example and showed them how to hide God's Word in their hearts, how to recognize ungodliness, and how to shun evil. Though he was not a perfect man, his children were witnesses to the blessings of God upon Solomon's life.

Listen Carefully! (verses 10-15)

10 Hear, O my son, and receive my sayings; and the years of thy life shall be many. 11 I have taught thee in the way of wisdom; I have led thee in right paths. 12 When thou goest, thy steps shall not be straitened; and when thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble. 13 Take fast hold of instruction; let her not go: keep her; for she is thy life. 14 Enter not into the path of the wicked, and go not in the way of evil men. 15 Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away.

Proverbs 4:10 begins with the admonition to "hear" or obey. There must be attentiveness and a willingness to appropriate what is taught. The consequence is that the life of the pupil "shall be many," which means he or she will be given a long life. Beginning from **verse 11,** the father/teacher gives additional reasons why his authority should be respected and the teaching followed. Solomon uses the image of a road to make a comparison as he explains the wisdom of his instruction.

In **verse 12,** Solomon explains that living according to wisdom is like walking or running on a safe road, a road that is well defined. On this right path, the feet can tread on good surface and take a course that will be free of unnecessary obstacles. Progress will be certain. "Thy steps shall not be straitened," means the journey will not encounter restraint, confinement, or rebuke. The implied opposite is that those who walk in a troubled and uneven path, are apt to stumble and fall. Likewise, those under the influence of sound biblical teachings ponder their paths and carefully examine circumstances as they occur. The fear of God leads them to act in an upright, honest manner. Thus their way in business and life is clear. They are without fear of being tripped by unpredictable and seemingly insurmountable obstacles.

The admonitions of **verse 13** challenge us to urgent faithfulness. Not only is wisdom the means of making progress in life, it is life itself. Anything so essential must be enthusiastically maintained. The believer must not let go of the truths of God's words and must not allow God's words to go unheeded. "Instruction" refers to discipline, such as parental counsel. It is our duty to hold to the truth that God has revealed to us and to attend to the commandments that He has sent us. But it is also for our own soul's profit. Divine truth is not a luxury; it is a necessity for life.

Verse 14 begins a command to avoid evil association, which is a source of mischief to everyone, but especially to the young, who are more imitative and whose habits are undergoing development. "Evil men" are bloodthirsty men of violence. The warning is to avoid evil ways and evil people by not starting on the wicked path of life. The rapid sequence of imperatives in **verse 15** stresses the urgency of the matter. In addition, the expressions used continue the comparison of lifestyle with traveling along a path—only now the lifestyle to consider is evil.

Phrases such as "avoid it" and "pass not by it" state in the strongest terms to get as far away from evil as possible. Whether for the sake of worldly gain, or through a desire to please others, never approach the pathway where you would not wish to be found when God calls you into the eternal world. The serious purpose of our soul should be to shun every appearance of evil.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

Why might Solomon have used a "path" metaphor?

Life is a journey and we must choose which path to take. Our decisions are consistent with our character. Our roads in life reflect what we value. Solomon urges that we take only the path of wisdom and right.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Walk This Way!

Solomon warned that the way of wisdom would not always be easy, and that it was not a popular road. He stressed the importance of choosing the way of wisdom so that his children's lives would be consistent and wholesome. Solomon's father, David, had children by each of his many wives. Despite the blended family, these were considered fully David's children and they were fully brothers and sisters to each other. In Solomon's family, his brother, Absalom, had his brother, Amnon, killed for raping his sister, Tamar. Later Absalom tried to steal his father's kingdom. When David was advanced in years, Solomon's brother, Adonijah, tried to have himself declared king instead of Solomon. Solomon apparently recognized, as we must, that adherence to God's Word can break the cycle of violence and sexual sin that can ruin a family. Solomon taught that the way of wisdom is a path to long life, prosperity, and happiness.

II. PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT (Proverbs 4:20–27)

To Solomon, it was not enough to tell his children to choose the way of wisdom and not give them practical tips on doing so. In these verses, he advised them to: (1) guard their hearts, (2) set a guard over their mouths, (3) attend to what they see or look upon, and (4) be considerate in all they do.

Pay Attention! (verses 20-27)

20 My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings. 21 Let them not depart from thine eyes; keep them in the midst of thine heart. 22 For they are life unto those that find them, and health to all their flesh. 23 Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. 24 Put away from thee a froward mouth, and perverse lips put far from thee. 25 Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. 26 Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. 27 Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil.

In **verse 20,** Solomon's son is first advised to heed the

wise words of the father. The word "attend" means to incline the ear attentively. The restating of this phrase in the same verse underscores its importance. **Verse 21** instructs the believer to guard wisdom in the heart for it is the wellspring of life. The heart is the starting point of life's activities **(Proverbs 23:19);** it determines the course of life. "Heart" refers not to the physical organ, but to the mind and the entire personality of the individual. The capacity to live with joy and vigor ultimately comes from within and not from circumstances. The corrupt heart draws one down to the grave, but wisdom protects the heart from that corruption. John Flavel, in his book Keeping the Heart, very wisely observed, "The greatest difficulty in conversion is to win the heart to God; and the greatest difficulty after conversion is to keep the heart with God" (Flavel, 2).The reason for heeding the instruction is that the father's words of wisdom given in **verse 22** are the means of life and health. The human condition apart from God is regarded as a condition of death or enfeebled by sickness, but obeying wise advice can restore the listener to life, health, and soundness. Wisdom does not automatically come to a person. In Hebrew, the verb "to find" used in **verse 22, s**uggests a deliberate effort to get possession of and procure wisdom. The "health" that is promised in verse 22 is physical, emotional, and spiritual—the whole person.

God's words bring deliverance from the evils that harm and hinder life. Nothing preserves soul and body in a healthier state than when we keep before our eyes and carry in our hearts good doctrine. In **verse 22,** "All their flesh" implies the completeness of the restoration; it is not confined to one part, but pervades the whole body.

The living stream "issues" from the physical heart in its normal, healthy condition, to vitalize and nourish every part of the body **(verse 23).** This truth also applies to spiritual things. The streams of spiritual life proceed from Him to all the powers and faculties of the soul. We must, therefore, be vigilant about our treatment of wisdom. The Hebrew term for "diligence" is very emphatic; it means "to set double guards" such as those which provide high-level security. This forcefulness of expression plainly implies how difficult it is to "keep" our hearts, and how dangerous to neglect them! Care must be taken that the fountain not be stopped up nor injured. We must be circumspect and careful with the thoughts we express.

In **verse 24,** after the father challenges his son to store wisdom in his heart and watch over his heart with all diligence, he gives the son a series of instructions involving his mouth, eyes, and feet. Centuries later, Paul referred to our bodies as "members of Christ" that we can use either as instruments of righteousness or unrighteousness **(1 Corinthians 6:15–20).** The commands in **Proverbs 4:24–27** concerning our mouths, eyes, and feet can be obeyed only when we are watching over our hearts with full vigilance. The heart works in tandem with the tongue and as such, starts with it. As the source of life, the heart sends up the thoughts that the tongue expresses in words. Words flow out of the heart. A believer must avoid the words that swerve from truth and purity to lies, deceit, and wrong discourse of every kind. Instead, righteousness must control the tongue, and twisted and crooked speech must be shunned.The final exhortation returns to the imagery of the path **(verses 25–27).** The idea is that one should not be distracted from the way of wisdom **(verse 25).** "Look straight before thee" is an expression of unswerving directedness toward a goal. The person who does this pursues wisdom single-mindedly. They do not look to the right or the left to check out other options. They are not distracted by temptation to leave the correct path. The foolish person is always looking around for different objects of desire. As the story of John Bunyan in Pilgrim's Progress well illustrates, temptations lie on both sides of the way, requiring one to focus directly ahead and walk without deviating to either side, without even glancing at them. As the author of Proverbs often states, winking or squinted eyes are symptoms of unreliability and guile **(Proverbs 6:13; 10:10; 16:30).** The wise person will have an unswerving directness, but the fool is easily distracted **(Proverbs 17:24).**

Verse 24 warns us not to allow our feet to take us down the wrong path. Proverbs speaks of the foolish as having "feet that are quick to rush into evil" **(Proverb 6:18,** NIV; see also **Proverbs 1:16). B**y contrast, the

wise stay on the path of life, the path of righteousness. **Proverbs 15:21** says that "a man of understanding keeps a straight course" (NIV). By contrast, the foolish man follows paths that are "crooked" **(Proverbs 2:15).** Having feet that stay on the path of righteousness demonstrates a single-minded pursuit of wisdom. The word "ponder" means "to make level," "to weigh," and, metaphorically, "to consider or to deliberate." The sense is that one must consider undertakings well by examining them thoroughly beforehand and pondering whether they are right and proper.

Proverbs 4:27 is closely connected with and more fully explains **verses 25 and 26.** As in **verse 25,** the gaze is to be concentrated; the feet are not to deflect nor turn aside to byways. Nothing is to be permitted to divert the believer from the right way, neither adversity, nor prosperity, nor anything that can possess the power of temptation. The disciple must not allow anything to turn him or her aside from the path of virtue, honesty, and fair dealings in all matters of faith.

QUESTION 2

How does the "body" metaphor provide warnings for those who follow God?

The rest of the chapter consists of warnings, which are permeated by a metaphorical use of body parts. The ear is to remain keen for listening to wise advice (verse 20); the eyes are to stay fixed on right teaching (verses 21, 25), and the feet are to stay on the right path (verses 26–27). The mouth and lips must shun using twisted words (verse 24). Above all, the heart must be guarded by sound doctrine (verses 21, 23). If the son listens to his father, his whole body will be healthy (verse 22). By using ears, eyes, and heart, the teacher is exhorting the whole person to receive the teaching.

Answers will vary.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

The Path of the Wicked

The path of the wicked is another metaphor used to characterize the route of the ungodly. The path of the wicked is wide and dark, but may be fun and seemingly prosperous. It does not have a "Do Not Enter" sign before it, but a discerning person might see other warning signs. A person on the path of the wicked does not care about godly things. They entertain evil thoughts and do evil things. They do what they want to do because they believe that life is too short not to have fun—regardless of the consequences to themselves and others.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will consider how society distracts us today.

The Pressure to Keep Up

The word "pressure" when related to teenagers, is called "peer pressure", but concerning adults, is called "keeping up with the Joneses". Using peers as a benchmark for where one should be is dangerous and leads to other evils. Keeping up with the Joneses has plagued African American communities and many others with debt, depression, and fear. How can the church promote wisdom in all aspects of life? Is this more or less difficult in an uncertain economy?

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will consider how the "paths" are represented today.

Today, what seems right may not be right. Consider this scenario:Kim had gone to three stores looking for the colorful bracelets her eight-year-old daughter, Destiny, wanted for her birthday.

When Kim and Destiny went into the fourth store, Destiny ran right to the bracelets. "Mom, they're here!"

Kim snatched a couple of bags of bracelets and led her daughter to the counter. "Praise the Lord," she told the cashier.

"Praise Him, sister," the cashier responded. "So, you're a believer?" "Yes, ma'am."

"Well, you should know what these bracelets mean. Your daughter is too young to know. Girls her age like them because they're colorful and are cute animal shapes, but older girls give them to boys because the colors stand for certain sexual acts. I know it sounds crazy, but what is innocent today might mean meet-me-behind-the-bleachers tomorrow."

What deceptive "road signs" can you find in our society?

PRAYER

Lord God, help us to keep our eyes, ears, hearts, and feet focused on following Your path. In Jesus' name. Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

It may be a good idea to begin each day with a plan and a prayer to guard our hearts against sin **(Luke 11:4b),** but are planning and praying enough? According to business analyst, Roger Martin, even a strategic plan does not assure success because "discomfort is part of the process." When athletes who have failed to practice before a game pray for victory before a game but fail to practice beforehand because the coach was "too hard," should they be surprised when they lose the game? Plans and prayer may fail to yield success if we stay in our "comfort zone."

Apostle Paul reminds us to examine ourselves **(2 Corinthians 13:5)** and avoid complacency **(1 Corinthians 10:12)**. After honestly looking at ourselves in the mirror of God's word, how do we handle the discomfort that results from what we see?

Instead of simply revising our plan for the day and spending more time in prayer, Richard Foster proposes the balanced use of "the disciplines of life in the spirit: meditation, prayer, fasting, and studying" the word of God. These disciplines are not laws that yield the "external righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees" but sustained actions that "facilitate the transformation of the heart." Practicing the disciplines opens us up experiencing a change of heart graciously awarded by God, and to purifying our hearts **(1 John 3:3).**

HOW TO SAY IT

Deuteronomy.	doo'tuh-RON-uh-mee .
Pharisee.	FAIR-uh-see.

DAILY HOME BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY
Guard Your Heart and Mind
(Proverbs 23:15–19)

TUESDAY
Walk Uprightly
(Psalm 84:8-12)

WEDNESDAY
Keep God's Commandments
(Joshua 23:1–8)

THURSDAY
Lifelong Protection
(Psalm 91:9–16)

FRIDAY
Walk in Your Parents' Paths
(Proverbs 1:8–15)

SATURDAY
Prize Wisdom
(Proverbs 4:1–9)

SUNDAY
Walk the Straight Path
(Proverbs 4: 10-15,20-27)

PREPARE FOR NEXT SUNDAY

Read **Proverbs 15:21-33** and study "Teaching Values."

Sources:

Baltes, A. J., ed. Biblespeech.com. http://biblespeech.com (accessed July 6, 2010).

Clarke, Adam. Clarke's Commentary, Vol. 2: Job–Malachi. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, n.d. 712. Clifford, Richard J. Proverbs. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999.

Flavel, John. Keeping the Heart. http://www.the-highway.com/heart1_Flavel.html (accessed June 7, 2010).

Garrett, Duane A. Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs. New American Commentary, Vol. 14. Nashville, TN: Broadman. 1993.

Hebrew and Greek Lexicons. Bible Study Tools.com. http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons (accessed September 16, 2010).

Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. Merriam-Webster, Inc. http:// www.merriam-webster.com (accessed July 6, 2010).

Plaut, W. Gunther. Book of Proverbs. New York, NY: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1961.

Strong, James. New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Seattle, WA: Biblesoft, and International Bible Translators, 1994.

COMMENTS / NOTES:

TEACHING VALUES

BIBLE BASIS: Proverbs 15:21–33

BIBLE TRUTH: Godly wisdom is necessary to live well and to succeed.

MEMORY VERSE: He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding (Proverbs 15:32, KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson, we will: DISCUSS the advice given in the lesson that promotes godly wisdom; REFLECT on experiences of following both good and bad advice; and DECIDE to follow the advice offered in the proverb.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Proverbs 10:1–15:33— Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

TEACHER PREPARATION

MATERIALS NEEDED: Bibles (several different versions), Quarterly Commentary/Teacher Manual, Adult Quarterly, teaching resources such as charts, worksheets/handouts, paper, pens, and pencils.

OTHER MATERIALS NEEDED / TEACHER'S NOTES:

_____

_____

LESSON OVERVIEW

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON
To embrace the values extolled in Proverbs 15.

BIBLE LEARNING
To recognize that without advice and support, the path of life is downward.

BIBLE APPLICATION
To desire an orderly life based on the wisdom of Proverbs.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES
Students will translate these proverbs into life lessons for today.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

PROVERBS 15:21–33, KJV

21 Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom: but a man of understanding walketh uprightly.

PROVERBS 15:21–33, AMP

21 Foolishness is joy to him who is without heart and lacks [intelligent, common] sense, But a man of

22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established.

23 A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!

24 The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.

25 The LORD will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish the border of the widow.

26 The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD: but the words of the pure are pleasant words.

27 He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.

28 The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.

29 The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

30 The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: and a good report maketh the bones fat.

31 The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise.

32 He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding.

33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility.

understanding walks uprightly [making his course straight].

22 Without consultation and wise advice, plans are frustrated, But with many counselors they are established and succeed.

23 A man has joy in giving an appropriate answer, And how good and delightful is a word spoken at the right moment—how good it is!

24 The [chosen] path of life leads upward for the wise, That he may keep away from Sheol (the nether world, the place of the dead) below.

25 The Lord will tear down the house of the proud and arrogant (self-righteous), But He will establish and protect the boundaries [of the land] of the [godly] widow.

26 Evil plans and thoughts of the wicked are exceedingly vile and offensive to the LORD, But pure words are pleasant words to Him.

27 He who profits unlawfully brings suffering to his own house, But he who hates bribes [and does not receive nor pay them] will live.

28 The heart of the righteous thinks carefully about how to answer [in a wise and appropriate and timely way], But the [babbling] mouth of the wicked pours out malevolent things.

29 The Lord is far from the wicked [and distances Himself from them], But He hears the prayer of the [consistently] righteous [that is, those with spiritual integrity and moral courage].

30 The light of the eyes rejoices the hearts of others, And good news puts fat on the bones.

31 The ear that listens to and learns from the life-giving rebuke (reprimand, censure) Will remain among the wise.

32 He who neglects and ignores instruction and discipline despises himself, But he who learns from

rebuke acquires understanding [and grows in wisdom].

33 The [reverent] fear of the LORD [that is, worshiping Him and regarding Him as truly awesome] is the instruction for wisdom [its starting point and its essence]; And before honor comes humility.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. **Abomination (Proverbs 15:26)** *towè-bah* (Heb.)—A disgusting thing.
B. **Reproof (vv. 31, 32)** *towkechah* (Heb.)—Rebuke, correction, punish, chastisement.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Most of the verses in **Proverbs 15** are composed of two-sentence couplets that extend or balance a single illustration. Each proverb sets before us advantages and disadvantages, blessings and curses, or choices made by the wise and the foolish. **Proverbs 15** has three sections that teach us how to speak wisely, live life happily, and embrace the blessings of good advice.

TEACHING THE BIBLE LESSON

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

AIM: That your students will recall the wisdom of the Proverbs in times of trouble and joy.

INTRODUCTION

The Importance of Advice

Solomon explained that it is easier to know what to do when one seeks the advice of others. In this fatherly advice, Solomon encouraged his children to shy away from making decisions alone and to avoid hasty decision-making. Obtaining counsel from others promotes sound judgment, support, and success.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will align their daily actions with God's Word.

I. RIGHT ACTIONS (Proverbs 15:21–24)

Merriam-Webster defines "folly" as "lack of good sense," which leads to terrible results and, in some cases, tragic outcomes. The focus of this week's lesson is folly and the serious urgency it demands.

Don't Face It Alone (verses 21-24)

21 Folly is joy to him that is destitute of wisdom: but a man of understanding walketh uprightly. 22 Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established. 23 A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it! 24 The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.

Foolish people isolate themselves when they make decisions. This generally comes from overconfidence that leads them to failure. The stumbling occurs when the person comes upon

defeating circumstances that they could have been prepared for or even foreseen if only the person had used wisdom. Nevertheless, the fool delights in folly and does not seem to comprehend the outcome of an immoral deed. A foolish person follows any whim and finds delight in impulsive behavior because he or she "is destitute of wisdom." To find joy and satisfaction in folly are definitely signs of stupidity, because folly can bring disaster.

In contrast, the wise person has insight, appreciates the potential for danger, and, therefore, walks "uprightly" or in a "straight course." **Verse 21b** underscores the importance of good judgment and suggests that a valuable lifestyle must be maintained by wise decisions. In fact, **verse 22 e**xplains that a successful plan requires using good advice; this general observation has value on the personal and national level. Imprudent action brings disaster; prudent action gives security. Failure to seek advice is a sign of pride, but seeking advice from many counselors can avert disaster.

Verses 21 and **22** concentrate on the disappointment of foolish and unwise decisions. **Verse 23** provides a contrast and speaks of the joy that comes with the answer spoken in wisdom. "A word spoken in due season" is advice given at the right moment and in the most suitable manner, when the occasion and the interests at stake demand it. The latter part of **verse 23** points out that content and timing are synonymous in importance. The well thought out and appropriate instruction requires knowledge and wisdom. Obviously good advice and good timing do notalways coincide. One of the ideals of the sage was to have the right word at the right time, as this verse indicates.

Verse 24 contrasts living with death and going to the grave. Seeking wisdom brings a promise of long life. Foolish decisions and choices can be detrimental to life itself.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

What primary benefit of wisdom is listed in Proverbs 15:24?

Those who seek wisdom avoid hell.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Plotting Disaster

In contrast to **Proverbs 11:14,** where the national interest is at the forefront, consultation here is advised for more personal matters. If a person determines the nature of a matter, and goes about its resolution hastily and precipitously, without mature deliberation, without consulting and taking the advice of others in forming a strategy to bring about desired results, it generally comes to nothing. Plans created by one person tend to be less effective than they could be. Wise planning encourages participation and counsel from a variety of people.

II. RIGHT RESPONSE (Proverbs 15:25-27)

Proverbs 15:21-24 gave a view of earthly behaviors. Verses 25-27 introduce God's concern for rightly responding to life's decisions.

What God Requires (verses 25-27)

25 The LORD will destroy the house of the proud: but he will establish the border of the widow. 26 The thoughts of the wicked are an abomination to the LORD: but the words of the pure are pleasant words. 27 He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live.

The Lord administers His justice through righteousness. He brings down the proud but protects the needy. The proud, self-confident man shall be uprooted along with his family, his household, and his wealth. The second part of **verse 25** refers to the particular vulnerability of widows in Israelite society. Widows had no one but themselves to mount a defense against encroachments and oppression **(Isaiah 1:23; Jeremiah 7:6).** The widow often typifies weakness and desolation in the Scriptures (see **Deuteronomy 10:18; Psalm 146:9).** Because of family, society, and circumstances, the widow was humble or weak,

depending only on God for help. These verses explain that God will take the widow under His protection and see to it that her property is secured. Scripture amply confirms that the Lord champions the cause of the widow, the orphan, the poor, and the needy.

Verse 26 refers to wicked plans or designs. These are an abomination to the Lord as are the devices of the wicked. On the one hand, the intentions or "thoughts of the wicked" are thoughts that will harm other people. On the other hand, the Lord is pleased with plans that have righteous intentions. The phrase "but the words of the pure are pleasant words" means literally that words of a soothing, comforting tone are pure in a ceremonial sense, as a pure and acceptable offering. "Pleasant words" are not sweet nothings. They are the opposite of the wicked plans of **verse 26** and thus express the virtuous designs of the just.

Those who are secure in their circumstances will not succumb to the evil devices of avarice. The "greedy" is the one who wants a big cut, who is in a hurry to get rich, and who is not particular about how it happens. In **Proverbs 15:27,** "gifts" could be innocent enough, but they could also be bribes that alter one's values. Hating bribes is the safest path to follow.

QUESTION 2

What will God do for the widow? (Proverbs 15:25)

He will enlarge the widows' border, meaning give protection and support when they have nowhere to turn.

Answers will vary.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Right Speaking

Right speaking includes knowing when to speak, speaking with pure motives and good intentions, and speaking profitably, truly, and pertinently. A fool speaks wrongly. Foolish words are ill timed. The person who says whatever comes to his mind speaks with evil intent and dishonors the hearers. Thus, it is the right word spoken at the right time. It may not be the word that is sought and asked for. It may even be an unwelcome word, a startling word, a word of rebuke. Whether by way of advice and counsel, or of exhortation and instruction, or of comfort, the Lord provides such words to His people.

III. SPEAK WELL, THINK RIGHT (Proverbs 15:28-30)

While speaking well is a strength, speaking right is vital. An articulate person speaks well—he knows how to express himself, pronounces his words precisely, and is verbally captivating—but a wise person speaks right. It is of great importance not only to consider the matter, but also the manner of our utterances.

Right Speaking (verses 28-30)

28 The heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things. 29 The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous. 30 The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: and a good report maketh the bones fat.

Speech is the one thing that many think they have a right to squander. There is probably no more common recklessness than that of the tongue. In **verse 28,** we find a contrast between deliberate speech and a deluge of thoughtless words. The righteous person "weighs" or "meditates" on how to answer. The thoughtful discourse of the just is the opposite of the rash, actually "evil" speech of the "wicked." Those who are wise are cautious in how they answer, as opposed to the wicked, who blurt out vicious things.

Wicked words are typical of wicked people. Wickedness puts distance between God and thesinner **(Exodus 33:3; Isaiah 59:2).** Those who turn their ears away from hearing God's words are inattentive to God's commands, thus making their prayers abominable to God **(Psalm 10:1; Proverbs 15:8; 28:9).** The distance of God from humans is expressed as His not hearing their prayers (e.g., **Psalm 10:1).** The wicked keep a distance from Him; so He is "far" from them––an idea that signifies He is inaccessible or

deaf to their appeals. Of course, a prayer of repentance by the wicked is the exception, for by it they would become the righteous. But God is near the righteous and hears their prayer. The prayers of the just gives delight to God **(Proverbs 8)**.

Good news is uplifting to hear. A "cheerful look," (NIV) may indicate the gleam in the eyes of someone who tells good news, as the parallel second clause suggests. The idea of "health to the bones" (NIV) comes from a Hebrew expression found in the KJV "maketh the bones fat," and it is a symbol of health and prosperity. These are the results of right speaking.

Right Thinking (verses 31–33)

31 The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise. 32 He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding. 33 The fear of the LORD is the instruction of wisdom; and before honour is humility.

The hinge on which right speaking and right actions swing is right thinking. **Verse 31** shows how someone who listens to "constructive criticism" will feel comfortable among wise people. The development of wisdom requires a willingness to hear and integrate perspectives that may run counter to previously held convictions. This is the implication of the word "reproof," which means "censure." This is also in opposition to the "scorner" of **Proverbs 15:12** and to anyone who will not listen to reproof. A listener who hears a rebuke receives it gratefully and obeys it.

To abide "among the wise" implies that either a person who listens to reproof will thereby be made wise and be esteemed as one of that number.

Verse 32 emphasizes the reward of teachability (compare with **Proverbs 5:12).** Note the connection between discipline and understanding, and the neglect of discipline and death. If embracing instruction leads to the preservation of life, he that "refuseth" willfully rejects and despises instruction—throws it all in the way of danger. This willful rejection of wise counsel istantamount to considering one's "own soul" as vile and worthless, as the word "despise" signifies. Discipline is often at odds with youthful inclinations, but accepting discipline is both necessary and important to spiritual development. Being a good disciple demands being a good listener, which in turn implies a willingness to receive rebuke.

The verse takes up the theme of "fear of the LORD" from **Proverbs 1:7** and **9:10** is the subject of **verse 33.** Humble submission, in faith to the Lord, is not only the beginning of wisdom but also its continuance. The last part of **Proverbs 15:33, "**before honour is humility" has its contrast in **Proverbs 18:12,** where pride leads to destruction. Here humility brings honor. It is the over- estimation of self that makes us contemptuous toward others. A person who fears God must be humble. Just as the fear of God leads to wisdom, it may be said that humility leads to the honor and glory of being wise and reckoned thusly among the wise **(verse 31).** God shall honor those who have the humility to accept Him and His guidance.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 3

What does it mean to "abide among the wise"?

This means becoming a wise person and living a wise lifestyle. It can also mean being respected by those who are considered wise. In the final sense, it is being recognized by God for wise actions and thought.

Answers will vary.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Avoid Moral Suicide

According to the Septuagint (the Greek version of the Old Testament commonly designated by LXX), a willful person commits moral suicide because he does not follow the path of life. He is like a sick man who "thrusts away" the wholesome medicine that offers his only hope of cure. In contrast, the person who hears reproof acquires understanding.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will be able to consider how poor choices result from a lack of advice.

Flawed Patterns of Thinking

Some families have been raised to keep quiet about their plans, pregnancies, dreams, and goals for fear of being jinxed, ridiculed, or talked about. Such behavior shuns seeking wisdom and good advice. These unwise decisions have led to disparities in education, entrepreneurship, and homeownership. How can we change these patterns and encourage our youth, our churches, and our communities to seek support and guidance from others?

STUDENTS' RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will identify personal sources for advice and wisdom

Seeking Advice

Are you one to seek advice from others? If so, with whom do you consult? Sometimes family and friends may not be the best people to consider when you need advice. This is especially true if they are not supportive or experienced in the area about which you have questions. Do you have an important decision to make? If you are on the cusp of a new venture or a major decision, prayerfully identify at least two to three supportive and experienced people you can talk to about your plans. Don't forget to take a list of questions you have and to ask God for boldness in seeking advice.

PRAYER

Dear God, help us to be wise in our decision-making and to seek wise counsel. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

Television shows featuring experts that give advice enjoy considerable popularity. They tell us how to solve family problems, handle health issues, finances, dating, and even how to remodel your house. Are all these programs reliable or are they simply geared to building an audience? How can we decide who to ask for advice and whether we should take it?

Sometimes those who have experience in our area of concern appear to be the best people to consult. Some look for credentials when deciding who to ask, others think an older person is the best choice. Noted pastor and teacher Warren Wiersbe warned, "Not everybody who grows old, grows up. There is a vast difference between age and maturity." Drawing from the book of James, Wiersbe adds that there is a difference between knowledge and wisdom: "knowledge enables us to take things apart, but wisdom enables us to put things together and relate God's truth to daily life."

The most reliable source of human advice is likely to be someone whose experience has yielded both knowledge and maturity: a Christian who has "grown up" as evidenced by the spiritual fruit on display in his or her life. Are you one of those who have the maturity to advice others, and do you associate with others who are?

Warren W. Wiersbe, Be Mature: How to break the mold of spiritual immaturity and grow up in Christ (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1978), 5 and 103-105.

HOW TO SAY IT

Sheol.	Shē-ōl.
Achan.	Ay-kan.
Achor.	Ay-kor.
Jericho.	Je-ri-kō.
Gehazi.	Ge-Ha-dzi.
Abomination.	ab-o-mi-na-sion.
Septuagint.	SEP-too-uh-jint'.
Naaman.	Nay-a-man.

DAILY HOME BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY
A Wise Child
(Proverbs 10:1–5)

TUESDAY
Wise Words
(Proverbs 10:18–22)

WEDNESDAY
Wisdom and Wealth
(Proverbs 10:23–28)

THURSDAY
The Wicked and the Foolish
(Proverbs 12:12–16)

FRIDAY
A Righteous Life
(Proverbs 14:27–34)

SATURDAY
The Better Way
(Proverbs 15:15–19)

SUNDAY
Instruction in Wisdom
(Proverbs 15:21–33)

PREPARE FOR NEXT SUNDAY

Read **Proverbs 25:1-10** and study "Wisdom and Discernment."

Sources:
Baltes, A. J., ed. Biblespeech.com. http://biblespeech.com (accessed July 6, 2010).
Clarke, Adam. Clarke's Commentary, Vol. 2: Job–Malachi. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, n.d. Garrett, Duane A. Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs. New American Commentary,
Vol. 14. Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1993.
Hebrew and Greek Lexicons. Bible Study Tools.com. http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons (accessed September 16, 2010).
Kidner, Derek. Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1964.
Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. Merriam-Webster, Inc. http:// www.merriam-webster.com (accessed July 6, 2010).
Murphy, Roland E. Proverbs. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1998.
Strong, James. New Exhaustive Strong's Numbers and Concordance with Expanded Greek-Hebrew Dictionary. Seattle, WA: Biblesoft, and International Bible Translators, 1994.
Warren W. Wiersbe, Be Mature: How to break the mold of spiritual immaturity and grow up in Christ (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1978), 5 and 103-105.

COMMENTS / NOTES:

WISDOM AND DISCERNMENT

BIBLE BASIS: Proverbs 25:1-10

BIBLE TRUTH: Godly wisdom helps us purify our lives, relationships, and workplaces.

MEMORY VERSE: Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another (Proverbs 25:9, KJV).

LESSON AIM: By the end of this lesson, we will: KNOW the wisdom of following godly advice in dealing with others; FEEL what it means to treat others as we desire to be treated; and DO an intentional act that promotes harmony with others.

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURES: Proverbs 25:1–28— Read and incorporate the insights gained from the Background Scriptures into your study of the lesson.

TEACHER PREPARATION

MATERIALS NEEDED: Bibles (several different versions), Quarterly Commentary/Teacher Manual, Adult Quarterly, teaching resources such as charts, worksheets/handouts, paper, pens, and pencils.

OTHER MATERIALS NEEDED / TEACHER'S NOTES:

_____

_____

LESSON OVERVIEW

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON
To remember that we they can promote harmony with others.

BIBLE LEARNING
To realize that wisdom should build our relationships with others.

BIBLE APPLICATION
To begin to understand that wisdom should purify our relationships with others.

STUDENTS' RESPONSES
Students will discern how important godly wisdom is.

LESSON SCRIPTURE

PROVERBS 25:1-10, 20, KJV

1 These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.

Proverbs 25:1-10, AMP

1 These are also the proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied:

2 It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.

3 The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable.

4 Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.

5 Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.

6 Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men:

7 For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.

8 Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame.

9 Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and discover not a secret to another:

10 Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away.

2 It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter.

3 As the heavens for height and the earth for depth, So the hearts and minds of kings are unsearchable.

4 Take away the dross from the silver, And there comes out [the pure metal for] a vessel for the silversmith [to shape].

5 Take away the wicked from before the king, And his throne will be established in righteousness.

6 Do not be boastfully ambitious and claim honor in the presence of the king, And do not stand in the place of great men;

7 For it is better that it be said to you, "Come up here," Than for you to be placed lower in the presence of the prince, Whom your eyes have seen.

8 Do not rush out to argue your case [before magistrates or judges]; Otherwise what will you do in the end [when your case is lost and] When your neighbor (opponent) humiliates you?

9 Argue your case with your neighbor himself [before you go to court]; And do not reveal another's secret,

10 Or he who hears it will shame you, And the rumor about you [and your action in court] will have no end.

BIBLICAL DEFINITIONS

A. **Unsearchable (Proverbs 25:3)** *cheqer* (Heb.)—Incomprehensible; beyond human investigation.
B. **Debate (v. 9)** *riyb* (Heb.)—To strive or plead; to contend against, argue or make a complaint against.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Solomon was the third king of Israel and David's son. He reigned for 40 years from around 971 to 931 B.C. Solomon is attributed with 3000 proverbs and 1005 songs. He was David's chosen heir; he built God's Temple in Jerusalem as well as great works that secured the water supply and defended the city of Jerusalem. After Solomon's death, the Kingdom was divided into two. The Northern Kingdom was Israel; the Southern Kingdom was Judah.

Hezekiah was a descendant of David's bloodline. He was the son and successor of Ahaz. Hezekiah was the 15th king of Judah, the Southern Kingdom He ruled from around 715 to 686 B.C. He began his 29-year reign at the age of 25. Hezekiah was a patron of respect, who removed idolatrous practices and centers, and resumed observance of Passover and temple worship. He prompted civil and religious reform.The "Men of Hezekiah" or "Friends of Hezekiah" were scribes or counselors of that compiled and edited 137 proverbs during the reign of King

Hezekiah in order to reveal the traditional wisdom and sayings while elevating the forgotten wisdom of David and Solomon.

TEACHING THE BIBLE LESSON

LIFE NEED FOR TODAY'S LESSON

AIM: That your students will appreciate that wisdom should guide their relationships with other.

INTRODUCTION

The Book of Proverbs and Solomon's Reign

The Book of Proverbs was primarily written by Solomon with contributions from Agur son of Jakeh and Lemuel, a king that received words of wisdom from his mother about wine, women, and legal rights of the weak and poor. Proverbs gives instruction in wisdom, ways of life in God's world, and the preparation for life. The men of Hezekiah transcribed or copied the proverbs and did not author them.

During the early part of Solomon's reign, he wrote and gathered the book of Proverbs. Solomon passed on his practical advice through the short, concise sentences that communicate moral truth. Forty-seven times the book conveys information about wisdom, or essentially, "the skill of living." The wisdom revealed in the book of Proverbs is practical to promote prosperity, productivity, and responsibility in humanity.

BIBLE LEARNING

AIM: That your students will desire godly wisdom

I. GODLY WISDOM SHOULD BUILD RELATIONSHIPS (Proverbs 25:1-3)

In **Proverbs 25,** we read that Hezekiah's men transcribed Solomon's wisdom. Solomon and Hezekiah were both patrons of wisdom in Israel. They were scholarly kings who lived during a time when governmental power and academic power were closely associated. **Proverbs 25** through **29** constitute a book within the book of Proverbs. This section gives insight to relationships with kings, but the information can be used to develop good and equitable relationships. The Scripture gives instruction for leaders and individuals who seek to become leaders.

The Proverbs of Solomon (verses 1-3)

1 These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out.
2 It is the glory of God to conceal a thing: but the honour of kings is to search out a matter.
3 The heaven for height, and the earth for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable.

Proverbs 25:2 refers to the "glory of God," which is God's overwhelming presence, the display of who God is. God's glory is the ultimate power, perfection, and transcendence. Although God's glory is incomprehensible, Solomon instructs humanity to study and search God's Word **(verses 2–3).** The more believers know God, the more we will reflect God's glory. Although difficult at times, the instruction is to search and study God's Word so that His Word can help us in building relationships. God does not reveal all of who He is to us because we cannot comprehend it. God's being is concealed and we search to know Him better throughout our lives. That is wisdom. That's why a wise king will search out a matter for understanding. As Solomon searched the heart of the true mother when he issued an order to divide a child, a king must seek the truth to rule righteously (refer to **1 Kings 3:24–28).**

This section of the book contains additional proverbs attributed to Solomon that were collected by the men of King Hezekiah (715–687 B.C.). The word "also" connects this portion of the collection with **Proverbs 10:1** and **24:23.** These scribes or scholars "copied out" the sayings (i.e., transcribed them from one book to another). The fact that "men" transcribed these proverbs, instead of referring to a single scribe, most likely refers to the entire process of "writing," "arranging," and the "collation of texts."

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 1

The men of what king copied these proverbs?

"These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah king of Judah copied out."

LIGHT ON THE WORD

The Wicked and the Righteous

In Proverbs, one finds numerous examples that contrast the wicked with the righteous. In particular, the wicked represent persons who live outside the confines of a faithful relationship with God and His people. Such persons transgress God's Law with seeming impunity, show injustice toward others, and, overall, exhibit self-centered living. In our day, persons usually are exalted to lofty positions of influence and power based upon academic credentials, social contacts, or outstanding personality traits. However, notice that the writer focuses on the character of those who surround the king. The need for a king to surround himself with honest servants is frequently emphasized (see **Psalm 101).** This is in agreement with the idea that justice is the foundation of his throne **(Proverbs 16:12; 20:28; 29:14).**

II. PURIFICATION IS A MUST (Proverbs 25:4-5)

As the refiner separates the dross from the silver, which mars its beauty and purity, so should the king exclude from his presence and counsels the reckless and the base. Just as it is impossible to have a sterling silver vessel until the silver has been purified, no nation can have a king who is a public blessing until the wicked—all the bad counselors, wicked and interested ministers, and flatterers—are banished from the cabinet and positions of power. When the wise and good are the king's only ministers and advisers, then the throne will be established in righteousness, and his administration be a universal blessing. Any court, pure or vicious, has immense influence on the manners and morals of the community. This is also true of individuals. We should be careful to realize this when seeking advice, choose our company wisely, and be careful whom we allow to speak into our lives.

A Separation (verses 4-5)

4 Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth a vessel for the finer.
5 Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness.

In **verse 4,** the writer employs the imagery of purification of metals as the basis of his analogy in **verse 5.** The "dross" in **verse 4** is analogous to the wicked or scoundrels in **verse 5** to show the polluting influence of the wicked when allowed into the corridors of power. Thus, the writer compares the scoundrels in the king's presence to the dross in refining silver. The king must take steps to root out wicked and corrupt officials if he is to lay a solid foundation for a good and just rule. A mark of the wise king or ruler is that he ensures he has surrounded himself with officials and counselors marked by integrity.

The "dross" that exists within society and a kingdom are evil individuals, conspirators, and liars who seek to create problems, division, and difficulty. An evil advisor can create chaos in the workplace, home, or social environment. When the "dross" is taken out of a kingdom, a relationship, or a community, the result is a relationship based on righteousness and honor. Wisdom purifies relationships.

QUESTION 2

What happens when the "dross" is taken out of a kingdom, a relationship, or a community?

One can have a relationship based on righteousness and honor.

Answers will vary.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

What Wisdom Teaches

Verses 4 and **5** discuss getting to the best by stripping away anything that is hiding true value. These are

examples of the value of wisdom. Humility and self-denial are important lessons thatare taught by wisdom. The message of **verses 6** and **7** is reiterated in **Luke 14:7–11.** Do not seek a place of honor where you will receive attention. Instead, seek to accomplish the purpose that God has given to you. Solomon instructed individuals not to pursue the best or most prominent places in life. Instead, individuals should purposely take the lowest place. On the other hand, society encourages individuals to strive for the most recognizable or viewed position––the place of recognition and believed honor. In **Luke 14,** Jesus taught that individuals should not seek social recognition through relationships, appearance, titles, or material possession. Jesus instructed individuals to seek positions where they can serve and allow God to lift them to places of prominence as God purposes.

III. LET WISDOM GUIDE YOUR RELATIONSHIPS(Proverbs 25:6-7)

Solomon instructed believers to live humbly and modestly in order to be advanced instead of being put "lower in the presence of the prince." God will lift up and honor believers according to His perfect plan.

Oh, to Have Wisdom (verses 6-7)!

6 Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men: 7 For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.

These verses deal with the actions of those in the court of the king or in the presence of someone who is great. Nothing in conduct is unimportant. Fitting and graceful manners should become our routine. It is wiser to wait to be promoted than to risk demotion by self-promotion. Self- respect is complemented by deference. Promoting yourself while in court may risk public humiliation, but it would be an honor to have everyone in court hear the promotion from the king himself. This is the paradox of Christianity: Humility leads to exaltation, but grasping at more than our due is to lose all and earn condemnation. We must avoid presumption in any of its forms—it is an offense hateful to humankind and God.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

QUESTION 3

Why is self-promotion deemed unwise?

It earns condemnation and is an offense to humankind.

LIGHT ON THE WORD

Disputes Damage Relationships

There are important lessons to learn from **Proverbs 25:8.** First, disputes are unavoidable. In view of conflict and complicated interests—individual, domestic, social, economic, civic, international—differences and difficulties often arise amongst us. There are always and will be conflicts of opinion—wishes and purposes clash; their divergence may result in dissension, including in Christian congregations. Second, the temptation is to be hasty either in jumping to conclusions or in acting rashly. Using the judicial system to mediate conflicts, including those between neighbors, can be one hastily applied result of struggles. But often these actions do no good other than to permanently damage relationships.

IV. DISPUTES ERECT BARRIERS (Proverbs 25:8-10)

Disputes erect a barrier between us and our neighbors and make it difficult, if not entirely impossible, to ever again live alongside one another in harmony. Instead, disputes handled unwisely sow seeds of bitterness and discord, which will bear fruit throughout our days. Rather than spreading disharmony and friction, Christians must seek to be peacemakers who love God, each other, and our neighbors.

Think Before You Act (verses 8-10)

8 Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbour hath put thee to shame. 9 Debate thy cause with thy neighbour himself; and

discover not a secret to another: 10 Lest he that heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn not away.

According to societal standards today, almost all disputes can be handled in the court system. Both parties meet in a courtroom where a judge listens to both sides and makes a decision based on the evidence that is presented. A third party settles the differences that created the disagreement. While some disputes demand court action or outside mediation, Solomon's advice is to discuss differences instead of rushing to court. He instructs that: (1) we should try to handle complaints and disagreements on a private level instead of going to court; (2) we should not complain to others about our neighbor, friend, or coworker; (3) we should not discuss with others what we have discussed with another person in secret because the result will only create trouble and negatively affect our reputations; and (4) after the disagreement has been discussed, end it privately and we will not endure shame.

QUESTION 4

Why shouldn't we rush into disputes?

We should strive to be "peacemakers".

Answers will vary.

BIBLE APPLICATION

AIM: That your students will begin to understand that just as God has forgiven us of our trespasses, we should forgive others

The Way of Peace

In **Proverbs 25:10,** the writer exposes what is at stake when one goes about with rash, impetuous behavior. Settling matters peaceably and privately can prevent escalation in a public arena, where many times things can be misconstrued, a person's reputation can be slandered, or even violence can result. The example given in this verse is about a person who reveals someone else's secret. When the person learns of the indiscretion, the shame suffered by the guilty party leads to a bad reputation that is difficult to overcome. In a case such as this reputation and friendship are ruined. Wisdom dictates that we always seek to maintain peace

STUDENT RESPONSES

AIM: That your students will desire to use wisdom in their relationships.

Reaching Out in Relationship

Exercising wisdom in handling and building relationships is not easy. Consider this scenario.

Frantically, Brenda knocked at her neighbor's door. When Veronica opened the door, Brenda asked, "Can you please take me to work? My car won't start! If I'm late another day, I will lose my job."

Immediately, Veronica grabbed her jacket and rushed to take Brenda to work. Later that day, Veronica saw Brenda at the local store, but Brenda didn't speak. Veronica had always spoken to Brenda, but she didn't receive the same response in return.

After Brenda and Veronica had been neighbors for 12 years, Veronica was accustomed to being ignored by Brenda. However, Veronica always treated Brenda with love and compassion.

Several weeks later, Brenda called Veronica to drive her to the hospital. Her brother was ill. The entire trip, Veronica spoke but Brenda barely responded. After they arrived at the hospital, Brenda got out of the car without saying anything.

As Veronica drove home, she prayed for Brenda and her family, and decided that she did not want to be treated disrespectfully by Brenda anymore. Veronica asked God to give her instructions on how to deal with Brenda.

How can Veronica continue to reveal God's love to Brenda when her actions are not reciprocated?

PRAYER

Father in heaven; help us to represent You well as

we reach out to others in relationship. Help us to be examples of peacemakers. In Jesus' Name we pray, Amen.

DIG A LITTLE DEEPER

When conflict erupts in our churches or neighborhoods, do we call the church elders, other respected community members, or the police to make peace? In 2020 when violence against unarmed African Americans seemed to crescendo, some suggested that social workers or others trained in conflict resolution should accompany or replace police officers called to the scene. They hoped this would prevent more violence and help restore communities.

Ideally, the church is a community. Nevertheless, even in church unresolved conflict can create major problems **(1 Corinthians 1:11 and James 4:1-4).** Feeling disrespected and disregarded or wanting more influence and power create major conflict inside and outside the church. Theologian Dr. Marva Dawn proposes that to build relationships that promote genuine respect and appreciation for our differences, Christians should apply the twelfth chapter of Romans in our churches. She says "Christian community sets us free from comparing ourselves with others and having to prove our own importance." What do you think? Where would you begin to make this biblical ideal reality?

Marva J. Dawn, The Hilarity of Community: Romans 12 and How to be the Church (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992), 72.

HOW TO SAY IT

Hezekiah. Hez-ay-Kiah.

DAILY HOME BIBLE READINGS

MONDAY
The Creator's Hiddenness
(Isaiah 45:9–17)

TUESDAY
Asking for Wisdom
(2 Kings 3:5–14)

WEDNESDAY
Humbly Seeking God
(2 Chronicles 7:12–18)

THURSDAY
Words Fitly Spoken
(Proverbs 25:11–15)

FRIDAY
Wisdom with Neighbors
(Proverbs 25:16–20)

SATURDAY
The Wisdom of Self-Control
(Proverbs 25:21–28)

SUNDAY
Wisdom and Government
(Proverbs 25:1–10)

PREPARE FOR NEXT SUNDAY

Read **Proverbs 29:16-27,** and study "An Ordered Life."

Sources:
Baltes, A. J., ed. Biblespeech.com. http://biblespeech.com (accessed July 6, 2010).
Clarke, Adam. Clarke's Commentary. Vol. 2: Job–Malachi. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, n.d.
Clifford, Richard J. Proverbs. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1999.
Emerson, Ralph Waldo. "Manners," Essays: Second Series. Boston: Phillips, Sampson & Company, 1850. 104.
Garrett, Duane A. Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs. New American Commentary, Vol. 14.
Nashville, TN: Broadman, 1993.
Hebrew and Greek Lexicons. Bible Study Tools.com. http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons (accessed September 16, 2010).
Kidner, Derek. Proverbs: An Introduction and Commentary. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1964.
Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary. Merriam-Webster, Inc. http://www.merriam-webster.com (accessed July 6, 2010).
Murphy, Roland E. Proverbs. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998.
Roger Martin, "The Big Lie of Strategic Planning," Harvard Business Review <hbr.org/2014/01>.
Richard J. Foster, Celebration of Discipline: the Path to Spiritual Growth (New York: Harper Collins, 1998), 7-9.
Warren W. Wiersbe, Be Mature: How to break the mold of spiritual immaturity and grow up in Christ (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1978), 5 and 103-105.
Marva J. Dawn, The Hilarity of Community: Romans 12 and How to be the Church (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992), 72.

COMMENTS / NOTES:

ANSWERS TO THE QUARTERLY QUIZZES

SEPTEMBER • OCTOBER • NOVEMBER 2021

LESSON 1 1. Those who seek God's will in all they do; 2. He corrects those He loves.

LESSON 2 1. Holding on to instruction gives life; 2. The issues of life flow from the heart.

LESSON 3 1. He destroys it; 2. the prayers of the righteous are of particular interest to God.

LESSON 4 1. "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing"; 2. His throne will be established in righteousness.

LESSON 5 1. You will have rest rather than anxiety over your child's actions and the quaity of life you lead. In addition, your soul will be delighted with the child throughout his or her life; 2: The hasty and rash person is more helpless than a fool!

LESSON 6 1. The king besieged the city and built great bulwarks; 2. A sinner.

LESSON 7 1. vanity; 2. Creator, youth, days, draw nigh.

LESSON 8 1. Mountains of Lebanon, including Amana, Shenir, and Hermon; 2. garden.

LESSON 9 1. merciful, mercy; 2. peacemakers.

LESSON 10 1. Allow the saints to explore different ways to make peace—answers will vary; 2. answers will vary.

LESSON 11 1. Answers will vary; 2. perfect.

LESSON 12 1. And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogue and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men" (Matthew 6:5); 2. God will not forgive us.

LESSON 13 1. first, kingdom, God, righteousness; 2. thought, morrow, morrow, thought, Sufficient, evil.

DECEMBER 2021 • JANUARY • FEBRUARY 2022

LESSON 1 1. Jesus wanted to make a contrast between Himself and His disciples from the religious leaders, the Pharisees, and Sadducees.

2. Anxiety causes stress, which can cause stroke, heart failure, and in some cases, death. Instead of adding to life, worry shortens life. Answers will vary.

LESSON 2 1. Only God rules nature. Answers will vary. 2. Jesus is fully God and fully man. He was tired.

LESSON 3 1. Answers will vary. 2. She knew the Word so she knew what to do. Answers will vary.

LESSON 4 1. Answers will vary. 2. It is remarkable that Peter walked on water at all. His faith was evident in his first step out of the boat. Answers will vary.

LESSON 5 1. Lepers were outcasts isolated from society.

2. Although isolated from society, the lepers heard the good news that Jesus is a healer.

LESSON 6 1. Paul's purpose is to a) impart a spiritual gift and b) for mutual strengthening. 2. Paul is eager and excited to preach.

LESSON 7 1. Because Abraham trusts God's promise, God trusts Abraham with righteousness/justice. 2. They do not have to "work" to be saved. Gentiles need only have faith in Jesus Christ. Males do not have to be circumcised.

LESSON 8 1. Justification is a sentence of acquittal—God acquits us of guilt on the condition of His grace. God sees me, "Just-as-if-I'd never sinned."

2. Reconciliation means that we are no longer God's enemies. We are at peacwith God. Atonement means to be "at one" with God.

LESSON 9 1. Without the Law—the Ten Commandments—we would not know what sin is. 2. Righteousness is right standing with God, which results in right living and treating one another right.

LESSON 10 1. Examples from the past teach and encourage us to have faith in God. Answers will vary. 2. Faith respects God and has reverence for who He is. Faith obeys God even without understanding why. Answers will vary.

LESSON 11 1. The early church was persecuted, and some may have considered returning to Judaism. 2. The writer urges believers to remain faithful to Christ, even when life becomes difficult. Answers will vary.

LESSON 12 1. According to 1 John 2–3, how do we recognize the spirit of the antichrist in false teachers? 2. The Holy Spirit lives in us to keep us connected to Jesus. Answers will vary.

LESSON 13 1. Suffering is temporary. Sharing in God's glory is eternal. Answers will vary. 2. Moving from a temporary tent to a permanent building puts the present in perspective and magnifies the hope of the future. Answers will vary.

MARCH • APRIL • MAY 2022

LESSON 1 1. I (wisdom); 2. blessed

LESSON 2 1. Light; 2. world, was made by him

LESSON 3 1. Cana; 2. Yes. The servants and Jesus' mother knew that Jesus had provided the wine

LESSON 4 1. Son, man; 2. save

LESSON 5 1. Passover; 2. True

LESSON 6 1. Mary Magdalene; 2. linen clothes and the napkin (that was wrapped around His head)

LESSON 7 1. merchandise; 2. temple, three days

LESSON 8 1. Jesus was offering her salvation—eternal life;

2. She became an evangelist telling others about Jesus.

LESSON 9 1. night; 2. Siloam

LESSON 10 1. Labour; 2. The Bread of Life is God and He offers eternal life.

LESSON 11 1. I am the door; 2. thief, steal, kill, destroy

LESSON 12 1. Martha said, "if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died;"

2. She said, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

LESSON 13 1. Jesus told them to believe in Him; 2. He said that if we know Him, we know the Father.

JUNE • JULY • AUGUST 2022

LESSON 1 1. unrighteous; 2. "thou shalt surely bring it back to him again."

LESSON 2 1. steal, falsely, lie; 2. unrighteousness, poor, honour, mighty, righteousness

LESSON 3 1. hallow, fiftieth, liberty, all, all; 2. He was their God.

LESSON 4 1. fear the LORD, walk in all His ways, love God, serve the LORD with all their heart and with all their soul, and keep the commandments of the LORD and His statutes;

2. foreskin of their heart

LESSON 5 1. It was a show of repentance; 2. sucking, offered, burnt, LORD

LESSON 6 1. the son of Jesse, the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel; 2. the God of Israel, the Rock of Israel

LESSON 7 1. two women who were harlots (prostitutes); 2. They both had a baby and one died. Both were claiming the live baby.

LESSON 8 1. The LORD called for a famine; 2. Gehazi was a servant of the man of God.

LESSON 9 1. do, judge, man, LORD, with you; 2. do, fear, LORD, faithfully, perfect heart

LESSON 10 1. princes, son, man, no; 2. eyes, blind, LORD, bowed down, LORD, righteous

LESSON 11 1. the government; 2. Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father,

The Prince of Peace

LESSON 12 1. They had destroyed and scattered God's sheep (His people); 2. He will visit on them the evil of their doings.

LESSON 13 1. The Good Shepherd will feed them and will be their shepherd; 2. The LORD will be their God.

2021 - 2022
UNIFORM LESSONS SERIES OUTLINE

YEAR 6: Fall 2021-2022
IDENTIFICATION: Worship
PERIOD: Fall Quarter, September-November 2021 (13 Sundays)
TITLE: Celebrating God

This quarter focuses upon acts of worship and praise that celebrate who God is and what God has done for God's people. The lessons offer several examples of biblical people who celebrate God, psalms that call God's people to praise and celebration, and visions of praise for God's ultimate work in establishing an eternal realm of justice and righteousness.

Unit I, "God's People Offer Praise," has four lessons that give examples of persons who celebrate God. Both Moses and the prophet Miriam sing songs of praise for God's mighty acts. David dances before the ark as he brings it into Jerusalem. Bartimaeus glorifies God in Mark. In Acts, after their experience of Pentecost and Peter's sermon, early believers enter into a life of praise for God's redemption through Jesus Christ.

Unit II, "Called to Praise God," has five lessons that explore psalms calling God's people to celebrate what God has done. The psalms speak of making joyful noise to praise God, of praising God for justice and righteousness, of giving thanks for deliverance, of the joy of worship, and of music as a way to celebrate and praise God.

Unit III, "Visions of Praise," has four lessons that share John's visions of celebration for God's ultimate victory in establishing a realm of peace and justice. In Revelation, people from every nation praise God and all heaven rejoices. In the passage from Acts, believers praise God that the good news now includes everyone as Gentiles receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Children Unit I: God's People Offer Praise
Youth/Adult Unit I: God's People Offer Praise

1. September 5	Moses and Miriam Praise God	Exodus 14:1–15:1-21 Print: Exodus 15:11-21
	Moses and Miriam Praise God	Exodus 14:1–15:1-21 Print: Exodus 15:11-21

People compose poems and songs for different celebrations. How can songs and poems express thankfulness and rejoicing in victory? After their deliverance from Egyptian slavery, Moses and Miriam composed songs and led the people in praising God.

2. September 12	David Dances before the Ark	2 Samuel 6 Print: 2 Samuel 6:1-5, 14-19
	David Dances before the Ark	2 Samuel 6 Print: 2 Samuel 6:1-5, 14-19

Celebrations can be diverse in form and include various actions. How do we celebrate great events in our

lives? King David expressed his joy and celebration of God by leading God's people in music and dance.

3. September 19	Glorifying God	Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43 Print: Mark 10:46-52
	Glorifying God	Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43 Print: Mark 10:46-52

People respond to life challenges and victories differently. How can we respond in ways that are encouraging for ourselves and others? Bartimaeus's boldness and faith in Jesus gave him the courage to ask for and receive his sight from Jesus.

4. September 26	Believers Praise God	Acts 2:32-33, 37-4 Print: Same
	Believers Praise God	Acts 2:32-33, 37-47 Print: Same

Celebrations bring about unity and a new way of seeing and being in the world. How can our celebrations unify a divided community and world? The first Christian community heard the gospel, was inspired by the Holy Spirit to see the world differently, and united to live, worship, and evangelize together.

Children Unit II: Called to Praise God
Youth Adult Unit II: Called to Praise God

5. October 3	Make a Joyful Noise	Psalm 100 Print: Same
	Make a Joyful Noise	Psalm 100 Print: Same

Life provides us with many opportunities to praise and find delight in people and things. How do we decide what has more value and is more worthy of our praise? Psalm 100 highlights that God is the object of the earth's praise and joy.

6. October 10	Praise God for Being Just Print: Psalm 9:1-12	Psalm 9; Ecclesiastes 3:16-22
	Praise God for Justice and Righteousness Print: Psalm 9:1-12	Psalm 9; Ecclesiastes 3:16

People choose to praise and have joy in particular things that may not be the best for them. Why do we choose those things that may harm us or others? Psalm 9 proclaims that God will bring justice and this is cause for our joyful praise.

7. October 17	Give Thanks for Deliverance	Psalm 107 Print: Psalm107:1-9, 17-22 Give Thanks for Deliverance

	Psalm 107	
		Print: Psalm 107:1-9, 39-43

People seek deliverance when they are in trouble. How should we respond when we are delivered? Psalm 107 encourages us to be thankful to God for God's deliverance.

8. October 24	The Joy of Worship	Psalm 84
		Print: Same
	The Joy of Worship	Psalm 84
	Print: Same	

There are times when the pressures of life are a heavy burden to carry. Where can people go to find the pressures of life lifted and then enjoy a period of celebration? The psalmist recounts a uniquely joyful experience when worshiping in the temple.

9. October 31	Praise God with Music	Psalms 149; 150
		Print: Psalm 150
	Praise God with Music	Psalms 147; 148; 149; 150
		Print: Psalms 149:1-5; 150:1-6

People choose different ways to express their emotions. What are some of the ways that expressions of victory and joy can be shared? Psalms 149 and 150 share great praise for who God is and the joy of praising God with all of who we are.

Children Unit III: Visions of Praise
Youth Adult Unit III: Visions of Praise

10. November 7	Let Everyone Praise God	Revelation 7:9-17
		Print: Revelation 7:9-14
	All People Praise God	Revelation 7:9-17
	Print: Same	

Celebrations that unite people from all over the world are significant and magnificent. How can we celebrate in spite of persecution and a hostile world? The writer of Revelation proclaims that God will preserve believers from every nation, tribe, people group, and language who remain faithful to him despite hardship.

11. November 14	Praise for God's Eternal Reign	Revelation 11
		Print: Revelation 11:15-19
	Praise for God's Eternal Reign	Revelation 11
		Print: Revelation 11:15-19

Celebrations are ways of culminating a unique event, and creating new ways of being in community. How do people celebrate in a hostile world? Revelation helps us to understand that all of the world is moving toward the just, eternal reign of God.

12. November 21	Rejoicing in Heaven	Revelation 19
		Print: Revelation 19:1-8

	Rejoicing in Heaven	Revelation 19 Print: Revelation 19:1-8

People want to have victory over the wicked people in their lives and in the world. How will they find victory over the wicked? God has the final judgment of the world, and God is worthy of all praise.

13. November 28	Good News for All	Acts 10:34-47 Print: Same
	Good News for All Print: Same	Acts 10:34-47

Barriers often keep people from becoming part of particular groups. How are barriers removed? God reveals to Peter that the Gospel of Jesus Christ is for all, and the power of the Holy Spirit is God's gift to everyone who accepts Christ.

YEAR 6: Winter 2021-2022
IDENTIFICATION: Justice
PERIOD: Winter Quarter 2021-2022, December 2021-February 2022 (13 Sundays)
TITLE: Justice, Law, History

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:
The study this quarter focuses on justice as presented in a variety of Old Testament Scriptures. Justice originates in the nature of God and is given to God's people as a gift under the Law. The history of God's covenant people shows that kings who exercised God's justice according to God's law were considered good kings. Over time, adverse circumstances caused God's people to raise questions about God's justice.

Unit I, "God Requires Justice," has four lessons that explore how leaders of God's people must rely on God's Law as they administer justice. Deuteronomy demands that God's people be just and equitable. In 2 Samuel, King David demonstrates justice by showing kindness to Mephibosheth. Isaiah describes a reign of justice and righteousness. The Christmas lesson shows foreign "kings" respecting God's justice more than Israel's own king.

Unit II, "God: the Source of Justice," has five lessons that focus on God's justice in the lives of God's people and in the gift of the Law. Stories in Genesis reveal God's justice in the face of human injustice. Included are stories of Cain's murder of his brother Abel as well as Hagar and Ishmael being cast out of Abraham's household. Exodus demands justice for all people including one's enemies. In Deuteronomy, judges, officials, and priests work together to administer justice for God's people In particular, Deuteronomy demands justice for marginalized people.

Unit III, "Justice and Adversity," has four lessons that deal with situations in which justice seems absent. In Second Samuel, Nathan condemns David for his acts of injustice toward Uriah the Hittite, Bathsheba's husband. In Ezra, after years of exile in Babylon, Ezra returns to Jerusalem and determines to restore respect for God's Law. Session 3 tells the story of Job's faithfulness to God after several tragic events in his life. The Scriptures in Job question the presence of God's justice when Job has suffered greatly.

Children Unit I: God Requires Justice
Youth/Adult Unit I: God Requires Justice

1. December 5	Remember God's Just Laws	Deuteronomy 5; 10; 27; 28:1-2 Print: Deuteronomy 5:1-3; 10:12-13; 27:1-10
	Justice and Obedience to the Law	Deuteronomy 5; 10; 27; 28:1-2 Print: Deuteronomy 5:1-3; 10:12-13; 27:1-10

People often struggle to do what they know is right. How can people find the strength and motivation to do what is right? Deuteronomy 10 teaches that obedience to God's Law is for our own well-being.

2. December 12	David Is a Just King	2 Samuel 9 Print: 2 Samuel 9:1-12
	David Administers Justice and Kindness	2 Samuel 9 Print: 2 Samuel 9:1-12

People rely on the kindness and support of others. How can people show radical kindness to one another? King David acted justly, remembered his promise to Jonathan, and was kind to Jonathan's son.

3. December 19	Hail the Righteous King!	Isaiah 9:1-7 Print: Isaiah 9:2-7
	Justice and Righteousness Reign	Isaiah 9:1-7 Print: Isaiah 9:2-7

People suffer injustices and ill treatment. Will there be a time when people can count on being treated fairly? God's kingdom will be one of justice and righteousness.

4. December 26	A Just King is Born	Matthew 2 Print: Matthew 2:1–12
	A Just King is Born	Matthew 2 Print: Matthew 2:1–12

People look for someone to bring justice in spite of injustice. To whom can people turn to address issues of injustice? The Wise Men searched and found the King of Justice, Jesus, and worshiped Him.

Children Unit II: God Is Just
Youth Adult Unit II: God: The Source of Justice

5. January 2	A Just and Merciful God	Genesis 4 Print: Genesis 4:1-16
	Justice, Vengeance, and Mercy	Genesis 4 Print: Genesis 4:1-16

Some people become angry when their best efforts don't result in the anticipated outcome. How do people deal with their anger and disappointment? God punished Cain because he allowed his anger to turn to rage and then to murder.

6. January 9	A Just God Remembers Everyone	Genesis 21:8-21 Print: Genesis 21:8-20
	Hagar and Ishmael Not Forgotten	Genesis 21:8-21 Print: Genesis 21:8-20

People sometimes face situations that feel hopeless. How can people find assurance when their circumstances change? Genesis shows that even though Hagar and Ishmael's circumstances changed, God was still with them.

7. January 16	A Just God Says, "Remember Others"	Exodus 23 Print: Exodus 23:1-12
	The Laws of Justice and Mercy	Exodus 23 Print: Exodus 23:1-12

It can be tempting to treat friends with more leniency and enemies with more harshness than they deserve.

How can people treat others justly? Exodus demands justice for all people including one's enemies.

8. January 23	God's Just Judges and Priests	Deuteronomy 16:18-20; 17:8-13; 19:15-21 Print: Deuteronomy 16:18-20; 17:8-13
	Justice, Judges, and Priests	Deuteronomy 16:18-20; 17:8-13; 19:15-21 Print: Deuteronomy 16:18-20; 17:8-13

People sometimes distort justice. What actions can we take to prevent manipulations of justice? In Deuteronomy, judges, officials, and priests work together to administer justice for God's people.

Children Unit III: Justice during the Storm
Youth Adult Unit III: Justice and Adversity

9. January 30	Justice and the Outsiders	Deuteronomy 24:10-21 Print: Same
	Justice and the Marginalized	Deuteronomy 24:10-21 Print: Same

Some people are poor and marginalized. How can their dignity and worth be respected? Deuteronomy demands justice for all who are poor or marginalized.

10. February 6	Nathan Condemns David	2 Samuel 12 Print: 2 Samuel 12:1-9, 13-15
	Nathan Condemns David	2 Samuel 12 Print: 2 Samuel 12:1-9, 13-15

People often see acts of injustice being committed. How are we called to respond when we witness unjust acts? Nathan sought God's guidance and received wisdom for how to address David's sin.

11. February 13	Ezra Seeks God's Law	Ezra 7:1-26 Print: Ezra 7:1-10, 23-26
	Law and Order	Ezra 7:1-26 Print: Ezra 7:1-10, 23-26

People sometimes face situations in which they fear others will oppose their efforts. What motivates people to behave benevolently toward others? God's hand was on Ezra, and he was able to return to Jerusalem in an effort to restore respect for God's Law.

12. February 20	Facing Life's Storms	Job 1:1–2:10 Print: Job 1:8-15, 18-19; 2:3-7
	Bildad Misunderstands God's Justice Print: Job 8:1-10, 20-22	Job 8

People tend to rationalize why bad things happen. How do people respond when they are faced with tragedy—natural disasters, birth defects, atrocious crimes, etc.? Job remained faithful to God after several tragic events in his life, even while his friends questioned God's justice and Job's innocence.

13. February 27	Serving a Just God	Job 42 Print: Job 42:1-6, 10-17
	Serving a Just God	Job 42 Print: Job 42:1-6, 10-17

Even the most downcast people can still have hope. How does our hope keep us focused on what is important? Job had a frank, heart-to-heart conversation with God, and God blessed Job's faithfulness.

YEAR 6: Spring 2022
IDENTIFICATION: God
PERIOD: Spring Quarter, March-May 2022 (13 Sundays)
TITLE: God Frees and Redeems

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:
This quarter uses the lens of liberation, Christian freedom, to examine and experience the nature of God who acts to deliver and free people in different situations. This liberation is experienced in the story of the Passover and in the good news of Easter. Liberation is experienced in God's new covenant community.

Unit I, "Liberating Passover," consists of four lessons that explore the memory of the liberating event of the Exodus. The memory of the Exodus, relived in the Passover liturgy, cultivated a desire for restoration and liberation for the Hebrew people as told in the books of Ezra and Deuteronomy.

Unit II, "Liberating Gospels," offers four lessons that explore the liberating freedom found in events beginning with Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and continuing through his death and resurrection. These lessons are drawn from the Gospel of Matthew. The text from John describes the liberating freedom found by following Jesus.

Unit III, "Liberating Letters," contains five lessons based on the letters to the Romans and Galatians that explore Paul's understanding of the radical nature of Christian freedom. The final lesson in the unit focuses on the fruit of the Spirit emanating from Christian freedom.

Children Unit I: Liberating Passover
Youth/Adult Unit I: Liberating Passover

1. March 6	Free to Go Home	Ezra 1; 2:64-70 Print: Ezra 1:1-8, 11; 2:64-70
	Babylonian Captivity Ends	Ezra 1; 2:64-70 Print: Ezra 1:1-8, 11; 2:64-70

Sometimes people are given a challenging job, which requires a change or risk. Where can we find resources to meet these challenges? Israel's release from Babylonian captivity reveals that we can have faith that God will provide persons and resources to fulfill God's purposes.

2. March 13	Free to Talk to God	Ezra 6:1-12 Print: Same
	Freedom to Worship	Ezra 5; 6:1-12; 10:1-5 Print: Ezra 6:1-12

Sometimes people focus on their own adverse situations rather than seeking guidance. Why do we act and speak according to our situations rather than seeking liberation from them? Ezra shows us that when we recognize and confess our failings God is ready to listen and support us, even in unexpected ways.

3. March 20	Free to Celebrate Passover	Ezra 6:13-22; Leviticus 23:4-8 Print: Ezra 6:13-22
	Celebrate Passover Liberation	Ezra 6:13-22; Leviticus 23:4-8 Print: Ezra 6:13-22

Celebrations provide opportunities for persons to rejoice after a difficult task. How can we celebrate and show thanksgiving to the person who made the victory possible? After the temple was completed, the Israelites celebrated God by sharing the Passover together.

4. March 27	Let's Remember God's Blessings	Deuteronomy 8 Print: Deuteronomy 8:1-11
	Lest We Forget	Deuteronomy 8 Print: Deuteronomy 8:1-11

Humility can be thought of as a weakness in today's society. Why do people forget the road they traveled in life and who helped them in their accomplishments? Deuteronomy extols humility as liberating and explains its purpose.

Children Unit II: Liberating Gospels
Youth Adult Unit II: Liberating Gospels

5. April 3	The Passover with the Disciples	Matthew 26:17-30 Print: Same
	The Passover with the Disciples	Matthew 26:17-30 Print: Same

People need reminders of times of liberation in history. How do people deal with the burdens of daily life? In celebrating the Passover with his disciples, Jesus reminded them of the freedom he gave from fear and want.

6. April 10 (Palm Sunday)	King Jesus Enters Jerusalem	Matthew 21:1-11 Print: Same
	Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem	Matthew 21:1-11 Print: Same

People long for leaders who can liberate them from tyranny and be worthy of their praise. What does humility teach us about leadership? Matthew describes Jesus' humility and the crowds blessing him.

7. April 17 (Easter)	He's Alive!	Matthew 27; 28:1-10 Print: Matthew 28:1-10
	The Paschal Lamb Lives!	Matthew 27; 28:1-10 Print: Matthew 28:1-10

The world is full of sadness and despair. How can we find hope in the midst of our anguish? In Matthew, Jesus allays our fears and gives courage to face the future.

8. April 24	Jesus Makes Me Free	John 8:31-38 Print: Same
	Freedom in Christ Jesus	John 8:31-38 Print: Same

Many people are bound by bad habits and vices. How can one experience deliverance? Jesus is the truth that sets us free and enables us to be his disciples.

Children Unit III: Liberating Letters
Youth Adult Unit III: Liberating Letters

9. May 1	Freed to Do Right	Romans 6:1-14 Print: Same
	Freedom from Sin	Romans 6:1-14 Print: Same

In life, we are constantly struggling to do what is morally right. How can we overcome temptations? Through Jesus' death and resurrection, we become dead to sin and instruments of righteousness.

10. May 8	The Spirit Sets Me Free	Romans 8:18-30 Print: Same
	Freedom for the Future	Romans 8:18-30 Print: Same

Living in the world we sometimes suffer because of evildoers. Where can one find inspiration and hope for the future? God promises to bring good out of our suffering and give us a blessed future.

11. May 15	Free to Be Faithful	Galatians 3 Print: Galatians 3:18-29
	Freedom and the Law	Galatians 3 Print: Galatians 3:18-29

Laws are provided to govern and ensure a functioning society. If there were no laws, what would guide human behavior? Paul taught that God's Law served a purpose, but when Christ came grace made it possible for all people to become children of God and heirs of God's promises.

12. May 22	Free to Love Others	Galatians 5:1-15 Print: Same
	The Nature of Christian Freedom	Galatians 5:1-15 Print: Same

Sometimes people feel bound by laws and desires that keep them in chains. Where can we find freedom to experience life in transforming ways? According to Galatians, God calls us to a freedom that is guided by love for others.

13. May 29	Free to Live on Spiritual Fruit	Galatians 5:16-26 Print: Same
	The Spiritual Fruit of Freedom	Galatians 5:16-26 Print: Same

In the world many opposing forces influence our lives. When we feel conflicted, what can we do? Paul reminds us that choosing to be guided by the Spirit will result in good fruit.

YEAR 6: Summer 2022
IDENTIFICATION: Creation
PERIOD: Summer Quarter 2022, June-August (13 Sundays)
TITLE: Partners in a New Creation

GENERAL INTRODUCTION:
Members of Christ's body have the grand opportunity to be co-laborers with the ever-abiding Spirit of God in reconciling, re-creating, and rightly restoring all things in the eternal reign of God. This summer quarter considers ways in which believers are partners with God in creation.

Unit I, "God Delivers and Restores," has four lessons. Using three chapters of Isaiah, this study explores God's predictions of the future destruction of Babylon and deliverance for Israel. These events were evidence of God's power at work to grant mercy and redemption to the penitent and to restore God's people to a state of peace and prosperity.

Unit II, "The Word: The Agent of Creation," has five lessons taken from John's Gospel. The lessons stress how the Creating Word, at work in and with humanity, became flesh, healed the sick, saved the lost, resurrected the dead and granted—through the Holy Spirit—peace.

Unit III, "The Great Hope of the Saints," is a four-lesson study drawn from Revelation. The study helps learners envision the new home and city God has prepared for the redeemed. In this new heavenly environment, the saints will enjoy the new water of eternal life.

Children Unit I: God Delivers and Restores
Youth Adult Unit I: God Delivers and Restores

1. June 5	God Sees Everything	Isaiah 47 Print: Isaiah 47:10-15
	God Foretells Destruction	Isaiah 47 Print: Isaiah 47:10-15

Humans trust in their own abilities and the systems they develop to control their lives and the lives of others. How does this confidence shape us? Isaiah affirms that God, the Creator of all, humbles the proud and the powerful.

2. June 12	God Will Make Things Better	Isaiah 49:1-17 Print: Isaiah 49:1-11
	God Foretells of Redemption	Isaiah 49:1-17 Print: Isaiah 49:1-11

Individuals and nations aspire to accomplish great things even in the midst of great challenges. How can we make a difference? Creator God covenants with us to redeem us—even when we don't realize it—for a higher purpose and important mission.

3. June 19	God Gives a Better Life	Isaiah 49:18-26 Print: Isaiah 49:18-23
	God's Restored People Shall Prosper	Isaiah 49:18-26 Print: Isaiah 49:18-23

When freedom from oppression is realized, it is hard to believe. From where do freedom and blessings come? Creator God will restore relationships between God's people, nations, the land, and the next generation in ways that confirm God's Lordship.

4. June 26	God Wants to Free Us	Isaiah 51 Print: Isaiah 51:1-8
	God Offers Deliverance	Isaiah 51 Print: Isaiah 51:1-8

People of integrity find it difficult to ignore criticism. Where do they find affirmation in the face of adversity? God delivers the righteous from the judgment of others when they are faithful to God's teachings.

Children Unit II: The Word: An Agent of Creation
Youth Adult Unit II: The Word: The Agent of Creation

5. July 3	Jesus Becomes Flesh	John 1:1-14 Print: Same
	The Creating Word Becomes Flesh	John 1:1-14 Print: John 1:1-14

People are often curious about how things began. How do we understand the origins of life? John begins by explaining that Jesus, the Word, was God's creating and redeeming agent in the world.

6. July 10	Jesus Heals	John 4:46-54 Print: Same
	The Word Heals	John 4:46-54 Print: Same

When we or our loved ones are sick, we seek restoration and healing. When all efforts fail, what can we do? Jesus invites our active, faith-filled participation with his power to create new life through healing—even at a distance.

7. July 17	The Word Raises the Dead	John 11:17-44 Print: John 11:17-27, 38-44
	The Word Resurrects the Dead	John 11:17-44 Print: John 11:17-27, 38-44

When people experience tragic situations, they long for comfort. Where can we find hope and strength for the future? Our faith in Jesus releases the power of God to bring resurrection and new life.

8. July 24	The Word Saves	John 12:27-50 Print: John 12:44-50

	The Word Saves	John 12:27-50 Print: John 12:44-50

Most people acknowledge a sense of a higher, spiritual power that exceeds our human capabilities. How do we understand the mysteries of the universe, the world, and our lives? Jesus' mission is to save the world so that the world can live in an eternal relationship with his Father, the Creator God.

9. July 31	The Word Gives Peace	John 14:15-31 Print: John 14:15-29
	The Word Gives Peace	John 14:15-31 Print: John 14:15-29

People seek trustworthy guidance for their lives. How can we find guidance? Our love for Jesus, shown through our obedience to his words and the Holy Spirit's teachings, creates an incredible peace.

Children Unit III: The Great Hope of the Saints
Youth Adult Unit III: The Great Hope of the Saints

10. August 7	A New Home	Revelation 21:1-8 Print: Revelation 21:1-7
	A New Home	Revelation 21:1-8 Print: Same

People long for a place and time when life's stresses and death will not exist. Where can we find such a peaceful existence? The vision in Revelation 21 foretells that God will create a new heaven and earth where life's challenges will be banished forever.

11. August 14	A New City	Revelation 21:9-27 Print: Revelation 21:9-21
	A New City	Revelation 21:9-27 Print: Revelation 21:9-21

It is difficult for people to imagine living in a place that is totally different from the one in which they presently live. What will the new place be like? Revelation 21 uses figurative language to describe the brilliant new city God will create.

12. August 21	The River of Life	Revelation 22:1-7 Print: Same
	The River of Life	Revelation 22:1-7 Print: Same

Rivers give life and nourishment to the things that exist around them. How do rivers nourish our lives? In God's new creation, God's power will be in the river, nourishing and healing people and nations in the New Jerusalem.

13. August 28	Come and Enjoy	Revelation 22:8-21

Print: Revelation 22:10-21

Come and Enjoy

Revelation 22:8-21

Print: Revelation 22:10-21

Everything has a beginning and an end. What is the source and ultimate purpose of human life? Revelation affirms that God, who is the Alpha and Omega, creates and controls all things.

GLOSSARY

A

Anointed—A consecrated person, such as a king or priest; can refer to the Messiah.

B

Begotten—The one who is born; brought forth.
Believe—To accept as true, to place confidence in, to rely on.
Believeth—To put confidence in; to trust or be persuaded.
Blessing—Prosperity, benediction, benefit, favor, peace, invocation of good.
Bowels—Womb, intestines, the abdomen.

C

Covenant—A promise, contract, or a will.
Curse—The act of denouncing.

D

Defilement—Unclean. No Hebrew, especially a priest could partake of the Passover Feast and be unclean. To be in a Gentile's presence or building rendered that person unclean.
Door—A portal, gate, or entrance.

E

Earing—Plowing; plowing time.
Ephraim--Joseph's younger son, born of Joseph and Asenath before the seven years of famine in Egypt; he was the ancestor of an Israelite tribe, and his name came to designate the Northern Kingdom of Israel.
Executes—Undertakes a deliberate action with a specific or distinct purpose.

F

Faith—A strong conviction that Jesus is the Messiah and the One through whom we can by faith obtain eternal salvation.
Fear—Dreading punishment or destruction; feeling overwhelming awe, wonder and amazement.
Firkins—A measure of capacity for liquids (each firkin equals about 10 gallons).
Fruitful—Abundant, successful, showing an ability to bear fruit.

G

Gift—This word means the same in Hebrew and English, but the context is a present being used as a bribe.

H

Hallow—To consecrate or sanctify.
Heart—The seat of thought and will.
Hebrew Servant—Proper name for a servant, slave, or attendant.
Hypostatize (Hy-POST–a-tize)—To think of a concept, abstraction, etc., as having a real, objective existence.

J

Jubile—Also spelled "jubilee"; a season of celebration; a year of emancipation and restoration.
Judges—Men chosen to exercise authority over God's chosen people to lead them back to the one true God.
Judgment—A formal utterance of an authoritative opinion.
Just—Lawful, righteous.

K

Know—To ascertain by seeing, be assuredly aware, with certainty.

L

Labour—To work, to do, to commit.
Life—Denotes life in the fullest sense; life as God has it.
Living water—It has vital power in itself and exerts the same upon the soul; represents the Holy Spirit.
Longsuffering—The patience and selfrestraint of people who could quickly and easily avenge themselves against wrongdoers.

M

Magnify—Glorify.
Manasseh—Grandson of Jacob; the firstborn son of Joseph and his Egyptian wife, Asenath; the name means "causing to forget"
Mansions—Abodes or dwellings.
Messias—The Greek form of Messiah, meaning "anointed"; a name of Christ.
Metaphor—A figure of speech in which a word or phrase is likened to
something, but is not to be taken literally.
Mock—To laugh and make fun of.
Mocked—Turned up one's nose at someone as a gesture of ridicule, scorn, or contempt.

N

Nature—The way of feeling and acting which has become "normal."
Nourish—Feed, attend to, contain, sustain, endure.

O

Officer—A man in the royal court who is a "eunuch"; a castrated male.
Oppress—To take advantage of, restrict, or pervert justice regarding someone's human rights.
Oppressed—Someone who has been cheated or otherwise exploited.

P

Passover—A Jewish celebration commemorating their exodus from bondage in Egypt
Pray—To plead, to intervene, to interpose, to arbitrate, or even judge.
Prince—Captain, leader.
Purifying—The process of ritual cleansing, either legal or ceremonial, to purge from the pollution of sin and guilt.

R

Redeem—To buy something from someone to establish ownership.
Resurrection—The act of having life restored after death.
Righteous—Just, lawful.
Requite—Return again, turn back, turn away, restore, bring, render, answer, recompense, recover, deliver, put, withdraw.
Righteousness—Rightness, rectitude, virtue, prosperity, piety.

S

Salvation—Deliverance, victory, or help.
Scourge —A whip.
Seed—Offspring, issue, progeny, posterity, family, race.
Sent—Charged or commanded by another with a verbal communication.
Sepulchre—A grave or tomb. Jesus was buried in a sepulchre, which was a room carved out of a rocky hill.
Servant—A minister, ambassador, and a worshiper of God.
Shadow of Death—Distress or extreme danger.
Shepherd—A pastor; used to illustrate Jesus' ownership and commitment to those who follow Him.
Should be made manifest—Made visible or known what has been hidden or unknown.
Sin—To wander from the law of God; violate God's law, miss the mark.
Sinned—Missed the mark; erred.
Son of Man—The phrase appears in the Old Testament primarily to specify a member of humanity (cf. Psalm 8:4).
Soul—The seat of feelings, emotion, desire, and affection.
Stranger—A sojourner; a newcomer, or a foreigner.

T

Tempt—To test, prove, try, put to the proof, to qualify.
Transgressor—A person who violates a command or law; someone who goes beyond a boundary or limit.
Triumphed—Rose up or was exalted in victory.
Troubled—Agitated, anxious, or causing commotion.

U

Unrighteousness—Injustice, iniquity, and wickedness.

W

Wisdom—Ability to discern inner qualities and relationships.

Witness—Someone who has seen or heard or knows the Gospel and testifies to it

Word—The Word denotes the expression of thought, not the mere name of an object. In John 1:1 and 1:14, Jesus is called "the Word." He became flesh and dwelled among us as fully human and fully divine.

Works—Denotes a deed or act

Y

Yoke—Denotes a condition of servitude or slavery

OUR AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

is a reminder of the basic beliefs of the Church Of God In Christ. It witnesses to the reality that God has been active in creation, history, and our lives. Being Trinitarian, our affirmation focuses on the work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, while proclaiming the Gospel holistically. God tells us through Scripture that salvation is available to all through Jesus Christ.

Our Affirmation of Faith is woven throughout the testifying, singing, praying, preaching, and teaching of the Church. Hence, one can hear the cardinal beliefs through these events.

The Affirmation makes no pretense of being exhaustive, or being a complete statement of all our beliefs. It presents a set of key beliefs that are grounded in Scripture.

The Affirmation echoes the classic testimony: "Giving honor to God in the highest and to the Lord Jesus Christ, I thank God that I'm saved, sanctified, and filled with the Holy Ghost." Our theology begins with God; the doctrine of God shapes all other doctrines for the Church Of God In Christ.

The Church Of God In Christ — Affirmation of Faith

We Believe the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible written Word of God,

We Believe that there is One God, eternally existent in three Persons; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

We Believe in the Blessed Hope, which is the rapture of the Church of God, which is in Christ at His return.

We Believe that the only means of being cleansed from sin, is through repentance and faith in the precious Blood of Jesus Christ.

We Believe that regeneration by the Holy Ghost is absolutely essential for personal salvation.

We Believe that the redemptive work of Christ on the Cross provides healing for the human body in answer to believing prayer.

We Believe that the Baptism in the Holy Ghost, according to Acts 2:4, is given to believers who ask for it.

We Believe in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit, by whose indwelling, the Christian is enabled to live a Holy and separated life in this present world.

Amen.

THE SYMBOL OF THE CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST

The Symbol of the Church Of God In Christ is an outgrowth of the Presiding Bishop's Coat of Arms, which has become quite familiar to the Church. The design of the Official Seal of the Church was created in 1973 and adopted in the General Assembly in 1981 (July Session).

The obvious GARNERED WHEAT in the center of the seal represents all of the people of the Church Of God In Christ, Inc. The ROPE of wheat that holds the shaft together represents the Founding Father of the Church, Bishop Charles Harrison Mason, who, at the call of the Lord, banded us together as a Brotherhood of Churches in the First Pentecostal General Assembly of the Church, in 1907.

The date in the seal has a two-fold purpose: first, to tell us that Bishop Mason received the baptism of the Holy Ghost in March 1907 and, second, to tell us that it was because of this outpouring that Bishop Mason was compelled to call us together in February of 1907 to organize the Church Of God In Christ.

The RAIN in the background represents the Latter Rain, or the End-time Revivals, which brought about the emergence of our Church along with other Pentecostal Holiness Bodies in the same era. The rain also serves as a challenge to the Church to keep Christ in the center of our worship and service, so that He may continue to use the Church Of God In Christ as one of the vehicles of Pentecostal Revival before the return of the Lord.

This information was reprinted from the book So You Want to KNOW YOUR CHURCH by Alferd Z. Hall, Jr.

The Doctrines of the Church Of God In Christ

THE BIBLE

We believe that the Bible is the Word of God and contains one harmonious and sufficiently complete system of doctrine. We believe in the full inspiration of the Word of God. We hold the Word of God to be the only authority in all matters and assert that no doctrine can be true or essential if it does not find a place in this Word.

THE FATHER

We believe in God, the Father Almighty, the Author and Creator of all things. The Old Testament reveals God in diverse manners, by manifesting His nature, character, and dominions. The Gospels in the New Testament give us knowledge of God the "Father" or "My Father," showing the relationship of God to Jesus as Father, or representing Him as the Father in the Godhead, and Jesus himself that Son (St. John 15:8, 14:20). Jesus also gives God the distinction of "Fatherhood" to all believers when He explains God in the light of "Your Father in Heaven" (St. Matthew 6:8).

THE SON

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the second person in the Godhead of the Trinity or Triune Godhead. We believe that Jesus was and is eternal in His person and nature as the Son of God who was with God in the beginning of creation (St. John 1:1). We believe that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin called Mary according to the Scripture (St. Matthew 1:18), thus giving rise to our fundamental belief in the Virgin Birth and to all of the miraculous events surrounding the phenomenon (St. Matthew 1:18–25). We believe that Jesus Christ became the "suffering servant" to man; this suffering servant came seeking to redeem man from sin and to reconcile him to God, his Father (Romans 5:10). We believe that Jesus Christ is standing now as mediator between God and man (I Timothy 2:5).

THE HOLY GHOST

We believe the Holy Ghost or Holy Spirit is the third person of the Trinity; proceeds from the Father and the Son; is of the same substance, equal to power and glory; and is together with the Father and the Son, to be believed in, obeyed, and worshiped. The Holy Ghost is a gift bestowed upon the believer for the purpose of equipping and empowering the believer, making him or her a more effective witness for service in the world. He teaches and guides one into all truth (John 16:13; Acts 1:8, 8:39).

THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST

We believe that the Baptism of the Holy Ghost is an experience subsequent to conversion and sanctification and that tongue-speaking is the consequence of the baptism in the Holy Ghost with the manifestations of the fruit of the spirit (Galatians 5:22–23; Acts 10:46, 19:1–6). We believe that we are not baptized with the Holy Ghost in order to be saved (Acts 19:1–6; John 3:5). When one receives a baptismal Holy Ghost experience, we believe one will speak with a tongue unknown to oneself according to the sovereign will of Christ. To be filled with the Spirit means to be Spirit controlled as expressed by Paul in Ephesians 5:18,19. Since the charismatic demonstrations were necessary to help the early church to be successful in implementing the command of Christ, we, therefore, believe that a Holy Ghost experience is mandatory for all believers today.

MAN

We believe that humankind was created holy by God, composed of body, soul, and spirit. We believe that humankind, by nature, is sinful and unholy. Being born in sin, a person needs to be born again, sanctified and cleansed from all sins by the blood of

Jesus. We believe that one is saved by confessing and forsaking one's sins, and believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, and that having become a child of God, by being born again and adopted into the family of God, one may, and should, claim the inheritance of the sons of God, namely the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

SIN

Sin, the Bible teaches, began in the angelic world (Ezekiel 28:11–19; Isaiah 14:12–20) and is transmitted into the blood of the human race through disobedience and deception motivated by unbelief (I Timothy 2:14). Adam's sin, committed by eating of the forbidden fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, carried with it permanent pollution or depraved human nature to all his descendants. This is called "original sin." Sin can now be defined as a volitional transgression against God and a lack of conformity to the will of God. We, therefore, conclude that humankind by nature is sinful and has fallen from a glorious and righteous state from which we were created, and has become unrighteous and unholy. We therefore, must be restored to the state of holiness from which we have fallen by being born again (St. John 3:7).

SALVATION

Salvation deals with the application of the work of redemption to the sinner with restoration to divine favor and communion with God. This redemptive operation of the Holy Ghost upon sinners is brought about by repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ which brings conversion, faith, justification, regeneration, sanctification, and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Repentance is the work of God, which results in a change of mind in respect to a person's relationship to God (St. Matthew 3:1–2, 4:17; Acts 20:21). Faith is a certain conviction wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, as to the truth of the Gospel and a heart trust in the promises of God in Christ (Romans 1:17, 3:28; St. Matthew 9:22; Acts 26:18). Conversion is that act of God whereby He causes the regenerated sinner, in one's conscious life, to turn to Him in repentance and faith (II Kings 5:15; II Chronicles 33:12,13; St. Luke 19:8,9; Acts 8:30). Regeneration is the act of God by which the principle of the new life is implanted in humankind, the governing disposition of soul is made holy, and the first holy exercise of this new disposition is secured. Sanctification is that gracious and continuous operation of the Holy Ghost, by which He delivers the justified sinner from the pollution of sin, renews a person's whole nature in the image of God, and enables one to perform good works (Romans 6:4, 5:6; Colossians 2:12, 3:1).

ANGELS

The Bible uses the term "angel" (a heavenly body) clearly and primarily to denote messengers or ambassadors of God with such Scripture references as Revelations 4:5, which indicates their duty in heaven to praise God (Psalm 103:20), to do God's will (St. Matthew 18:10), and to behold His face. But since heaven must come down to earth, they also have a mission to earth. The Bible indicates that they accompanied God in the Creation, and also that they will accompany Christ in His return in Glory.

DEMONS

Demons denote unclean or evil spirits; they are sometimes called devils or demonic beings. They are evil spirits, belonging to the unseen or spiritual realm, embodied in human beings. The Old Testament refers to the prince of demons, sometimes called Satan (adversary) or Devil, as having power and wisdom, taking the habitation of other forms such as the serpent (Genesis 3:1). The New Testament speaks of the Devil as Tempter (St. Matthew 4:3), and it goes on to tell the works of Satan, the Devil, and demons as combating righteousness and good in any form, proving to be an adversary to the saints. Their chief power is exercised to destroy the mission

of Jesus Christ. It can well be said that the Christian Church believes in demons, Satan, and devils. We believe in their power and purpose. We believe they can be subdued and conquered as in the commandment to the believer by Jesus. "In my name they shall cast out Satan and the work of the Devil and to resist him and then he will flee (WITHDRAW) from you" (St. Mark 16:17).

THE CHURCH

The Church forms a spiritual unity of which Christ is the divine head. It is animated by one Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. It professes one faith, shares one hope, and serves one King. It is the citadel of the truth and God's agency for communicating to believers all spiritual blessings. The Church then is the object of our faith rather than of knowledge. The name of our Church, "CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST," is supported by I Thessalonians 2:14 and other passages in the Pauline Epistles. The word "CHURCH" or "EKKLESIA" was first applied to the Christian society by Jesus Christ in St. Matthew 16:18, the occasion being that of His benediction of Peter at Caesarea Philippi..

THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe in the second coming of Christ; that He shall come from heaven to earth, personally, bodily, visibly (Acts 1:11; Titus 2:11–13; St. Matthew 16:27, 24:30, 25:30; Luke 21:27; John 1:14, 17; Titus 2:11); and that the Church, the bride, will be caught up to meet Him in the air (I Thessalonians 4:16–17). We admonish all who have this hope to purify themselves as He is pure.

DIVINE HEALING

The Church Of God In Christ believes in and practices Divine Healing. It is a commandment of Jesus to the Apostles (St. Mark 16:18). Jesus affirms His teachings on healing by explaining to His disciples, who were to be Apostles, that healing the afflicted is by faith (St. Luke 9:40–41). Therefore, we believe that healing by faith in God has scriptural support and ordained authority. St. James's writings in his epistle encourage Elders to pray for the sick, lay hands upon them and to anoint them with oil, and state that prayers with faith shall heal the sick and the Lord shall raise them up. Healing is still practiced widely and frequently in the Church Of God In Christ, and testimonies of healing in our Church testify to this fact.

MIRACLES

The Church Of God In Christ believes that miracles occur to convince people that the Bible is God's Word. A miracle can be defined as an extraordinary visible act of divine power, wrought by the efficient agency of the will of God, which has as its final cause the vindication of the righteousness of God's Word. We believe that the works of God, which were performed during the beginnings of Christianity, do and will occur even today where God is preached, faith in Christ is exercised, the Holy Ghost is active, and the Gospel is promulgated in the truth (Acts 5:15, 6:8, 9:40; Luke 4:36, 7:14, 15, 5:5, 6; St. Mark 14:15).

THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

It is generally admitted that for an ordinance to be valid, it must have been instituted by Christ. When we speak of ordinances of the church, we are speaking of those instituted by Christ, in which by sensible signs the grace of God in Christ and the benefits of the covenant of grace are represented, sealed, and applied to believers, and these in turn give expression to their faith and allegiance to God. The Church Of God In Christ recognizes three ordinances as having been instituted by Christ himself and, therefore, are binding upon the church practice..

THE LORD'S SUPPER (HOLY COMMUNION)

The Lord's Supper symbolizes the Lord's death

and suffering for the benefit and in the place of His people. It also symbolizes the believer's participation in the crucified Christ. It represents not only the death of Christ as the object of faith, which unites the believers to Christ, but also the effect of this act as the giving of life, strength, and joy to the soul. The communicant by faith enters into a special spiritual union of one's soul with the glorified Christ.

FOOT WASHING

Foot washing is practiced and recognized as an ordinance in our Church because Christ, by His example, showed that humility characterized greatness in the kingdom of God, and that service rendered to others gave evidence that humility, motivated by love, exists. These services are held subsequent to the Lord's Supper; however, its regularity is left to the discretion of the pastor in charge.

WATER BAPTISM

We believe that Water Baptism is necessary as instructed by Christ in St. John 3:5, "UNLESS MAN BE BORN AGAIN OF WATER AND OF THE SPIRIT..."

However, we do not believe that water baptism alone is a means of salvation, but is an outward demonstration that one has already had a conversion experience and has accepted Christ as his personal Savior. As Pentecostals, we practice immersion in preference to sprinkling because immersion corresponds more closely to the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord (Colossians 2:12). It also symbolizes regeneration and purification more than any other mode. Therefore, we practice immersion as our mode of baptism. We believe that we should use the Baptismal Formula given to us by Christ for all "...IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, AND OF THE SON, AND OF THE HOLY GHOST..." (Matthew 28:19).

Suggested Order of Service

1. Call to order.
2. Singing.
3. Prayer.
4. Responsive reading:

Supt.: Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

Psalm 133:1

School: And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.

Colossians 3:15

Supt.: Blessed are they that dwell in thy house: they will be still praising thee.

Psalm 84:4

School: Praise ye the LORD. I will praise the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, and in the congregation.

Psalm 111:1

Supt.: And the LORD said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me: I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built, to put my name there for ever; and mine eyes and mine heart shall be there perpetually.

1 Kings 9:3

School: Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.

Leviticus 19:30

Supt.: And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Matthew 16:18

School: My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the LORD: my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.

Psalm 84:2

Supt.: And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

John 10:16

School: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

1 Timothy 3:15

All: Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.

Psalm 134:2

5. Singing.
6. Reading lesson by school and superintendent.
7. Classes assemble for lesson study.
8. Sunday School offering.
9. Five-minute warning bell.
10. Closing bell.
11. Brief lesson review by pastor or superintendent.
12. Secretary's report.
13. Announcements.
14. Dismissal.

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST
ANNUAL COMMENTARY 2021-2022

Church Name: Robinson Memorial COGIC
Pastor: Pastor Jay Robinson
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop John O. Ford
Superintendent: Jay Robinson Jr

Church Name: Greenway Park COGIC
Pastor: Pastor Fabian Finney
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop Nelson Gatlin
Superintendent: Annie Mayberry

Church Name: Mt. Olive COGIC
Pastor: Pastor Arnold Sheard
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop John H. Sheard
Superintendent: Deacon Curtis Frye

Church Name: Wilson Memorial Temple COGIC
Pastor: Pastor Kelvin Thomas Sr
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop Ocie Booker
Superintendent: Bro. Darnell Davis

Church Name: Mt. Olive COGIC
Pastor: Pastor C. Taylor
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop Albert Galbraith
Superintendent: Charles Stephens

Church Name: Glorious Temple Deliverance
Pastor: Bishop Willie G. Robinson
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop James Pullings, Jr.
Superintendent: Elder. Anthony Upshaw

Church Name: Unity Church Of God In Christ
Pastor: Pastor Tyrone Burnell
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop Frank Anderson
Superintendent: Sister Annie Harrington

Church Name: Remnant COGIC
Pastor: Bishop John W. Fleming
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop John W. Fleming
Superintendent: Minister Gregory Wilson

Church Name: Ninth Street COGIC
Pastor: Pastor Vernon Culley
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop Otis Eanes
Superintendent: Brother Jeffery Marion

Church Name: Morning Star COGIC
Pastor: Pastor Bertram Bailey
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop William Dean
Superintendent: Willie A. Frieson

Church Name: Greater Faith Temple COGIC
Pastor: Pastor Jerry Ellis, Sr.
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop William Watson, III
Superintendent: Elder Pringle

Church Name: Greater New Hope COGIC
Pastor: Pastor James L. Newman
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop Ray L. Sample
Superintendent: Dewight Franklin

Church Name: In Spirit and Truth Worship Center Church Of God In Christ
Pastor: Pastor Parrish Hill
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop Anthony Gilyard
Superintendent: Pastor Parrish L. Hill

Church Name: Living Waters COGIC
Pastor: Pastor Richard C. Rogers
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop Charles H. McClelland
Superintendent: Sandra F. Rogers

Church Name: North 6th Street COGIC
Pastor: Pastor Nathaniel Ellis
Jurisdictional Bishop: Bishop Nathaniel Ellis
Superintendent: Hester Ellis

ISBN 978-1-68087-513-3
ISBN-10 1-68087-513-2

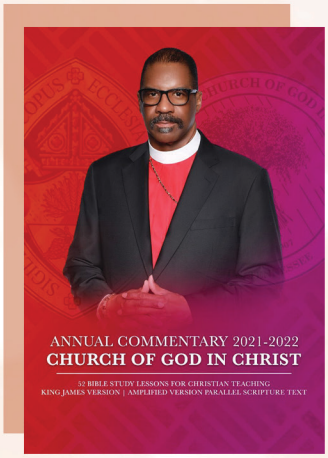
52450
9 781680 875133

PRICE: $24.50

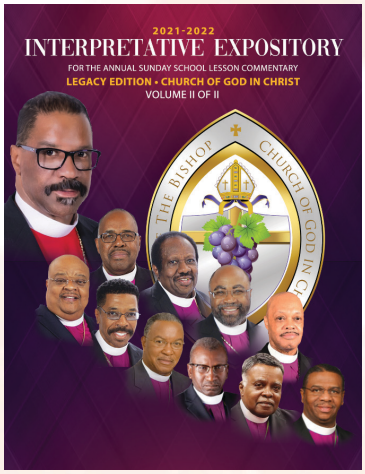
806 E. BROOKS RD. • MEMPHIS, TN
FACEBOOK: CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST PUBLISHING HOUSE
COGICPUBLISHINGHOUSE.NET

Everything You Need

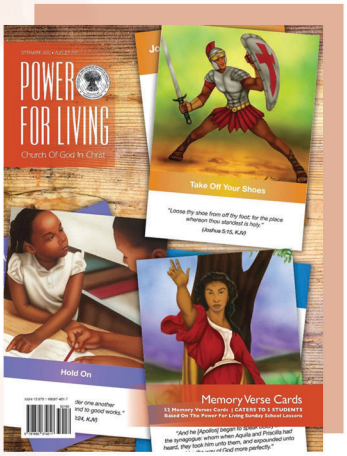
FOR A SUCCESSFUL FALL QUARTER



Annual Lesson Commentary 2021-2022

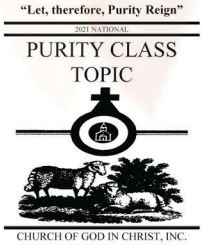


Annual Interpretative Expository 2021-2022



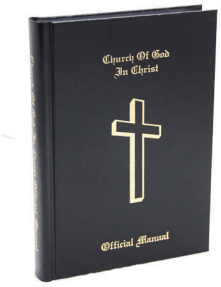
Annual Memory Verse Card Set 2021-2022

OFFICIAL CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST — MANUALS AND HANDBOOKS —

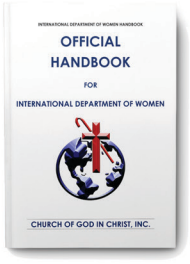


Purity Class Topics

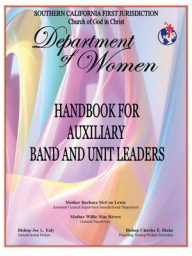
Christian Women Council Curriculum Topics



COGIC Manual



Official Handbook



Department of Women

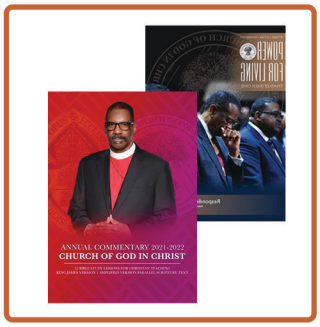
Men Perfecting Men

Church
– SUPPLIES –

Anointing Oils

Communion

Envelopes



Curriculum

Clergy Collar

Banner and Signs

Badges, Patches, and Pins

Many more general supplies!

Make sure you're safely prepared for worship.
Shop for all of your COVID-19 PPE and Church Supplies today!

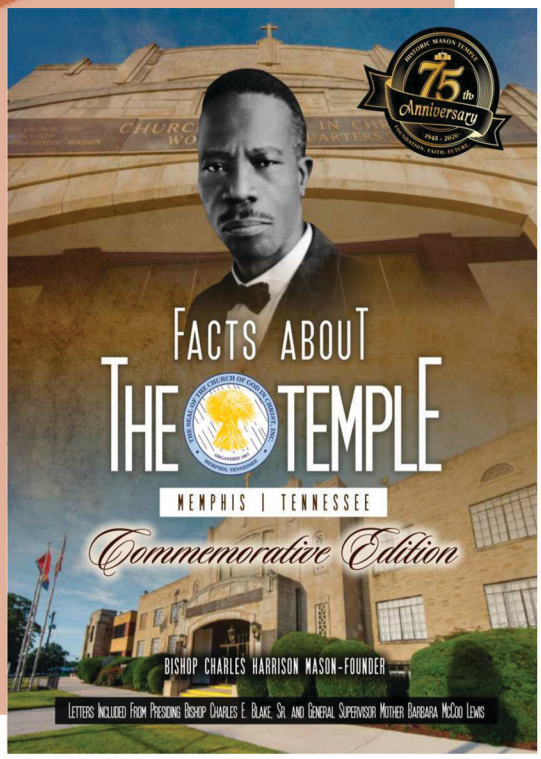
Thermometers and Sanitizing Stations

Disposable Masks

Hand Sanitizers

COGIC Masks

Founders EDITION



Facts About the Temple
75th Commemorative Edition

Included are:

Featured Products
Facts About The Temple 75th Commemorative Edition
1945 Original Facts About The Temple
75th Anniversary Historic Mason Temple Collectable Medallion
75th Anniversary Historic Mason Temple Pop Socket

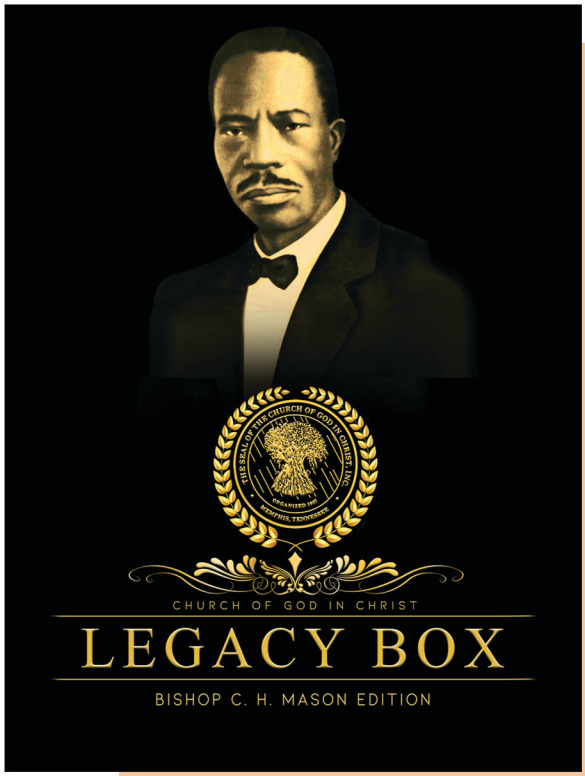
$65.00

Church of God in Christ Legacy Box: Bishop C. H. Mason Edition

This box features:

History and Life Work of Bishop C H Mason
From the Beginning of Bishop C H Mason
Bishop Mason Singing, Preaching, and Praying Vol. 2
The 100 Year Celebration of the COGIC
Bishop C. H. Mason's Homegoing Celebration

$65.00



Commemorative SETS

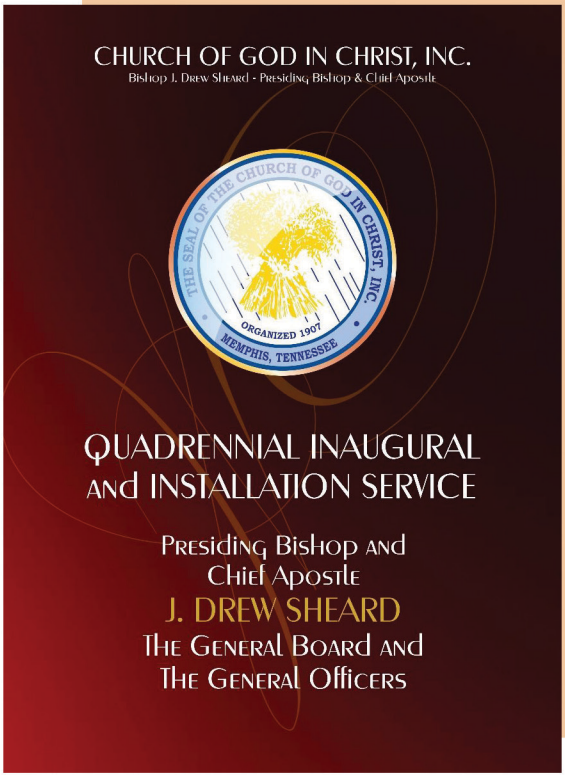
Commemorative Inaugural & Episcopal SET

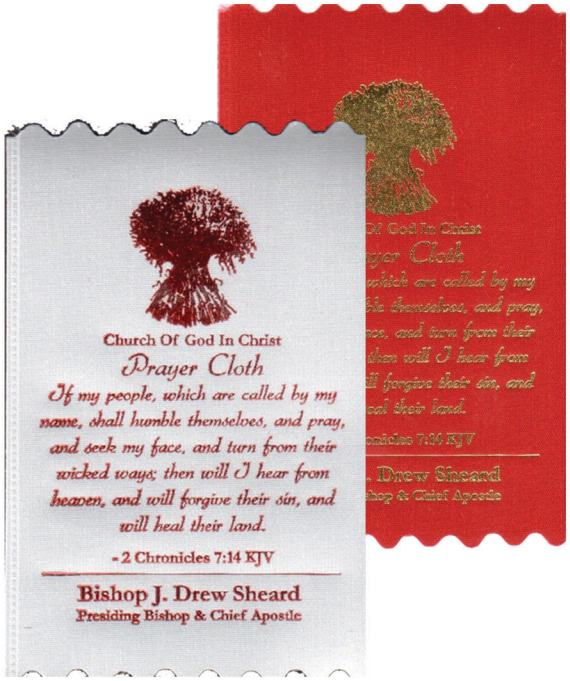
Quadrennial Inaugural and Installation Service
Tuesday, June 22, 2021

Episcopal Consecration Service
Wednesday, June 23, 2021

Commemorative Inaugural Poster

Poster: $15.00
CD Set: $20.00
DVD Set: $40.00





COGIC Prayer Cloths | 2 Chronicles 7:14 KJV - White (Package of 10)

3x4 Inches
White with Red Imprint
Red with Gold Imprint

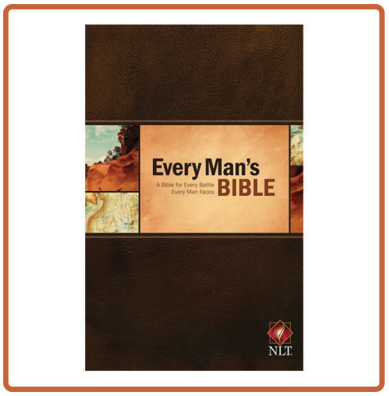
"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." 2 Chronicles 7:14

$9.95

OCTOBER IS *Clergy Appreciation* MONTH

October is Clergy Appreciation Month.
Let your ministry leaders know that there good works does not go unnoticed!

Books



Bibles

Drinkware

totes

Cufflinks

Books

Bible Study
SETS

The Reasons We Pray Bible Study
This set includes:
Reasons we pray bible study book
Reasons we pray prayer journal
Prayer Cloth
Scripture Cards
$24.99

Pray Your Way Bible Study Set
This set includes:
The Importance Of Prayer Bible Study
What Happens When We Fast and Pray? Bible Study
The Ideal Church Series Volume 3: Prayer
Prayer Journal
Let Us Pray CD
Prayer Cloth
2oz Hand Sanitizer
$24.99

The WHOLE TRUTH

Church *of* God in Christ

Since 1895

PERFORM TO INSPIRE AND INFORM COGIC READERS AND CHRISTIANS EVERYWHERE

HAS GOD CALLED YOU *to write a book?*

Harrison Mason Press is the official self-publisher of the Church Of God In Christ.

Click here to find out how to self-publish your book today!

CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST
PUBLISHING HOUSE

We Want To Know What You Think!

SUNDAY SCHOOL SURVEY

Please take a moment to share your thoughts with us. As a thank you for participating in our survey, We would like to offer you a Bible Study eBooks!