

LEADER'S GUIDE
CHANGED INTO HIS IMAGE

Jim Berg

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Note: You may reproduce any part or all of this *Leader's Guide*.

SECTION ONE: *CHANGED INTO HIS IMAGE* MATERIALS

The discussion to follow will refer to these components available from JourneyForth.

Changed into His Image: God's Plan for Transforming Your Life—372-page book of thirteen chapters

Taking Time to Change—189-page study guide that takes an individual through a thirteen-week personal study of *Changed into His Image*. As he reads a few pages of *Changed into His Image* each day, the reader answers questions to help him apply the material to his life.

Changed into His Image DVD Series—four DVDs containing thirteen thirty to forty-minute lectures by Jim Berg. The thirteen inspirational sessions correspond to the thirteen chapters of *Changed into His Image* and provide an effective way to teach the truths of biblical change and Christian growth to larger groups, small-group discussion classes, or individuals in one-on-one discipleship opportunities.

Changed into His Image Leader's Guide (this document)—If *Changed into His Image* and *Taking Time to Change* are being used in small-group discussion classes, please print this *Leader's Guide* for every small-group discussion leader.

SECTION TWO: PRESENTATION AND STUDY FORMATS

The components mentioned above can be used in a variety of ways, as discussed below, to fit your circumstances and ministry goals. The greatest impact occurs, of course, when all components are used together.

Individual Use of *Changed into His Image* and *Taking Time to Change*

An individual can systematically study through the truths of *Changed into His Image* following the daily schedule proposed in the study guide, *Taking Time to Change*, one chapter per week. After the daily reading of a few assigned pages in *Changed into His Image*, the reader will answer questions in *Taking Time to Change* to apply the material to his own life. Each chapter in the study guide is designed to be completed in five days per week.

One-on-One Discipleship

A person discipling someone else can have him work through one chapter of *Changed into His Image* and *Taking Time to Change* per week. For additional impact, the person being disciplined can watch

the video on that chapter before he begins his weekly study. Counseling and discipleship sessions can then deal with issues that were raised by the study guide application questions.

Adult Elective Training Courses

Of course, pastors can offer the videos for interested adults in a Sunday training hour before the evening service or on a given night of the week for thirteen weeks. This latter option will fit the weekly Bible study classes that many local churches offer for their people.

Small-Group Discussion Sessions

The adult Sunday school classes can be broken down into small groups of eight to ten participants. If groups consist of only men or only women, the members are more likely to share what they have learned with others.

Each class member will study through a chapter of *Changed into His Image* and *Taking Time to Change* each week. When the members come to the small-group class, one class member can lead a discussion of what the members have learned that week about the Scriptures and about themselves. The leader needs to do little more than ask the questions in *Taking Time to Change* and go around the class allowing each member to share his answers. More complete help for small-group leaders is given in the next section of this *Leader's Guide*, "Information for Small-Group Leaders."

Entire Church Congregations Using Weekly Video Series Combined with Small-Group Discussion Sessions

This option provides the most saturation for your church congregation and integrates the use of the video series, the *Taking Time to Change* study guide, and the *Changed into His Image* text itself. Of course, the videos can be viewed without follow-up small-group discussion sessions, but the greatest impact will come when the viewers are made to personally apply the truths by using *Taking Time to Change* in conjunction with the videos.

A pastor wishing to instruct his congregation on what the Bible teaches about how believers change and grow would show the *Changed into His Image Video Series* on a weekly basis to the entire congregation on Sunday evening for thirteen weeks. For example, a pastor could show Session One on a Sunday evening and then have the adults read Chapter One of *Changed into His Image* and work through Study Unit One in the *Taking Time to Change* study guide during the following week. The next Sunday the adult small-group Sunday school classes would spend the entire time in application and discussion. This format has the advantage of providing an extended, unified instruction time for the whole congregation. The *Taking Time to Change* study guide also serves as a video seminar syllabus. The participants fill in the blanks of the Lecture Notes section in the study guide with the answers given to them on the DVD presentation.

Home Bible Studies

Changed into His Image and *Taking Time to Change* may also be used in a two-hour home Bible study in conjunction with the *Changed into His Image Video Series*. The first session would consist of showing the first video, taking time for a fifteen- to twenty-minute fellowship break, and then spending forty minutes to an hour covering the material in "The First Week" of Section Three of this *Leader's Guide*. Throughout the coming week, the participants would go through Chapter One of *Changed into His Image* and Study Unit One of *Taking Time to Change* on their own.

When the group members assemble a week later, they would discuss during the first forty to forty-five minutes what they learned during the week as they studied through *Changed into His Image* and *Taking Time to Change*. They could take a fifteen- to twenty-minute fellowship break and then reconvene to watch the next video in preparation for Chapter Two the following week.

The group could be as large as ten to twelve participants or could be as small as one or two people you are personally discipling.

Weeklong Video Series Format

Churchwide Series—The entire thirteen-session series can be presented to the church congregation during evening sessions within a single week immediately before all the adult Sunday school classes begin using *Taking Time to Change* in small-group classes. The advantage of this method is that the participants receive a broad overview of the entire book before they begin to study it weekly in small-group discussions.

A schedule for the week that has proved to be effective is outlined below. A ten-minute break is given between the forty-minute video sessions.

Sunday:	(6-7 P.M.)	Session One—Understanding Biblical Change
Monday:	(7 -8:30 P.M.)	Session Two—Recognizing the Evil Within Session Three—Identifying Your Own Way
Tuesday:	(7 -8:30 P.M.)	Session Four—Getting in Your Place Session Five—Mortifying Your Flesh
Wednesday:	(7-8:30 P.M.)	Session Six—Getting in Touch with Reality Session Seven—Becoming like Christ
Thursday:	(7-8:30 P.M.)	Session Eight—Searching for Wisdom Session Nine—Walking in Wisdom
Friday:	(7 -8:30 P.M.)	Session Ten—Being a God-Loving Example Session Eleven—Being a Word-Filled Teacher
Saturday:	(9-10:30 A.M.)	Session Twelve—Being a Ministry-Minded Overseer Session Thirteen—Laboring Together with God Session Fourteen—Question and Answer (optional)
Sunday:	45 minutes	Adult Sunday school classes introduce <i>Taking Time to Change</i> for small-group discussions that will continue for the next thirteen weeks.

Concentrated Staff Training—The videos could be viewed in a concentrated time frame similar to the churchwide series as part of a weeklong staff training program for church, school, or camp staffs.

SECTION THREE: INFORMATION FOR SMALL-GROUP LEADERS

If you are a small-group leader using the *Taking Time to Change* study guide, the following information will help you get the most out of your time with the group. *Taking Time to Change* has been used very effectively during the Sunday school hour in local churches. The comments below will be geared for that situation but can be adapted for use in Bible studies at home or in one-on-one counseling situa-

tions. Be sure to read through “How to Use This Study Guide,” pp. v-vii in *Taking Time to Change*, to acquaint yourself with the overall structure of the study guide.

Each member of your group should have his own study guide, *Taking Time to Change*, and each individual or couple should have a copy of the text, *Changed into His Image*.

It is important to stress to the group that biblical change *takes time*. Though it is not essential that you do so, if you have read through *Changed into His Image* yourself before you begin this responsibility as a group leader, you will be able to speak with great conviction about the necessity of taking time. You will then have an overview of how the group should progress and why *taking time* is such an important matter in Christian growth. Of course, if you cannot read through the entire book before beginning, do not despair; work on one chapter at a time with the group.

The First Week

The first week’s lesson will be an introductory session for Study Unit One, which your small-group members will be studying throughout the following week. They will not have completed a study unit this first week, so there will be no discussion time during this first session. You can use this first week’s discussion time to pass out materials—study guides and texts—and to have each member of the group introduce himself.

Once everyone is acquainted, you can briefly survey the materials for the participants. Tell them that before they leave this first meeting, you will have gone through the Introduction and Lecture Notes for Study Unit One with them. Then walk them through a day’s components as presented in “How to Use This Study Guide,” pp. v-vii in *Taking Time to Change*.

After you have finished this overview, ask the participants to turn to Study Unit One of *Taking Time to Change*. Read through the Introduction with them, including the knowledge objectives and application objectives. Then go over the material in the Lecture Notes section. You should not have to devote more than fifteen minutes each week to this material.

Your participants will greatly appreciate your making available to them a Lecture Notes outline with all the blanks filled in. The answer key may be found at the end of the *Leader’s Guide* at ChangedintoHisImage.com. Post the outlines on a bulletin board or leave them on a table where anyone can refer to them throughout the thirteen weeks of your study together. If a participant misses an answer in the video session or in the teaching time, he can find the answer for himself.

This fill-in-the-blank time at the end of each week’s session is designed to give your group members an overview of the chapter ahead and to prepare them more effectively for their personal study throughout the week. Of course, if your class members are viewing the *Changed into His Image Video Series* as part of your class time or before coming to your class, they will have already filled in the blanks of the Lecture Notes, and you can spend more time together in group discussion.

Subsequent Weeks

After your first week together, you will not be spending time passing out materials and introducing the participants to the components of the study guide. Instead, once you have opened in prayer, you will begin a group discussion time. *Be sure to leave fifteen to twenty minutes at the end of each session to cover the Introduction and Lecture Notes for the following week.*

Small-Group Discussion

Small-group discussion is one of the most effective means for helping your group members think through the personal implications of a lesson. Remember the following guidelines as you facilitate group discussion:

1. Small-group discussion is most productive when there are ten or fewer participants and when the participants are arranged in a circle rather than in rows. Each participant can then make eye contact with everyone else in the group.
2. Begin discussion by asking group members to relate to the group one of the most significant statements they wrote down for any day (Day 1-5). Then ask them to explain briefly why it was important to them. Going around the group one person at a time, in the order in which they are seated, helps the participants to feel more at ease in giving public feedback. This is where some of the greatest benefits of the class time will come—as believers share with each other what God is doing in their lives (1 John 1:3). A participant hearing someone share the same idea or principle that God has taught him can be greatly encouraged that God is working in his life and that he is on the right track. You may even spend your entire discussion time on these significant statements.
3. If you have time left, you can then move on to the discussion questions, asking the participants whether there were any questions that were unclear or for which they couldn't think of an answer. If someone points out a certain question with which he had trouble, ask other group members what they put down for an answer and why.
4. Carefully guide the flow of the discussion. You should not dominate the conversation, but you must motivate group members by restating contributions made, expressing appreciation for all input, and asking follow-up questions. If the discussion gets sidetracked, you will need to refocus it tactfully. You may also need to keep dominant group members from monopolizing the discussion, or you may need to privately encourage quiet participants to become involved. Going around the group asking each one to state what God has spoken to him about or to read a significant statement as mentioned above is often enough to get some measure of response from everyone—including those who are naturally withdrawn.
5. Draw the discussion to a close by asking the group members to summarize the conclusions they have reached together. You could write the conclusions on a whiteboard. Stating clear conclusions helps participants feel that the discussion time was productive.
6. If your group exhibits a high level of involvement and interest, you will find that the Sunday school hour is not enough time to cover the material to everyone's satisfaction. Offer an extended time of discussion at another time during the week at your home or at the home of one of the group members. This will allow for a greater measure of discipleship of your group members.

Additional Ideas

Atmosphere

Try to cultivate a warm, informal atmosphere throughout each group session. This will motivate participants to be responsive when the time comes for them to participate or for you to challenge them. Unless it is desirable to have a clearly defined teacher/student relationship (as it might be in a Bible institute or college setting), do not view yourself as the authority in the group but as a co-learner and facilitator of your group's learning. Take time in private conversation to ask about what is happening in the lives of the participants and to develop a genuine concern for them.

Your small groups will be much more open if you have the men meet with the men and the women meet with the women. Your applications can be much more pointed and the interchange freer if group members feel they are interacting with people who face similar challenges.

Late Starters and Stragglers

You may have people come into your small-group class—especially if it is an adult Sunday school class—who have not had the benefit of the previous weeks of study. If they are going to be a permanent part of your class, they should be assured that they can begin right where the class is even though the chapters you have studied build one upon the other. They can “catch up” in the text if they would like to do so, but encourage them to start studying the same chapter the rest of the class is studying. There are enough stand-alone truths in each chapter that they can still benefit from the study.

If you have people who have been part of the group all along but are not doing the work, try to speak to them outside of the class context and ask them whether you can be of any help to them. Perhaps they aren’t good readers or don’t think they can do all the work. Encourage them to try at least to read the chapters and pick out two significant sentences even if they think they can do nothing more. Of course, if they have not read the material and then try to take part in the discussion by presenting merely their own opinions, they should be asked privately not to participate in the discussion if they have not studied what the rest of the class has studied.

SECTION FOUR: ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE FROM JOURNEYFORTH

Go to ChangedintoHisImage.com for additional resources including PowerPoint slides, sermons, and audio lectures of the thirteen sessions, and an answer key to the study guide.

STUDY UNIT ONE

UNDERSTANDING BIBLICAL CHANGE

INTRODUCTION

Most of us are aware of areas of our life that need to be changed. Maybe someone else has already pointed out an attitude or action in us that isn't pleasing to God; or perhaps no one has said anything yet, but we are painfully aware of our short-coming. Nonetheless, in the past when we have attempted to become a different kind of person, our efforts were haphazard and sporadic. Consequently, we saw no lasting results. Our frustration is very much like that of someone attempting to assemble a jigsaw puzzle without first seeing the picture on the box. By the time we finish the study this week, we should have in mind the "big picture" of biblical change.

Take time to look over the *knowledge* and *application* objectives for this week's study before proceeding with the rest of the study.

Knowledge objectives:

By the end of this week you should be able to—

1. Explain God's primary goal for wanting you to make changes in your life.
2. Summarize the Holy Spirit's role in making biblical change.
3. Explain the three parts of biblical change.
4. Define the term "discipleship" and explain the important part it plays in life's relationships.

Application objectives:

By the end of this week you should be responding to what you have learned by—

1. Identifying specific areas of your life that need biblical change.
2. Noticing times during your day when you can cooperate with God's plan to sanctify you.
3. Asking God to burden you for the needs of others around you who also need to make biblical change.

LECTURE NOTES

Fill in the blanks from a live lecture or video presentation or from your own reading in the text, *Changed into His Image*, as recommended in the assignments to follow.

Introduction

1. This study is about sanctification.
2. Sanctification, in the sense we are discussing in this study, is progressive. A person's likeness to Christ is not something that happens all at once.
3. In the tea bag illustration, the hot water didn't create the taste; it merely revealed, or drew out, what was already in the bag.

A. The Goal of Change

1. The result of the sanctification process is that the believer looks increasingly like Christ—the “grown-up Christian.”
2. Spiritually mature humanity is in essence Christlike humility—the humility of a servant.

B. The Person of Change

1. The Holy Spirit is not some mystical or cosmic impersonal influence or force. He is one of the three Persons of the Godhead.
2. We are changed by Him as we cooperate with His leading.
3. The Holy Spirit is the divine Leader calling attention through His convicting voice to the times when we are intent upon going our own way. It is leadership—away from sin and toward Christ’s likeness.
4. This leadership of the Spirit toward Christlikeness takes place as we obey Paul’s admonition in Ephesians 5:18 to “be filled with [controlled by] the Spirit.”

C. The Process of Change

1. Sanctification is the process whereby the Spirit of God takes the Word of God and changes us to become like the Son of God.
2. Complete the chart.

Our Personal Responsibility	Paul’s Instruction (Ephesians 4:22-24)	James’s Instruction (James 1:21-25)	The Holy Spirit’s Result
1. <u>Mortification</u> of the flesh	“put off [the ways of] the old man [i.e., the old unregenerate self]”	“lay apart [lit., put off] all filthiness”	The flesh is <u>restrained</u> through the Spirit’s enablement.
2. <u>Meditation</u> on the Word	“be renewed in the spirit of your mind”	“receive . . . the engrafted word”	The mind is <u>renewed</u> through the Spirit’s illumination.
3. <u>Manifestation</u> of Christlikeness	“put on [the ways of] the new man [i.e., the new self in Christ]”	“be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only”	Christ is <u>revealed</u> through the Spirit’s fruit.

D. Spiritual Parenting

1. While this study is about *sanctification*, it is also about discipleship.
2. Biblical discipleship is a certain kind of relationship between two believers with a specific goal in mind.
3. Discipleship is helping another believer make biblical change toward Christlikeness—helping others in the sanctification process.

E. The Centrality of Discipleship

1. Parenting is discipleship.
2. Edification in the local church is discipleship.
3. Christian education is discipleship.
4. Counseling is discipleship.
5. Management in Christian work is discipleship.

F. Your Role in Discipleship

1. You must have a working knowledge of the doctrine of sanctification.
2. You must be practicing it in your own life.

CONCLUSION

The goal of this study is to give us a thoroughly biblical world-view of the Christian life, of man, and of his relationship with God—the “big picture” on the puzzle box. When man does not understand God’s ways and is not properly related to God, everything is chaos. We will not be able to lead others out of that self-centered chaos unless we understand life from God’s perspective, model the proper relationship with God ourselves, and know how to lead others to the change that will bring them back to a right relationship with God. There is no true biblical change toward Christlikeness unless life and its problems are handled God’s way.

STUDY UNIT TWO

RECOGNIZING THE EVIL WITHIN

INTRODUCTION

In the last study unit we were given a glimpse of the “big picture” of biblical change. We likened it to seeing the picture on the front of the jigsaw puzzle box. Part of that “big picture” is the right view of man. Some people, unfortunately, have a picture of man that is wrong. To have the wrong picture on the front of the jigsaw puzzle box is as frustrating as having no picture at all. We will see this week the true picture of man as God gives it to us in His Word and will see what happens when people have the wrong picture.

Take time to look over the *knowledge* and *application* objectives for this week’s study before proceeding with the rest of the study.

Knowledge objectives:

By the end of the week you should be able to—

1. Explain how the wrong view of man leads to the wrong diagnosis of man’s problems in the family, in counseling, in Christian education, in the local church, and in management in Christian work.
2. Explain what is wrong with man and why trusting the heart of man is so treacherous.
3. Understand why submission to the authority God has placed in your life is so crucial to your spiritual success.

Application objectives:

By the end of this week you should be responding to what you have learned by—

1. Recognizing areas of your life where sin’s destruction is already making headway and where you are prone to raise a clenched fist at God and demand your own way.
2. Repenting of any self-confidence and self-reliance you tend to have.
3. Turning to God in dependence to keep you from trusting in your own heart.

LECTURE NOTES

Fill in the blanks from a live lecture or video presentation or from your own reading in the text, *Changed into His Image*, as recommended in the assignments to follow.

Introduction

1. Even after salvation we still have an indwelling principle of sin in us that corrupts every part of us.
2. Something is desperately wrong with man.
3. The Bible’s message not only reveals the extent of man’s wickedness but also offers man his only hope—redemption.

A. Getting the View of Man Right

1. We are all pretty bad people who do right only by the grace of God.
2. If the view of man isn't right, we end up with
 - a. Misdiagnosis in parenting.
 - b. Misdiagnosis in counseling.
 - c. Misdiagnosis in the local church.
 - d. Misdiagnosis in Christian education.
3. More misdiagnosis examples:
 - a. "I can't believe I did that!"
 - b. "I can't believe anyone would do that!"
 - c. "I trust my kids. They would never do something like that!"
 - d. "I can't believe God would damn anyone to hell!"
 - e. "The Devil must really be fighting me!"

B. The Nature of Our Nature

1. The flesh defies God.
2. The flesh defiles man.
3. The flesh deceives man.
4. The flesh destroys man.

The toxicity of this heart is so potent that when God wants to judge a man, all He has to do is turn that man over to his own heart (Romans 1).

CONCLUSION

The picture is bleak. If there were no help from God, knowledge of this condition would lead only to despair. It ought to lead us instead to repentance and dependence. We will look more specifically in the next study unit at how that sinful heart manifests itself in so many different ways in all of us.

STUDY UNIT THREE

IDENTIFYING YOUR OWN WAY

INTRODUCTION

By now we should have a pretty good grasp of the wickedness of the heart of man. Since that heart is no longer being restrained by most individuals, institutions, and society in general, it is no wonder that our world is wallowing in the depths of perversion and violence. Before we take a look in Study Unit 5 at the provisions God has given us for restraining that heart, we want to take a more personalized look at the human heart to help us discover some of the customized ways of sinning that are common to our own heart. Not all of us want the same things, nor are we all tempted by the same lusts. Though the temptations we face are common to man, they appear in different combinations in each of us. To effectively war against the sinful tendencies of our heart, we must learn to “identify our own way.”

Take time to look over the *knowledge* and *application* objectives for this week’s study before proceeding with the rest of the study.

Knowledge objectives:

By the end of this week you should be able to—

1. Explain why the rebellion of our own way manifests itself differently in each of us.
2. Recognize different kinds of rebel ways (e.g., assertive, cooperative, passive) evidenced in your own life and in the lives of those with whom you live and to whom you minister.
3. Know why there is hope for any of us who wish to make biblical change.

Application objectives:

By the end of this week you should be responding to what you have learned by—

1. Being much more cautious of your own actions and reactions throughout the day since you are more aware of how your *own way* manifests itself under “hot water” conditions.
2. Encouraging others who have lost hope about making biblical change.
3. Asking God to increase your awareness of your rebel ways, repenting of their manifestations, and depending upon Him to help you change those ways.

LECTURE NOTES

Fill in the blanks from a live lecture or video presentation or from your own reading in the text, *Changed into His Image*, as recommended in the assignments to follow.

Introduction

1. We must now look at the nature of our *nurture* _____.
2. Because of our ability to *learn to lust* in unique combinations, we could say we have “*designer* _____ *lusts* _____.”

A. The Masks of Rebellion

1. The assertive rebel says, “I won’t obey. Nobody is going to tell me what to do.”
2. The cooperative rebel says, “I will obey since it gets me what I want.” This mask has two variations.
 - a. One type of cooperative rebel is compliant, at best.
 - b. Another type of cooperative rebel appears to be driven by a sense of duty: as a child he is often called a “really good kid.”
3. The passive rebel shows up in three variations.
 - a. “I can’t obey.” (Example of Perry)
 - b. “I forgot to obey.” (Example of Janet)
 - c. “I didn’t know to obey.” (Example of Josh)

B. The Reason for Hope

1. The Scriptures teach us that God has a certain kind of change in mind for all of us.
 - I Corinthians 6:11: “And such were some of you.”
2. We can begin to change by becoming more accustomed to looking beyond our own behavior and emotions and asking ourselves, “What is the ruling lust in my heart right now that is driving this behavior or emotion?”

C. A Case in Point: Craig, Frank, and Susan

CONCLUSION

Not a Pretty Sight

A good look at our heart is often pretty gruesome. After examining our heart we may think, “There’s no hope for me! It looks as though everything I do comes from the wrong motives and desires.” There is hope, however. God doesn’t show us this picture of ourselves without offering His own wonderful remedy. We will begin to look at that plan in the next chapter, Getting in Your Place.

STUDY UNIT FOUR

GETTING IN YOUR PLACE

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter of *Changed into His Image*, we read on page 58 a quotation by John Owen decrying the fact that most believers do not take the time to know themselves well. He said, “They never gain a realistic view of themselves. Ineffective lives and scandal grow like branches out of this root of self-ignorance. How few truly seek to know themselves, or possess the courage to do so.”¹ Chapters 2 and 3 of the text and the corresponding study units in this study guide have attempted to help us remove that self-ignorance and replace it with God’s view of our heart.

This study unit will take that look at our heart one step further. It will lay out for us the folly of trusting ourselves for anything and will show us the most basic of all Christlike virtues—humility. We will find out what godly humility looks like and why it ought to become the norm for every believer.

Take time to look over the *knowledge* and *application* objectives for this week’s study before proceeding with the rest of the study.

Knowledge objectives:

By the end of this week you should be able to—

1. Explain why a continual sense of dependence characterizes the Christlike believer.
2. Explain why humility is the hallmark of the believer’s sense of dependence upon God.
3. Identify several ways God humbles His children.

Application objectives:

By the end of this week you should be responding to what you have learned by—

1. Being able to define “biblical humility.”
2. Committing yourself to letting God teach you the dependency of your “creatureliness” so that you will get in your place under God’s headship and stay in your place.
3. More quickly recognizing when God is trying to teach you Christlike dependence and humility through the various circumstances in your life.

LECTURE NOTES

Fill in the blanks from a live lecture or video presentation or from your own reading in the text, *Changed into His Image*, as recommended in the assignments to follow.

A. Dependent by Design

1. God made man dependent. Adam was not made autonomous.

¹ Owen, *Sin*, 132.

2. Any attempt to make man a creature who can live independently from God is doomed to failure. Man can no more joyfully and peacefully live independently from God than he can fly by flapping his hands.
3. Any change that will ultimately help a man must move him away from autonomy (self-sufficiency) and must move him toward dependence upon his Creator.
4. Creation inherently demands dependency. (Illustration: A Boy and a Bike)
5. The account of Nebuchadnezzar powerfully illustrates the destructive nature of man's natural bent toward self-sufficiency.

B. Humility—the Hallmark of the Dependent Creature

1. Andrew Murray said, "Humility is simply [man's] acknowledging the truth of his position as man and yielding to God His place."²
2. No man who has been humbled before God is self-justifying, self-protective, or self-confident.

C. Live the Christian Life the Same Way You Got It

1. Humility is not only the start of the Christian life; it is the start of everything godly in the Christian life.
2. Being "clothed with humility" is a concept that most of us very likely have never considered.
3. Our aversion to the whole idea of humility is testimony of the poverty of our understanding of God's ways.

D. How Does God Humble Us?

1. He can send us a problem we can't handle to expose our helplessness.
2. He can give us a command we won't obey to expose our self-centeredness.
3. He can arrange an outcome we can't control to expose our sinfulness.
4. He can show us a God we can't comprehend to expose our finiteness.

CONCLUSION

A man's potential for God lies not in his ability, nor in his opportunity, but in his humility before God.

² Andrew Murray, *Humility* (Springdale, Pa.: Whitaker House, 1982), 12.

STUDY UNIT FIVE

MORTIFYING YOUR FLESH

INTRODUCTION

What we have seen so far about the heart of man has not been at all flattering. God in His Word has painted a picture of man that would naturally lead everyone to despair. *But* He has also painted a wonderful picture of Christ's remedy for man. So many Christians lead unhappy, unsatisfied, and restless lives because they are either ignorant of or disobedient to God's remedy for indwelling sin—mortification. In this unit we will look at this powerful yet neglected teaching of the Christian walk and warfare.

Take time to look over the *knowledge* and *application* objectives for this week's study before proceeding with the rest of the study.

Knowledge objectives:

By the end of this week you should be able to—

1. Explain the meaning of the three steps of mortification in Romans 6—know, reckon, and yield—and how our identification with Christ at the time of salvation makes these steps all possible for every believer.
2. Recognize the importance of refusing to obey or to feed the flesh.
3. Understand why God-dependent self-denial is crucial to flesh-free living.

Application objectives:

By the end of this week you should be responding to what you have learned by—

1. Using the teachings of Romans 6—knowing, reckoning, and yielding—in your daily fight against the power of the fleshly nature within you.
2. Examining your life for areas where you are feeding the flesh and thus sabotaging your effectiveness in resisting the pull of the flesh.
3. Appreciating the Bible's teaching about the importance of self-denial instead of despising or resisting it.

LECTURE NOTES

Fill in the blanks from a live lecture or video presentation or from your own reading in the text, *Changed into His Image*, as recommended in the assignments to follow.

Introduction—To “mortify a motorcycle” you must

1. Let up on the throttle to cut down on the amount of fuel to the engine.
2. Apply the brakes to reduce forward motion.
3. Disengage the clutch to prohibit the engine's power from driving the rear wheel.

These mechanical operations illustrate three spiritual truths from Romans 6, which teaches that—

A. We Have to Know Some Things

1. Romans 6 teaches us that because of Christ's death and Resurrection, we have been "made free from sin" (6:22). We no longer *have* to obey its pull to go our *own way*.
2. Paul says in Romans 6:3 that "so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death."
3. Before our identification with Christ in this way, we, in these earthly bodies, were required to serve the flesh. Paul tells us, however, that the control of that indwelling sin over us has been destroyed or "nullified." We now have a choice! We do not have to obey the flesh.
4. Paul says, "This is something you need to know!"

B. We Have to Reckon Some Things

1. We "reckon" things every day. When we drive along the highway, we see a speed limit sign that says "55 miles per hour." We are expected to "reckon" or consider that sign to be binding for us.
2. We may feel as though we have to give in, but we need to know better because God said to "reckon [ourselves] to be dead *indeed* unto sin" (6:11).

C. We Have to Yield Some Things

1. Don't obey the flesh! We would like to think that in this or that sin we have been defeated. The humbling reality is that we have been disobedient.
2. Though the Christian life isn't easy, it isn't complicated.
3. Paul is clear—the flesh can be denied, and it must be denied.
4. Illustration: A Lesson from Kirk
5. The picture here is clear for us. If we wish to restrain the flesh as God commands, we are foolish to feed it.
6. Since the flesh is always with us, self-denial is always needed because the danger is always present.

CONCLUSION

Back to Mortifying

Cut the fuel to the engine, disengage the clutch, and apply the brakes. Stop the motorcycle!

STUDY UNIT SIX

GETTING IN TOUCH WITH REALITY

INTRODUCTION

Although we have spent much time in the past several study units examining the *own way* tendency of indwelling sin and seeing how the flesh manifests itself in different ways in all of us, we must realize that growing in the Christian life involves more than merely restraining our flesh—important as that is. The Christian life isn't primarily about things we do or don't do. It is about a personal relationship with our Creator and Redeemer—the God of heaven. Most people—even Christians—think very little about God, which is why they are often clueless about how to handle life and its challenges. They are “out of touch” with the most important reality of all time—God! Christian growth means learning who God is and allowing Him to change us by His Spirit as we are exposed to His nature in the Word of God. Study this chapter in the text carefully—it is the most important chapter of the entire book! In it we will learn how to “get in touch” with God—the ultimate Reality.

Take time to look over the *knowledge* and *application* objectives for this week's study before proceeding with the rest of the study.

Knowledge objectives:

By the end of this week you should be able to—

1. Recognize why, without God, it is impossible to understand the world and your place in it.
2. Understand the dynamics of building a relationship with God Himself.

Application objectives:

By the end of this week you should be responding to what you have learned by—

1. Recognizing the desire for God that He has placed within you if you are His child.
2. Seeking God wholeheartedly and personally in response to that desire.
3. Spending time interacting with God, as the coach described it to Phil in the text.

LECTURE NOTES

Fill in the blanks from a live lecture or video presentation or from your own reading in the text, *Changed into His Image*, as recommended in the assignments to follow.

Introduction

The world says and, sadly, many Christians say that Bible solutions do not work in the “real” world. The irony of their complaint is that the Bible *alone* gives the only true picture of the “real” world. Reality (i.e., the truth) is that there is a God in heaven and what He says matters. This is the *real world*, and only a believer walking in fellowship with God can understand it. Everyone else in the world is experiencing a “break with reality.”

Illustration: An Alien in Times Square

A. More Than Relief from Problems

1. Christianity is primarily a relationship with the Creator, not merely a means to achieve creature comfort.
2. God created man to be most satisfied, most joyful, and most useful when there is an ongoing, dependent, life-giving personal relationship with his Creator.

B. More Than Being on Speaking Terms

1. Fellowship with God is possible when there is “nothing between my soul and the Savior,” as the hymn writer put it; but there must also be much going on between my soul and the Savior.
2. Illustration: Something Is Going On Between Them!

C. Knowing God Requires That We Have a Desire for God

1. God has created in man the desire for Himself and has offered Himself as the object of man’s desire.
2. God is glorified when man takes his place of joyful, grateful dependence because then God is exalted to His place as the only worthy, all-sufficient object of that dependence.
3. Any attempt to solve the problems of life apart from a dependent relationship with God is both arrogant and, in the long run, ineffective.

D. Knowing God Requires That We Seek Him

1. The search for God must be a passionate search. Apathy toward God is the result of being passionate toward something or someone else.
2. The search for God must be a search for a Person.
 - a. Illustration: Phil’s Conversation with His Coach
 - b. Illustration: A Letter to John

CONCLUSION

Living in the Real World

Renewing the mind starts right here—with God.

STUDY UNIT SEVEN

BECOMING LIKE CHRIST

INTRODUCTION

Our study this week will begin to explore the specific process whereby we are changed by the Spirit of God into the image of Christ. We saw last week that God must draw a man to Himself and that the man must respond with a wholehearted pursuit of God. God must be treated personally and will Himself respond personally to the searching believer. Continued exposure to God Himself through the Word will have its own powerful effect upon a believer's life, as we shall see. If we have asked God to forgive any known sin in our heart and have forsaken any personal desires that quench our desire for God, we are ready to take some exciting steps spiritually as God shows us Himself in His Word. The result will be biblical change into His image.

Take time to look over the *knowledge* and *application* objectives for this week's study before proceeding with the rest of the study.

Knowledge objectives:

By the end of this week you should be able to—

1. Explain the importance and effects of the Bible doctrine of illumination in Christian growth.
2. Understand the importance and effects of exposure to God and His attributes in the Word.
3. Recognize the differences between communicable and noncommunicable attributes of God and the part each attribute plays in Christian growth.

Application objectives:

By the end of this week you should be responding to what you have learned by—

1. Relying upon God to illuminate your mind when you read the Scriptures.
2. Looking for God and His attributes in the Word as you study it daily.
3. Realizing that the revival we believers desire is the result of Spirit-sent illumination.
4. Demonstrating biblical change into Christlikeness as you meditate upon God and His attributes.

LECTURE NOTES

Fill in the blanks from a live lecture or video presentation or from your own reading in the text, *Changed into His Image*, as recommended in the assignments to follow.

Introduction

We have learned that in order for us to have a relationship with God, He must take the initiative to draw us to Himself. We must then respond by taking the time to find out what He is like in His Word, the Bible. None of us can “behold” God in His Word, however, unless He illuminates us by His Spirit, revealing Himself to us. Unless we are beholding God in this way, there will be no lasting change into Christlikeness.

A. More About God's Attributes

1. A noncommunicable attribute is one that no creature of God can "get."
2. Being Christlike means acquiring His communicable attributes—those generally known as the "fruit of the Spirit."

B. Changed by His Glory

1. God's glory is the manifestation of His many-splendored excellencies (attributes).
2. In II Corinthians 3:18, Paul is saying that no one who is exposed to the glories (attributes) of God as they are revealed by God's Spirit through the Scriptures will remain the same.

C. Illumination: When God Turns on the Light

1. We must not think that reading the Bible alone changes a man. God's Spirit must personally show the realities of God to that man as he ponders the Scriptures. This divine work is called "illumination."
2. Illustration: Tanned by the Sun

D. Evidences of Exposure to God

1. Illuminated truth moves the believer intellectually. The believer sees afresh the validity of the truth.
2. Illuminated truth moves the believer emotionally. The believer sees the beauty of the truth.
3. Illuminated truth moves the believer volitionally. The believer is shown the urgency and the responsibility of the truth.

E. This is Revival!

Illustration of gathering logs of truth in the forest of God's Word

CONCLUSION

What Is Your View of God?

If our view of God is not right, nothing can ultimately be right in our lives. To live in the *real world*, God must be central in our thoughts. We must embrace Paul's perspective of God's role in all of this (see Colossians 1:16-18).

STUDY UNIT EIGHT

SEARCHING FOR WISDOM

INTRODUCTION

We learned in Chapter 1 that sanctification—our growth into Christlikeness—is a joint venture with God. We are changed by God Himself as we are exposed to His glory, but He has placed upon us certain responsibilities in that divine process. Jesus said that a man could become wise (i.e., have a renewed mind) by “hearing and doing” and thereby defined our basic responsibilities in this process of change. These two master disciplines of wisdom will be the basis of our study in this chapter and the next since becoming wise and becoming Christlike are synonymous. Many of the “nuts and bolts” of spiritual growth will fall into place in these two chapters as we complete our study of Christian growth.

Take time to look over the *knowledge* and *application* objectives for this week’s study before proceeding with the rest of the study.

Knowledge objectives:

By the end of this week you should be able to—

1. Define “wisdom” and be able to distinguish between the “helicopter view” and the “dashboard view.”
2. Explain what will be judged at the Judgment Seat of Christ.
3. State the two basic disciplines contained within the master discipline of hearing.
4. Describe biblical meditation.

Application objectives:

By the end of this week you should be responding to what you have learned by—

1. Pursuing wisdom (Prov. 2:1-9).
2. Removing distractions that keep you from giving attention to God.
3. Committing yourself to daily meditation on the Word so that you are not a “forgetful hearer.”

LECTURE NOTES

Fill in the blanks from a live lecture or video presentation or from your own reading in the text, *Changed into His Image*, as recommended in the assignments to follow.

Introduction

Our study in this session and the one to follow is based on Jesus’ words in Matthew 7:24: “Therefore whosoever *heareth* these sayings of mine, and *doeth* them, I will liken him unto a *wise* man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.” Jesus here describes for us how we too can be wise—by hearing and doing.

A. What Is Wisdom?

1. The “helicopter view” versus the “dashboard view”
2. Wisdom is not having God’s perspective of the whole matter before us; it is having God’s perspective about what next response will honor Him while keeping us still usable to Him.
3. The Judgment Seat of Christ will be an examination of our usefulness or fruitfulness for God.

B. The Master Discipline of Hearing

1. The indifferent hearer
2. The impulsive hearer
3. The infested hearer
4. The ideal hearer

C. The Basic Discipline of Attention

1. Adam was not created autonomous. He was designed to listen to someone for direction in life.
2. If we are to move out of the “foolishness” of our own heart and develop a renewed mind, we must make it a habit of life, a discipline, to listen to God rather than to our own heart.

D. The Basic Discipline of Meditation

1. Much of the motivation to *remember* the words of God is tied to the kind of relationship we have with Him.
2. In James 1:21-25 the word “looketh” (Greek *parakupto*) means “to bend over (to see something better).”

CONCLUSION

How to Remember Not to Forget

1. We are to continue peering intently into the Word as long as it takes to make sure we do not forget what we have heard.
2. We are to continue peering intently into the Word as long as it takes to actually begin to show a difference in our lifestyle and practice.

STUDY UNIT NINE

WALKING IN WISDOM

INTRODUCTION

We move now from the master discipline of hearing to its twin discipline of doing. Remember that the practice of these two disciplines is the foundation of wisdom—the renewed mind. This week we shall study the two basic disciplines of doing—obedience and endurance—and learn how we are enabled to obey and endure by the power of the Holy Spirit. We shall also see how hearing and doing blend together to form the portrait of the “grown-up” Christian—a Christlike servant.

Take time to look over the *knowledge* and *application* objectives for this week’s study before proceeding with the rest of the study.

Knowledge objectives:

By the end of this week you should be able to—

1. Explain the role of the Holy Spirit in our obedience to God.
2. Understand that biblical obedience is not compliance with a rule but a submissive response to the Person of the Holy Spirit who reveals God’s will to us through the Word.
3. Understand that biblical endurance is the result of a relationship with God and not the determination of a person who has decided he won’t quit or won’t give in to something.
4. Explain how the master disciplines of hearing and doing are the hallmarks of grown-up Christianity.

Application objectives:

By the end of this week you should be responding to what you have learned by—

1. Becoming increasingly sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s conviction in your life as He seeks to lead you to do right.
2. Turning to God continually for help to obey and endure in the things you know are His will.
3. Reflecting Christ to others around you by evidencing the characteristics of biblical servanthood.

LECTURE NOTES

Fill in the blanks from a live lecture or video presentation or from your own reading in the text, *Changed into His Image*, as recommended in the assignments to follow.

Introduction

1. Doing versus being
2. Just as the Holy Spirit is the key player in the hearing aspect of gaining the Christlike wisdom of a renewed mind, He is also central to the doing aspect.
3. The divine help in creating a desire and giving us power to please God is called grace.

A. The Basic Discipline of Obedience

1. Illustration: John's battle with lying
2. Biblical obedience is not just compliance to some abstract law or rule. It is the submissive response to the Person of the Holy Spirit, who has revealed the will of God to us through His Word.
3. A love relationship is at the heart of our obedience. "We will always please the one we love the most."¹

B. The Basic Discipline of Endurance

1. Endurance is continued obedience to God even under pressure.
2. Christlike endurance is not the stubborn self-will of a person who refuses to give in because he believes he is right. It is the absolute submission to the One who loved us most.

C. Grown-up Christianity

1. Servanthood is grown-up Christianity.
2. First-century slaves were responsive to the needs of others. Our Lord taught that those most exalted in His scheme of events had an attitude of otherness.
3. First-century slaves were responsive to the will of another.
 - a. The spirit of our age preaches that if you do not like the will of your master, it is all right to ignore or defy it. Nothing is more un-Christlike!
 - b. Christlikeness will be evidenced in doing good for others; but just as important, it is evidenced by submission to authority.

CONCLUSION

1. These two issues—being responsive to the needs of others and being responsive to the will of our masters—are the litmus tests of Christlikeness.
2. We will become living advertisements of Christlikeness, true servants, when we have a renewed mind that is hearing and doing the will of the Father.

¹ Ken Collier, THE WILDS Christian Association. Used by permission.

STUDY UNIT TEN

BEING A GOD-LOVING EXAMPLE

INTRODUCTION

We have been learning in the past nine chapters how we can restrain the flesh and renew our mind through the power of the Holy Spirit. The result of this work in us will be a *Christlike character within us*. The remainder of this study will focus on how we can have a *Christlike influence on others* as a result. We will look to Moses' mandate to the spiritual leaders of Israel (Deut. 6:5-7, 12) for the direction we need in order to have a spiritual impact upon those we lead. There Moses charged them to be *God-loving examples*, *Word-filled teachers*, and *ministry-minded overseers*. In this week's study we will examine what it means to be a God-loving example to those around us.

Take time to look over the *knowledge* and *application* objectives for this week's study before proceeding with the rest of the study.

Knowledge objectives:

By the end of this week you should be able to—

1. Explain how to make a difference as a servant-leader in the lives of others.
2. Understand how to test your real priorities in life.
3. Recognize the extravagance in the life of a lover of God.

Application objectives:

By the end of this week you should be responding to what you have learned by—

1. Repenting of other "loves" that have taken priority over wholehearted love for God.
2. Seeking ways to demonstrate extravagant love to God.
3. Asking God to make you an example to others of wholehearted, God-loving devotion.

LECTURE NOTES

Fill in the blanks from a live lecture or video presentation or from your own reading in the text, *Changed into His Image*, as recommended in the assignments to follow.

Introduction

1. How to Make a Difference

The Principle of Influence

You have to be different to make a difference.
You cannot change anything by adding more of the same.

2. Loving God with All Your Heart

- a. "What you love and what you hate reveal what you are."¹
- 1) Our *anxieties* reveal our priorities.
 - 2) Our *preoccupations* reveal our priorities.
 - 3) Our *anger* reveals our priorities.
- b. No one is ever apathetic! Every man is passionate about something.
- c. A God-exhilarated lover, like all true lovers, is extravagant.

A. Mary's Extravagant Gift

B. Mary's Extravagant Attention

C. David's Extravagant Praise

D. Paul's Extravagant Service

E. The Extravagance of Our God

1. "We are nothing if we are not in earnest about our faith, and if our wills and inclinations are not intensely exercised. The religious life contains things too great for us to be lukewarm."²
2. If we are not known to be God-loving believers by our obvious extravagance for the Lover of our soul, why should those who follow us bother with Him either?

CONCLUSION

1. Those who have great impact for God are those who have a great passion for Him fueled by meditation upon His Word.
2. All of us are masters at meditation. We all are very skilled at taking one thought and mulling it over and over in our mind. We do it every time we experience a temptation of any sort.
3. The next generation must be tempted with God. People must see by our passionate, God-loving lives that He is good, that He is delightful, and that He is desirable to make one wise.

¹ Dr. Bob Jones Sr., *Word of Truth* (radio broadcast), number 337 (ca. 1952).

² Jonathan Edwards, *Religious Affections*, ed. James M. Houston (Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers, 1996), 8.

STUDY UNIT ELEVEN

BEING A WORD-FILLED TEACHER

INTRODUCTION

Moses told Israel's leaders not only to be God-loving examples—"thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart" (Deut. 6:5)—but also to be Word-filled teachers—"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children" (Deut. 6:6-7). There is a dearth of doctrinally sound teaching and preaching today—even in some Fundamentalist churches; consequently, there is a famine of the Word in many of today's Christian homes. The result is an anemic Christianity that has little resistance to the world and little impact upon the world for the gospel. As Moses warned, those who ignore "these words" will soon "forget the Lord" (Deut. 6:12). Sadly, that is often the case today—God's people and their children have little knowledge of God and, therefore, little likeness to Him. How, then, can we become Word-filled teachers? Our study this week will get us started.

Take time to look over the *knowledge* and *application* objectives for this week's study before proceeding with the rest of the study.

Knowledge objectives:

By the end of this week you should be able to—

1. Explain the four key functions of the Word as given by Paul in II Timothy 3:16-17.
2. Understand how to use the Word to help someone who is hurting.
3. Recognize the element of unbelief that underlies disobedience to God.

Application objectives:

By the end of this week you should be responding to what you have learned by—

1. Experiencing an increased appreciation and love for the Word of our God.
2. Setting aside regular time each week for in-depth study of the Word of God for yourself.
3. Demonstrating a greater confidence that God's Word has the answers to the problems of living and turning away from competing man-made systems of self-help.

LECTURE NOTES

Fill in the blanks from a live lecture or video presentation or from your own reading in the text, *Changed into His Image*, as recommended in the assignments to follow.

Introduction

The only antidote to the dangerous days ("perilous times") of II Timothy 3:1 is the knowledge of and continuation in the Word of God. II Timothy 3:16-17 instructs us in the actual use of the Scriptures as we help someone grow.

A. The Scriptures Teach Us What Is Right

1. The Scriptures are inspired.
2. The Scriptures are infallible.
3. The Scriptures are authoritative.
 - a. To go to sources that do not point you to the God of the Scriptures for help to solve the problems of living is to rely upon a competing source of information for help.
 - b. Example: How to Handle Hurt
When the apostles wrote to hurting people, the thrust of their writings was this: allow God to use these times of great pain to refine your soul and to prepare you for the day when you will stand before your Lord.

B. The Scriptures Teach Us What Is Wrong

1. When addressing someone who is wrong in doctrine or in practice, perhaps the most important element in confronting is the necessity of prayerful self-examination before dealing with the sins of others.
2. Don't just rebuke someone for his outward sin. Be aware of how that sin is a manifestation of a heart of unbelief—God's greatest concern for His people.

C. The Scriptures Teach Us How to Make the Wrong Right

1. The first part of making any offense right with God or others is confession.
2. The second part of correction, according to Proverbs 28:13, is forsaking.

D. The Scriptures Teach Us How to Keep It Right

1. The word for “instruction” is the Greek word *paideia*, which can be translated “child training.”
2. The disciple-maker must bring to bear all the instruction, accountability, and discipline necessary to see that his disciple is growing in his skill of right living—righteousness.

CONCLUSION

Are we seriously studying the Word and doctrinally sound books about the Word in order to become Word-filled teachers?

STUDY UNIT TWELVE

BEING A MINISTRY-MINDED OVERSEER

INTRODUCTION

Moses completed his charge to Israel's parents in Deuteronomy 6 with an admonition to "talk of [these words] when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up" (Deut. 6:7). As they were daily interacting with their children, Israel's parents were to be looking for ways to saturate the lives of the next generation with the ways and the words of the living God. In short, they were to be ministry-minded overseers—a role not just for parents within a family. It is the mindset that every believer is to have as he fulfills God's mandate for him to be leading others spiritually. This week we will examine together the components of being a spiritual parent to others—whether they are the children in our own household or other believers within the household of faith.

Take time to look over the *knowledge* and *application* objectives for this week's study before proceeding with the rest of the study.

Knowledge objectives:

By the end of this week you should be able to—

1. Recognize how death to self is the atomic-level component of Christianity.
2. Understand that each of us is called to spiritually parent others.
3. Explain the main discipleship emphasis illustrated in each of the three parenting periods: the preschool years, the school-age years, and the teen years.

Application objectives:

By the end of this week you should be responding to what you have learned by—

1. Understanding that to be a disciple of Christ you cannot have your own way. Instead you must be practicing God-dependent self-denial.
2. Embracing a life of law and order so that you can become a productive disciple of Christ.
3. Being willing for God to use you as a servant-leader in the lives of others.
4. Using every day to get ready for "the biggest day" of your life when you will stand before Jesus Christ to give an account of how useful you were to Him.

LECTURE NOTES

Fill in the blanks from a live lecture or video presentation or from your own reading in the text, *Changed into His Image*, as recommended in the assignments to follow.

Introduction

1. God provides the perfect picture of oversight in spiritual matters—parenting.
2. Christianity has an atomic-level component that lies at the heart of everything godly. That component is death.

A. The Preschool Years—The Rebel Broken

1. In the first step of any discipleship effort, the disciple must be taught the meaning of self-denial: you cannot have your own way.
2. The self-denial that must become a regular practice of life must eventually become a God-dependent self-denial.
3. This lesson of self-denying submission to God and other authorities is the primary lesson of “spiritual kindergarten.”
4. “Be not weary in well doing” (II Thess. 3:13).

B. The School-Age Years—The Disciple Trained

1. The flesh when manifesting itself will produce chaos.
2. Law and order are foundational principles of civilized and productive people.
3. Order in our lives does not make us godly; rather, it makes us useful to God.
4. The *empowerment* for godly living comes from walking in the Spirit.
5. The *motivation* for denying self is found in the first and second great commands—demonstrating love for God and our neighbor.
6. A person whose life is not useful to the Lord at the moment has a great need for some structure and order so that his life does not continue to spiral out of control and into greater chaos.
7. How well do you smell smoke?

C. The Teen Years—The Servant Deployed

1. Ideally, a Christian teen who has been biblically discipled by God-loving, Word-filled, ministry-minded parents should be consistently living the applications of God-dependent self-denial by this time of his life.
2. A teen should be increasingly active in service at school and church, influencing others for Christ—becoming a servant-leader.

CONCLUSION

We are getting them ready for the biggest day of their lives.

STUDY UNIT THIRTEEN

LABORING TOGETHER WITH GOD

INTRODUCTION

As we seek to become God-loving, Word-filled, ministry-minded disciple-makers, how do we know what is *our* part and what is *His* part in this endeavor? Our wonderfully sufficient God has not left us without definitive answers to that question. We can clearly see God’s plan for us this week through the biblical analogy of farming. We will look at three kinds of farmers—two extremes to avoid because of their dependence upon the flesh and one to imitate because of his God-dependent self-denial.

Take time to look over the *knowledge* and *application* objectives for this week’s study before proceeding with the rest of the study.

Knowledge objectives:

By the end of this week you should be able to—

1. Recognize how the characteristics of the fleshly, Gambling Farmer are far too common in our culture—perhaps even in our own lives.
2. Understand that the danger of the legalistic, Controlling Farmer is not his discipline but his fleshly self-dependence.
3. Identify the God-dependent self-denial of the Trusting Farmer that makes him useful to God.

Application objectives:

By the end of this week you should be responding to what you have learned by—

1. Identifying areas of fleshly self-indulgence where you, like the Gambling Farmer, are not useful to God because of your lack of Spirit-filled discipline.
2. Turning from areas of fleshly control where you are attempting to make life work by “being good without God.”
3. Maintaining a faithful, trusting relationship with God that brings great joy to both you and God.

LECTURE NOTES

Fill in the blanks from a live lecture or video presentation or from your own reading in the text, *Changed into His Image*, as recommended in the assignments to follow.

Undisciplined Farmer	Disciplined Farmer	
The <u> <i>Gambling</i> </u> Farmer	The <u> <i>Controlling</i> </u> Farmer	The <u> <i>Trusting</i> </u> Farmer
Pleases <u> <i>Self</i> </u>		Pleases <u> <i>God</i> </u>

A. The Gambling Farmer

1. This farmer ignores the laws of nature and gambles on the outcome.
2. The book of Proverbs presents such a man—the sluggard—and even likens him to a lazy farmer.
3. The lazy farmer has a “lottery mentality” that ignores God’s normal ways of provision through sowing and reaping.
4. He is seldom helped by a “second chance” since he will waste another chance until he has a different kind of heart.
5. The most *merciful* thing God can do is to chasten us—though it is painful at the time—in order to deliver us from the miserable end of our self-indulgent living.

B. The Controlling Farmer

1. This farmer doesn’t ignore the laws of nature. Instead, he keeps the laws of nature—religiously.
2. He is so diligent he can become quite driven and controlling—even perfectionistic—about his labor.
3. As he grows in his lust for control, we can characterize his life by one word—intense.
4. He is a legalist because he does what is right—at least what is right in his own eyes—in order to insure and control the outcome that he has decided he must have.
5. Pleasing self is at the heart of legalism just as it is at the heart of slothfulness.

C. The Trusting Farmer

1. He, like the Controlling Farmer, keeps the laws of nature, but for an entirely different and higher motive. He keeps them, not to insure the results he wants but *because the Father he loves has given them*.
2. The danger is that he can gradually become somewhat dependent upon his own disciplined habits to keep up his image of godliness.
3. The most outstanding characteristic of this man is not the bumper crop of his fields but the fruit of God’s Spirit that is so evident in his life—no matter what the yield of his field.

EPILOGUE