



EYN GOSPEL TEAM

BIBLE STUDY OUTLINE
(6th EDITION)

THEME:
**ROOTED &
BUILT UP IN
CHRIST**

COLOSSIANS 2:6-7

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our Bible study session focusing on the theme "Rooted and Built up in Christ," drawn from the inspiration found in Colossians 2:6–7. The Pauline Epistle to the Colossians imparts valuable insights into the Christian journey. The metaphor of being "rooted and built up in Christ" vividly depicts spiritual growth and stability, underscoring believers' crucial connection with Jesus. This edition delves into the importance of accepting Christ Jesus as Lord and its foundational impact on our Christian voyage. Grasping the roots of our faith becomes vital for the spiritual steadiness that Paul advocates. Our contemplation will revolve around the ongoing experience of living in Christ, requiring a daily, purposeful relationship that permeates every facet of our lives.

As believers, we encounter diverse challenges that put our faith to the test. Paul's encouragement to strengthen our faith motivates us to examine (in this edition) ways to fortify our convictions and stand resolute in our Christian journey. This leads us to investigate the correlation between a thankful heart and a life firmly rooted and built up in Him, contemplating how gratitude serves as a testimony to the world. This study also aims to deepen our comprehension of the theme and apply its timeless principles to our contemporary lives.

We also focus on the understanding that accepting Christ is not a singular event but the commencement of an ongoing journey of walking in His ways. The metaphorical imagery of being "rooted and built up" establishes a profound and secure foundation in Christ, signifying stability, strength, and resilience amid life's challenges. Believers are being instructed on how to establish a firm and unwavering foundation in the teachings and principles of Christianity throughout this edition. Therefore, as we unpack the imagery of being rooted and built up in Christ, our discussion will explore the profoundness of our bond with Christ and the dynamic evolution of our spiritual journey.

STUDY 1

THE ROOT

Jeremiah 17:7–8

INTRODUCTION

In agriculture, the root is the part of a plant that attaches it to the ground. Some plants, like oak trees, have deep roots, while others, like grasses, do not have deep roots, and they cannot survive if they are not watered often. When plants do not have deep roots, they may look alright for a while, but soon, they will dry up and wither away. They do not last in a season of drought. Therefore, part of a plant's longevity depends on the depth of its root.

The root can also mean the primary cause, source, foundation or origin of something. Everybody has a root (lineage). A man's lineage dramatically affects his life because it carries the life and character of his ancestors, good or bad. In most African traditions, if someone is proposing to get married, an investigation will be conducted on the spouse's family to know the root of the family. This is done to avoid any bad behaviour from the family. Even the Bible traced Jesus' earthly lineage to Jesse (Isaiah 11:1).

Our root now is Jesus. The day we accepted him as our Lord and Saviour, we were spiritually translated from the devil to Jesus Christ. To understand the concept of our theme very well, we have to study our root - Jesus to know where we are coming from.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What is root?
- ★ What do you think will happen to a plant that has a shallow root?
- ★ And what will happen to a plant that has deep roots?
- ★ Why do we compare Jesus with root?
- ★ Discuss why trees planted by the riverside are always green.
- ★ How can we relate it to our Christian life (Jeremiah 17:7–8, Psalm 1:1–3)?
- ★ Who is Jesus? And how did he become our root (Mathew 16:13–20, Colossians 1:13–14; 2:6)?

CONCLUSION

The implied meaning drawn from these verses is a metaphorical comparison between a person who trusts in the Lord and a tree planted by water. The imagery of the tree sending out its roots by the stream conveys several profound spiritual principles, such as trust in the Lord, spiritual nourishment, stability in adversity, continuous spiritual growth and freedom from anxiety. It, therefore, implies that those who trust in the Lord experience a deep and secure spiritual foundation, drawing sustenance from their relationship with God. This trust brings stability and resilience in adversity, painting a vivid picture of the blessings of a steadfast faith.

STUDY 2

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ROOT TO A TREE

Job 14:7

INTRODUCTION

The root of a plant helps convey water and nourishment to the rest of the plant through numerous branches and fibres. Just as the body cannot function without the heart, a plant cannot survive without a root. Job tells us that as long as the root of a plant is in the ground, there is hope for its survival, even if it is cut off. Jesus clearly tells us that he is the vine, and we are the branches; without him, we cannot survive. If we want to continue existing, we have to live by Jesus' teachings. John 6:48–51.

DISCUSSION

- ★ Discuss the importance of roots to a plant.
- ★ Read John 15:1–6; Job 14:7 and discuss how important Jesus is to Christians.
- ★ There are some plants that survive in the desert, while some cannot.
- ★ Discuss why this is so and how this can be related to Christians.
- ★ Can a good tree bear a bad fruit? Why is it that despite listening to the word of God, some Christians still exhibit bad fruit (Galatians 5:19–24)?

CONCLUSION

There are many branches on a tree, but the same root supplies them with nutrients, and they will have the same fruits. If we claim to be Christians and our lives are not showing the light of Jesus, then we may be getting our nutrients from a different source, not Jesus.

STUDY 3

SPIRITUAL ROOT

Luke 8:4–15

INTRODUCTION

The spiritual root is the stamina of a believer. It represents our unwavering faith in God; it is a foundation that holds us steady amidst life storms, just as root anchors a tree during fierce winds.

In the parable of the sower in Luke 8:4–15, the roots symbolized the depth of one's faith and commitment to the teaching of Jesus. Jesus described different types of soil where seeds are sown, representing different responses to the message of the kingdom of God. The parable illustrated why having deep roots is so important. Having deep roots comes from being spiritually nourished each day. It involves reading God's word, praying and meditating on it throughout the day.

DISCUSSION

- ★ In your understanding, what is the spiritual root?
- ★ Discuss the parable of the sower in relation to how people take the word of God in the church today (Luke 8:4–15).
- ★ How can we develop spiritual roots?
- ★ What are the signs that will show someone has spiritual roots or not (Hebrews 5:12–6:1-2)?
- ★ What are the benefits and advantages of spiritual roots (Ephesians 4:14)?

CONCLUSION

In this end time, the presence of numerous false prophets and teachers potentially threatens our spiritual well-being. Without a solid spiritual foundation, we risk being led astray. Life's challenges, too, can divert our focus from faith unless we establish deep spiritual roots. Let us earnestly seek God's guidance to anchor ourselves firmly in the teachings of Jesus. May His grace enable us to stand unwaveringly amidst the currents of deception and distraction, ensuring that our spiritual roots run deep in the soil of His truth.

STUDY 4

WHEN THE ROOT DRIES UP

Hosea 9:16

INTRODUCTION

The root is undoubtedly the most crucial part of the tree. It is the channel through which the tree's stem gets its own nourishment and passes down to branches. If the root is planted well in the soil and well-watered, the tree has a high chance of giving more yield. Conversely, a tree can't live to its full potential if the root is in a rocky environment with less soil and limited water supply. Man's life can be so dry (empty) of kingdom-related fruits that will please God. We pray God will help us as we explore reasons that can help us ensure that nothing tempts with our roots in God.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What causes one's root to dry (Hosea 9:1; John 4:13-14)?
- ★ How often do we see characteristics of good soil (Matthew 13:23; Psalms 1:3; Jeremiah 17:8; Ezekiel 47:12) among Christians?
- ★ How do the characteristics of dried soil in Matthew 13:5 relate to our lives?
- ★ What is the spiritual implication of a dried tree (Matthew 7:19–23; Luke 3:9)?

CONCLUSION

God has created man to become fruitful and multiply. That means the life of a believer should always be green, growing with much fruit for people to eat. Contrary to this, it will mean a life that is not living on God's plan and purpose. As Christians, God is calling us to stay evergreen and bear fruits so that His name will be glorified through us.

STUDY 5

ROOTED IN CHRIST 1

Romans 11:17

INTRODUCTION

The grafting here is a symbolic illustration used by the apostle Paul to convey spiritual truths about the relationship between the Gentile believers (wild olive shoot) and the Jewish people (olive tree branches). The implication is that Gentile believers have been included in the promises and blessings of God's covenant with Israel. The concept of grafting highlights the inclusivity of God's covenant, extending beyond the original recipients to include a broader community. It underscores the idea that salvation is available to all who believe, regardless of their ethnic or cultural background. Jesus said, "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5). This becomes apparent that whenever a man is saved, his life or welfare on earth is no longer determined by his natural or ancestral root but by his spiritual root (Jesus Christ). This is because to be saved means one is engrafted into the life of Jesus. Rooted means having the word of God abiding in us. It means our inspiration, spiritual energy, and spiritual sustainability is derived from Jesus.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- ★ What does it mean to be rooted in Christ?
- ★ What does it mean to remain in Christ?
- ★ If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit. What type of fruit is Jesus referring to (John 15:5)?
- ★ What will happen to those who refuse to bear fruit or remain in Christ (John 15:6)?
- ★ What are the benefits of abiding in Christ (John 15:7)?

CONCLUSION

We need to be anchored in Jesus so that we will not drift away when storms come our way. We may shift and sway from side to side because of the wind, but when we are well-rooted, no storm or wind will be able to shake us.

STUDY 6

ROOTED IN CHRIST 2

Colossians 2:6–7

INTRODUCTION

The text we read appeals to believers to continue their journey with Christ, rooted deeply in Him, growing in faith, and expressing gratitude for the gospel's transformative power. It emphasizes the importance of a strong foundation in Christ and a continual, vibrant relationship with Him. Exploring the growth of a tree serves as an essential analogy for comprehending the essence of being "Rooted in Christ." Like a sturdy tree, the robust root system is the fundamental support, enabling the tree to reach towering heights and yield fruits. Similarly, being rooted in Christ involves laying a firm foundation in His teachings. Anchoring ourselves to Jesus signifies a surface connection and a deep establishment of unwavering faith and reliance. This steadfast grounding ensures resilience, preventing us from swaying or toppling amidst life's trials.

DISCUSSION

- ★ How do we become rooted in Christ (Colossians 2:6–7; Romans 6:3–11)?
- ★ Discuss the prayer of Paul for the Ephesians that Christ dwells in their hearts through faith and they should be rooted and established in love (Ephesians 3:16–20).
- ★ Discuss the importance of being rooted in Christ.
 - i. To stand strong during trials.
 - ii. The key to bearing fruit (John 15:4–8).
 - iii. To discern God's truth so that we are not deceived (Matthew 24:4–5; 10–12).
- ★ Does it mean we will not face challenges if rooted in Christ (John 15:18–18)?

CONCLUSION

Emphasizing the imperative for a child of God (particularly one undertaking to share the gospel with the unsaved) to be profoundly rooted in Christ cannot be overstated. Our spiritual maturation and fruitfulness require establishing a robust foundation in Christ Jesus. Thus, the need to be rooted.

STUDY 7

THE BENEFITS OF BEING ROOTED IN CHRIST

Galatians 5:22–23; Psalm 1:1–3, 6

INTRODUCTION

Some of the benefits one can look forward to as they become rooted in Christ Jesus are being filled with the power to withstand the storms of life, like the wise man who built his house on a rock. They cannot be carried away by different kinds of teaching and craftiness of deceitful plots because of the pleasure they derive from studying and meditating on the word of God always. Again, the Lord watches over their ways always. To them, all things are possible, and they are the happiest people because of their inner fulfilment and peace of mind, knowing that their roots go down deep to withstand every drought which continually nourishes them and bears fruits in its season. Being rooted in Christ enables steady growth and purpose fulfilment, reminding us, "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works" (Ephesians 2:10). God's will for every believer is to have absolute confidence in his/her salvation. This is why those who are solely rooted in Christ Jesus can boldly say,

"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Philippians 1:21). As we delve into discussions, may we all understand the importance and benefits attached to being rooted in Christ Jesus, Amen.

DISCUSSION

- ★ How can one become rooted in Christ Jesus before enjoying its benefits (Proverbs 3:5; Psalms 1:1–3; 121:1, 2 Corinthians 5:7)?
- ★ Discuss the fruit of the Spirit according to Galatians 5:22–23 relating it to the benefits of being rooted in Christ Jesus.
- ★ Can those not in Christ also enjoy the benefits highlighted in the introduction? If yes, how? If not, why?
- ★ Are you rooted in Christ Jesus and enjoying its benefits?

CONCLUSION

The benefits of being rooted in Christ Jesus cannot be overemphasized. Deliberate Commitment and allowing the Holy Spirit to take its place is required. It enables one to continually feed on the word of God by studying and meditating on it day and night. It makes one to walk by faith and not by sight. Always find pleasure in doing the work of an evangelist. It enables one to be spiritually stable, confident, and courageous.

STUDY 8

MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT BEING ROOTED IN CHRIST

Col. 2:6-7

INTRODUCTION

In our Christian journey, certain beliefs may exist that, upon closer examination, reveal themselves as misunderstandings. Together, let's explore these misconceptions and unveil the truths that lie at the heart of being rooted in Christ.

DISCUSSION:

- ★ **Misconception: Rootedness Implies Perfection (Colossians 2:6)**
 - a. Discuss the misconception that being rooted in Christ means a flawless, problem-free life.
 - b. Explore the reality that rootedness involves growth, learning, and reliance on Christ in the midst of imperfections.
- ★ **Misconception: Rootedness Leads to Instant Spiritual Maturity (Colossians 2:6)**
- ★ Examine the belief that being rooted results in instant spiritual maturity.
- ★ Discuss the journey of spiritual growth and the patience required as believers develop and deepen their roots.
- ★ **Misconception: Rootedness is an Isolated Experience (Colossians 2:7)**
- ★ Address the misconception that being rooted in Christ is a private, individual experience.
- ★ Explore the communal aspect of being rooted and the importance of fellowship within the body of believers
- ★ **Misconception: Rootedness is a One-Time Event (Colossians 2:7)**
- ★ Discuss the idea that being rooted is a singular event rather than an ongoing, dynamic process.
- ★ Explore how a continual, active engagement with Christ is essential for sustained rootedness.
- ★ **Misconception: Rootedness Guarantees Prosperity (Colossians 2:6)**
- ★ Discuss the misconception that being rooted in Christ ensures a life of material prosperity and success.

- ★ Explore biblical narratives that challenge this misconception and highlight the Scriptural truth that rootedness involves enduring through both highs and lows.
- ★ **Misconception: Rootedness Equals Comfort (Colossians 2:7)**
- ★ Address the idea that being rooted in Christ leads to a comfortable, problem-free existence.
- ★ Examine Scriptures that illustrate how rootedness can involve stepping out of one's comfort zone for the sake of God's kingdom and personal spiritual growth.

CONCLUSION

May this study serve as a guide to dispel misconceptions and illuminate the profound truths about being rooted in Christ. As we grow in understanding, may our roots go deeper into the rich soil of God's love and grace, allowing us to bear fruit in abundance and stand firm in the truth of His Word.

STUDY 9

PRE-REQUISITE FOR BEEN ROOTED IN CHRIST

John 3:1–10; Mark 8:34; 10:21

INTRODUCTION

For a person to be rooted in Christ Jesus, he/she must have passed through some radical scenarios and requirements which qualify a person to be strong enough in the heavenly race. We must first deny ourselves all the luxuries that spiritually blindfolded our hearts and thoughts. No wonder Jesus said we must first deny ourselves. Some of the necessary things and prerequisites for one to be deeply rooted in Christ Jesus are that you must be born again and be baptized with water and the holy Spirit before you can access the kingdom of God (John 3:1-10). Put to death all the misdeeds of the body, which is drastically disuniting us from Christ (Rom 8:13, 2 Chronicles 7:14).

Our availability to do good works determines our faith in Christ Jesus. The lips of our mouth cannot merely pronounce it, but it should be deep from our heart. We should not be moved away by hollow deception and the world's philosophy; let us press on and strengthen our faith in Christ Jesus (Colossians 2:8).

DISCUSSION

- ★ Based on your understanding, Outline some of the requirements that are expected of you before you can be rooted in Christ Jesus.
- ★ Discuss how and why self-control, self-examination, commitment, perseverance and endurance, among others, become prerequisites for being rooted in Christ.
- ★ Discuss why it is difficult for some believers today to give out their possessions for the gospel despite being in Christ for years (Mark 10:19–24).
- ★ Discuss self-denial as a prerequisite for being in Christ (Mark 8:34; 12:29–31; Luke 14:26–27).

CONCLUSION

Although our salvation was said to be free of charge by God, who so loved us and subjected His only begotten son to death on the cross for our sake, we are called to respond with gratitude, faith and obedience. Thus, to whom much is given, much is expected. This suggests that our commitment to every aspect of discipleship is fundamental. May we all live in Christ all the days of our lives. Amen.

STUDY 10

HOW TO BECOME ROOTED IN CHRIST Col. 2:6 -7

INTRODUCTION

In the hustle and bustle of life, it is easy to find ourselves swayed by various influences, but the Scripture calls us to be firmly rooted in Christ. This study is an exploration of what it means to establish a strong spiritual foundation in Him. Together, let's delve into the Word and discover practical insights on building a lasting connection with our Savior.

DISCUSSION

- ★ **The Call to Receive Christ (Colossians 2:6; John 3:3; John 1:12, Ephesians 2:8)**
 - a. Reflect on what it means to "receive Christ Jesus as Lord" in the context of your own life.
 - b. Share personal experiences or testimonies of how receiving Christ has impacted your spiritual journey.
- ★ **Walking in Him (Colossians 2:6; John 15:7; Acts 17:28; John 15:3)**
 - a. What does it look like to walk in Him practically in daily life?
 - b. Discuss the idea of continual dependence on Christ in our thoughts, actions, and decision-making.
- ★ **Being Rooted (Colossians 2:7; Psalms 1:1-6; Galatians 2:20)**
 - a. Focus on the imagery of being "rooted and built up in Him." What does it mean to be rooted in Christ?
- ★ **Overflowing with Thanksgiving (Colossians 2:7; Psalms 107:8-9; Colossians 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)**
 - a. Examine the connection between being rooted in Christ and overflowing with thanksgiving.
 - b. Share examples of how a rooted relationship with Christ leads to gratitude in various circumstances.

CONCLUSION

Paul's counsel to the Colossians resonates as a timeless guide. Emphasizing the ongoing reception of Christ, we explored the transformative journey of "walking in Him." Being rooted in Christ

signifies a deep, stabilizing connection that sustains and nourishes, enabling believers to wider life's challenges. The culmination is an overflow of gratitude, a natural response to a steadfast foundation.

STUDY 11

ATTITUDE OF ONE WHO IS ROOTED IN CHRIST

Ephesians 3:16–17; John 15:5

INTRODUCTION

Being rooted in Christ is foundational for a thriving Christian life. It is about acknowledging Him as Lord and Savior and allowing His teachings and presence to transform our attitudes and behaviours. It is essential for every believer's spiritual growth and maturity. Our faith in Christ is not just a static belief but a living relationship that impacts every aspect of our lives. Being rooted in Christ is more than mere belief; it is a deep and abiding relationship. It is about living in Christ, drawing strength and nourishment from Him.

Our faith journey does not end at salvation; it is an ongoing walk in His presence. Being rooted in Christ transforms our attitudes and behaviors; we become more Christ-like as we grow in Him, leading to a life marked by thankfulness and spiritual growth. A Christ-centered attitude transforms how we relate to others and fosters love, forgiveness, and reconciliation. Our relationships become a testimony of Christ's work in us.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What does it mean to be rooted in Christ? How is this different from simply believing in Him (Colossians 2:6–7)?
- ★ How does being rooted in Christ impact our daily attitudes and actions (Galatians 5:22–23)?
- ★ How can we encourage one another to remain rooted in Christ as a community of believers (Hebrews 10:24–25)?
- ★ According to Ephesians 3:16–17, what is the Holy Spirit's role in helping us remain rooted in Christ?
- ★ In your own words, describe the difference between a person rooted in Christ's love and one who is not.

CONCLUSION

Being rooted in Christ is not just a one-time event but an ongoing process of growth and transformation. Our attitudes, behaviours, and

relationships will reflect His love and grace as we live in Him. Let us remain rooted in Christ, drawing strength from Him and bearing the fruit of a Christ-centered attitude in our lives.

STUDY 12

THE PROOF THAT SHOWS ONE IS ROOTED IN CHRIST

Matthew 7:16 Galatians 5:22-23

INTRODUCTION

It is often said that actions speak louder than words. As followers of Christ, our lives should bear witness to the transformative power of being rooted in Him. Together, let us explore the Scriptures to discern the tangible proofs that indicate a deep and authentic connection with our Savior.

DISCUSSION

- ★ **According to Colossians 2:6-7** In what ways do you think being rooted in Christ differs from merely believing in Him? Consider the depth and implications of rootedness.
- ★ **Using Joseph, Abraham and Job as case study**, Share practical examples of how one can manifest being "rooted and built up in Him" in their everyday activities.
- ★ Discuss potential challenges individuals might face in cultivating a rooted life and brainstorm strategies to overcome them.
Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalms 119:9-11
- ★ How does acknowledging Christ as Lord affect the lens through which we view our purpose and priorities in life?
- ★ Considering the fruits of the Spirit in **Galatians 5:22-23**, how do these virtues serve as visible proof of a genuine connection with Christ?

CONCLUSION

As we conclude this study, let us be inspired by the profound truth that our lives can be a testament to the rootedness we have in Christ. May the proofs discussed—living out our faith, walking in Him, bearing the fruits of the Spirit, and displaying obedience and surrendering—be evident in our daily journey as followers of Christ. May our lives serve as a compelling proof of the transformative power of being deeply rooted in the love and grace of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

STUDY 13

CHALLENGES OF BEING ROOTED IN CHRIST

2Timothy 3:10–13; John 15:18–21

INTRODUCTION

We should keep in mind that our footpaths are full of challenges in the cause of spreading the gospel of Christ. In the face of these daunting challenges that continually instil fear and weaken our faith in Christ Jesus, some individuals have regrettably backslidden, leading to an abandonment of the gospel. Jesus has not left us ignorant of all these, but He has cautioned us even before such challenges come. Our Lord Jesus has been persecuted even to death. Unavoidably, we are to share in His suffering for the gospel's sake. The world first hates Him because He is not of the world; likewise, we belong not to the world. We are living in a life-threatening jurisdiction, but our ability to withstand up to the very end matters a lot.

Apostle Paul once charged his co-worker Timothy regarding his challenges in Antioch and Lystra. He was persecuted but endured, and our Saviour Jesus rescued him from the adversaries. To live a godly life in Christ is significantly self-denial. Blessed are those persecuted, even to the detriment of their lives, for righteousness because theirs is the kingdom of God (Mathew 5:10–12). After we have fought a good fight, there is a treasure and a crown of righteousness our righteous judge will give us on the last day, even to those who longed for His appearance (2Timothy 4:7–8). Our present suffering is not comparable to the future glory that was kept for us; let us not trouble our hearts; believe in God Almighty and His son. "I have told you all these things so that in me you will have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 14:1; 16:33).

DISCUSSION

- ★ Discuss the reality of persecution in our identification with Christ (Act 16:22–26; Matthew 10:17–20).
- ★ If based on truth, an advocate (Spirit) will speak on our behalf when facing challenges, whether before false judges or life-threatening. Discuss why some Christians do look for lawyers or create unnecessary lies to be free from the accusers.

- ★ The escalation of killings, maiming, displacing and destruction of lives and properties are devastating to the extent that some have compromised their faith in Christ. Discuss the fate of these people in getting eternal life.
- ★ Is persecution one of the vital tools that will lead to the firmness of our faith and the perfection of our salvation? If Yes, how? If No, discuss.
- ★ How does God save His people in the face of challenges (Daniel 3:19–26; 6:16–23; Act 12:1–12).

CONCLUSION

Persecution has become one of the packages attached to the lives of those in Christ, but one of the amazing things about this is that, amidst all, He always provides an escape route out of such challenges. Jesus has never forsaken us nor left us as orphans in every critic. Therefore, t's only believe in the saving power of God Almighty.

STUDY 14

THE LIFE OF A MAN WHO IS ROOTED IN CHRIST 1

Philippians 3:10

INTRODUCTION

The root is the part of a plant that grows under the ground and absorbs water and minerals that it sends to the rest of the plant. This means the plant's growth and fruit-bearing depend on whatever the root absorbs. There is a certain way of life a man who is rooted in Christ is supposed to live. This way of life depends upon whatever the person absorbs through his root (Christ). I pray that you will weigh your life on the scale and see if you are bearing fruit as someone who is rooted in Christ.

DISCUSSION

- ★ From the following passages, what is the man's delight rooted in Christ (Philippians 3:10; 1 Timothy 3:15–17; Joshua 1:8, Revelation 1:3; Romans 15:4; Psalm 119:15–16)?
- ★ How does a man rooted in Christ handle the word of God (John 14:15; 8:31; Acts 5:29; 1 John 5:3; Isaiah 1:19; Luke 6:46)?
- ★ Discover from the following passages that the man rooted in Christ loves to have personal fellowship with God, not hide under corporate fellowship (Matthew 6:5–8; 14:23; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; Luke 5:16; Hebrews 4:16; Philippians 4:6–7; Colossians 4:2; 1 Chronicles 16:11).
- ★ How ought a man who is rooted in Christ to live (2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:1; 6:11; John. 11:25–26, Mark 10:52, Romans 1:17; Matthew 17:20)?

CONCLUSION

From the discussions above, we learnt that a man who is rooted in Christ is a man of God's word, obedience, prayer and full of faith that with God, all things are possible (Mat. 19:26). If your life is short of any of these, know that your root is not in Christ. May your roots be always grounded in Christ in Jesus' name, amen.

STUDY 15

THE LIFE OF A MAN WHO IS ROOTED IN CHRIST 2

Philippians 4:13

INTRODUCTION

In this study, we will focus on the life of a man who is rooted in Christ by enduring Persecution and being able to withstand lack. We will also study the signs and dangers of being a shallow Christian and how to be rooted in Christ. In a world filled with challenges, uncertainties and hardships, believers must understand how to navigate these trials victoriously by taking root in Christ.

This study will unravel the profound truth that being rooted in Christ empowers us to endure persecution and withstand lack. We will explore how a firm foundation in Christ transforms our perspective, equips us with spiritual resources and enables us to rise above adversity.

Throughout history, followers of Christ have faced various forms of persecution for their faith. From the days of the early church to the present, believers have encountered opposition, discrimination and even physical harm due to their unwavering commitment to Jesus. Likewise, many have experienced seasons of lack and material difficulties that test their trust in God's provision.

However, the Bible assures us that a person deeply rooted in Christ possesses the strength and resilience to endure persecution and stand firm in times of scarcity. Together, we will journey through Scripture to uncover the principles, promises and examples that illustrate this truth.

DISCUSSION

- ★ In what ways can lack or adversity challenge our faith in God? How can a person rooted in Christ overcome these challenges (Philippians 4:6, 13; James 2:5; Nehemiah 8:10; Proverbs 3:5–6)?
- ★ How does being rooted in Christ help a believer endure persecution (Matthew 5:10–12; James 1:2–4, 12; 2Corinthians 12:10; 1Peter. 3:14 Romans 8:35–37)?
- ★ What are the signs of being a shallow Christian (Hebrews 10:25; Romans 11:25; Mark 10:24; Matthew 19:14; Matthew 26:40–41; Matthew 23:5)?

- ★ What are the dangers of being a shallow Christian (Matthew 13:20–22; Luke 6:49; Colossians 2:8; Ephesians 4:14; Galatians 6:1)?
- ★ What can one do to become rooted in Christ (John 15:1-7, Eph. 6:10-20, Mat. 16:24, Luke 14:25–34)?

CONCLUSION

To be rooted in Christ means that our lives are firmly grounded in his love, grace, and power. When we are rooted in Christ, we are able to withstand persecution and endure lack. We can persevere through difficult times because we know our foundation is secure.

STUDY 16

THE ETERNAL REWARD OF ONE WHO IS ROOTED IN CHRIST

John 5:24; 6:33–35

INTRODUCTION

God knows how and when to rescue us from the trials of this world because there's no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus. By virtue of living in Him, we become a new creature; the old nature has been waved away. What a great reward we gained! Moreover, the good news is that He prays for His disciples or believers for God to intervene in the situational ethics that were bound to happen after His ascension to heaven. We are certainly the light of the world; we walk no more in darkness. As the product of light, let our light shine so that people will see the good works and glory of our God. Jesus has salvaged us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of His son, in whom we were redeemed from the bondage of our sins.

The gift of the Spirit of truth, which Jesus has bestowed upon us, continues to awaken our spirit and help us in our weaknesses. For at times, we don't know what to pray for, but the Spirit makes intercession for us. As His sons and daughters, God has promised us an advocate (Holy Spirit). Jesus will never leave us nor forsake us. The tears and the sorrows of the oppressed will be wiped away and be crowned with life everlasting while living in Christ Jesus. Through Him, we were set free and uncluttered, for we were redeemed not by the glittering gold and silver but by the precious blood of the Lamb of God.

DISCUSSION

- ★ How certain are we that there's a store of inheritance in heaven for us on the last day (John 14:1–4)?
- ★ Our redemption was first aimed at when He chose us while we were yet sinners. Now that we are believers, do we still have those who will miss the everlasting life among us (John 15:16; 2 Peter 2:9)? Discuss.
- ★ We are the sons and daughters and the heirs of the kingdom of God. Was this glory aimed at our good works or righteousness? (2Corinthians 6:16–18; Galatians 4:1–7)

- ★ Discuss the proofs of eternity in our heavenly race.
- ★ Is the reward of eternity comparable to the bronze medal, gold and trophy won by athletes and footballers in their competition?

CONCLUSION

God, in His infinite love and compassion, didn't count on our shortcomings but did consider the image we were made up of. He chose us, yet we were yet to take action in the ministry of salvation. We were also chosen to be heirs of Christ or the kingdom of heaven. Heirs of Christ Jesus, even when we were yet sinners under the bondage of laws and as a slavery to the kingdom of the world, He redeemed us into sonship because we are His sons, and if sons, then heirs (Galatians 3:29; 4:1–7). Glory be to God!

STUDY 17

SATAN'S PLAN TO HINDER BELIEVERS FROM BECOMING ROOTED IN CHRIST

Matthew 13:1–9; 18–23

INTRODUCTION

The strength of every tree and its production level depends on how well the root is deepened. The need for a believer to grow and become rooted in Christ has been an emphasis in the scripture. Galatians 4:1 made us understand that as far as the heir remains a child, he differs not from a slave. Not becoming deeply rooted signifies being weak and vulnerable to the ever-rising challenges of life. The devil, right from the beginning, has been working round the clock to see that believers don't grow into maturity. He fights the gospel and creates a lot of distractions in our time today that take the place of the desire to know God more in our lives.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What does it mean to hinder? 1Peter 5:8
- ★ The devil's plans to hinder believers from being rooted in Christ:
- ★ Cause them to sin (Genesis 3:1–7; Ephesians 2:2; Luke 22:31; Luke 22:3–6).
- ★ Makes them prayer-less (Matthew 26:36–44).
- ★ Not paying attention to the word of God (Matthew 13:19, Mark 4:1–9; 13–15).
- ★ Blinding the eyes of the believers to the truth (2Corinthians 4:3–4).
- ★ Distracting believers to pursue the world rather than God (2Corinthians 11:3).
- ★ In our own time, what are those things the devil uses to hinder us from becoming rooted in Christ?

CONCLUSION

From today's study, we discovered that the enemy works tirelessly to see that children of God do not become rooted in Christ. He has succeeded in making the younger generation lose after carnal things. But Christ is always our strength in times of weakness.

STUDY 18

THE DANGERS OF NOT BECOMING ROOTED IN CHRIST TO A BELIEVER

Colossians 2:6–7

INTRODUCTION

The need to look at the "The Dangers of Not Becoming Rooted in Christ to a Believer" is very vital to every believer especially to one who has called himself to become part of fulfilling the great commission. This study will explore the consequences of not deepening our relationship with Christ, in line with the general theme of being "Rooted and Built Up in Christ," as emphasized in Colossians 2:6-7: "Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him. Rooted and built up in him and established in faith. Just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving" As believers, we receive Christ as our Savior, but our faith journey doesn't end there. We must continue growing, maturing, and rooting ourselves deeply in Him. In this study, we will examine the potential dangers that may arise when we neglect to do so.

DISCUSSION

- ★ Discuss the blessings of being rooted in God's Word (Psalm 1:1–3; Gen. 39:3–6).
- ★ Discuss the parable of the sower, and tell what each type of soil represents and how they illustrate the dangers of not being rooted in Christ (Matthew 13:1–9; 18–23; Luke 8:11–15; Mark 4:3–20; James 1:22–25).
- ★ In line with the following scriptures (1John 2:15–17; James 4:4; Romans 12:2; Matthew 6:19–21), discuss the implications of loving the world.
- ★ Discuss the consequences of spiritual immaturity and a lack of growth in understanding God's Word (Hebrews 5:11–14; 1Corinthians 3:1–3; Ephesians 4:13–14; 1Peter 2:2).
- ★ What admonitions are given regarding drifting away from the faith (Hebrews 2:1; Colossians 1:23)?

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, being rooted in Christ is not a one-time event but a lifelong journey of growth and deepening our relationship with Him.

Neglecting this essential aspect of our faith can lead to shallowness, susceptibility to worldly influences, spiritual stagnation, and even drifting away from the faith. As we conclude this study, let us commit to nurturing our roots in Christ, meditating on His Word, and walking faithfully in Him, knowing that we find the strength and stability needed to overcome the dangers that may threaten our faith.

STUDY 19

CHRIST AS A MODEL

Hebrews 12:2; 13; 1Peter 2:21

INTRODUCTION

Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, is necessary if we want to imitate Christ as a role model. Ephesians 5:1 says, therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children; and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. Brethren, Christ put God the Father first in His life. He said, for I seek not to please myself but Him who sent me. John 5:30. You are expected to put Jesus first and not to seek what will please you. To emulate Christ, you must forsake everything, take your cross and follow Him. You must obey Him, prioritising Him by seeking His kingdom and righteousness first.

Christ is Holy, Perfect and completely genuine. You must also be holy, perfect and utterly genuine to imitate Him. He did not fake his life like the teachers of the law, who were hypocritical by walking around in flowing robes, loving to be greeted in the marketplaces and have the most important seats in the synagogues and the places of honour at banquets.

Christ was concerned about all kinds of people. Irrespective of tribe, race, or religion, He demonstrated an agape love for us; He said love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. For us to emulate Christ, we must also be concerned for others. Jesus prayed to God not to hold the sin against His killers. Christ was humble in serving others. It would be best if you also imbibe the spirit of humility. You have been called for this purpose since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example to follow in His steps. May He be seen in our lives as we toil here on earth as we imitate Christ. Amen.

DISCUSSION

- ★ Discuss Matthew. 16:24 and relate it to Jesus as a role model.
- ★ How should we forsake our father, mother, son, and daughter for Christ (Matthew 10:37–38)?

- ★ Read Luk 20:45—47. Does this scripture remind you of any religious leaders you have seen?
- ★ We are told to follow Christ's example. Christ had humility. How humble are Christians in politics, offices, businesses and churches?

CONCLUSION

As a role model, Christ is one that every believer aspires to be like in life. He was humble, uncompromised, courageous, holy, and perfect. He had compassion for mankind by feeding and healing them, saying love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. He demonstrated a life worth emulating. So, the importance of imitating Christ cannot be overemphasized. May God help us to continually look unto Jesus, making Him our priority in life. Amen.

THE ONENESS OF CHRIST AND THE FATHER

John 1:1-3; 10:30, Genesis 1:26

INTRODUCTION

From the texts above, a bond relationship creates a strong unity between people and God. From the conception, ministry, crucifixion, resurrection, and the miraculous ascension of Jesus Christ, had clearly shown His oneness with the Father. Jesus is the same as the Father in action, mind and nature; God does everything with Jesus's consent. No wonder He said, I do nothing of my own, but that of the Father who sent me purposely for His will, not mine. John 1:1–3 says from the beginning was the word, the word was with God, and the word was God, through him all things were made. Jesus has demonstrated and declared to the world that "I and the Father are one"(John 10:30); whoever loves and lives in Jesus, He (Jesus) too lives in the person just as He is in the Father and the Father in Him.

The sameness of Christ with the Father was made known to the believers through the Holy Scriptures. None of us had ever seen God with our naked eyes. Still, the one and the only son who is "Himself God" and is in the closest relationship with the Father has made Him known to the world (John 1:18). During the intercession prayers of Jesus Christ for His believers, Jesus and the Father has no barrier or gap that's why He interceded that we believers whom the Father has given Him shall be one even as He and the Father are one for us to attain a complete unity in the relationship (John 17:20–23).

Therefore, Jesus undoubtedly pierced the hearts and minds of His believers with the word of life; all He did and was doing was of the Father. Furthermore, if you as a believer heard the word or message through Jesus, you heard it directly from the Father. Jesus, the great mediator, intercessor and compassionate Father, is the same as God.

DISCUSSION

- ★ Is the relationship of Jesus Christ and the Father comparable to our relationship with our biological father?
- ★ Discuss the oneness of Jesus and the Father based on the following scriptures (John 1:1–3; 10:30. Genesis 1:26).
- ★ Discuss how truly we are living in Christ Jesus based on this quotation "all that belongs to the Father is mine" (John 16:15).
- ★ What lesson do we learned from the relationship of Jesus Christ and the Father (God).

CONCLUSION

From the study today we have learned that we are also one with the Father through Jesus Christ our mediator. As we live in Christ Jesus and He in us. Living outside of God can be as serious as sitting on a time bomb waiting to be explode. One cannot thrive in this wicked world we are in depending on his or her strength. Therefore; the need to be with the FATHER.

STUDY 21

BEING ESTABLISHED IN CHRIST

Colossians 2:6–12

Memory verse: Colossians 2:6–7

"So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness."

INTRODUCTION

God does not save us to remain slaves to sin and Satan. His desire and plan is for us to grow and mature in Christ so that we are not tossed to and fro by every kind of doctrine. Being established in Christ helps us know Christ and maximize our inheritance as God's children through this study. I pray that God will help us to be based in Christ.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What do you understand by the word 'established'?
- ★ From the following scriptures (Colossians 1:28; 2:6–7; John 15:1–5), what do you understand by "being established in Christ"?
- ★ Examine from the following points how we can be established in Christ.
- ★ Study of God's words (1Peter 2:2; Luke 10:38–42; 2Timothy 2:15; 3:16–16).
- ★ Discipleship (Matt. 4:18-19, Mark 3:14. Rom.8:29).
- ★ Consistent prayers (Luke 18:1. 1Thess. 5:17. Acts 2:42–43)
- ★ Fellowshiping with God and other brethren (Hebrews 10:25).
- ★ What are the benefits of being established in Christ (Colossians 2: Matthew 28: Acts 4:13. John 15:5)?
- ★ What are the dangers of not being established in Christ (Colossians 2:8; Ephesians 5:6; 1Corinthians 3:1–4; Galatians 4:1; 5:21b; 2Peter 1:9; John 15:6–7)?

CONCLUSION

Anyone who is not established in Christ is vulnerable to the attacks of sin. Satan and self will not enter into God's inheritance. The dangers of

not being established in Christ are numerous and costly. I pray that God will cause you to be fully established in Christ in Jesus' name, amen.

CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD

John 10:11–14; Psalms 23:1–6

INTRODUCTION

A shepherd is a person who takes care of animals. One can do this as the owner or a hireling.

Jesus says, "I am the good shepherd." The relationship of believers with Christ is like that of sheep to a shepherd. The Lord is our shepherd; we are his flock. Christ has received us as a gift from the Father, and no one can snatch us out of the Father's hand.

One of the qualities that makes Jesus a good shepherd is that He owns you and will never abandon you. He knows His sheep and he call them by their name. Here is the joy of following Jesus Christ. He knows you completely; he can lead you effectively. The good shepherd knows what you (the sheep) needs and can give you what you need when you need it. What a marvellous thing to be wholly owned by the Son of God. Christ cares for you because you are his. He made you his own at the cost of his life, and he will never leave you nor forsake you.

Another distinguishing quality of Jesus being a good shepherd is that He guards and gives you eternal life. He said, "I give them eternal life, and they will never perish..." (John 10:28). If Christ is your shepherd, you get covered and give you the precious gift of eternal life. Thus, you are secured between the clasped hands of the Omnipotence.

Also, the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. Everything Jesus endured was for you. When he was arrested, scourged, beaten, condemned to death, and hung on that cross in agony, it was for you. He gave himself willingly. Jesus accomplished everything he had come to do, and then he gave himself to death. And this is what he has done for you as a good shepherd. The good shepherd protects and defends the sheep at all cost. Only Jesus is "the Good Shepherd". Only Him could accomplish what was required to save and rescue His people. No one else could fulfil the prophecies in the Old Testament, pointing to a saviour and shepherd for God's people.

DISCUSSIONS

- ★ How would you know if you are one of Christ's sheep? John 10:27
- ★ How does he bring us to himself and make us his sheep (John 10:3)?
- ★ Why is Jesus Christ our "Good Shepherd? John 10:11; Matthew 9:36
- ★ What does it look like in our daily lives to follow the Good Shepherd in a world full of wolves that attack us throughout the journey of faith? Matthew 16:24; Matthew 4:18-22

CONCLUSION

We need to know that Jesus is the Good Shepherd; He is fully God and can protect and guide believers throughout. Like a shepherd who protects, defends and saves his flock from attacks, Jesus is the one who does that for us. A shepherd always keeps watch of his sheep, and Jesus watches over us. More than that, He is with us always until the end of the age and will lead us all of our days as we trust in Him. The Bible describes Christ as a good shepherd because He protects, guides, and nurtures by providing what the sheep need to grow in our faith and finally lays down his life to save them from condemnation.

STUDY 23

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SHEEP AND THE SHEPHERD

John 10:11

INTRODUCTION

The Bible often uses the metaphor of a shepherd and his sheep to describe the relationship between God and his people. This topic will explore this metaphor in more detail and examine its implications. First, it is crucial to note that the shepherd in this metaphor is not simply a man who tends to sheep. He is also a protector, provider, and guide. He leads his sheep to safety and ensures they have everything they need. Second, the sheep in this metaphor represent God's people. They are dependent on the shepherd for their survival and well-being. They are also called to obey the shepherd's commands and follow his lead.

This metaphor teaches us several important lessons about our relationship with God. First, it teaches us that God is our protector, provider, and guide. He loves us deeply and cares for us deeply. Second, it teaches us that we are dependent on God for our survival and well-being. We need him to lead us and protect us. Third, it teaches us to obey God's commands because he knows what is best for us.

In the interactive discussion below, we will explore the relationship between the shepherd and the sheep in more detail. We will examine the implications of this metaphor for our lives and learn how to live in a closer relationship with God.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What does it mean to say that Jesus is the "Good Shepherd" (John 10:11–18)?
- ★ How does Jesus' relationship with his sheep reflect the relationship between a shepherd and his sheep in the Old Testament (Psalm 23:1–6; Ezekiel 34:11–16)? Is it reflected in the shepherd motif in the Church today?
- ★ What are some of the ways that Jesus cares for his sheep (Matthew 11:28–30; John 14:6; 1 Peter 5:7)?
- ★ What are some of the ways that we can respond to Jesus' love and care?

for us (John 15:9–10; 1John 3:16; 1Corinthians 13:4–8)?

- ★ How can we apply the lessons we learn from the relationship between the Good Shepherd and his sheep to our own lives (Ephesians 5:1–2; Philippians 2:3-4; 1Peter 2:19–25)?

CONCLUSION

The shepherd and the sheep relationship is one of love, trust, and obedience. The shepherd loves his sheep and cares for them deeply. The sheep trust their shepherd to lead them and protect them. And the sheep obey their shepherd's commands because they know he has their best interests at heart.

May you continue to remain in the sheepfold of Jesus Christ at all times in Jesus' name, Amen.

LIVING FOR CHRIST 1

Philippians 1:21

INTRODUCTION

Living for Christ involves forging a profound and intimate connection with Jesus, where the purpose, motivation, and essence of one's life become intertwined with Him. This commitment goes beyond mere affiliation, extending to a sacrificial lifestyle marked by choices, actions, and existence dedicated to serving and following Christ. Such dedication reflects a steadfast commitment to embodying the teachings and example set forth by Jesus. This transformative way of life encompasses an eternal perspective whereby death is viewed not as a loss but as a gain. It underscores a deep-seated belief in the promise of eternity and the hope beyond mortal existence. Therefore, living for Christ encapsulates a holistic commitment that shapes every facet of one's being, from daily decisions to the overarching perspective on life and death.

DISCUSSION

- ★ How can one Live for Christ according to these Scriptures (John 3:3, 16; 11:25–26, Acts 20:24; Romans 12:1–2; Revelation 18:4–5)?
- ★ What are the Benefits of Living for Christ (John 3:16; Ephesians 1:7; Romans 14:8; Hebrews 13:5)?
- ★ The Necessity of Living for Christ (Ephesians 2:10; 5:15–16; Matthew 5:16; Isaiah 60:1–3)?
- ★ Discuss the dangers of Living for Self (Galatians 6:8; 5:19–21; Rom 6:23a; 8:6a; 12–13; Ezekiel 18:20; Revelation 21:8).

CONCLUSION

Yahweh desires men who intentionally give up self-will, desires, and pleasure so that Christ may dwell inside them. The world is covered in gross darkness and held in bondage, eagerly waiting for the sons of God to show forth the Light that will bring liberation and freedom. Give up self-gratification that your life may be hidden in Christ as you reveal Him (Colossians 3:3). May Jesus take charge of your life. Shalom!

STUDY 25

LIVING FOR CHRIST 2

Philippians 1:19–26

INTRODUCTION

As discussed in our last study, reflecting on living for Christ is paramount in this delicate time. In the face of moral decay, escalating corruption, persecution, and the pervasive surge of temptations in society, it becomes crucial for Christians to seek God's guidance diligently. Under His guidance, we can navigate the complexities of life, learning to live lives that mirror godliness amidst societal challenges. A pivotal aspect of this journey involves consecrating ourselves as instruments of righteousness aligning our actions with God's principles. As Christians, there comes a point where our existence becomes akin to living sacrifices, laid bare at the altar of divine purpose. This profound surrender encompasses every aspect of our lives, epitomizing a commitment to a life wholly devoted to Christ. In pursuing this sacred commitment, our earnest prayer should be that our endeavours serve as catalysts for strengthening convictions and fortifying our faith in God.

DISCUSSION

- ★ Discuss the practical implication of living for Christ (Matthew 4:19–22; 11:28–29; 2Timothy 3:12; Romans 8:11–14; Philippians 3:7–10; Galatians 2:20).
- ★ Highlight from the following scriptures (Genesis 39:2–12, 19–20; Acts 5:27–29, 38–42; Ruth 1:15–18; John 6:5–12; Matt 26:6–13) the characters that lived for Christ, stating the cost they had to pay.
- ★ Discuss practically how a Christian can live for Christ amid economic hardship and the looming conflict and violence.

CONCLUSION

A desire to live for Christ must be backed up with a solid resolve to count everything as loss for the sake of knowing Jesus and living for Him. The Lord is in a great search for men and women who are willing to place their lives on the altar of Jesus with no decision to take them back. It is on the shoulders of such men and women that the gospel will be carried to the ends of the earth.

CHRIST'S WITNESS 1

Acts 1:8

INTRODUCTION

This verse is part of the final instructions Jesus gave to His disciples before His ascension into heaven. It encapsulates a significant promise and commission from Jesus to His followers. This promise refers to the empowering work of the Holy Spirit, enabling them to carry out the mission given to them effectively. The disciples were commissioned to be witnesses for Jesus, sharing their firsthand experiences and knowledge of His teachings, death, and resurrection. They bore witness to the transformative power of the gospel. This promise of power from the Holy Spirit extends beyond personal edification; it serves the purpose of a global mission.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What do you understand by the word "Witness?"
- ★ How are we supposed to Witness Christ (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:5; Romans 1:16; Acts 13:5;16; 25:32; 5:30–32; Matthew 28:20)?
- ★ Discuss the Necessity of Witnessing Christ (Mark 16:15; Acts 1:4–5; 26:18, 10:43; John 15:16).
- ★ According to these Scriptures (Mark 13:10, Matt. 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, Jer. 1:5), where should Christ be witnessed?

CONCLUSION

Yahweh is seeking men who will stand as His representatives everywhere and every time. He is still interested in the souls of lost men out there. Desire an outpouring as you intentionally carry out the Master's heartbeat; avail yourself and speak (2 Tim 4:2). May you carry Jesus to the nations of the earth. SHALOM!

CHRIST'S WITNESS 2

Acts 1:8

INTRODUCTION

As we noted in our last study, those who have experienced salvation and are filled with the Holy Spirit are entrusted with the task of proclaiming the transformative presence of Jesus, who saved and restored them. We are called to function as His mouthpiece, ambassadors, and representatives, making His identity known to the world. Christ, often called the Light of the World, remains concealed unless we radiate His light through our actions and words. As we engage in this study, may we embody the role of witnesses, boldly shining His light for all to see in Jesus' name.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- ★ From Acts 1:8, where do we start witnessing for Christ? Why is this important?
- ★ What does witnessing Christ in Judea, Samaria, and the world mean, as we can see in Acts 1:8 and Matthew 28:18–20?
- ★ (i) Discuss the following people who were witnesses for Christ in their time and the impact they made:
 - a. The disciples (Matthew 28:18–20).
 - b. The man born blind (John 9:13–15, 25b).
 - c. Paul (Acts 9:22).
 - d. Mary Magdalene and other women (Mark 16:1–2; 9–11).
 - e. The Samaritan Woman (John 4:28–30, 39).
- ★ (ii). How can we witness and impact our time like they did?
- ★ What are the hindrances for an effective witnessing for Christ (Isaiah 59:1–2, Acts 19:13–19)?

CONCLUSION

As a witness for Christ, we are to make Him known to everyone so that all will come to know and experience Him as we have experienced. Our prayer should be that we become a living witness of who Jesus Christ is to the people we come in contact with.

STUDY 28

CHRIST THE MEDIATOR

1Timothy 2:5–6; Hebrew 9:15

INTRODUCTION

Ever since the fall of humanity, sinners have been unable to approach God without going through a mediator. Scripture reveals this truth in many ways, particularly in establishing the old covenant priesthood. As we have seen, only those who held the priestly vocation could enter into the holiest parts of the Tabernacle, where God made His presence manifest (Numbers 3:5–10).

However, Scripture also recognizes that these old covenant mediators were ultimately insufficient. The old covenant mediators had to offer sacrifices for their transgressions, which meant that they were unable to deal with the problem of sin finally. Even the sacrifices they offered were not ultimately effectual: Animal sacrifices did not provide true atonement, but they were the means God appointed that allowed Him to pass over the sins of Israel out of gracious forbearance, knowing that those sins would one day be dealt with by the atonement and mediation of Christ. A mediator is a go-between who can represent the interests of both parties.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- ★ In your own understanding, explain the role of a mediator.
- ★ Describe how Christ has become the perfect mediator (Romans 3:25; 8:34; 1Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24; 9:15).
- ★ Outline the features of the good mediator and relate them to the lives of believers nowadays. What are the similarities and differences (Genesis 18:22–32; 20:7; Deuteronomy. 5:27; Leviticus 9:7; Job 33:23)?
- ★ Christ is not one of many doors through whom men may approach God. He is the one and only door. Discuss this fact in line with the following scriptures: Heb. 1:3, 3:1-6, 7:26-28
- ★ How have believers nowadays neglected Christ (John 8:42; Acts 7:50–57; Zephaniah 1:1–6)?
- ★ Suggest possible ways on how believers should accept Christ as the only mediator in all situations.

CONCLUSION

By dying as the sinless sacrifice for all who put their faith in Him, Christ provides the avenue for sin's forgiveness. This mediatorial sacrifice is offered for all kinds of people without distinction. Christ is the only mediator available to us whether we are rich or poor, male or female, king or servant. In His vocation as the Mediator, Christ sacrifices Himself and intercedes for us (Hebrews 7:25).

THE RECONCILIATORY POWER OF CHRIST

2Corinthians 5:17–21

INTRODUCTION

Reconciliation is restoring a relationship to a harmonious state after a dispute; it is bringing accord out of discord between two parties. Christian reconciliation is the work of God through Christ by which He restores mankind to a favourable relationship with Himself. Since the fall of man in the garden, God has planned to reconcile man to Himself. The only means for man to be reconciled is through the shedding of blood. No animal in the entire universe has the blood with the potency to deliver man from the lost relationship. Thus, God made Jesus the sacrificial lamb out of His mercy.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What is reconciliation (Romans 5:10)?
- ★ Why does a man need reconciliation (Romans 3:23; 6:23; Genesis 3:8)?
- ★ Are there other ways to save a man except through Jesus Christ (Acts 4:2; John 14:6; John 6:44)?
- ★ What does it mean that we were entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation (2Corinthians 5:19; Hebrews 2:17–18)?

CONCLUSION

The Bible is full of stories of men and women who have enjoyed the mercies of God that reconciled them to Him and also between men and fellow men. Joseph was gracious to create room to reconcile with his brothers after all they did to him (Genesis 37, 41, 42). The prodigal son in Luke 15:11–32 was reconciled to his father after squandering his father's wealth, analogous to our blessings in Christ Jesus. Having experienced the reconciliatory power of God, we should, therefore, positively respond to it.

STUDY 30

CHRIST THE AUTHOR AND FINISHER OF OUR FAITH Hebrews 12:2

INTRODUCTION

Jesus is One with God, the author of Scripture by which our way of life is defined. Jesus Christ pioneered or founded the new way through his exemplary life and teaching, and he sealed our trust at the resurrection. Jesus, as the "Author of Our Faith," implies that Jesus is the originator and source of our belief in Him, having laid the foundation of Christianity through His life, death, and resurrection. It also means that Jesus initiates our faith, sustains it and brings it to completion, being the culmination or perfecter of our faith. Christ, as the finisher of our faith, gave us the fullness of himself so that we would yield spiritual fruit "and God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8).

DISCUSSION

- ★ Discuss how Jesus pioneered salvation and growth for the faithful. (Romans 5:8–10; Acts 4:12; Titus 3:5; Ephesians 2:8–9).
- ★ Discuss why we must depend on Christ as the author and finisher of our faith (Psalms 16:8; 73:26; 121:1–3; John 15:5; Romans 8:8).
- ★ Discuss how our faith can be developed as believers (John 1:12; 3:16; Joshua 1:8; Matthew 4:4; James 1:22).
- ★ Read the following scriptures (Hebrews 3:7–19; 4:1–11; 11:6; Matthew 21:22; Luke 1:37; Proverbs 3:5–6) and discuss some of the benefits of God's redemption in Christ Jesus.

CONCLUSION

Our good work is a manifestation of what God has accomplished in us through His grace, coupled with our willingness to let Him refine us. Since Jesus initiates and perfects our faith, we must run the race with our gaze firmly fixed on Him. He is both the starting point and the fulfilment of the promises. In this context, completion doesn't merely signify the end of a narrative but rather the realization of salvation, accessible to all who accept this gift.

STUDY 31

CHRIST THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH 1Corinthians 3:11

INTRODUCTION

This verse emphasizes the exclusive and central role of Jesus Christ as the foundation of the Christian faith. The Christian faith is built entirely on Him; no alternative foundation can replace or supplement His role. In Christian theology, Jesus is considered the cornerstone—the essential and primary element upon which the entire belief system rests. He is the basis of salvation, redemption, and the Christian life. At the church's helm stands Jesus, serving as its ultimate authority and source. All the activities and teachings within the church must emanate from Him, for He is the wellspring of its essence. This foundational truth finds expression in Peter's declaration of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, a proclamation to which Jesus affirmed, expressing His intent to build His church upon this profound truth (Matthew 16:16–18). Additionally, Jesus emphasized the responsibility of His followers to "shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood" (Acts 20:28).

DISCUSSION

- ★ From the following scriptures, discuss what makes Christ the church's foundation (Ephesians 2:20; 1Peter 2:4; 6–7; Revelation 21:14; 1Corinthians 3:10–11).
- ★ Discuss the nature of the church that Christ is its sole foundation (Ephesians 2:19—2; 4:1–16; 1Corinthians 16:19).
- ★ Identify and discuss some attributes of a church that Christ is not the foundation. (Ephesians 4:18; 1Samuel 16:14).
- ★ How can the above issues mentioned in no. 3 above be addressed?

CONCLUSION

Finally, let us be thankful to God for Jesus Christ, the only foundation which he has laid, and for the abundant evidence which he has given us of the divinity of his character, the perfection of his righteousness, the acceptance of his sacrifice, the prevalence of his intercession, and the future glory of his kingdom. Let us build our faith, hope, profession, obedience, and experience on him as our foundation. We must not

pretend to hold the foundation unless we are building thereon, for a foundation is of no use but to build upon. Having begun at the right foundation, let us be careful that our structure consists of the best materials and avoid all impure and perishable mixtures as much as possible.

STUDY 32

THE DESIRE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT CHRIST **Philippians 3:8–11**

INTRODUCTION

Someone has wisely pointed out, "One of the most dangerous forms of human error is forgetting what one is trying to achieve". That is especially true in the Christian life. It's easy to get side tracked. We need to be clear and focused at all times on what it is we're after. Christianity is not a religion of rules and rituals that we must work at keeping to climb the ladder to heaven—instead, a personal, growing relationship with Jesus. Personal experiential knowledge of Christ is the core of Christian desire. Thus, knowing Christ is not merely an affirmation of our doctrinal statement on paper but an on-going personal knowledge of Christ in our lives. That is why to know Christ was the overarching ambition of Paul's desire. This discussion below guides us on the need to know Jesus.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- ★ What does it mean to know Jesus?
- ★ Discuss why a Christian should desire to know more about Jesus (John 10:10; 14:6; 17:3; 1John 4:9).
- ★ Knowing Jesus is far beyond intellectual understanding but involves a personal relationship and commitment to following his teachings. Discuss
- ★ Discuss how we can develop a solid relationship with Jesus (Jeremiah 29:12-13; James 4:8; Joshua 8:1).
- ★ Sometimes, the desire to know about Jesus comes with challenges. Discuss some of the challenges (John 15:20–25; 16:33).

CONCLUSION

It is important to know Jesus Christ and become more like Him. Is that your goal? If not, you need to ignite the desire to know more about Jesus and be like Him; you will see opportunities all over the place to apply it. You will have temptations where you need to rely on the power of His resurrection. You will encounter irritations where you must learn to be more conformed to His death. View it all as an opportunity to know Christ and remind you that it is preparing you for that great day when He comes and you will be raised in glory with Him for all eternity. That's our goal!

BUILDING EACH OTHER IN FAITH**Ephesians 2:20–22****INTRODUCTION**

Embracing your identity as a child of God comes with the expectation of cultivating warm connections with fellow Christians, as illustrated in Paul's letter to the Ephesians. This relationship is depicted in two significant ways. Firstly, each believer is viewed as a vital member of the body of Christ. Secondly, the people of God are evolving into a sacred dwelling, akin to a temple for God's presence. According to Ephesians 2:20–22, this temple is constructed on the foundation of Apostles and Prophets, with Christ Jesus serving as the cornerstone. It emphasizes that believers are being built together into a dwelling place for God through the Spirit as part of this process. For us to attain maturity and serve as a worthy dwelling for God, we need to uplift one another mutually. This process is called edification, as outlined in Ephesians 4:12. Evangelism initiates spiritual birth, while edification fosters spiritual growth. The ultimate goal of edification is attaining spiritual maturity and likeness to Christ. When each member actively contributes to the growth of others within the body, the collective entity matures, flourishing in health and vitality.

DISCUSSION

- ★ How do we build each other (Ephesians 4:29)?
- ★ Discuss the ways we can serve others (Ephesians 4:32; Romans 12:10; Philippians 2:4; Galatians 5:13).
- ★ Explain why a personal relationship with God is crucial in building another (Colossians 3:16).
- ★ What are the key points to building others in faith (Romans 12:15; 15:14; Galatians 6:1–2; Matthew 18:15; 1 Corinthians 12:26)?

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, commit to regular gatherings for mutual upliftment. Include reflective questions about God's work in your lives, pressing needs, and ways to minister to each other. Foster open communication and utilize this time for sharing Scriptures, mutual accountability, and collective prayer, aiming for spiritual maturity and unity in Christ (Ephesians 4:13).

STUDY 34

BUILDING FAITH IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:1; Luke 17:5

INTRODUCTION

Apostle Paul provides perhaps the best-known definition of faith: "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Faith in Jesus Christ is the conviction and assurance of (1) His status as the only begotten son of God, (2) His infinite atonement, and (3) His resurrection—and all that these fundamental realities entail for us. Paul includes faith in the list of spiritual gifts (1Corinthians 12:9). Faith indeed comes by the Spirit, yet as the Bible dictionary notes, "although faith is a gift, it must be cultured and sought after until it grows from a tiny seed to a great tree." We can do much to influence and expand the endowment of faith we receive through the Holy Spirit.

DISCUSSION

- ★ How does a man get saved (Romans 3:23, 28, Galatians 2:16)?
- ★ How is a man of faith supposed to live (Galatians 3:11; Matthew 4:4)?
- ★ Can a believer increase/grow his faith (Luke 17:5, 2Peter 1:5–11; 2Thessalonians 1:3)?
- ★ How can we build faith in Christ (2Corinthians 5:7; Psalms 119:16; Romans 12:2; Hebrews 12:28–29; Jude 1:20)?

CONCLUSION

Your faith in Christ will grow wonderfully as you seek day by day to know and do the will of God. Faith, already a principle of action in you, will also become a principle of power. Faith indeed comes by the Spirit, yet as the Bible Dictionary notes, "Although faith is a gift, it must be cultured and sought after until it grows from a tiny seed to a great tree."

CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST 1

Colossians 1:18–19

INTRODUCTION

Jesus Christ is the "head" of the body, which is the church, while the "members" of the body are seen as members of the church. Church is the family of God, the temple of the Holy Spirit, a Holy nation and the body of Christ. Church as the body of Christ is such a significant term to believers and a good way to understand the manifestation of Christ's love to his followers. If members of the church are seen as the body of Christ, then only the spirit of Christ can mortify the deeds of the body and crucify the old man from all. As a church, Jesus is the most complete model that God has placed before us; we are to follow in his footsteps as members of his body body. Therefore, the spiritual unity of believers as a church is paramount. We must be aware of those things contesting to win our attention and making our focus on Christ difficult. Peter's experience of walking on water (Mathew 14:25–31) is one example of how we can be distracted in our spiritual journey.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What makes the church a body of Christ? (Ephesians.4:15–16)
- ★ If the church is the body of Christ, why do some people consider the church as a pastor's business (2Corinthians 12:13–20)?
- ★ Are there any differences between the body of Christ and the church? Discuss according to the following verses Colossians 1:18; 1Corinthians 12:13, 27.
- ★ Does 21st-century Christians value the church as the body of Christ? Discuss in relation to 1Corinthians 5:1–4; 9–13, 1Corinthians 1:10–13.

CONCLUSION

God wants the church to live a Christ-like life because it is his body" so the world can read, feel, see and know that Christ truly lives in the church (we are members of the body). By so doing, the world will be drawn near to salvation and deliverance. If we seriously desire to walk in all the footsteps of Christ as members of his body and to experience abundant life, we should, therefore, strive to be rooted in Christ.

CHURCH AS THE BODY OF CHRIST 2

1Corinthians 12:12–31; Ephesians 4:11–13

INTRODUCTION

The church has faced different problems and challenges since its very inception. We begin with variations in opinion about the gospel of Christ (1Corinthians 1:10–13). Division in the church is no longer news; tribalism and sectionalism are mostly key players. Denominational differences have already eaten up the church. But the pressing question remains: why? Does it mean the body is no longer one? Remember, since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, we should exercise them accordingly. We are one body, for by one spirit, we were all baptized into one body.

Therefore, as a church, let us strive to build up the body of Christ until we all attain the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the son of God since we have the grace given to us, each to the proportion of his faith and service (1Corinthians 12:12–31). If we are the members of the body, then we have to live a Christ-like life. The believers were first called Christians in Antioch because their lives resembled Christ; the unfortunate reality today is that many profess to be Christians, but their way of life does not correspond to the lifestyles of Christ.

DISCUSSIONS

- ★ Discuss the challenges the church as the body of Christ faces in the 21st century.
- ★ What brings segregation in the church today despite being one body (1Corinthians 1:10–13)?
- ★ How can the body stand amidst the challenges within and without (Colossians 3:15; Ephesians 4:4; 15–16)?
- ★ Discuss people's perception of the church as the body of Christ (John 2:19–22).
- ★ How do you relate church members today to the body of Christ based on the following scriptures (1Corinthians 12:25–26; Ephesians 4:15–16; 4:25; 5:29–30)

CONCLUSION

If we must stand the test of time and life as a church, we must develop a deeper level of love and intimacy with Christ; and his word to be rooted in us. When confronted with scores of different opinions or challenges, we can overcome them because the great I AM is our root. God is counting on us as a body to fully implement His kingdom principles

THE GOSPEL OF TRUTH

Romans 1:16

INTRODUCTION

The influence of the gospel should not merely offer hope to sinners, allowing them to perceive the salvation of Christ as a matter of free grace while persisting in the transgression of God's law. When the light of truth illuminates the mind, and one comprehends the extent of their transgressions, a transformation occurs. They reform their ways, becoming loyal to God by drawing strength from their Saviour and leading a new and purer life. The gospel's ultimate purpose is to cultivate supreme, sanctified love for God and unselfish love for one another. This love surpasses mere benevolence or philanthropy; it emanates from a heart purified from all defilement. The gospel, revealed by God, aims to elevate humanity from sin to righteousness. Those who embrace the gospel continually reach for the divine, persistently relying on the strength of their Savior. Their hearts become a dwelling place for the Holy Spirit as they daily proclaim the praises of the One who called them out of darkness into His marvellous light. It is not enough to merely profess belief in the gospel; true sanctification by the gospel is essential. Without victory over sin, our professions hold no significance. The thorns that are merely cut off but not uprooted will grow rapidly, overshadowing the soul. As we delve into the discussion questions, may the Lord Almighty grant us insight into understanding the gospel of truth. Amen.

DISCUSSION

- ★ How does the Bible define the gospel (Romans 6:1–16; 2Corinthians 4:4; 1Timothy 1:11)?
- ★ According to the following scriptures (Romans 5:16; 8:7, 2Corinthians 5:18–19, 21; Colossians 1:20–21), what is the basis of salvation?
- ★ What fruit will the Spirit bring forth in those who obey the gospel (Galatians 5:22–23; Psalm 92:14; John 15:5; Romans 7:4; Ephesians 5:9; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:10)?
- ★ How does Paul express his abhorrence of the teaching that Christians

may continue in sin (Romans 6:1–2; Romans 6:15; Galatians 5:13; 1Peter 2:16; Jude 4)?

- ★ How successful was the early church in preaching the gospel (Colossians 1:23; Acts 8:4)?

CONCLUSION

Abundant assurances are granted to those who remain steadfast in their allegiance to God. The promise states that if you persist in unwavering faith, grounded and settled, and resist being swayed from the hope of the gospel, the Redeemer will present you holy, unblemished, and irreproachable in the presence of His Father. This assurance serves as an extraordinary beacon of hope for Christians, surpassing anything in this world, as they stand firm in anticipation of the fruitful rewards promised by the gospel.

THE POWER OF CHRIST**Luke 10:19; Ephesians 1:20–21****INTRODUCTION**

Jesus Christ possesses unparalleled power in both heaven and earth. His abilities surpass all that we can ask or imagine, and he has the authority to subdue all things unto himself. Being God in the flesh, the Son of God, he performed miracles, signs, wonders, the great atonement, and the resurrection—each a testament to his divine nature. Our citizenship is in heaven, and we eagerly await the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power enabling him to subject all things to himself, will transform our lowly bodies to be like his glorious body. Believers have been bestowed with an extraordinary gift—the authority, in his name, to pray and wield authoritative power, causing every adverse circumstance to bow before him. Today, we acknowledge the importance of knowledge, yet it is the power in the name of Jesus Christ that brings about transformation, not just mere knowledge (2 Tim 3:15). When Christ's light shines on the lives of believers, remarkable things happen. Our focus is on spiritual power, which surpasses all other forms.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What understanding do you have about the power of Christ today (Colossians 1:17; Matthew 8:27; 1 Corinthians 1:24)?
- ★ How can we exercise the power we have in Christ Jesus (1 Corinthians 1:24; Philippians 3:10; Ephesians 1:19; 1 Peter 1:5)?
- ★ Discuss the divine powers of Christ in the following aspects:
 - a. Atonement b. Resurrection c. Healing (Philippians 3:10; 1 Corinthians 1:18; Hebrews 1:3; Matthew 10:1; John 2:19–21; Luke 5:17).
- ★ Explore the promises made through the power of Christ for those who believe (Mark 16:17–18, Matthew 10:1, John 10:20–30, Hebrews 7:25; Ephesians 5:14).
- ★ Discuss the manifestation of Christ's power in his second coming. Are 21st-century believers ready for it? (Mark 13:26; 2 Peter 1:16; John 5:25–26).

CONCLUSION

When Christ becomes the object of our faith, we entrust him to live in us and accept his leadership in our lives. As we decrease, Christ increases. The ultimate goal for each one of us is to have a life completely hidden in Christ, where we trust in his power to transform and guide us.

THE COST OF BEING A DISCIPLE OF CHRIST Luke 14:25–27; Matthew 16:24–26

INTRODUCTION

The term "Cost" resonates deeply in the Nigerian context, given the challenges in meeting basic needs. Cost encompasses the hardships and difficulties associated with fulfilling tasks, whether assigned by others or arising from life's circumstances—physical, emotional, or spiritual. Within the spiritual dimension of discipleship, cost transcends mere folklore; it is a palpable reality. Disciples of Christ face persistent challenges in aligning themselves with Him, a struggle that spans generations. Jesus acknowledged that those who follow His radical path must be prepared to endure significant costs. Self-denial, a pivotal aspect of this journey, is a demanding commitment that Jesus explicitly addressed. Disciples may face opposition and persecution due to their association with Jesus, but those who endure will be blessed with eternal life, having overcome the world. The allure of worldly pleasures threatens our spiritual growth, diverting us from our true path. Loving the world and its luxuries is incompatible with serving Jesus. A call to take up one's cross and follow Him is a directive to enter the world, making disciples of all nations. Despite the challenges, believers are assured of Jesus' continuous presence, a testament to the compassionate nature of our Father. Though daunting, our present sufferings pale compared to the glory awaiting us. Hence, believers are encouraged to persevere with faith and endurance, knowing that victory belongs to them in the name of Jesus.

DISCUSSION

- ★ Examine the difficulties faced by individuals in their discipleship journey (Matthew 26:69–75; 27:3–5; Acts 5:1–11).
- ★ Explore Jesus' admonishment on earthly possessions as hindrances to the believer's relationship with Him (Mark 10:16–26).
- ★ Delve into the significance of self-denial as a rigid criterion in discipleship (Matthew 16:24–26).
- ★ Identify challenges encountered in daily life during the discipleship journey.

CONCLUSION

The challenges that test our faith as disciples are numerous, yet we find solace in knowing that Jesus bore the ultimate cost on the cross. There is no comparison between the difficulties we face and what Christ endured. Therefore, our responsibility is to run the race with unwavering faith, focusing on heavenly things as directed by the Holy Scriptures.

STUDY 40

CHRIST: THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE

Matthew 7:1–5; Romans 2:16

INTRODUCTION

In His infinite love and compassion, God has provided a straightforward path for His chosen people to attain the promised glory without unjust judgment in a world marked by human judgment, where false judgments may prevail due to an inability to accurately discern inner shortcomings. God, in His wisdom, appointed Jesus Christ as the righteous judge. Unlike human judges, Jesus doesn't judge with favouritism or nepotism but with righteousness entrusted to Him by the Father. A righteous life is defined by faithfulness (Habakkuk 2:4). Jesus emphasized the surpassing righteousness required for entry into the kingdom of heaven, going beyond that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law (Matthew 5:20). The righteous are destined to inherit eternal life, a truth exemplified by Jesus willingly accepting the consequences of our actions on the cross (1Peter 3:18). Jesus, the righteous judge, evaluates not by outward appearances but with righteousness, rendering fair decisions for the needy and the poor.

Therefore, believers are admonished not to pass judgment based on mere appearances but to judge correctly (Isaiah 11:4, John 7:24). The imminent time approaches when secrets will be revealed, and judgment will commence, starting with God's people. On that day, the righteous judge will come in His righteousness, judging the dead and the living according to their deeds (2Timothy 4:1, Revelation 20:12).

DISCUSSION

- ★ Explore the reasons why some Christians pass false judgments on their fellow believers while engaging in the same sins (Matthew 7:1–5).
- ★ Analyze the reasons for the lack of righteousness in passing judgments among clergy and church members.
- ★ Examine the contrast between Jesus, the righteous judge, who assesses inner deeds, and the tendency to hide wrongs before others (1Peter 4:5, Romans 2:16).
- ★ Reflect on your personal approach to judging and settling disputes among people. Do you judge correctly or unjustly?

CONCLUSION

Let us, therefore, refrain from judging others based solely on appearances and, instead, judge with fairness and truth. Jesus, the righteous judge, discerns the hidden and visible deeds, ensuring righteous and correct judgment. As He has lifted the burden of sacrifice for forgiveness, may we all be liberated from unrighteous judgments in the name of Jesus.

STUDY 41

THE TRUE VINE

John 15:1–16

INTRODUCTION

To fully grasp the significance of the term "Vine," let's draw an analogy from agriculture. A farmer meticulously prepares the land, cultivates, waters, weeds, and prunes to ensure a fruitful harvest. In this context, any plant bearing fruit is considered a true plant within that garden or land. Jesus Christ, scripturally referred to as the first fruit or firstborn before creation, is the ultimate True Vine, and we are the branches of this fruitful vine. God serves as the Landowner and Gardener, committed to cultivating fruitfulness. Fruitless trees face elimination, but the true vine undergoes pruning and receives the necessary nutrients for increased fruitfulness. Our rootedness in this vine determines our potency. Without being firmly connected to Christ Jesus, we cannot effectively spread the gospel, as emphasized by His words, "if you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you."

Believers need consistent nourishment in their Christian lives. A genuine believer bears good fruit, and their lives are evident through their actions (Matthew 7:18–19). Living a godly life is akin to a tree planted by the riverside, bearing fruit in and out of season, with leaves that do not wither (Psalm 1:3–4). Remaining in Christ Jesus is crucial for producing a fruit worthy of our calling.

DISCUSSION

- ★ Explain how, as branches on the True Vine, believers stand to bear fruit that lasts forever through the pruning process (John 15:1–2, 16).
- ★ Consider the analogy of a tree planted by the streams of water and the branches of the True Vine not bearing fruit (Psalm 1:3–4; John 15:5–7). What factors may contribute to this condition?
- ★ Discuss the consequences of a Christian life without fruitfulness (Psalm 1:4; Matthew 7:19; Mark 11:12–14).

CONCLUSION

Our ability to accomplish anything significant, including bearing fruit, sustaining, guiding, and protecting, hinges on having Jesus in our lives. Without Him, we are incapable. Living a godly life tells the world that we are followers of Jesus Christ. The entrusted task is to go into the world, making disciples of all nations by sharing the good news with hearts in need (Matthew 28:19). In doing so, we bring glory to His name here on earth.

WITHOUT ME, YOU CAN DO NOTHING

John 15:1–11

INTRODUCTION

This is an impactful statement of our master Jesus Christ "Without Me, you can do nothing." Rooted in the Gospel of John, specifically chapter 15, verse 5, these words convey a profound truth through the metaphor of a vine and its branches. This imagery illustrates the intimate and essential connection between believers and Christ. The vine and branches metaphor invites us to explore the depths of our dependence on God. In a world that often champions self-sufficiency, Jesus challenges this narrative by proclaiming a timeless truth that transcends cultural norms. Abiding in Him is not a mere suggestion but a fundamental aspect of our Christian journey. It calls us to recognize that true strength, purpose, and productivity emanate from a deep connection to Jesus Christ. As we embark on this study, we will unravel how we can practically abide in Him daily and experience the transformative impact of living in intimate communion with Him.

DISCUSSION

- ★ Explore the significance of Jesus being the vine and believers as the branches (John 15:1–2).
- ★ Analyze the consequences of not abiding in Christ (John 15:4–6)
- ★ Reflect on the various fruits of the spirit and implication of not having them in a life of a believer. (Galatians 5:22–23)
- ★ Discuss the connection between abiding in Christ, bearing fruit, and experiencing the fullness of joy (John 15:8–11)

CONCLUSION

As we delve into Jesus' profound words in John 15, let's embrace the truth that we can do nothing without Him. May our study lead us to find strength, purpose, and fulfilment in abiding in Christ, bearing fruit that glorifies the Father, and experiencing the joy from a deep relationship with our Saviour.

STUDY 43

THE NEED FOR DWELLING IN THE LIFE OF ONE WHO IS ROOTED IN CHRIST

John 15:4–5; Galatians 2:20

INTRODUCTION

Being rooted in Christ forms the foundation of our faith, but dwelling in His life sustains and enriches our journey as believers. Dwell continually in His presence; it is not merely an option but a necessity. While being rooted in Christ is akin to planting a solid tree, dwelling in His life is like living in the shade of that tree, experiencing the richness of His presence that shapes our lives. Our Christian journey begins with accepting Christ as our Lord and Savior, establishing the foundation of our faith. However, living rooted in Christ is an ongoing growth and lifelong commitment. This dwelling strengthens our faith and leads to overflowing thankfulness. Dwelling in Christ's life is finding refuge and protection in His presence, prioritizing heavenly perspectives over earthly concerns. This discussion below explores the crucial need for those rooted in Christ to continually dwell in His life, understanding its transformative effect on our lives.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What does it mean to "remain" or "dwell" in Christ, as described in John 15:4–5?
- ★ Why does Jesus use the metaphor of a vine and branches to illustrate the concept of dwelling in Him?
- ★ According to this verse (Psalm 91:1), what is the outcome of remaining or dwelling in Christ's life?
- ★ How does the life of one rooted in Christ differ from a self-centred life (Galatians 2:20)?

CONCLUSION

Dwelling in the life of one rooted in Christ involves an ongoing, intentional choice to remain in His presence and live by faith in Him. As we dwell in Christ's life, our own lives are transformed, and we bear the fruit of His presence. It is not an option but a necessity for spiritual growth and effectiveness as Christians. This deliberate choice to abide in His presence, live by faith, and set our hearts and minds on heavenly things brings us into a more profound experience of the richness of His presence.

IMPORTANCE OF DISCERNING SPIRIT IN ROOTEDNESS 1John 4:1

INTRODUCTION

Establishing a firm foundation in faith is crucial in every believer's journey. This foundation requires a profound connection with spirituality and a keen ability for spiritual discernment. Being firmly rooted involves discerning spirits to distinguish between truth and deception, authenticity and falsehood, as emphasized in Matthew 7:15. One significant aspect of discernment is conforming to the truth, vital in affirming one's authenticity (1 Corinthians 2:12–13; Proverbs 2:3–5). Additionally, it strengthens convictions, helping believers solidify their beliefs by differentiating between what aligns with their faith and what contradicts it (Hebrews 5:14). Furthermore, discernment empowers individuals to resist temptation effectively. It ensures that choices made align with faith and values, contributing to a sense of rootedness and moral integrity (Philippians 1:9–11; Romans 12:12). The discerning spirit also guides decision-making, directing choices in line with spiritual principles (1 Kings 3:9; 4:29). Building authentic relationships within a spiritual community is another valuable outcome of discernment (Proverbs 119:66). This connection provides support, encouragement, and shared growth, contributing significantly to a sense of rootedness.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What does it mean to discern spirits? How does this spiritual gift relate to our faith journey (1 Corinthians 12:10)?
- ★ Why is discerning spirits important for maintaining a strong and rooted faith (Ephesians 6:11–12)?
- ★ Discuss instances in the Bible where characters needed to discern spirits (Matthew 4:1–11; Acts 16:16–18).
- ★ How can we cultivate the gift of discernment in our own lives? What practical steps can we take to sharpen this gift (Hebrews 5:14)?

CONCLUSION

Discerning spirits is a vital aspect of our faith journey. It helps us avoid deception, remain rooted in truth, and be guided by the Holy Spirit. By

discerning between what is of God and what is not, we can deepen our rootedness in Christ, strengthen our faith, and walk in the light of His truth. Therefore, seek the Holy Spirit's guidance and remain rooted in God's authentic, unchanging word.

THE PLACE OF SELF-EXAMINATION FOR ONE WHO IS ROOTED IN CHRIST

2Corinthians 13:5

INTRODUCTION

Self-examination should be a fundamental practice for every individual who are rooted in Christ. It plays a significant role in nurturing and deepening your relationship with Jesus, fostering personal growth, and ensuring a life aligned with Christian principles.

Let's closely look at place of self-examination for someone in Christ:

Self-examination allows believers to reflect on their faith journey, it helps us assess the authenticity of our faith, ensuring that we are truly rooted in Christ and not merely going through religious motions (2 Corinthians 13:5). It often leads to the recognition of sin and areas in our lives that are not in line with God's will. It prompts repentance and confession, which are essential for maintaining a close relationship with God (1 John 1:9). A believer who is not deliberate about this exercise regularly will end up running his race with no certainty whether he is on track or he is just doing an activity without productivity.

DISCUSSION:

- ★ Why is self-examination important for those who are rooted in Christ?
- ★ What does it mean to "examine yourselves" as mentioned in 2 Corinthians 13:5; Lamentations 3:40?
- ★ What are some potential benefits of regularly examining our hearts and actions in the context of our faith? Psalm 139:23-24
- ★ In Psalm 139, David invites God to search and know his heart. What can we learn from this example of openness and vulnerability in our relationship with God?
- ★ Discuss the idea of "returning to the Lord" as mentioned in Lamentations 3:40. How does self-examination help us draw closer to God?
- ★ Share personal experiences of times when self-examination led to spiritual growth or transformation in your life. Are there any common obstacles or challenges that people may face when attempting to examine themselves in the light of their faith?
- ★ How can these be overcome?

CONCLUSION

Self-examination is not a one-time event but an ongoing practice for those rooted in Christ. It serves as a spiritual mirror, helping individuals grow, deepen their faith, and maintain a close relationship with Jesus. Through self-examination, believers can continually align their lives with God's will and experience the transformative power of the Holy Spirit.

SET YOUR MINDS ON THE THINGS ABOVE

Colossians 3:1–2

INTRODUCTION

Colossians 3:1-2 delivers a powerful message, urging believers to "set your minds on things above, not on earthly things." This verse encapsulates a profound Christian teaching, challenging believers to prioritize spiritual matters over worldly concerns. In this Bible study, we will explore the significance of setting our minds on things above, examining the practical applications in our daily lives and understanding its impact on our faith journey.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What does it mean to set minds on things above, and how does this mindset differ from a worldly perspective (Colossians 3:1–2)?
- ★ Why must Christians prioritize heavenly values over earthly desires and ambitions, and how does this choice impact our attitudes and actions (Matthew 6:19–21; Philippians 3:19–20)?
- ★ What are some practical ways to cultivate a mindset focused on the things above in our daily lives, and how can we avoid being consumed by materialism and temporal concerns (1 Timothy 6:17; Romans 12:2)?
- ★ How does setting our minds on things above influence our relationships with others, including believers and non-believers (Colossians 3:12–14, 1 John 3:16–18)?

CONCLUSION

The directive of setting minds on things above is a guiding principle for Christian living. Aligning our thoughts and desires with heavenly realities transforms our attitudes, behaviours, and relationships. This mindset empowers believers to live purposefully, with integrity and unwavering faith, finding hope and fulfilment in God's promises. As we internalize this teaching, we can navigate life's challenges with grace and positively impact the world around us.

STUDY 47

THE PLACE OF SERVICE AND BEEN ROOTED IN CHRIST 1Samuel 3:1–11

INTRODUCTION

God expects that one should become active in His vineyard after being saved. He has called man to the place of partnership with divinity so as to enforce His will and purposes here on earth. But it will take one who is willing to go through the process of pruning, purging, and getting deeper in experience/encounter with God to partake effectively in this honourable task. The Bible said in a large house there are many vessels, some unto honour and some unto dishonour (2Timothy 2:20–21). The more you yield yourself for intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit the more you will be relevant and must effective in God's service.

DISCUSSION:

- ★ Discuss those things that are required in a man to serve. Rom. 12:1, 1Sam. 15:22, 1Samuel 3:9, 1Cor. 3:1-3, Col.4:12, Hebrews 5:14, 2Timothy 2:20-22, Matthew 9:36 and 2Tim. 2:15
- ★ What are the dangers of given major assignment to someone who is not rooted in Christ? 1Timothy 3:1-6, 1Cor. 13:11, Ecc. 10:16, Gal. 4:1-3
- ★ What kind of vessels is God expecting us to become? 2Timothy 2:20-21, Mark 2:22
- ★ God desire that we grow deeper in our walk with Him. Discuss this in the light of this scripture; Matthew 13:5, Luke 5:4-11

CONCLUSION

Heaven is always looking for people who will be a true reflection of Christ on earth. That will only become a reality of those who have built consistent walk with God and became intentional in getting deeper with God daily. We live in a world where young people are craving for the pulpit but in a real sence they are not properly disciple to assume that assignment.

The lord grant us the desire to go deeper daily with God.

FOLLOWING THE STEPS OF THE MASTER

John 14:6

INTRODUCTION

Jesus declared, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6). Following Jesus goes beyond mere belief; it requires putting our faith into action and aligning our lives with His teachings. In this study, we will explore the profound concept of following the steps of the Master, delving into the key ways in which Jesus lived His life and discovering how we can apply His teachings to lead a fulfilling and meaningful life.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What does it mean to follow Jesus (John 14:6; John 12:26; Matthew 16:24)?
- ★ What are some of the key ways in which Jesus lived His life (Matthew 11:29; Philippians 2:3–8; 1 Peter 2:21–25)?
- ★ How can we apply Jesus' teachings to our own lives (Matthew 7:12; Matthew 22:37–39; 1 John 4:7–8)?
- ★ What challenges do we face in following Jesus (Matthew 10:34–39, 2 Timothy 3:12, 1 Peter 4:12–19)?
- ★ How can we support each other in following Jesus (Hebrews 10:24–25; Galatians 6:2; 1 Corinthians 12:12–27)?

CONCLUSION

Apostle Paul confidently urged others to follow his example as he followed the example of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1). Jesus stands as the perfect example for us to follow, and caution is necessary when elevating human figures, even well-known preachers as substitutes for the Master. May we find the grace to walk in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, our perfect example.

GUARD YOUR WAYS

1Timothy 4:16

INTRODUCTION

In 1Timothy 4:16, Apostle Paul advises believers to "guard their ways." This succinct phrase holds profound significance in Christian teachings, emphasizing the importance of steadfastness, discernment, and spiritual vigilance. The verse encourages adherents to be rooted and built up in Jesus Christ, steadfast in faith, and abounding in gratitude. It serves as a reminder to be watchful, protecting one's beliefs and actions from external influences that might lead them astray from the teachings of Christ.

DISCUSSION

- ★ What does Paul meant by telling Timothy to "watch or take heed" 1Timothy 4:16
- ★ Discuss the warning against being taken to captivity. Colossians 2:8; 2Corinthians 11:3–4
- ★ What is the transformative power of faith? Romans 12:2; Galatians 5:22–23
- ★ What is the role of the Church in guarding one's faith? Hebrews 10:24–25; James 5:16

CONCLUSION

Colossians 2:6 impacts timeless wisdom, urging individuals to safeguard their faith and behaviour. The counsel emphasizes the importance of remaining rooted in Christ and vigilant against detrimental influences. The call to "guard your ways" serves as a spiritual directive, prompting Christians to stand firm, exercise discernment, and establish deep roots in their faith. This commitment leads to a life that mirrors the teachings and love of Jesus Christ.