

**The Secret
to
Waking Up
the
Pew Potatoes**

John-Mark Wilson

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Publisher's Statement

Some time back I received a letter from John-Mark Wilson requesting copies of one of our books for his school, **Tent Makers School of Preaching**, an on-line training program. In corresponding with John-Mark I soon discovered that he is a unique preacher and that he is getting some things done that have been neglected. For one thing, through his school he is reviving the concept that it is possible to take a small congregation and develop it to bring about a substantial amount of spiritual and numerical growth.

Since our first contact we have been in touch with each other quite often. John-Mark has been kind enough to put our magazine, *The Voice of Truth International*, and our books, on his web page.

One of the projects that has already grown out of John-Mark's work is this book, **The Secret to Waking Up the Pew Potatoes**. These pages are filled with a detailed plan on how to wake up the local church and to get things on the move again. Every eldership and preacher of the gospel will surely want their own copies.

We expect to hear much more out of John-Mark in the future. He and his family presently live and work with the church in Hayti, Missouri.

J.C. Choate
Winona, MS
September 1, 2002

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Introduction

Growing in Attendance from 39 to 94 in Just Six Months

The older congregation you attend can double or even triple in attendance, if you apply the principles within these pages. Our Christian bookstores are filled with wonderful ideas for evangelizing our communities. Yet, hundreds of splendid ideas are ineffective, if we don't understand how to implement them.

This book is designed to function as an action-plan for small, older congregations nation-wide. When we look across this great country of ours, we discover many congregations struggling to simply keep alive! Many would do anything to keep from closing their doors. Yet, they feel powerless as their numbers continue to decline.

The mission and vision of the Lord's church needs to be brought back to the forefront. Many congregations continue to shrink because they have shifted from Christ's mission to simply "assembling with the Saints". Assembling is important. In fact, it's commanded (Hebrews 10:24-26). But, this is not the primary mission of our Lord and His church. "Church" is from the Greek word "*ekklesia*" meaning "the called out"; in this case, "the called out" of the world (Romans 1:5,6; 1 Corinthians 1:2). We are called out of the world by the Gospel (2 Thessalonians 2:14). Upon our obedience, we are saved and added to the church (Acts 2:36-47). As a Christian, we are now part of the body of Christ,

(Ephesians 1:22,23; 1 Corinthians 12:13-27); therefore, we should emulate Christ in our daily lives. **His mission is Our mission!** Jesus' mission was "*to seek and to save the lost*" (Luke 19:10), and our mission should be no different.

The biblical system, presented in this publication, will empower the preacher, or any concerned member of this "type" of congregation, to ignite what is present in the form of talent, knowledge and ability. Not only does the reader learn how to recapture the vision of the early church, but he also learns how to motivate others to do the same. The Word of God provides a powerful pattern for church growth! The New Testament is saturated with examples of common, everyday people doing extraordinary things with God's help. Christians who worship at smaller congregations, who are only interested in assembling, have seen glory days fade into their magnificent past.

Many sit back on their padded pews and wonder, "What happened to all the people who used to attend services?" I have affectionately named these comfortably concerned Christians *Pew Potatoes*. No disrespect is meant by this title. I wish only to emphasize that, from the perspective of the "pew potato", something needs to be done, but no one is sure what. Most are not even sure they can assist their brothers and sisters in Christ to overcome the problem.

The Lord's church will never begin experiencing new growth until its members realize the problem. Individual Christians must lift up the mirror of God's Word and take a good look at who they are spiritually! Our vision must be in line with Christ's vision.

Through empowering our congregation of 39 with "Recapturing the Vision" of Christ, our attendance began to

explode! We more than doubled in less than 6 months! Each member, whether young or old, was suddenly engaged in spreading the love of God to a lost and dying community. Members were excited with their new direction and vision. Visitors were amazed and lives were changed as those present began obeying the Gospel of Christ!

There is no reason why this Bible-based system can't work in the congregation you attend. If you have a handful of faithful members who are literate, can talk, pray and dial numbers on the telephone, then you have all you'll need for success. If you have been discouraged, just remember the powerful words penned by a man who had opportunity after opportunity to be discouraged, but instead decided to write, "*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me*" (Philippians 4:13).

You have an exciting year ahead. My hopes and prayers go with you as lives in your community are touched with the hand of God through earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4:7).

Evacuating the Padded Pew

Part One: Cleaning out the Potato Bin

One of the first things older church buildings need is a good spring-cleaning! If the facilities look old and worn out, visitors will think the faith of its members must be the same. Our buildings should say, "Welcome to our services, you are our honored guest!" In meeting this need for cleanliness, one should begin in three highly noticeable areas.

First, if your building has a nursery, check to see how the toys look. Like many older congregations, your toys may be thirty to forty years old, and no visiting mother would want them to even touch her new baby. You need to throw them out and buy some new, child-friendly, toys which will be easy to keep clean. Make sure there is a place also for babies to be changed and an area stocked with clean sheets, baby wipes and diapers. If there is a bulletin board in the nursery, put something colorful and inviting on it. Also, if you have a P.A. system where a speaker can be placed in the nursery, do that, and keep it turned on so they don't miss the message.

Secondly, make sure the directions to the bathrooms are clearly marked. As the visitor looks around, he can be comfortable in knowing which door to go through. Some older buildings have the bathrooms all the way down front through a door beside the pulpit. If your building is made this way, and you have signs explaining this, your visitors won't be wandering around during worship feeling uneasy in their search. If visitors seek to be

directed to the restrooms, only to discover they must walk up front where everyone will watch them, their lack of comfort might be just enough to keep them from attending again.

Third, the baptistery needs to be prepared. It could very well be that you haven't had many baptisms in the past few months, so the baptistery is either dry, green or freezing! If this is the case, now is the time to clean it and fill it with fresh water. Buy a box of chlorine tablets to keep it fresh and free of algae. I would also recommend getting some kind of circulating system to keep your water at a bearable temperature. If you baptize the elderly or some who are sick, you run the risk of putting them into shock or making their condition worse. As your "recapturing the vision" program begins to take shape and baptisms become more frequent, don't drain the baptistery between immersions. The water must be ready at all times!

As you are cleaning out the potato bin, I want you to look around in your auditorium and see what posters are up and take them down. Some congregations have posters or announcements up that have been hanging for ten to fifty years. I can guarantee that no one notices the poster anymore, even if it contains a sound message.

If you have a record and attendance board, clear it of your old record attendance. I spoke for a congregation in Alabama that had a record attendance of 150, but only about 30 were in attendance on that particular Sunday. I asked when the record was set, but no one remembered. Now friends, records like that can only serve to discourage you. If you have to stare at a number that's more than quadruple what your attendance is, how do you expect to feel accomplishment when you double and have 60!

Another thing you need to do, as you're getting your facilities prepared, is to provide pew Bibles. Many of the visitors who will be attending during your program will not have a Bible. They can either sit and wonder if they're in the church that teaches the truth, or you can provide them a Bible so they can see for themselves.

As visitors are in the foyer before and after worship, have a tract rack available. It needs to be stocked with tracts that deal with issues that affect the non-Christian, issues surrounding the family, the true church, suffering, smoking, dealing with loss, etc. — things they can apply right away.

Another good thing is to change your bulletin boards. Put bright, colorful messages about recapturing the vision of the early church. Make them big and bold enough to stand out. If this is done right, no one passing the board will miss its message of hope and change!

The fellowship hall also needs to be prepared. The tables must be cleaned and chairs counted to know just how many visitors and members may be seated during a fellowship meal. Wash and count your silverware to make sure there is enough.

Once the potato bin is clean and ready for visitors, you can move on to the next phase of increasing your attendance. If you try the program and don't clean up your facilities, making them appealing to the public, you won't have nearly as much success. Once you get the visitors in the door, they will see that you cared enough about them to make things as comfortable as possible; then, the door of their heart will begin to swing open!

Evacuating the Padded Pew

Part Two: Dealing with the Rotten Potatoes

As you know, one rotten potato can ruin the whole bin full! Therefore, it's important that we have a section on how to deal with those not interested in reaching the lost. With any size congregation, there are always some who aren't interested and by their actions try to halt the spread of Christianity. Most of these people aren't aware that's what they're doing. They think they are protecting the way things have always been done. They are comfortable and don't want anything to change with their standing in the church. They are more concerned with self-interests, traditions or finances than reaching out into the community. Even though these members will cause friction from the very beginning, their negative influence can be overcome through time and prayer. You need to make your intent clear, from the very start, that you are interested in saving souls and that it is your ultimate goal!

As you are preparing the building and the minds of the members for work, keep your goal ever before them. Most of all, don't let their discouragement get you down. Spend time with the members who are excited about recapturing the vision. It's this handful of excited Christians who will make the difference in your vision and goal toward saving souls. They will give you the energy boost to overlook the narrow vision of others and keep you running toward the goal at hand (Philippians 3:14).

Beloved, growth can happen in spite of those with limited vision! One of the things you should never stop doing is praying for all those in the congregation you attend (Luke 10:2). Prayers must be offered for members to increase in love and interest toward the lost in your community.

Evacuating the Padded Pew

Part Three: The Hidden Power of the Potato Clock

Many of the potatoes occupying the pew have great talent, and we must work to unlock this potential. Talent that goes unused will fade away (Matthew 25:28); therefore, we must find the spark of life left within the dormant member. Each of us has great and powerful things we can do to further the kingdom of Christ; we just discount them as being small and invaluable.

When I was in kindergarten, my teacher brought in a clock. It looked like an ordinary clock, except that it had a pocket on each side. She held the clock up and asked what we thought should be used to power the clock. Some suggested batteries, while others said it should simply be plugged in. All our guesses were wrong and after a while, she pointed to a couple of potatoes in a nearby bowl, then said, "How about those?" I remember thinking, "Did she just say potatoes?" But she did and placed one in each pocket of the clock. She then stuck a wire into both potatoes and something amazing began to happen; the clock started running! These spuds, which seemed for all obvious purposes worthless, were powering a device that looked to be beyond their capability. Friends, just like those spuds, members who have been trapped in the comfort of the padded pew can accomplish great things through the power that works with us (Ephesians 3:20)! It's important that we discover whose power we're using. We never accomplish anything for God all by ourselves. Christ works *through us*, providing strength to continue as our weariness invades (2 Corinthians 4:6).

During the summer a few years ago, I was teaching the Gospel in the northern region of Ghana, West Africa. There were eight of us on this particular trip and some who had never before preached. Yet, they came to proclaim the message of Christ. During the first few days, I was sitting listening to a gentleman teach a whole village about Jesus' one true church. He was not a seasoned speaker and his delivery worried me. When the invitation was given and 63 people came forward to be baptized into Christ, I realized the power wasn't in the delivery. It's not important that we speak with any eloquence of speech or have two or three degrees before evangelizing. The power is in the message! It truly hit home that we are only a vessel for a divine message, and it humbled me to be counted worthy to share with people the simple message of Christ.

Beloved, if we can breathe, we have the ability to teach the lost in our communities! Some give the excuse of, "I enjoy teaching just by example." It's true that the example of the faithful Christian can have an impact on people, but it doesn't tell them what it takes to become a Christian. We have two shoes to do that!

We should always encourage those who haven't been very active in the past to test the waters outside the padded pew. With little steps, no one will become frightened and run back to its comfort.

The beauty of this step-by-step method is that members are empowered to serve Christ in small ways that when culminated become a beacon of light for the lost. Just as the potato clock had hidden power, we too can energize one another to love and good works (Hebrews 10:24,25).

Pew Potato Power Points

Older congregations need a good spring-cleaning! If the facilities look old and worn out, visitors will think the faith of its members must be the same!

Review Questions

1. What areas need to be cleaned and prepared?

2. How does one deal with rotten potatoes?

3. What was so amazing about the potato clock?

4. How are Christians similar to potatoes?

How to Develop Your “Recapturing the Vision” Program!

Part One: How to Recapture the Vision of Christ and the Early Church

Just after the establishment of the church, the new disciples were on fire for Christ! Many heard the first gospel message proclaimed by Peter and were moved to make a major change in their life. Luke records this exciting new time in Acts 2:37,38 saying, *“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”* There was a multitude listening to those powerful words being presented on this great day and we can read a little farther to see the effects in the lives of those obeying the Gospel. *“Then they that gladly received His word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things in common; and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart,*

praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:41-47).

This explosion of growth didn't just stop with its profound beginning. Scripture says, "*the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.*" Day after day the early church grew and as persecutions became worse, these new Christians were scattered abroad (Acts 8:4). This great scattering only ignited the growth of the early church. They went everywhere preaching the word, as ultimately the world was turned upside-down!

One of the things we need to discuss is how congregations can recapture that lost vision. The preacher needs to stop saying, "I'll preach only on things containing meat, because all our members are Christians already." As visitors from the community come and sit in the assembly, they'll be choking on all that meat, without a drop of milk to wash it down! If you don't teach the non-Christian concerning the fundamentals of Christianity, you're never going to see much growth.

This information is focused on building up the numbers within the listening audience. The crowd should be full of people seeking Jesus! Months before the establishment of the Lord's church in A.D. 33, the Gospels tell of the huge multitudes who followed Christ. The crowd consisted of all kinds of ground. People whose hearts were thorny, some whose hearts were stony, but also others who were truly looking for Christ and His coming kingdom or church. As Jesus would begin to speak, a crowd would often gather. "*And He began again to teach by the sea side: and there was gathered unto Him a great multitude, so that He entered into a ship, and sat in the sea; and the whole multitude was by the sea on the land*" (Mark 4:1). It was to this mul-

titude that Jesus took opportunity to teach concerning the acceptance of the kingdom of God.

The message presented by Jesus was that of success in spreading the Gospel seed! After He created in their minds the image of four different types of listeners, he focused on the one that is called the good ground. It is here that we find the great promise of success for this program. *“And other fell on good ground, and did yield fruit that sprang up and increased; and brought forth, some thirty, and some sixty, and some an hundred”* (Mark 4:8). We want to focus on increasing the crowd so that we may find this good ground!

A question that may worry the Christian is, can we appeal to modern people and still remain Biblical? The needs, desires, and wants of people haven't changed over the centuries. People still need the comfort that security in Christ brings. Most people desire a level of success in their life and through earthly means they pursue their dreams and goals, only to fall short and feel as if something is missing. Christ fills the heart of the searching with hope that is unsurpassed by material things. As long as people exist, there will be a need to proclaim Christ to a lost and dying world!

Unfortunately, some today think the Bible is a dead letter, that it teaches things not applicable to the modern world with our fast-paced American society. But, it's just as relevant today as in the day in which it was penned. Its Biblical principles can be applied to a person with a chariot, stone pot and word-of-mouth entertainment, as well as a person with a Cadillac, microwave and big screen television!

There are hundreds of different approaches to reaching the

lost for Christ. As long as they are founded on the Word of God and don't violate biblical principles, they need to be implemented. The printed page will convert some, the radio will reach others, the television even others. We are simply given the message and told to "go". We aren't instructed on how to go. Therefore, we must use every means available to accomplish the task given us earthen vessels, to take the word and "go". *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world"* (Matthew 28:19,20).

Can we appeal to modern people and still remain biblical? Absolutely! *"Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever!"* (Hebrews 13:8).

Pew Potato Power Points

The preacher needs to stop saying, "I'll preach only on things containing meat, because all our members are Christians already." As visitors from the community come and sit in the assembly, they'll be choking on all that meat, without a drop of milk to wash it down!

Review Questions

1. Why build up the number of listeners?

2. What does a crowd consist of?

3. Can we appeal to the modern world and remain Biblical? _____

4. Is the ground mentioned in Mark 4:8 found in most crowds? _____

5. Are we told how to go and preach the Gospel? _____

How to Develop Your “Recapturing the Vision” Program

Part Two: How to Discover What Talents Are Available

The first thing you need to do is make a current attendance list. Who are the Christians you will be working with? Hopefully, you have some type of system for keeping up with people in your congregation. You may think your congregation is so small it hasn't needed an attendance list before. But, it's time for changes as you prepare for an increased crowd!

As you compile your list, write down the talents and abilities of each individual for use in the program. One of the things you need to emphasize to the church is that no one is useless! It doesn't matter if someone is as young as 10 or as old as 90, they can still take part in this program and effect great and powerful change in the life of the non-Christian.

After you make your list, ask the congregation if they would like to participate in helping the church to grow more rapidly. Tell them that if they can talk, use a telephone, or send out cards, they are needed by Christ in His church. In the next section, the combination of ways in which the program functions will be laid out, so prepare your mind for the flood of excitement and work that will soon be upon you.

I want to provide just a bit of encouragement before we enter this next section. Don't be overcome by discouragement when

only a handful of people want to use their talents by helping in the program. A handful of people is all God needs to make this a success! At the church where I currently preach, 8 people were all that were interested in the beginning. With this small courageous group we combined the strength of God and grew from 39 to 94 in only 6 months.

Here is a suggested chart for recording names and talents.

Member's Name	Talents and Abilities Available

Pew Potato Power Points

One of the things you need to emphasize is that nobody is useless! It doesn't matter if someone is as young as 10 or as old as 90, they can still effect great and powerful change in the life of the non-Christian!

Review Questions

1. Why is an attendance list important?

2. To be effective, what age must we be?

3. Why should one not be discouraged?

4. If one can talk, use a telephone or send cards, he can what?

How to Develop Your “Recapturing the Vision” Program

Part Three: Growing Through Eight Easy Steps

Step One — *Develop a Prospect List*

The first thing that needs to be done, before any contacts are made, is to complete a list of people in the community who you want to invite. Whoever is heading up your program needs to announce that names and telephone numbers will be asked for the next Wednesday evening during the class period. *This program will not work if you simply ask the membership to turn in names to you of people to compile on the list.* If you choose to get names that way, few if any will give you names! What you must do is **go from person to person down all the pews, asking for the name of someone they work with, are friends with, or past members who might attend if invited.**

Many of the names, as you go around the room in older congregations, will be those who have attended in the past and for one reason or another have left their first love. These are fine to have on your prospect list and need to be there, but what you are really looking for are new prospects. There are thousands of people who simply don't attend church services, anywhere, and among these souls is the good ground that Jesus spoke of. The former member, who has turned his back on Christ, has done so

willingly and will be very hard in most cases to coax back into the fold. Many years and prayers are often involved in bringing them back. Therefore, don't expect a rush of wayward members in just a few months.

Get as many names as you can. Write down the contact's name and phone number if they have it. If they don't have the number, ask what it's listed under in the phone book. It doesn't matter how many names you get, whether few or many, remember God is working with you.

Sample Prospect List

Name of Contact
Phone Number
Mailing Address

Step Two — *Begin a Wednesday Night Soul-Winning Class*

The second easy step is to provide a time to encourage one another. This is best accomplished with a Wednesday night soul winning class. It's during this class that you will review and update the contacts. New names will be given, while old prospects will be removed. It is essential that you have such a class during the length of your "Recapturing the Vision" program.

I want to begin to explain now the way in which the structure of the program works. Let us say that you asked everyone in the auditorium class to provide you with names. After making sure you have a phone number for each person, you discover that you have 20 prospects. These prospects are the most likely people to attend the assembly and hear the Word of God and so, naturally, you want them to be invited. I have found that when a person in a community gets an invitation from a preacher, he appreciates the invite, but he also assumes that it's the preacher's job to invite him. The way this system works is that the prospect gets invited by 2 different members during a one-week period. This creates within the person who is the good ground a sense of wonder and amazement. They then attend because they understand there are people who truly love and care for them. They want to see what Christian people have to offer.

On the other side, there are some who get upset because they were invited to the assembly. But, don't let that type of person discourage your efforts. They are not the good ground. They are not ready to face the truth of their being eternally lost. You can check back with them later and see if their minds have changed.

Many times tragedies within a family will lead them to question their eternal state and the person will become good ground for planting in the future.

Step Three — *Organize your Volunteers*

During your first Wednesday night soul-winning class, not only do you write down the names of your prospects in the community, but also the members willing to work. Before you ask for volunteers, let the congregation know that “Recapturing the Vision” is an easy system. No one really has to work very hard at all! Unfortunately, most people hate the thought of hard work, so they become apprehensive whenever something new is begun. Comfort them from the very beginning. Let them know that each person who wants to get involved will be responsible for only one small job, whether young or old. When they are relaxed and excited, proceed to ask for volunteers in the following areas:

Attendance Keeper. If you don’t already have someone who is keeping up with the attendance in the assembly, you need to ask for a volunteer to record visitors’ addresses and phone numbers. This job is invaluable in regard to follow-up that will be made after their visit to the assembly.

Mother’s Helper. As you reach out into your community, you will find many single-parent families. This tragic result of our present society seems to be only getting worse. There are also married women with children who will attend if invited, but their husbands do not come along to help with the children. The members must understand that the children will not know how to act in the assembly. What the mother’s helper does is sit with the

mother and help with controlling her children so the visiting mother is free to listen to the gospel message. Some of the children may be small enough for the nursery but by the age of 3 are plenty big enough to learn how to act during worship.

Monday Card Person. Everyone likes to receive cards. The new contact who visits the assembly and is impressed with the love and biblical pattern of its structure will go home wondering if it was all a “put on”. Many people, out in our communities, have been hurt by false religious teaching which makes them skeptical of anything that seems too good to be true. To combat this, the visitor needs to know that members of the church were not just acting, but in fact were so excited from the visit that they took time to send a note of personal thanks. What the Monday card person does is simply mail a short, hand-written message to the visitor. Everyone can sign it, if you like. The message says something like “Thanks for coming and assembling with us. We truly love you and your family and would like you to consider attending with us again.” Then add a personal message like “Your children are so beautiful, and I hope we all become close Christian friends.” This card is mailed out the Monday following the prospects’ visit on Sunday. You can use your new attendance book to get the name and address needed. The preacher can send a card also if he desires, but don’t substitute the member’s hand-written message for a typed generic message from the preacher. Visitors will expect that, so do the unexpected.

Members Who Will Call. You should have the most people in this category. Explain to the membership that each week they will be responsible for calling only two people and inviting them to worship. The invitation should be loving and never judgmental. If the caller knows something about the prospect, like fami-

ly members, where they work etc., you can use this to interact pleasantly with them before going on to explain who you are and why you are calling.

Here is how the calling part of the program works. For example, let's say you get 5 volunteers who are willing to call the prospects. Upon examination of your list, you notice that 10 names have been given. With this simple demonstration of 5 to 10, here is how you would organize the list.

This list should be rotated each week and then handed out to

Week One	Volunteered to Call	Prospects	Phone #
	Bob Smith	Mary Hill	359-0978
		Bea Land	359-0227
	Mike Jones	Mary Taylor	359-1123
		Jake Jones	359-5748
	Penny Wilson	Holly Hunter	359-6473
		Joseph May	359-3336
	Bill Harden	John Harris	359-7728
		Tom Wills	359-0002
	Bob Colston	Ray Hall	359-2443
		Pat Hays	359-4545

those who volunteered to call. Instruct the volunteers to make the calls on either Thursday, Friday or Saturday. The reason for this is because people tend to devise excuses if you call too early in the week. The end-of-the-week call limits their excuse-planning time. The contacts on this list will receive an invitation from two different members each week. This should last for a total of three weeks. If there has been no response from the prospect or they are feeling harassed, remove them and add another.

Step Four — Set Your Goals

As I mentioned previously, if you have “best attendance” records posted, take them down. Everything needs to feel and look fresh and new to the membership. Try to remember that in order to motivate them toward growth, we are re-igniting a flame that has only been flickering for some time. Pew Potato mode has set in, and we must re-excite them about the real possibility of doubling in size!

In this fourth step you need to determine how many people regularly attend your assembly. After you calculate the average number present on Sunday mornings, add twenty to this number for your first goal. In this program you need to have a number of goals, some short-term and some long-term. If you set your goal too high, you risk not reaching it and only discouraging the membership even more. If you set it too low and reach it too quickly, your enthusiasm will climax before you really even get started. In the beginning, Sunday morning attendance is what you should be concerned with. Most visitors will attend on Sunday mornings. Therefore, this is the count measured toward your goal.

In the front of the auditorium, place a large colorful thermometer. You can connect two pieces of poster board together end-to-end and design your thermometer with a side graph for your attendance goals so that everyone can see their progress. As you get closer to the goal, color more of the thermometer in, while the crowd is watching and excited!

When you reach the desired goal, decide on another goal and make a new thermometer. The main thought here is that the congregation needs to be able to continually see that progress is

being made. As the number grows, the excitement and enthusiasm grow as well!

Step Five — *Paint Colorful Reminders*

If you have someone in the congregation who can paint, then you have an added blessing. The memory of most people is very short. For example, do you remember what was preached on two Sunday nights ago? Probably not, because we have so many things filling our time and minds, we tend to forget. That is why the congregation needs to continually see reminders of the church's vision and the current goal before their eyes!

Colorful banners need to be painted or printed from a computer to hang above or beside the pulpit, if at all possible. As the congregation looks toward the preacher they can't help but be reminded that they are recapturing the vision of the early church. It also makes it easier for the preacher during his messages to point to the sign and encourage the newly burning flames to continue in their efforts.

Some examples for banners might be: **RECAPTURING THE VISION**, or **OUR GOAL 70!**, or **DON'T FORGET TO MAKE PHONE CALLS!** Whatever you decide to paint or print, make it colorful and cheerful! Use red, blue, yellow or green, but don't use brown or black! We want to keep the Pew Potatoes awake, not put them back to sleep.

Your goal of recapturing the vision needs to saturate your church bulletin. Make it stand out to anyone reading it. Don't ever let them forget! One of the things you can do is make part

of your bulletin a bookmark. As you set your goal, place it in the bookmark along with a passage such as Matthew 28:18-20. Members can cut it out and use it in their Bibles to mark their place.

As you reach your first Goal, remove the banners you've been using. If you keep up the same banners for the whole program, people will lose interest. Paint or print new banners for each new goal set!

Step Six — Start Two Picture Boards

Pictures are a valuable tool for the newly excited church! If you don't already have a picture board, you need to start one. Get a corkboard and a Polaroid camera. Start off by taking pictures of all the people who are currently attending the services. Write their names on the white portion of each picture and pin them to the board. As visitors begin attending from the program, the pictures will increase.

After visitors have returned the second week to the services, take their picture and place it on the board. Of course, they are not a member of the Lord's church, as of yet, but this picture board is *for all* who are in the crowd. The picture board serves three different purposes. One is for the members. As more and more visitors begin attending, it will be hard for everyone to remember their names. But, with the picture board, all one has to do is walk to the foyer and find their picture. It also serves to help the new attendee begin to place names with all the faces of the congregation. Another good reason to have a picture board is because it excites those who are visiting! In a small sense, they

have now become a part of something. They begin to associate themselves with this new family who cares enough about them to help people get to know who they are.

The second picture board that needs to be started is a baptismal board. There will come a time in the near future that your visitors will want to put on Christ in baptism. When this happens, it's the single greatest event in their life. It needs to be treated as such! The pictures of your baptisms will also serve to show the congregation, once again, that they are growing. This is a new brother or sister in Christ! It's a blessed event! The babe in Christ can look at the picture in the future and gain strength by being reminded of the way he or she felt on that great day!

Step Seven — *Multiply Your Children*

As wise congregations know, children are the church leaders of the future. It's because of this important fact that we must put in place an outreach toward gaining and training children from the community. Most congregations who have entered Pew Potato mode have only a handful, if even that, of young people. Don't be discouraged because there is little to work with in the beginning. It's true that growth comes quicker and easier as the number of children increases. But you need only a handful to get the snowball rolling. You can easily turn five children into fifty in just a few short months with the following plan.

Begin a Thursday evening puppet show! Film the show and if you can, place it on your local cable channel. In our community the Lions Club had its own channel, and airing our puppet show costs only \$50 per month. We filmed the show with a reg-

ular camcorder, making sure to film the children. On Saturday morning at 8:30 the show would air and the children were always excited to see themselves on TV.

The show should last for 15 to 30 minutes and have a biblical theme. Give the puppet show a name. The one I began was called *The Treehouse Bible Time*. Then, advertise in the paper, radio and local television. Do whatever it takes to let the public know when it's being filmed.

Your number of children will continue to grow each week. If your congregation doesn't have much money to advertise, place one-minute spots on your local radio station and then call your newspaper and ask them to drop by and do a story on your new Thursday puppet show for the community. They will be happy to carry that news item. Another way to let children in the community know is to walk up and down the streets and visit with any parents you can find. Let them know about the show and ask if someone from the church can drop by and pick up their children on the next Thursday.

After the children have a wonderful time, tell them about the exciting Sunday school classes. Then, as you are dropping them off at home, walk up to the door and tell the parents what a great time their children had. Say something nice about the child and ask if he/she/they can be picked up Sunday morning for Sunday school. The children will probably be jumping up and down, saying, "Please, please, please"! This being the result, your youth group has just increased!

The building should not just sit empty during the week. Use it to build up the number of contacts for Christ. Other ideas for using the building in midweek include:

1. **Mother's Day Out** — This is one morning a week when a mother can drop off her child at the building for a couple of Bible classes, puppet shows, fellowship and games.

2. **Day Camp** — Provide a week where the youth come for eight hours each day and have Bible classes, games and a cook-out.

3. **Community Honors** — Provide a meal or finger foods for new graduates of the local school. Community servants can also be honored, as well as local ball teams, etc.

Step Eight — Feed the New Christians

If you've ever seen a newborn baby, they come into the world screaming for MILK! New babes in Christ are no different. What is this milk? Joel 3:18 foretells of its coming, *"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk...and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord..."* The time came and the scripture revealed to man this wonderful milk. *"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby"* (1 Peter 2:2). The MILK is the WORD OF GOD!

On the day of the new Christian's birth, they need to immediately receive milk to start them on their way, growing. This milk can take many different forms:

1. Video Series
2. Correspondence Studies
3. Home Bible Studies
4. Pamphlets
5. Tracts
6. Or other milky materials.

Remember that the ol' devil has just lost one of his children and he will be working overtime to try and get him back! Don't hand anyone back to him without a fight! Babes are weak and must be strengthened.

Here is a list of MILKY BOOKS for babes:

1. **Why We Believe What We Believe**, Volumes 1 and 2, by J.C. Choate.
2. **Abiding in the Doctrine of Christ**, by Dale Grissom.
3. **Answers in the Bible to Problems in the Church**, by Jim Massey.
4. **Basic Bible Lessons**, by O.P. Baird.
5. **Beginner's Bible Correspondence Course**, by D. Wright.
6. **Bible Keys**, by J.C. Choate.
7. **Bible Themes**, by J.C. Choate.
8. **Cardinal Concepts of Christianity**, by Roy V. Palmer.
9. **Focus on the Fundamentals**, by W. Douglass Harris.
10. **Growing in the Grace and Knowledge of Christ**, by John Waddey.
11. **New Testament Worship**, by J.C. Choate.
12. **The Voice of Truth International**, Editor, J.C. Choate.

All books can be ordered from Choate Publications at www.choatepublications.com or to receive a catalog through the mail, write to: J.C. Choate Publications, P.O. Box 72, Winona, MS 38967.

One thing that should not be overlooked is the family of the new convert. Someone should immediately begin to help the new Christian talk to his or her family about Christ. The babe is hungry and thirsting for righteousness. This enthusiasm should be used to try and reach those closest to the new babe.

Pew Potato Power Points

When you reach the desired goal, decide on another goal and make a new thermometer. The main thought here is that the congregation needs to be able to continually see that progress is being made. As the number grows, the excitement and enthusiasm grow as well!

Review Questions

1. What are the Eight Easy Steps for growth?

2. How is each step important?

How to Develop Your “Recapturing the Vision” Program

Part Three: Changing the Pulpit Potato into a Motivator

A preacher has the choice of being an office preacher or a community preacher. The office preacher is one who stays primarily in his office. He reads, writes, works on the computer and occasionally pursues souls outside the building. The community preacher is much more mobile. He travels throughout the city looking for opportunities to befriend people. He searches for needs that the church can meet and friendships that he can cultivate. In order for a church to see great growth, the Pulpit Potato must exit the potato bin and mingle among the people. There are a number of ways to accomplish this which will be discussed later on.

As the visitors begin to fill the building, the lessons should be written and delivered with them in mind. The morning lesson should be geared toward the un-churched, with an emphasis on basic Bible truths. It should have a comfortable, motivational style, which when delivered in love, will effect great change in the lives of the listeners.

Another thing that can be tried is to have one Sunday each month when the preacher delivers a “How To” message. Topics could be addressed such as family, Christian marriages, teenagers, the power of prayer, etc. Choose topics that can be

used to draw a large crowd. Print some handouts and have the members who are interested in growth invite everyone in the community that they come across to attend.

During the beginning of the Recapturing the Vision program, the preacher needs to prepare lessons for Sunday evening that will excite the pew potatoes about evangelism. They need to be reminded in every Sunday service that all members need to work together if they want to succeed.

The following pages contain a small compilation of possible sermon outlines:

Waking Up from Our Sleep of Deception

Ephesians 5:14

I. James 1:22

- A. We must be doers, being deceived no longer.
- B. Must once again be people of the Book.
- C. Must change focus outward.
- D. Expand emphasis from simply assembling.

II. 1 John 3:17

- A. Must have hearts of compassion.
- B. The world is in dire need of salvation!
- C. God loves the needy (Psalm 146:5-10).
- D. Proverbs 11:30; Matthew 7:24-27; Mark 1:41.

III. Acts 5:42

- A. Must be faithful to inherit heaven.
- B. Can't be faithful without evangelism (Acts 5:42).
- C. Teach publicly and house-to-house (Acts 20:20).
- D. Commanded to teach everywhere (Acts 8:4).

Conclusion:

We need to wake up! We need to reach our community by teaching both publicly and house-to-house! There are two important reasons why: One — because that is what Jesus commands (Matthew 28:19-20). Two — because we want others, as well as ourselves, to inherit heaven (John 2:48; Romans 2:6; 1 Peter 1:17; Revelation 22:14).

Improving on the Adult Class

Luke 16:8

I. 1 John 2:3

- A. We know Jesus only if we keep His commandments.
- B. We are commanded to teach (Matthew 28:20).
- C. We pass out meat and forget babes in Christ.
- D. Most will not win one soul to Christ this year.

II. Acts 2:42

- A. Disciples continued teaching “steadfastly”.
- B. Basic Bible verses must be taught and learned.
- C. Time is of great importance (Revelation 22:12).
- D. Must follow pattern (Hebrews 8:5; 2 Timothy 1:13).

III. Hosea 4:6

- A. God’s people destroyed for lack of knowledge.
- B. People need the light of knowledge (Psalm 119:105).
- C. Knowledge brings understanding (Ephesians 3:3,4).
- D. Bible class must be balanced, i.e., Milk and Meat.

Conclusion:

Our Bible classes need to be modified. They need to not only be concerned with teaching Bible texts, but also how to put them into practice! If we don’t know how to use knowledge, it is useless. We will never grow toward making new disciples (Matthew 28:19) until we empower members with how and why saving souls is Christ’s goal (Luke 19:10)!

On Fire for the Lord

Ecclesiastes 9:10

I. Colossians 3:23

- A. Must obey as if Christ were standing next to us.
- B. Excitement builds only after we begin!
- C. Explosion of fire draws more attention than a candle.
- D. Be zealous to build up the church (1 Corinthians 14:12).

II. Colossians 1:23

- A. Gospel was preached to all of humanity.
- B. Early disciples ran to teach the lost (Acts 8:30).
- C. Not just from a pulpit (Acts 20:20; Romans 16:5).
- D. All members are preachers (Acts 8:4).

III. Galatians 6:9

- A. Do not give up on people or yourself!
- B. We must find the good ground (Luke 8:9,10).
- C. Through patience and perseverance, souls are won.
- D. Some will not obey Christ, but we must plant.

Conclusion:

Fire is something that moves very rapidly through dead fields of brush. Anything in its path is soon conquered. We can learn a great deal from fire. Our spiritual fire should burn even more brightly! We should be zealous to spread throughout our community, reaching those who are dead in sin! We should let nothing stop us from our purpose. We can conquer and overcome (Romans 8:28)!

Teaching One-on-One

Acts 20:20

I. Example of Individual Evangelism:

- A. Proverbs 11:30; Daniel 12:3; Mark 16:15; Luke 19:1-10; John 4; John 8:1-11; John 9; Acts 5:42; Acts 8:4; Acts 20:20; 1 Corinthians 3:6; Philippians 1:14; and Philippians 2:14-16.
- B. Should we not follow these examples?

II. John 15:2,8

- A. Teach one-on-one if we want to reach heaven.
- B. God wants all men saved (1 Timothy 2:3,4).
- C. God uses us to carry out His desire (2 Corinthians 4:7).
- D. If we don't carry the message, who will?

III. Philippians 4:1

- A. There is great joy in soul-winning!
- B. There is no greater joy (3 John 3,4).
- C. Shows God we are like Christ (Matthew 10:25).
- D. It helps make our calling and election sure!

Conclusion:

People must be won to Christ, one soul at a time. With millions of people lost all around us, we should be motivated to begin. A sobering fact is that another person dies outside of Christ every 12 seconds. In a 30-minute lesson 150 people are now unteachable, doomed to an eternity in Hell. And yet our air is cool, our pews are soft and our hammock is prepared. We are wasting time! God's and our's! We must Wake Up for Christ!

Overcoming Our Excuses

Romans 8:28

I. Some Excuse-Makers from the Bible

- A. Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:12,13).
- B. Aaron (Exodus 32:22).
- C. Saul (2 Samuel 15:24).
- D. One-Talent Man (Matthew 25:24).

II. Some Excuses We Use

- A. We pay a preacher to work for us.
All are to evangelize (Acts 8:4).
- B. I don't have enough time.
Must make time (Hebrews 5:12).
- C. My education level is too low.
Christ chose fishermen (Matthew 4:18,19).
- D. I am just too old.
Can't start after death. So when?

III. James 2:17,18

- A. Faith without works is dead and profits nothing.
- B. There are many examples of faith plus works:
 - 1. Andrew (John 1:34-42).
 - 2. Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 15:35-40).
 - 3. Philip (Acts 8).

Conclusion:

We must be reminded that God will not accept excuses. He does not make deals. He is no respecter of persons.

Along with these types of messages, the preacher should keep the area colorful within the building. Everything should be as bright and exciting as possible. He should wear bright ties and put a smile on his face. He should always walk around before every service and shake the hand of each visitor present. As this is done, he should introduce himself and show just how excited he is to see them!

Worship sheets should be passed out every Sunday. The worship sheet should have the topic of the lesson for that service, questions which will be answered during the preaching and the current goal. This paper will function to encourage everyone to listen and take notes. It also gives the member something to take with him to give to anyone he thinks might need the information later on in the week.

Pew Potato Power Points

We should be zealous to spread like fire throughout our community, reaching those who are dead in sin! We should let nothing stop us from our purpose. We can conquer and overcome (Romans 8:28)!

Review Questions

1. What are the two types of preachers?

2. Which type is more effective in evangelism?

3. What type of lessons should be delivered on Sunday mornings?

4. Why should everything be bright and colorful?

5. Are smiles contagious?

How to Meet New Contacts & Increase Attendance

Pew Potato Prospects

There are numerous opportunities one can take advantage of in locating receptive people. God opens doors everywhere, so keep your eyes wide open. I will be mentioning a few ways in this chapter to get you started. If you take some time and write down the public activities going on in your community, even more will come to light!

The Funeral Visitation

A funeral is a time when families are thinking about eternity and searching for comfort. This provides a great opportunity for showing Christian love and giving invitations for worship. You should carry cards listing your name, phone number, church building address and worship times. Give this to each member of the family privately and tell them, "If you need prayers or anything at all, just give me a call, anytime, day or night."

Monitor the death notices. When you find a person with no church affiliation listed, you have found an excellent prospect in his or her family.

Families of the Terminally Ill

Anytime someone within a family is terminally ill, questions regarding eternity become a high priority. Not only is the person who is ill trying to deal with the situation, but also the family needs a lot of prayers and guidance. This provides an opportunity to pray with the family and provide emotional support. If this is done on an extended basis, the family will realize that you are sincere in your love for them. This being the case, you have a better chance of leading them to Christ.

Christian Alternatives for Community Youth

Most communities have various activities available for young people to participate in. These things, along with school, take up much of a young person's time. As a congregation, activities should be planned which the community youth will enjoy and participate in. When this is done correctly, the Lord's church can be introduced and promoted at each gathering.

Church Welcome Baskets for New Parents

Whenever someone has a new baby, the whole family is excited about the new changes. The congregation should always acknowledge the birth by sending a New Baby Welcome Basket with various items the mother would need. Along with diapers, wipes and burp cloths, include an invitation to the Lord's church. Be sure to mention everything that pertains to new young families.

Go to Community Events and School Productions

If you know of a family that doesn't worship anywhere but has children in school, attend their plays, ball games etc., and sit by the parents. Cheer for their child. This will help open up the parents' heart to you. You can give an invitation to services or set up a Bible study, etc.

Always attend community parades, county fairs, Police benefit dinners and Fire-fighter dinners. This will keep the community aware that the congregation is alive and well.

If your town has a local community center, eat there at least once a week. You can make many great contacts for Bible studies. Also if you have a local café or coffee shop where regulars always gather, mingle in and make new friends.

Take on a Leadership Role in the Community

If you want people to recognize you and learn of the church, you can join a civic group. Through your example and guidance, the congregation will get credit by the business leaders of the community.

Discover the Benefits of Mass Media

Start a radio program. You can begin a short broadcast about

“Searching the Scriptures” and reach out into the whole community every day. One-minute spots can be added to direct your listeners to the local church of Christ!

Here Is a List of Possible Prospects

- 1. Someone going through a tragedy**
- 2. Major illness**
- 3. Death of a close friend or loved one**
- 4. Marital problems**
- 5. Separation**
- 6. Divorce**
- 7. Non-Christian relatives**
- 8. The “new” poor**
- 9. New baby**
- 10. New retiree**
- 11. New to the community**
- 12. Job change**
- 13. Financial status change**
- 14. Newly-weds**
- 15. Wife beginning or quitting work**
- 16. College graduates**
- 17. Children leaving home**
- 18. Military personnel**
- 19. Non-Christian mates**
- 20. Hospital visitation**
- 21. Non-Christian friends**
- 22. College campus**
- 23. High school graduates**
- 24. Rest homes**
- 25. Campaign for Christ**
- 26. Neighbors**

Pew Potato Power Points

There are numerous opportunities one can take advantage of in locating receptive people. God opens doors everywhere, so keep your eyes wide open.

Review Questions

1. What are some of the ways to find prospects?

2. What are some community groups available?

3. Do you know of any children you can cheer for at ball-games? If not, will you discover some?

4. Why are grieving people more apt to listen?

5. If someone is hurting, what is one thing you can do for them? _____

Overcoming the Urge to Slip Back into Potato Mode

Part One: “I’m tired and want my potato bin.”

There are five important things to do in order to keep everyone motivated and working. Some members will become discouraged and want to quit. If nothing is done to counteract this, the evangelistic fire will begin to fizzle out and eventually die.

Make a Progress Chart

A good idea to keep evangelism going is to be reminded of how far you have come. A progress chart should be made and either shown on an overhead projector or copied for all present so they can view their successes. The chart should contain the increased attendance, contribution and baptisms.

Appreciation Dinners for Personal Workers

Another opportunity for encouragement is to have a special dinner for all personal workers. This provides opportunities not only for fellowship but also for sharing experiences, both good and bad surrounding what is succeeding or not working well.

Evangelistic Periodicals

Another profitable move is to sign up all personal workers to receive evangelistic periodicals and magazines such as *The Voice of Truth International*, *Gospel Advocate*, *Apologetics Press*, *Firm Foundation*, *Christian Courier*, *Gospel Gleaner*, *Spiritual Sword*, etc. Links for these and many other publications are located on the Tent Makers School of Preaching at www.howtopreach.com

Home Study Courses

Another thing one can do is offer home study courses in personal growth and evangelism. Those involved in teaching the lost can complete a chapter a week in order to keep studying for themselves.

Help Recharge the Worn Out Pulpit Potato

The located preacher often wants and should be a leader in the effort for growth. This means setting the example for others to follow in Bible studies and hard work. When working in personal evangelism, one realizes rather quickly that it's an emotionally draining experience. The devil isn't going to give up his hold on people just because we want him to. At times it's tiring and patient work. Those involved with church growth will experience this first-hand and should find ways to show appreciation to the preacher and each other for being leaders in the vineyard.

Overcoming the Urge to Slip Back into Potato Mode

Part Two: Avoiding Burn-Out; We don't want any Fried Potatoes

Pray for Strength

An active prayer life should be encouraged. A program for growth is doomed to fail if God is not a major part of the planning. Not only should He be consulted in the beginning but He should be approached every day to gain strength and comfort. In **Matthew 6:8** we learn *"Your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him...."* But we still must ask to receive them, according to **Matthew 7:7**, *"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."*

Step Back and Re-Focus

Sometimes it's good to step back and refocus your goals and schedule. We want to organize our day to allow time with family, the Lord and for much-needed rest. If some begin to feel burn-out coming on, help them reorganize their schedule and add more time for rest and relaxation. God understands our physical limitations.

Spend Time with Spiritually Mature Friends

When we are drained emotionally from dealing with people who are sincere, but are sincerely wrong, or are spiritual babes depending on us for leadership and example, retreat to a spiritually mature friend. Time spent with those who have the same spiritual maturity as yourself can greatly strengthen your resolve to head back into the trenches!

Overcoming the Urge to Slip Back into Potato Mode

Part Three: Overcoming the “We’ve Arrived” Complex

When a congregation grows and people are at all different spiritual levels, it’s easy to want to stop working on growth and simply focus on those you currently have in Studies. But this is a grave mistake. Amongst the many different types of hearts who have begun attending the assembly, there is only one type of person who will obey the Gospel and stay — the good ground! Because of this, the congregation needs to keep bringing *in* more people than are saying, “No,” to the Gospel and leaving. True growth happens only when those coming in the front door exceed the numbers of those exiting out the back.

Keep Raising Attendance Goals

Whenever you reach a goal it’s good to celebrate in some way, but don’t ever stop reaching. A new goal needs to be set and everyone needs to immediately begin working on attaining that new goal. If people ever get comfortable again, they will slip right back into Potato mode. We must never forget that souls are at stake — the ones we are teaching and our own!

Get New Members Involved

As the congregation begins growing, encourage those who obey the Gospel to assist mature members in Bible Studies. As they observe how the Gospel is presented, they will become aware that they can do this! When the new Christians are ready, help them set up studies with their families and friends. Above all, help them to work in the vineyard soon after they obey the Gospel. They should be engaged in *some type* of instruction for their own continued growth as well as learning soul-winning methods and opportunities. In the next few pages, a couple of one-time home Bible studies are provided to help get you started in personal work. Some charts are also provided to help you show various points more clearly to the prospect. The charts have come from numerous sources through the years and are wonderful teaching tools. They are not original with me, and I take no credit. I would encourage you to design your own charts to use alongside these. Sometimes it's easier for a person to understand a point when seeing a chart. By using them, your Bible study will become more effective.

Pew Potato Power Points

When a congregation grows and people are at all different spiritual levels, it's easy to want to stop working on growth and simply focus on those you currently have in Studies.

Review Questions

1. Why is a progress chart good?

2. What are some periodicals personal workers need?

3. Why is it important to keep raising attendance goals?

4. Why is it important to put new members to work?

5. Why spend time with mature Christian friends?

This Begins Your Personal Work Notebook.

You may copy and enlarge the pages to compile in a folder for ready use!

This Bible study works only if you do!

When you use this notebook, you are obeying

Acts 20:20

“And how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house.”

WE MUST ESCAPE POTATO MODE!

Romans 13:11

“...now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed.”

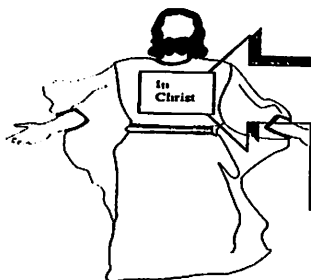
Ephesians 5:14

“Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.”

5 Minute "Getting Back to the Bible" Study

- Romans 3:23** _____ have sinned. Does this include you and me _____?
- Romans 6:23** The wages of sin is eternal _____.
- John 3:16** God _____ the world. God sent his _____ for us to believe in.
- Colossians 1:13,14** Through God's Son, we have _____ and _____.
- Romans 1:16** The _____ is the power of God unto salvation.
- 1 Corinthians 15:1-5** The Gospel is the death, _____ and resurrection of Christ.
- Mark 16:15,16** In obeying the Gospel, we must _____ and be _____.
- Romans 10:10** With the mouth we make _____ unto salvation.
- Acts 2:38** We must repent (turn) and be baptized for _____ _ _____.
- Acts 2:47** When we are baptized, the Lord adds us to His _____.

(**Hear**, Romans 10:17; **Believe**, Hebrews 11:6; **Repent**, Acts 17:30; **Confess**, Acts 8:36,37; **Be Baptized**, Acts 2:38, Mark 16:16, Matthew 28:19,20)



**"In Christ" We
Have:
Salvation,
Forgiveness of Sins,
Holy Spirit,
All Spiritual
Blessings &
Eternal Life!**
Galatians 3:27

MTT. 28:18-19

EXAMPLES OF CONVERSION

MRK. 16:15-16

<u>PREACHING</u>	<u>BELIEVED</u>	<u>REPENTED</u>	<u>CONFESSED</u>	<u>BAPTIZED</u>	<u>SAVED</u>
PENTECOST ACTS 2:14-41		REPENT VERSES 37-38		BAPTIZED 38:41	REMISSION OF SINS 38:47 SAVED
SAMARIA ACTS 8:5-13	BELIEVED 12			BAPTIZED 12:13	
EUNUCH ACTS 8:35-39	BELIEVED 36:37		CONFESSED 37	BAPTIZED 38	REJOICED 39
SAUL ACTS 9:17-18				BAPTIZED 18	SINS WASHED AWAY 22:10
CORNELIUS ACTS 10:34-48	BELIEVED 42			BAPTIZED 48	REMISSION OF SINS 43
THE JAILER ACTS 16:29	BELIEVED 31			BAPTIZED 33	
LYDIA ACTS 16:15	ATTENDED 14			BAPTIZED 15	

PREACHING
ROM. 10:14

FAITH
HEB. 11:6
HEB. 5:8,9

REPENTANCE
LUKE 13:3

CONFESSION
ROM. 10:10
II THESS. 1:7-9

BAPTISM
GAL. 3:27

SALVATION
II TIM. 2:10

How to use this Bible Study Notebook

1. Change the "Services offered by Christ's church" to reflect what is offered where you attend.
2. With notebook in hand, knock on someone's door.
3. Here is what you say:

“Morning, Afternoon, Evening, etc...”

I’m _____ from your local church of Christ.

*I’m visiting in the community today to share
some of the free services we
offer to the public.*

You probably haven’t heard about them.

*May I come in
and share some of them with you?”*

4. After you are invited inside, say something nice about their home and sit with the prospect wherever they direct.
5. Next, go through the list from top to bottom. When you reach the 30-minute “Getting Back to the Bible” study, say:

“We also offer a short 30-minute “Getting back to the Bible” Study. We can do it here in the living room or at the kitchen table, which ever you prefer?”

6. You may use the enclosed Bible study or another one. When you complete the study, ask if they are ready to obey the Gospel.
7. Either take them to be baptized and set up a date for

continual study, or use the charts to answer questions they might have.

8. Try to set up a time for follow-up study if they do not obey but still seem interested.
9. Remember you must sift through the shallow, rocky and thorny soil to find the good heart.

**Never forget that you and I are only
tools for God's use!**

**We plant
And God gives the increase!**

Won't *you* plant the Gospel Seed!

*“Therefore said he unto them, the harvest truly
is great, but the labourers are few:...”*

(Luke 10:2)

Make a sheet similar to the one following.

Place this sheet on the outside of your notebook for easy
access.

Services Offered by Christ's Church

1. Many types of Christian counseling such as: grief, marriage, depression, teen pregnancy, anger, pre-marital, and worry.
2. Free clothes, coats and shoes for anyone in need, including children.
3. Free food for any needy family in our community.
4. Free transportation to and from worship services.
5. Puppet show every Sunday night after worship.
6. Tuesday ladies' class each week from 2:00 to 3:00.
7. Adult and Youth devotionals.
8. Frequent Senior Saint Trips.
9. Youth skating, bowling and fellowships.
10. Youth rallies and a monthly area Bible quiz.
11. 30-minute "Getting Back to the Bible" study.

We are concerned about you physically, emotionally and spiritually.

Therefore, we have a number of helps FREE to the public.

Some of the following charts have been taken from Mid McKnight's booklet of **Personal Work Charts**.

30 min. "Getting Back to the Bible" Study
Are You Saved?

Are you willing to let the Bible decide?
"Jesus Loves You. He wants You Saved"

You must have an *Open Heart* and an *Open Bible!*

Are we commanded to understand what the will of the Lord is? _____ Ephesians 5:15-17

If we love God, we will _____. 1 John 5:3

Has Jesus given us an understanding, so we can obey Him? _____ 1 John 5:20

If Christ asks you to do something in our study today, will you obey Him? _____

All scripture is _____ of God and is profitable for instruction in _____. 2 Timothy 3:16,17

If we do not follow God's Word, it will still _____ us. John 12:48

Are we allowed to add or subtract from God's divine message? _____ Revelation 22:18,19

To have salvation we must enter through what door? _____ John 10:9,10

The GOSPEL is the power of God unto what? _____ Romans 1:16

What three things make up the Gospel of Jesus? His _____, _____ and _____ 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Can there be more than one saving Gospel? _____ Galatians 1:8,9

By what are we called to be Christians today? _____ 2 Thessalonians 2:14

We need the Gospel because we are separated from God by _____ or _____. Isaiah 59:1,2

All have _____? Rom. 3:23. Does this include you and me? _____

If we die, while still in our sins, we receive wages of eternal _____. Romans 6:23

Christ died for you, a sinner, because He _____s you. Romans 5:8

We are justified by Jesus' _____. Romans 5:9

Jesus shed His blood for the _____ of the _____. Matthew 26:28

(We need to reach His blood so that we may have forgiveness and eternal life.)

Through God's divine grace, Jesus tells us of some instructions we must _____, in order to receive His free gift of eternal life. Hebrews 5:8,9

We must have _____. Hebrews 11:6

This comes from truly hearing God's _____. Romans 10:17

The _____ believe and tremble. James 2:19 Are they saved? _____

The _____ believed in Him, but would not confess Him. John 12:42

Is simply believing, enough to be saved? _____

We must _____, which is a change of heart and mind. Luke 13:3

We must _____ Jesus as the Son of God. Romans 10:10

(We still haven't mentioned blood. Let's see where He shed His blood.)

Jesus shed His blood in His death on the _____. Colossians 1:20

How do we get into Christ's death, where He shed His blood? We are _____ into Christ Romans 6:3,4

When we get into Christ, we are a new _____. 2 Corinthians 5:17

In Acts 2:38, we are told to _____ and be _____ for _____.

When does Jesus' blood wash away our sins? Be _____ and wash away your sins. Acts 22:16

All must believe and be _____. Mark 16:16. Can I be saved without baptism _____?

This is because Jesus' blood, in death, flowed from His side. The water was in the blood and the blood was in the _____ . John 19:34

When we are baptized correctly, the Lord adds us to His _____ . Acts 2:41,47

The body = _____ Colossians 1:18. How many bodies does Jesus have? _____ Ephesians 4:4

Does Jesus want us to be united in His one church? _____ 1 Corinthians 1:10

Did Jesus build or plant His church or churches? _____ Matthew 16:18

For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his _____ we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection. Romans 6:5

What about doctrines planted by men? _____ Matthew 15:13

Jesus purchased His church with His _____, which saves us. Acts 20:28

In Jesus' one church (or body), we receive _____ spiritual blessings. Ephesians 1:3

If *All* spiritual blessings are "in Christ", how many are outside of Him? _____

When Jesus comes again, He is coming to save His _____. Ephesians 5:23

When the Ethiopian Nobleman learned the truth about Christ and His church, how long did he wait to obey the Gospel and become a Christian? _____ Acts 8:34-38

Now that you have learned the truth, when should your day of salvation be? _____ 2 Corinthians 6:2

THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

Founder Christ
MATT. 16:18

Where Jerusalem
ISA. 2:3 ACTS 2:5,47

When AD 33
ACTS 2:

Head Christ
EPH. 1:22

ORGANIZATION
PHIL. 1:1

Elders Tit. 1:5-7, I Pet. 5:1-3, Acts 20:28, ITim. 3:1-7
Deacons Acts 6:1-6, I Tim. 3: 8-13
Members Acts 2:41-47, Col. 1:13, I Cor. 1:2

NAME
EPH. 3:15

Church of God I Cor. 1:2, Acts 20:28
The Body of Christ Col. 1:18, Eph. 1:22-23
Churches of Christ Matt. 16:18, Rom. 16:16
Bride of Christ Rom. 7:4, Rev. 21:9

NAME
EPH. 3:15

Disciples John 15:8, Acts 11:26
Saints Rom. 1:7, I Cor. 1:2, Phil. 1:1
Brethren Luke 8:21, Gal. 6:1
Children Gal. 3:26, I John 2:1
Christians Acts 11:26, 26:28, I Pet. 4:16

CREED

Jesus Christ Matt. 16:16-18, 10:32-33-Acts 8:37

**RULE OF FAITH
& PRACTICE**

Word of God Matt. 28:18-20, II Tim. 3:16-17, II Pet. 1:3, Jas. 1:21

WORSHIP

Sing Col. 3:16- Eph. 5:19, I Cor. 14:15, Heb. 2:12
Pray I Thes. 5:17
Teach Acts 5:42
Communion Acts 20:7, I Cor. 11:23
Contribution I Cor. 16:1-2

MISSION

Save Souls Matt. 5:13-16, John 15:8, 16, I Tim. 4:16, II Tim. 2:2, Heb. 5:12

WARNING

Be Faithful Matt. 15:9-Matt. 15:13, Gal. 1:6-8, II John 9: , Rev. 22:18-19


Where God Has Placed Baptism

Before Baptism

The Alien Sinner Is...

Condemned Romans 3:10,23
Dead in Sins Ephesians 2:1
Without God and Hope . . Eph. 2:12

The Alien Sinner Must...

Hear the Gospel. . . Romans 10:17
Believe in Christ John 8:24
Repent of Sins Luke 13:3,5
Enter into Christ by 

Don't Reject the Counsel of God
Luke 7:30

After Baptism

Blessings Obtained...

Saved Mark 16:16
Remission of Sins. . . . Acts 2:38
Wash Away Sins Acts 22:16
Into Jesus Christ..Galatians 3:27
Into One Body 1 Cor. 12:13
Into His Death. . . . Romans 6:3,4
Newness of Life Romans 6:4
Renewing of Spirit Titus 3:5
Now Saves Us 1 Peter 3:21

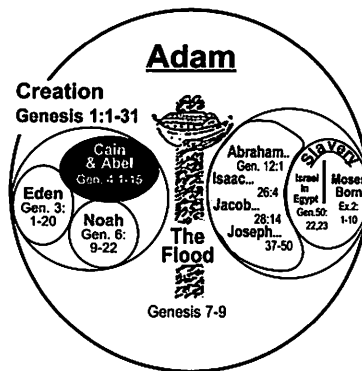
"Gladly Receive His Word"
Acts 2:41

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Three Dispensations of Time

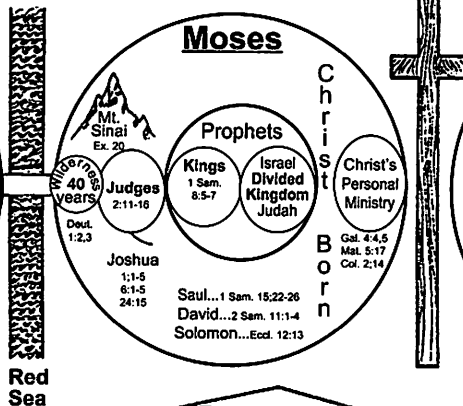
PATRIARCHY

Family Religion



JUDAISM

National Religion



CHRISTIANITY

International Religion



GOD SPOKE TO FATHERS

Genesis 12:1

ALTAR

Animal Sacrifice

LAW CAME BY MOSES

John 1:17

Was schoolmaster Gal. 3:24
Was abolished Col. 2:14

Passover

TABERNACLE

Sabbath

GRACE & TRUTH BY CHRIST

John 1:17

Gospel Church
Rom. 1:16 Acts 2:47

Lord's Supper

Lord's Day

INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE

ITS ORIGIN

Inspired ..2 Timothy 3:16
Holy Spirit.....John 16:13
Holy Men.... 2 Peter 1:21
36 Men.....1500 Years
66 Books Completed 96 A.D
1200 languages & Dialects

ITS PURPOSE

Keeps From Sin ..Ps. 119:11
Lights Our Way ..Ps.119:105
Enlightens Us2 Tim. 3:15
Instructs Us ..2 Tim. 3:16,17
Purifies Us1 Pet. 1:22
Frees UsJohn 8:32
Saves Us.....Jas. 1:21;
.....

ITS COMPLETENESS

All TruthJohn 16:13
All Things2 Pet. 1:3
Whole Counsel ..Acts 20:27

ITS INDESTRUCTIBILITY

Lasts ForeverMt. 24:35;
.....1 Peter 1:25

THE BIBLE WARNS

Do Not Add to Nor SubtractDeut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6; Rev 22:18,19
Do Not Substitute Human IdeasMark 7:7-9
Preach and Teach Only God's Word2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Peter 4:11
Believe No Other GospelGalatians 1:8
His Word Will Judge Us.....John 12:48

THE BIBLE ANSWERS THREE QUESTIONS

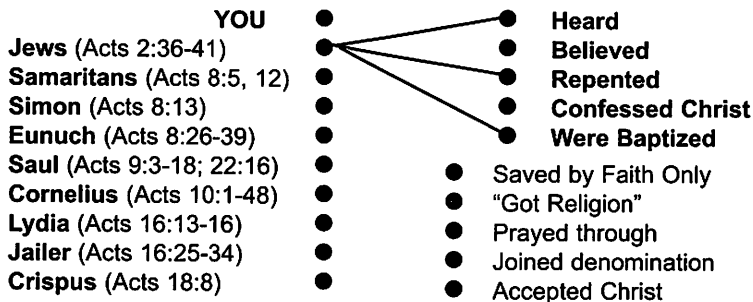
1. The Origin Of LifeWhere Did I Come From?
2. The Purpose Of LifeWhy Am I Here?
3. After DeathWhere Am I Going?

THE BIBLE CONTAINS

The Mind Of God
The State Of Man
The Way Of Salvation
The Happiness Of Believers
The Doom of Sinners

“Search the Scriptures” (John 5:39 & Acts 17:11)

Instructions: First, draw a line from “YOU” to what you did to be saved. Then draw a line from the case of conversion to what the Bible says they did.



Does the account of your conversion compare completely with what the Bible demanded of these people? (Read Romans 8:16; also Jeremiah 10:23 and Proverbs 14:12)

Acts 2:38
Acts 22:16

Saved: Past Sins

Things to Remember

New Creature _____ 2 Corinthians 5:17
Romans 6:4

Babes in Christ _____ 1 Peter 2:2
1 Corinthians 3:1,2

Critical Period _____ Matthew 4:1,11
1 Corinthians 10:11,12

Possibility of Falling _____ John 8:31
1 John 2:1,2
Acts 8:11,24

Representative _____ 2 Corinthians 3:2
1 Timothy 4:12

Christ, your Example _____ Hebrews 12:1,2
1 Peter 2:21

After Conversion

1 Timothy 4:16

Revelation 2:10

Saved Eternally

God Wants You to

Love Him First _____ Matthew 22:37
Matthew 10:37

Study _____ 2 Timothy 2:15
Acts 17:11

Pray _____ Philippians 4:6,7
1 Timothy 2:8

Assemble _____ Hebrews 10:25-27
Matthew 18:20

Give _____ 1 Corinthians 16:1,2
2 Corinthians 9:6,7

Help Save Others _____ Matthew 28:19,20
John 15:1,6,16

SALVATION FROM SIN

WHAT IS SIN? I JOHN 3:4 JAS. 4:17

ALL HAVE SINNED ROM. 3:23 I JOHN 1:8

**NOT
ENOUGH
TO BE**

IN A WAY PROV. 16:25 JER. 10:23
MATT. 7:13-14

RELIGIOUS GAL. 1:13-14
ACTS 3:26-39

HONEST ACTS 23:1
ACTS 22:16

MORALLY GOOD ACTS
10:1-6 & 48

BELIEVER JAS. 2:
19-26

ALMOST PERSUADED ACTS 26:
27-29

"HEAR YE HIM"

MATT. 17:5

BELIEVE MARK 16:16
JOHN 8:24

REPENT ACTS 2:38
LUKE 13:3

CONFESS MATT. 10:32-33
ACTS 8:37

BAPTIZED MARK 16:16
ACTS 2:38

WHO? MATT. 23:19 ACTS 8:12 HOW? ROM. 6:3-4

THUS ADDED ACTS 2:
41-47

REDEEMED ACTS 20:28
COL. 1:13-14

**ALL SPIRITUAL
BLESSINGS
IN CHRIST** EPH. 1:3

BLESSED ARE DEAD

Rev. 14:13

ETERNAL LIFE

I John 5:11

SALVATION

II Tim. 2:10

NO CONDEMNATION

Rom. 8:1

NEW CREATURE

II Cor. 5:17

Baptised Into Gal. 3:27

Confess Unto Rom. 10:10

Repent Unto Acts 11:18

Believe Unto Rom. 10:10

HEB. 5:8-9 ROM. 2:8-9

GOD'S PATTERN

As Applies To

MUSIC IN THE WORSHIP

★ *The pattern is specified:*

1. Vocal — Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; 1 Cor. 14:15; Jas. 5:13
2. Instrumental — (Not in the pattern)

The law of exclusion must be observed!

★ *Old Testament Examples: Romans 15:4*

Cedar	NOAH	Gopher
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">WOOD</div>		
Oak		Pine
Genesis 6:14-22 Generic: Wood Specific: Gopher		
When God specified the kind of wood, all other kinds were excluded.		

Camel	JEWS	Lamb
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;">BLOOD</div>		
Cow		Pig
Exodus 12:21 Generic: Blood Specific: Lamb's Blood		
When God specified the kind of blood, all other kinds were excluded.		

★ *Applications To The Christian's Worship Today: Heb. 8:5*

Guitar	MUSIC	Sing
Piano		Harp
Ephesians 5:19 Generic: Make Music Specific: Sing		
When God specified the kind of music (vocal), all other kinds were excluded.		

Pie and Ice Cream	LORD'S SUPPER	Bread and Fruit of Vine
Cookies and Water		Ham and Eggs
1 Cor. 11:23-26 Generic: Eat and Drink Specific: Bread and Fruit of Vine		
When God specified the kind (Bread and Fruit of Vine), all other kinds were excluded.		

God is displeased and division among His people results when His specific commandments are not obeyed. Adding to or substituting constitutes a violation of the law of exclusion, and disrespects the silence of the Scriptures.

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

OLD TESTAMENT

2 TIMOTHY 2:15

NEW TESTAMENT

PROMISES MADE (GENESIS 3:15; 12:3)

PROMISES FULFILLED (GALATIANS 3:16)

1. KINGDOM TO BE ESTABLISHED (DAN. 2:44).....Matt. 3:1,2; 10:7; 16:18,19 ; Mark 9:1; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:47; CoL 1:13
2. LORD'S HOUSE TO BE BUILT (ISA. 2:2,3)Heb. 3:6; 1 Tim. 3:15
WILL BE IN "LAST DAYS"Acts 2:16,17; Heb. 1:1,2
WILL BEGIN IN JERUSALEMLuke 24:46,47; Acts 1:4-8
ALL NATIONS ADMITTEDActs 2:39; Rom. 1:16
3. CHRIST WILL BE KING (JER. 23:5,6)Matt. 28:18; Acts 2:29-33
4. NEW COVENANT BINDING (JER. 31:31)Matt. 16:18,19; Acts 2:36-38; Heb. 9:15-17; Heb. 8:8
5. HOLY SPIRIT TO BE GIVEN (JOEL 2:28)ACTS 2:16-21

ALL PROMISES MADE ARE FULFILLED IN ACTS 2

(ACTS 2 GIVES THE ACCOUNT OF EVENTS OF ONLY ONE DAY - PENTECOST)

Every Scripture
speaking of the Kingdom BEFORE Acts 2
speaks of it as being in the FUTURE!!

Isa. 2:2-4; Micah 4:1,2; Dan. 2:44; Matt. 3:1,2;
Matt 16:18; Mark 9:1; Matt 6:9-10



PENTECOST
ACTS 2

Every Scripture
speaking of the Kingdom AFTER Acts 2
speaks of it as being in EXISTENCE!!

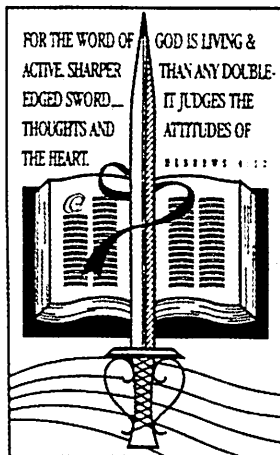
Acts 2:47; Col. 1:13,14; Rev.1:4



THE POWER OF GOD'S WORD!

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than a two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." —Heb. 4:12

Converts the Soul..... Psa. 19:7
It is Able to Save..... Jas. 1:21
Saved by Gospel..... 1 Cor. 15:2
The Power to Save..... Rom. 1:16
Begotten by Gospel..... 1 Cor. 4:15
Born by the Word..... 1 Pet. 1:23
Quickened by Word..... Psa. 119:50
Saved by Words..... Acts 11:13-14
Seed of Kingdom..... Luke 8:11
Sword of the Spirit..... Eph 6:17



Word Gives Light..... Psa. 119:130
It Produces Faith..... Rom. 10:17
Sanctified by Word..... Jno. 17:17
Cleansed by Word..... Jno. 15:2
Word Makes Free..... Jno. 8:32
It Works In Us..... 2 Thes. 2:13
Saved by Preaching..... 1 Cor. 1:21
Word is Complete..... 2 Tim. 3:16-17
Gives All Needed..... 2 Pet. 1:3
Needs No Revision..... Gal. 1:6-8

Dillard Thurman

Salvation By Grace Through Faith

1. Not of Works

Merit? Romans 3:10, 23; Luke 17:10
Law? Galatians 2:16; Rom. 3:20,28
Obedience? John 6:29; James 2:24

11. Saved By grace

God's Gift — John 3:16; Romans 5:8
Death, Burial, Resurrection:
John 15:13; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.

111. Saved Through Faith

Man's Part — John 6:29; 20:30,31;
Hebrews 11:6; Romans 10:10,17;
Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30,31; Acts
2:38; 10:48; 22:16.

God's
Part

By
Grace

DEATH — Romans 5:8

BURIAL — 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

RESURRECTION — 1 Pet. 1:3

Are You Saved

Man's
Part

Through
Faith
Ephesians
2:8,9

DEATH — Colossians 2:12

BURIAL — Romans 6:2-6

RESURRECTION — Rom. 6:11

3 Follow-Up Studies

(Each study will fit on a single page of 8 1/2 by 11 paper)

Which Testament is Binding Today?

Galatians 4:21-31 The bondmaid is the _____ covenant.
The free woman is the _____ covenant.

Vs. 24 The 1st. covenant from Mt. Sinai gendereth (or puts one in) _____.

Vs. 30 The bondwoman and her son were to be _____.

Vs. 31 Do we want to be children of the bondwoman or the free? _____

The Old Law was _____ them and us. Colossians 2:14

The Old Law was taken away by Jesus' death on the _____. Col. 2:14

(This includes: Law of Moses, laws of the Sabbath, laws of clean and unclean meats, laws of the priesthood, annual trip to Jerusalem, sacrificial laws, etc...)

God said, "The days come when I will make a _____ covenant." Jer. 31:31-34

Jesus is the mediator of the _____ covenant. Hebrews 8:6,7

The Old Law contained fault (or imperfection), correct? _____ vs. 7

The Old Law had a separate priesthood that was changed through Jesus.

Because of this, there also is a change of _____. Hebrews 7:12

Jesus' Testament (or will) began taking effect after His _____. Heb. 9:15-17

The first Testament was _____ away that the New could be _____.

Hebrews 10:9,10

The Bible compares the Old Law, the New Law and Marriage in Rom. 7:1-4.

When the Law of Moses was done away at the cross (Col. 2:14), we were then free to be joined to Christ! The Lord's church is the bride of Christ (Rev. 21:2).

What is the value of the Old Testament for the Christian today?

The Old Testament was written for our _____. Romans 15:4

The Old Law was added because of _____. Galatians 3:15-23

It would last _____ the seed (Christ) should come. Vs. 19

The Law was a schoolmaster (one who brings us to truth) to bring us unto _____. Galatians 3:24

That we might be justified by _____ in Christ. Galatians 3:24

After faith is come, we are _____ under a schoolmaster. Gal. 3:25

We are no longer under the Old Law, but we can see the nature of God, which does not change. Also, we can study the prophecies about Christ and His church.

What are we to be called as followers of Christ?

God's people under the Old Testament were called _____. Gen. 35:10
God said one day His people would be called by a _____ name. Isa. 62:2
God said this would happen after the _____ saw God's righteousness. Isa. 62:2
God's righteousness was shown in sending His _____ in which we can have faith. Romans 3:22

Christ's Gospel first went out to _____ only. Matthew 10:6
In Acts 11:18 Peter and those with him understood that God from that day on, had granted repentance not only to the Jews but also to the _____. *This fulfilled the prophecy in Isaiah 62:1,2, Isaiah 65:15*

When people understood that anyone, Jew or Gentile, could be saved, it was time for God's new name for His people to begin to be used. The new name comes in Antioch, after the fulfillment of this prophecy. The record is found in Acts 11:26. The disciples were first called _____ in Antioch.
God wants all of us to be called simply Christians, because it glorifies _____. 2 Thessalonians 1:12

Christian means "follower of Christ".

You cannot spell it, say it, or write it without mentioning Christ!

Many people claim to be Christians and yet they teach different doctrines. If we are true Christians, as the New Testament defines the term, can we add things on to this name given by God?

(Some examples would be: Catholic-Christian, Baptist-Christian, Methodist-Christian, etc...)

1 Corinthians 1:10-13 answers this question. The answer is _____.

Should we ever wear a man-made name? _____ 1 Cor. 1:12,13.

In the New Testament, we are the _____ or tabernacle of God? 1 Cor. 3:16
The church (or called-out people) are also called the _____ of God in Eph. 2:21
The tabernacle or temple of the Old Testament was an _____ or _____ of things to come in Christ. Hebrews 8:5 and Colossians 2:17

According to Hebrews 8:5, was the tabernacle (or, today, the church) to be built according to the pattern of God? _____

We are the church or temple of God! Therefore, shouldn't we call ourselves what we are told to call ourselves, according to the pattern? _____

If we leave the pattern of doctrine, we have not _____. 2 John 9

“Back to the Bible” Study

(Understanding Spiritual Gifts)

We must not deny what God's Word says on this vital subject

Spiritual gifts include the following: Supernatural faith, knowledge, healing, tongues, interpretation of tongues, wisdom and prophecy. These are listed in 1 Corinthians 12,13 and Ephesians 4.

There are 3 reasons for spiritual gifts and miracles:

1. They are written in the Bible that we might _____. John 20:30,31
2. The word of the Lord was _____ by miracles given by God. Mark 16:20
3. They were for *“the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: _____ we all come in the unity of the faith.”* Ephesians 4:12,13a
“Till” or “until” sets a time limit on supernatural spiritual gifts. The faith has now been once and for all _____. Jude 3.

They were to last till the church was mature. We are to grow in knowledge *“unto”* or *toward* a _____ man. The church was to _____ up into Christ. Ephesians 4:13,15

How did people receive miraculous gifts of the Spirit?

Acts 8:14-17 _____ had two apostles lay their hands on them.

They had already been baptized and therefore received the Holy Spirit already as indicated in Acts 2:38. “_____ and be _____ for the _____ of sins and you shall receive the _____ of the _____.”

In Acts 6:1-6 Philip had the apostles’ _____ laid on him for a specific purpose. After this, he could perform _____? Acts 8:12,13

Timothy was told to stir up the spiritual gift which was given by _____. 2 Timothy 1:6

If supernatural spiritual gifts were given only by the apostles’ laying on of hands, to fulfill a specific purpose, *“edifying of the church till”* (Remember the limiting time). Ephesians 4:13;

then we can understand that when the purpose was accomplished, and when the apostles died, miraculous gifts ceased. God says the spiritual gifts were only _____. 1 Corinthians 13:9

When that which is _____ is come, the things in part shall be _____. 1 Corinthians 13:10

The perfect (or complete) has come. It is the _____ law of liberty. James 1:25

This is the completed revelation for man today; _____ have now been given. 2 Peter 1:3

The apostles were guided into _____ truth. John 16:13

Therefore, there are no more revelations for the Spirit to confirm.

Scripture is _____ and _____ furnished. 2 Timothy 3:16,17

Now abideth _____ and _____. 1 Corinthians 13:13

He said this after he said supernatural spiritual gifts would _____. 1 Corinthians 13:8-10

He did not say supernatural spiritual gifts would abide. (True) or (False) in 1 Corinthians 13:8-10.

We don't need miraculous gifts today because we have the confirmed Word of God which is able to give us _____ things that pertain to life and godliness. 2 Peter 1:3

The Spirit still does non-miraculous things for us today: Comforts — 1 Thessalonians 4:18,

Teaches through the Word — 1 Corinthians 2:13, John 20:31 and John 6:63, Helps in our prayers

— Romans 8:26, Convicts men of sin — John 16:8.

Misunderstandings about Salvation

1. Can I be saved like the thief on the Cross?

He died under the old law, not the new.

Hebrews 9:15-17. Will is in effect after death.

Colossians 2:14. Tells us when the old law ended.

Ephesians 2:15. Abolished in his flesh – the old law.

2 Corinthians 3:14. Old Testament is done away in Christ.

Galatians 3: 23-29. We are no longer under the Old Law.

2. What about the people who are very sincere but have not been baptized

Would a sincere Atheist or Muslim or Pagan be saved?

Not by sincerity alone.

Hebrews 5:9. We must obey Christ.

Matthew 7:21. We must do the will of God.

John 3:5. Must be born of water and the Spirit or cannot enter the kingdom.

2 Thessalonians 1:7,8. God will take vengeance on those who will not obey the gospel.

2 Timothy 2:10. Salvation is only in Christ Jesus.

Romans 8:1. No condemnation in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:27. Tells how we get into Christ.

3. But if there is no water, what then?

Question: What if you are bitten by a rattlesnake and there is no antidote? You die.

What kills the soul is *Sin*. Bitten by the serpent of sin.

The only antidote is the blood of Christ.

You're not out in the desert, so this doesn't apply to you anyway.

4. Baptism is a work and we are not saved by works.

Verses often used:

Romans 4:1-5.

Ephesians 2:8.

Romans 4:1-5. These are works of merit — we can't earn our salvation.

James 2:14-26. Not saved by "faith only" but also spiritual works commanded within the New Testament.

Titus 3:5. Baptism is not a work of merit but an act of God's mercy.

Luke 7:30. Pharisees refused baptism and rejected the counsel of God.

John 6:29. This is the work of God — believing is a work.

Acts 10:35. He that works righteousness is acceptable.

5. We are saved by Grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8)

Acts 17:30. Must repent, but confession and faith are not mentioned. So we don't have to believe or confess in order to be saved? Right?...

Matthew 10:32,33. Confession is mentioned, but neither believing nor repenting are mentioned, therefore we don't have to have faith or repent? Right?...

1 Peter 3:21. Baptism is mentioned, but neither faith, repentance, nor confession are mentioned. So all we have to do is be baptized? Right? *Why is that not right?*

You have tried to isolate a passage about salvation, and we can't do that.

Grace — stands for everything God has done in order to redeem mankind.

1. Promise of the redeemer.
2. Death of Jesus on the cross.
3. Giving of the plan of salvation.
4. Preservation of the Bible.
5. Sending of the apostles out into the world.
6. Includes God's providence.

Faith — everything that man must do.

1. Believing in God.

2. Turning away from sin.
3. Believing in Jesus as the divine son of God.
4. Confessing faith in Him.
5. Baptism is also an act of faith.
6. Faithfulness unto death.

Noah is a good example of being saved by grace through faith.

Genesis 6:8 — Found grace in the eyes of the Lord. So God in His mercy told Noah what to do — build an ark. It was a huge job but he did it exactly as God asked.

Hebrews 11:7 — Noah prepared the ark with Godly fear and it was called faithfulness.

6. Baptism is only a figure of our salvation, signifying we have been saved (1 Peter 3:21).

1 Peter 3:21 Does not say baptism is a figure, but a “like” figure. Just like the flood waters saved Noah, “*Baptism saves us*”

7. In Mark 16:16 Jesus does NOT say, He that believeth not and is baptized not shall be condemned.” Only the unbelievers are condemned.

Parallels

1. He that eateth and digesteth shall be filled, but he that

eateth not shall be hungry. (If one does not eat, he certainly won't digest.)

Car Dealer Example

2. He that believeth and is baptized shall receive a new automobile, but he that believeth not shall be rejected. If you refuse to be baptized, is the dealer obligated to give the automobile? NO. You didn't meet both the conditions.

An unbeliever wouldn't be baptized, so Jesus didn't have to say "is baptized not".

Box car example. If a train goes one way, the other cars will follow because they are linked together. "And" links the two words (believeth; baptized) of this verse together.

8. [John 5:1 Jesus said "*Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.*" Therefore, one is born of God at faith without baptism.

Can't isolate one passage from another on the same subject.

If we can, then repentance and confession are not essential for salvation, because they're not mentioned here.

Examples:

1 John 2:29. Everyone who does righteousness is acceptable, *so faith is not essential, right?*

1 John 4:7. Everyone who loves is born of God, therefore *faith is non-essential, right?*

9. In Acts 2:38, the word “for” means “because of.” Therefore, one is baptized because his sins were forgiven when he believed.

This is the same word used in Greek in Matthew 26:28, “eis”, “*shed his blood for the remission of sins*” — not because we already had forgiveness. Acts 2:40 *save yourselves from this crooked generation*. If they were already saved, why did he tell them they must *be saved*? They were already believers (Acts 2:37).

10. In 1 Corinthians 1:17 Paul said, “Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.”

Jesus did send his disciples to baptize. Matthew 28:19

Mark 16:15,16. Baptism.

John 3:5. Baptism.

Acts 18:8. Corinthians believing and were baptized.

1 Corinthians 6:11. But ye were washed.

1 Corinthians 1:17 is an hebraism. A parallel is found in **John 6:27**, where it sounds like he said don't work for food.

2 Thessalonians 3:10 No work, don't eat.

What he is saying is *work not only for perishable food but for eternal life.*

John 12:44 is another hebraism: "*He that believes on me doesn't believe on me...*", "only" is understood.

Paul was not sent to baptize (only) but to preach.

11. 1 Corinthians 10:2 — to be baptized into Christ (*eis Christon ebaptishete*) corresponds identically with the statement, "baptized unto Moses" (*eis ton Mosen ebaptisanto*). Israel was not literally baptized into Moses.

Those people associated their salvation with Moses. If they didn't, they had no hope. The same thing is true for us.

John 3:5 Must be born of water and the spirit.

Hebrews 5:9 Jesus is the author of eternal salvation to those who obey.

Those baptized unto Moses were *delivered* from bondage to Pharaoh, they did not *remain* in bondage to Pharaoh. Drank of

the spiritual rock, which was Christ Jesus. Those who didn't follow Moses didn't have Christ.

12. John 4:1 — “Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John.” Jesus FIRST made disciples and then He baptized them. Therefore, they were saved BEFORE baptism.

A **disciple** is a learner — so **before** he can be a Christian, he must be a disciple. Question: Before one can believe in Jesus as the son of God he must be a disciple. You can't be baptized unless you are a believer. Mark 16:16 *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”*

13. John 3:5 — To be born of water and Spirit is to be born physically and spiritually. “Water” here refers to physical birth and “Spirit” refers to spiritual birth. Baptism is not discussed here at all.

Where in the Bible is physical birth ever referred to as water? John 1:13 says “born of blood”. It's amniotic fluid. If water is figurative then the spirit is figurative also. One can't be literal and the other figurative.

If the water refers to physical birth, then just by being born one is already halfway into the kingdom! What about those who come from a dry birth? They're not born of water so they can't be saved.

14. John 3:5 — Water and Spirit are the same here. The Greek word, “Kai”, can be translated “even.” Jesus is saying. “Except one be born of water *EVEN* the Spirit...”

Look at the difficulty this argument creates:

Mark 16:16 He that believeth even is baptized shall be saved.

Acts 2:38 Repent even be baptized for the remission of your sins.

1 John 5:8 Three that bear witness. Spirit, water and the blood. Can you see the Holy Spirit? No. Can you see the blood of Christ? No. Can you see the waters of baptism? When you are baptized into the waters of Christ you contact His blood and receive the Holy Spirit.

15. John 3:5 — If water here refers to “water” baptism, then there are two baptisms taught in this passage. But Ephesians 4:5 teaches there is but one baptism. Therefore, “water” in this passage cannot refer to baptism.

1. The passage speaks of one birth, consisting of two elements. Like a cake with many ingredients. It's still one cake.

2. In physical birth there are two factors: the male factor and the female factor. In spiritual birth, there are also two factors: water and the Spirit.

16. John 3:5 — To be born of water and Spirit has no reference to baptism because baptism is a burial and not a birth.

In baptism we die to sin and we are raised to a new life (Romans 6:2-5). 2 Corinthians 5:17 — *In Christ we are a new Creature.*

17. John 3:5 — To be born of water in this passage cannot refer to Christian baptism because it had not yet been instituted.

When does a will go into effect? When does he write his will? Answer: Before He dies. He comes up with the conditions of his will before he dies.

18. John 3:5 — The word “water” in connection with salvation is often used as a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

John 7:37-39. Jesus gave a clear explanation of what he meant.

Acts 2:38. Shows the Apostles understood. Peter told them

to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins.

Ephesians 5:26. Christ sanctifies the church, having cleansed it by the *washing of water* with the word.

Titus 3:5. God saves not by works of righteousness but by the *washing of regeneration*.

Remember the Spirit, Water, and Blood bear witness.

19. John 1:31— Baptism is to make manifest that we are already children of God.

Acts 2:38. For forgiveness of sins.

Mark 16:16. To save us.

John 3:5. Put us in the kingdom.

Romans 6:3-5. Brings souls in contact with death, burial, resurrection.

Acts 19:1-5. Why be rebaptized if they were already saved?

20. Acts 10:44 — Cornelius received the Holy Spirit before baptism, so he must have been a Christian before he was baptized.

Acts 11:4. Peter told the events (in order) vs. 15, “*and as I began to speak the holy spirit fell on them.*” So they were saved without faith? Right?

21. Can I worship with a Denomination?

1 Corinthians 1:10. No divisions (denominations) of Christ's church allowed.

1 John 4:1. All teach different things, so we must test them.

Romans 16:17. Bible says to avoid denominations (divisions).

Luke 8:11. The proper seed must be planted (Word of God).

1 Corinthians 3:6. I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

Ephesians 4:4,6. The Lord has one body (church).

Acts 2:47. The Lord adds us to His one church when we are baptized.

1 Corinthians 12:13. He adds us *only* when we are baptized into His one church.

Romans 6:3-5. Christians are planted together in baptism.

Matthew 15:13. Others have planted different seeds.

Matthew 15:9. Denominational worship is vain in the eyes of God.

The divisions and doctrinal error of denominationalism were foretold:

1 Timothy 4:1-5. Some are tricked into believing in a

denominational church, so they do not obey the one gospel correctly.

Galatians 1:8,9. There is only *one* true gospel.

2 Thessalonians 1:8. God will take vengeance if we don't obey His *one* gospel.

22. What about the Alter Call?

("Praying through" in hopes of calling on God, in order to find salvation.)

Going to an alter in order to pray for salvation, in the absence of obeying the Gospel, is not authorized in the New Testament.

God's plan

2 Thessalonians 2:13,14. We are called by the Gospel. We must believe and obey it.

John 6:44,45. Must be taught, must hear, must learn – to be saved.

Acts 22:16. Tells us how we call on the name of the Lord.

We are never told to pray that the Holy Ghost will come upon us.

23. I believe miracles exist today, but you deny them.

Reason why miraculous signs were recorded:

John 20:30,31. So that we might believe.

Purpose of Bible Miracles

Hebrews 2:3,4. To confirm the word of God.

How were miraculous gifts of the Spirit received in the Bible?

Answer: By the laying on of the Apostles' hands.

1. **Acts 8:14-17.** Samaritans had two Apostles lay their hands on them.

They had been baptized so they had already received the Holy Spirit as promised in Acts 2:38, but He had not empowered them to do miracles.

2. **Acts 6:1-6.** Philip – Laying on of the Apostles' hands.
3. **Acts 19:1-7.** Paul gave miraculous power to these 12 men...

...whom he had baptized. They had already received the gift of the Holy spirit at baptism (Acts 2:38), but did not...

...receive miraculous gifts. Those gifts were given by Paul's hands (Acts 19:6).

Important Fact: *When the last Apostle died and the people they laid hands on died, the performance of miracles by men in the church ceased.*

Paul told us in scripture how long miracles by the hand of men would last:

Ephesians 4:8-13. Till the church reached maturity.

1 Corinthians 13:8-10. Tells of the ceasing of miraculous gifts.

James 1:25. Would cease when the Word of God was completely revealed.

John 16:13. Apostles were guided into all truth, therefore there are no more revelations to confirm.

2 Peter 1:3. All things have been given.

2 Timothy 3:16. Scripture is inspired and is perfect (needing no new prophecy).

Why the church of Christ is Jesus' one church

1. **Matthew 16:18.** Founded by Christ.
2. **Ephesians 2:20.** Scriptural Foundation.
3. **Isaiah 2:2,3.** It was founded at the right place (Jerusalem).

1 Timothy 3:15. The church = the house of God.

I. It was founded at the scriptural time, the Pentecost following Jesus' resurrection.

1. **Matthew 16:18.** Jesus promised to build...
2. **Mark 9:7.** In the lifetime of some disciples.
3. **Matthew 18:3.** Disciples had not entered it.

4. **Luke 10:9.** Is nigh unto you.
5. **Luke 22:18.** Shall come.
6. **Acts 2:41.** 3000 added to the church by the Lord *on that day.*
7. Started in Jerusalem in A.D. 33.

II. Uses a Scriptural Name.

1. **Matthew 16:18.** My church.
2. **1 Corinthians 1:2.** Church of God.
3. **Romans 16:16.** Church of Christ.
4. **Ephesians 4:16.** Body of Christ.
5. **1 Timothy 3:15.** Church of the living God.
6. **Hebrews 12:23.** Church of the firstborn.

III. Call ourselves by Scriptural names.

1. **Acts 20:7.** Disciples.
2. **1 Corinthians 1:2.** Saints.
3. **Romans 1:7.** Beloved of God.
4. **1 Corinthians 15:6.** Brethren.
5. **Romans 8:14.** Sons of God.
6. **1 John 3:7.** Children of God.
7. **Romans 8:17.** Heirs of God.
8. **1 Peter 2:9.** Royal priesthood (priests).

9. **Acts 11:16.** Christians.

There were never any hyphenated Christians, _____-Christian.

IV. The Bible is our only creed (no confession of faith or church manual).

1. **1 Peter 1:3.** All things are given.
2. **2 Timothy 3:16.** Only the Bible is inspired.

V. We rightly divide the Word.

1. **2 Timothy 2:15.** Must rightly divide.
2. **Colossians 2:14.** We are living today under New Testament law.

VI. We are undenominational.

VII. Use only scripturally authorized music in worship.

1. **Ephesians 5:19.** Singing.
2. **1 Corinthians 14:15.** Singing.
3. **Hebrews 2:12.** Singing.

VIII. Observe the Lord's Supper every Sunday.

Acts 20:7. First day of the week? How often does it come around?

IX. Voluntary giving to God, not tithing.

1. **1 Corinthians 16:1,2.** We are to give as we have prospered.
2. **2 Corinthians 9:7.** We must give as we have purposed in our heart.

X. Gospel Preaching (1 Corinthians 1:21), Praying (James 5:16, Acts 2:42).

XI. Each church is self-governing just as Christ organized.

Christ's church has a scriptural organization:

1. **Acts 7:55,56.** The headquarters of the church of Christ is in Heaven.
2. **Colossians 1:18.** Christ is the head of His church, not a man.

XII. Each autonomous congregation is organized according to the Scriptures.

1. Christ as head of His church (**Ephesians 5:23**).
2. A plurality of elders, bishops, overseers, pastors — as leaders in each church (**Titus 1:5**).
Must meet qualifications of **1 Timothy 3:2-7**.
3. Deacons appointed by the elders.
Must meet qualifications of **1 Timothy 3:8-12**.
4. Evangelist and Teachers and members follow.

Condensed “Recapturing The Vision” Program

- I. **Prepare the facilities to best appeal to your community.**
 1. Place new toys in the nursery.
 2. Start a picture board with Polaroid photos for identification and recognition of the assembly.
 3. Start a picture board with Polaroid photos of baptisms during the year.
 4. Make sure directions to the bathrooms are clearly marked.

- II. **Organizing and Motivating the mature members.**
 - A. **Organization:**
 1. Start a book to keep attendance records with addresses and phone numbers.
 2. Decide on someone to be a mother's helper for single mothers with children.
 3. Someone needs to be chosen to mail out a card of appreciation for attendance on the Monday following their visit (use your new attendance book or have them fill out a visitor's card).
 4. If you use visitors' cards, someone needs to be chosen to hand them out, take them up, or place them in the collection plate.
 - B. **Motivation:**
 1. Sunday morning lessons need to be directed toward the unchurched.
 2. Sunday evening lessons provide time for meat to the members.
 3. Wednesday night for (6 months) needs to be a soul-winning class. In order to organize new names for contacts and discuss encounters the members have had with people the previous week.
 4. Set your first goal (20) above what you currently have on Sunday morning. Place this goal in the bulletin and make a large sign for the front of the auditorium where you can color in the highest number to date and always see your progress. The goal is to keep the thought of “Recapturing the Vision” ever before your eyes. You might even make some posters or banners which say “Recapturing The Vision”. When you reach your goal, thank the Lord in prayer and celebrate. And raise your goal by 10 more. And create new signs.

III. Setting Up the Program to Increase the Crowd

1. If you can use a phone and write, than you can double using this system.
2. In your Wednesday night soul winning class the teacher (preacher) asks each member in the class to give him names and phone numbers (if they already have the numbers) of anyone they work with, or see at the coffee shop, or they know is erring in the community, or family members or friends who are not Christians. These names are written down during the class, for those who have agreed to make a call and invite them to worship (in a non-threatening way). Each person who chooses to call will have to call only 3 people on Friday or Saturday. We are searching for the good ground. If the person doesn't attend after 2 weeks, he is taken off the list. The list is also rotated each week so the person hears from 2 members giving an invitation.

IV. Members who are willing to call at the end of each week:

V. Names of Contacts	Numbers	Who Will Call?
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1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____
7.	_____	_____
8.	_____	_____
9.	_____	_____
10.	_____	_____
11.	_____	_____
12.	_____	_____

13. _____
14. _____
15. _____

VI. Other means for growth.

1. As individuals obey the gospel, buy Bibles for each one.
2. Have activities for the youth every month and encourage them to invite friends.
3. Make pamphlets showing the youth activities and worship times, to be handed out door-to-door. This will help to find the unchurched. Many people will want to begin sending their children, and this means they must be picked up. Have a volunteer each week who rotates, to avoid burnout. When you have more coming than you can pick up, get an inexpensive van and rotate drivers. For a 15-passenger, you don't need any extra training.
4. Start a radio program or air 1-minute spots.
5. Don't tie your preacher down to the office. Provide time each day for evangelism. Realize that fishing, golf, lunches, door-to-door, business-to-business, all are necessary to build trust in the unchurched. A beeper is fantastic.
6. Recognize and take advantages of the demographics in your area. Find the poor and needy, find the single parent family with 3 children, and be Christ-like in your attitude.

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Biography



John-Mark led his first song when he was only 18 months old at the church of Christ in Rector, AR. At the age of 9, he obeyed the Gospel at the Bristol Road church of Christ in Flint, MI, where his father was currently preaching. John-Mark attended a Christian school from 5th - 12th grades where he began having classes in Greek and Hebrew. At 16 he started preaching for the church of Christ in Delaplane, AR, where he continued till graduation. He has

worked as a tent-making preacher in 17 congregations. During this time, he was a member of both the Army and Air National Guards. He was also working as a Medical Laboratory Technician.

Currently John-Mark is preaching full time for the church of Christ in Hayti, MO. He has been laboring there since 1997. He is the director of two schools: **The Ghanaian Bible Institute** located in Muoso, Ghana, West Africa and **The Tent Makers School of Preaching** at www.howtopreach.com.

He publishes three quarterly newsletters: *"The Christian Perspective"*, *"Ghana Mission Newsletter"* and *"Tent Maker Tidings"*.

He directs and produces a Saturday morning children's pro-

gram called "The Treehouse Bible Time" which airs on channel 42 at 8:30 A.M.

He directs a Young Preachers Class for grades 5 - 12 each week, where students learn how to deliver sound and successful sermons.

He is a speaker on the "*Search for Truth*" Radio Program at 6:45 A.M. on K.C.R.V.

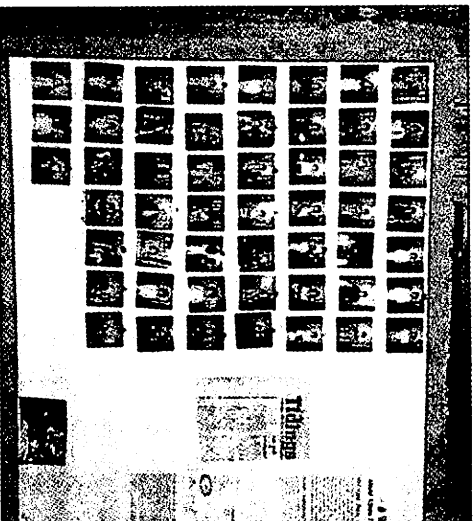
He is also Secretary of the local Rotary Club, Vice President of the Library Board, Board Member at Pemiscot Youth Home, President of Parents' and Teachers' Organization (P.T.O.) and Board member of the Local Senior Center.

John-Mark attended: Luckett Christian Academy, Crowley's Ridge Academy, Crowley's Ridge College, William's College, Ft. Leonard Wood Engineer Training, Community College of the Air Force, Video Bible Institute, International Bible College and the Theological University of America.

Degrees are held in the following areas: Combat Engineer 1989, Medical Laboratory Specialist, 1991, American Society of Clinical Pathologist Cert., 1992, BA in Ministry, 1994 (TUA), MA in Missions, 1997 (TUA), DMin in Church Growth and Development, 1999 (TUA).

Since 1990 he has taught and baptized over 200 souls and planted 16 congregations.

John-Mark is married to Penny L. (Hatley) Wilson and they have 3 beautiful girls, Holland, London and Ireland.



The Attendance board is to help visitors and members remember each other's names and to let everyone see the progress.



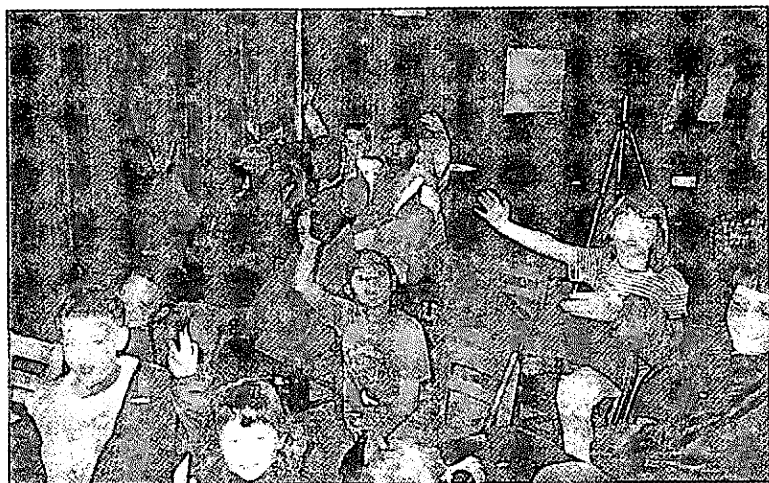
The Baptism board is to show the new Christian how excited he was on his spiritual birthday and to let members see the progress.



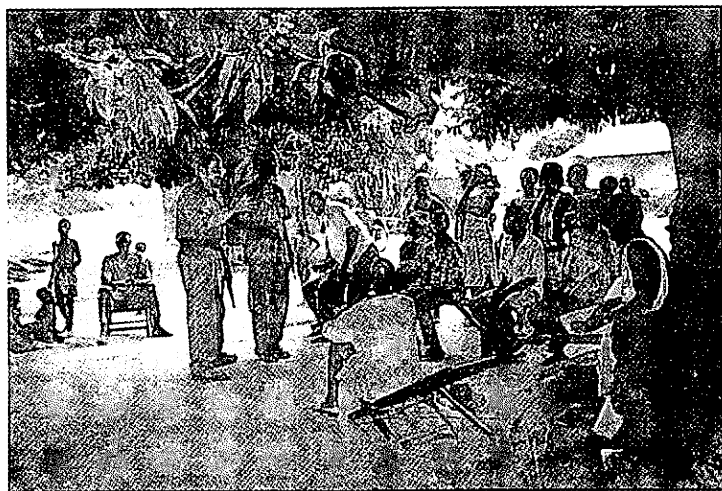
Our growing congregation in Christ,
which consisted of only 39 people when we arrived.



Our Puppet show "The Treehouse Bible Time".



The increased numbers of children which continues to multiply and multiply.



Ghana, West Africa,
where John-Mark was involved in missionary work.

