

Knowing God

Through Obedience



Discovery Lessons 31 Through 40

2nd Edition

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Grand Rapids, Michigan

Published by BMW/bbci
Box 2844, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49501

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Knowing God

Discovery Lessons

by Paul R. Veenstra

Dedicated to my good friend Nidhu Das
Founder of
Bangla Ministries Worldwide and
the Bangla Bible Correspondence Institute

Appreciation is extended to Mr. Nidhu Das, Mrs. Stella Das, Mrs. Janice Goddard, Dr. Donn Ketchum, Mrs. Carol Veenstra, and Mrs. Jayne Wolf for invaluable critical editing work of the manuscript.

KNOWING GOD

This Bible course consists of a series of five books, each with several discovery lessons to help you know God better. This is the fourth book.

Book 4 - KNOWING GOD THROUGH OBEDIENCE

The Holy Bible asks the question, “What does the LORD your God require of you?” Obeying God is the key to knowing the fullness of blessing God has in store for the believer. The purpose of this chapter is to discover what God requires of us. God wants to bless us so we can be a blessing to others.

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INSTRUCTIONS

Each of the books has several short lessons. We suggest that you do one lesson each day. Study the lessons in order. Each lesson will help you understand the lessons that follow. The lessons include a statement of the purpose of the lesson, verses from the Holy Bible (boxed in), definitions and explanations, and questions.

First pray. Ask God to make Himself and His plan for you known to you.

Second, read the Bible verses in the boxes carefully. Think about what God is making known.

Third, read the definitions and explanations.

Finally write brief answers to the questions in each lesson.

If you have any questions about the lesson, please call Thomas at 1-646-462-5232, email us at info@banglaministries.org, or write to us at BMW, PO Box 2844, Grand Rapids, MI 49501.

Each book has an examination. This is simply a compilation of questions from each lesson. They are numbered the same as the numbers in each lesson. Before writing your answers, review the lessons. Then try to see how many questions you can answer without consulting the questions included in each lesson. After that, go back to the lesson book for your answers. When you complete the examination, fill out the personal information, sign the sheet and send it to BMW, PO Box 2844, Grand Rapids, MI 49501, email it to info@banglaministries.org, or give it to your instructor. Your questionnaire will be graded and returned.

KNOWING GOD THROUGH OBEDIENCE Lesson Thirty-one

The purpose of this lesson is to discover the benefits of pleasing God. These benefits are found throughout the Holy Bible.

Verses from the Holy Bible

Hebrews 11:6 And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.

Ephesians 3:12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

Ephesians 5:8-10 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord.

Colossians 1:10 And we pray this in order that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God,

Romans 8:8 Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.

Definitions and Explanations

See Hebrews 11:6 and Ephesians 3:12.

Having **faith** in God means having a personal relationship of love, trust, confidence, and dependence on God that determines the priorities of one's life.

See Ephesians 5:8-10 and Colossians 1:10

Fruit is the result of what a person sows. Good seed, good fruit; bad seed, bad fruit.

See Romans 8:8

The **sinful nature** is the nature we inherited from Adam by which humans rebel against God, miss His purpose for their life, and surrender to the power of evil rather than to God.

Questions

31a. What is necessary to please God? *(See Hebrews 11:6)*

31b. What privilege is ours if we have faith in God? *(See Ephesians 3:12)*

31c. What are three characteristics of those who have moved from darkness to light? *(See Ephesians 5:8-10)*

31d. In what two ways can we please the Lord? *(See Colossians 1:10)*

How can you cooperate with God in seeing more of the “fruit” in your life?

31e. Who cannot please God? *(See Romans 8:8)*

Notes

More verses from the Holy Bible

1 Thessalonians 4:1-9 Finally, brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you by the authority of the Lord Jesus. It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; and that in

this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you. For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.

Deuteronomy 10:12-13 And now, . . . , what does the LORD your God ask of you but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to observe the Lord's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?

Micah 6:8 He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

More Definitions and Explanations

See Deuteronomy 10:12-13 and Psalm 25:12 and Exodus 20:20

Fear the LORD your God does not mean to be afraid of God but to have an awesome reverence or respect for God.

See Micah 6:8

Act justly means to do what is right and fair.

* * * * *

More Questions

31f. What is not pleasing to God? *(See 1 Thessalonians 4:1-9)*

Is there anything in your life that would not be pleasing to God? If so what? Talk to God about it now.

31g. What does God ask of us? *(See Deuteronomy 10:12-13 and Micah 6:8)*

More verses from the Holy Bible

Psalm 25:12 Who, then, is the man that fears the LORD? He will instruct him in the way chosen for him.

Exodus 20:20 Moses said to the people, "Do not be afraid. God has come to test you, so that the fear of God will be with you to keep you from sinning."

Jeremiah 7:23 Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people. Walk in all the ways I command you, that it may go well with you.

1 John 1:7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

More Questions

31h. What are some benefits of an awesome reverence for God?
(See *Psalm 25:12 and Exodus 20:20*)

Should you be afraid of God? Why?

31i. Why should you walk in God's ways? (See *Jeremiah 7:23*)

In your opinion what does it mean to walk in God's ways and how do you discover God's ways?

31h. What are the benefits if we walk in God's light? (See *1 John 1:7*)

KNOWING GOD

THROUGH OBEDIENCE

Lesson Thirty-two

The purpose of this lesson is to discover the advantages of choosing Jesus as Lord. These advantages are found throughout the Holy Bible.

Verses from the Holy Bible

Philippians 2:5-11 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Revelation 19:16 On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Romans 10:9 If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Definitions and Explanations

To choose **Jesus as Lord** is to choose to obey Him and give control to Him as the ruler of your life.

(See Romans 10:9)

Saved means delivered from the condemnation of sin which all deserve.

Notes

Questions

32a. Why is Jesus entitled to be the Lord of our lives?
(See Philippians 2:5-11)

32b. What name has God given to Jesus? *(See Philippians 2:5-11 and Revelation 19:16)*

In your opinion what does the name KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS indicate?

32c. What is the greatest advantage of confessing “Jesus as Lord?”
(See Romans 10:9)

Notes

More verses from the Holy Bible

Mark 12:28-30 One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, "Of all the commandments, which is the most important?" "The most important one," answered Jesus, "is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'"

Ephesians 6:7-8 Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.

1 Chronicles 28:9 And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the LORD searches every heart and understands every motive behind the thoughts. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you forever.

Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 8:38-39 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

More Definitions and Explanations

(See Romans 5:1)

Being justified is the result of faith alone. God declares that trusting faith in Jesus Christ puts people in a right relationship with God. The sin that separates us from God is gone, bringing eternal life now and forever.

Notes

More Questions

32d. Of all the commandments in the Holy Bible, which is the most important? *(See Mark 12:28-30)*

32e. What should my attitude and motivation be in serving others?
(See Ephesians 6:7-8)

32f. How should we serve the LORD? Why? *(See 1 Chronicles 28:9)*

In what way(s) can you serve the Lord?

32g. List four blessings available to us from Jesus our Lord.
(See Romans 5:1 and Romans 8:38-39 and 1 Corinthians 15:57 and 2 Corinthians 3:17)

What blessings from Jesus as Lord have you experienced?

Notes

More verses from the Holy Bible

1 Corinthians 15:57 But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.

Matthew 7:21-23 "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"

1 John 2:3-4 We know that we have come to know him if we obey his commands. The man who says, "I know him," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

More Questions

32h. If not everyone who calls Jesus, Lord, will enter heaven, who will?
(See Matthew 7:21-23)

In your opinion what does it mean for you personally to confess “Jesus is Lord?”

32i. What does the Holy Bible say about those who do not obey God's commands? (*See 1 John 2:3-4*)

Think through the various areas of your life (future plans, family, work, money, home, entertainment, hobbies, etc.) Ask Jesus to be the Lord and Master over each area. What adjustments do you need to make, in order to truly let Him be first in these areas?

Notes

KNOWING GOD THROUGH OBEDIENCE

Lesson Thirty-three

The purpose of this lesson is to discover the value of a new life in Christ. These values are found throughout the Holy Bible.

Verses from the Holy Bible

John 10:10b I (Jesus) have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Revelation 21:5 He who was seated on the throne said, "I am making everything new!" Then he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

Romans 6:4 We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Ephesians 4:22-24 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Ephesians 2:10-13 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. ¹¹Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)--¹²remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

Definitions and Explanations

Ephesians 4:22-24

Old self refers to our old nature controlled by our evil desires.

Questions

33a. Besides dying for our sins, why did Jesus come? *(See John 10:10b)*

33b. What one word describes the life Jesus has given us?
(See Revelation 21:5 and 2 Corinthians 5:17 and Romans 6:4)

Would you like to experience the abundant new life that is available in Christ? Why?

33c. What should we put off and put on to begin the new life God offers us?
(See Ephesians 4:22-24)

33d. What is our old life controlled by? (*See Ephesians 4:22*)

33e. Where does the new life begin? (*See Ephesians 4:23*)

33f. What is the new life to be like? (*See Ephesians 4:24 and Ephesians 2:10*)

33g. What were we without, before Christ? (*See Ephesians 2:12*)

More verses from the Holy Bible

Colossians 3:7-8 You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.

Romans 6:20-22 When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. ²¹What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! ²²But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life.

Colossians 1:21-22 Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation.

1 Peter 2:10 Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Hebrews 12:1-2 Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

More Definitions and Explanations

Colossians 3:7-8

Malice is the intention to do something harmful to another person.

Slander is saying something harmful, whether true or false, to someone about another person.

Colossians 1:21-22

Alienated means separated.

More Questions

33h. What kinds of things are not suitable for the new life?

(See Colossians 3:7-8)

How would you describe your desire for the new lifestyle in Christ?

33i. What does God call those who are controlled by sin?

(See Romans 6:20)

33j. What are the benefits of being set free from sin? (*See Romans 6:22*)

33k. In what ways has God changed us? (*See Colossians 1:21-22 and 1 Peter 2:10*)

33l. Who provides the new life? (*See Galatians 2:20*)

33m. What three things can we do to nurture the new life?
(*See Hebrews 12:1-2*)

What changes do you want God, by His power, to make in your lifestyle?

KNOWING GOD THROUGH OBEDIENCE

Lesson Thirty-four

The purpose of this lesson is to discover how to have victory in your new life in Christ. The steps to victory are found in 2 Peter and throughout the Holy Bible.

Verses from 2 Peter

2 Peter 1:1-4 Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who through the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ have received a faith as precious as ours: 2 Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. 3 His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. 4 Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

2 Peter 1:5-7 For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith goodness; and to goodness, knowledge; 6 and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; 7 and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love.

Definitions and Explanations

To have victory means to have success.

2 Peter 1:1-7

God has provided everything we need to live the new life successfully. His provision is summed up in two words—power and promises. God does not expect us to live this new life by our own strength. Neither does He expect us to do nothing. He has given us His power and has promised to help us. What does God expect on our part?

Faith must be our foundation for living the new life. Faith is believing on God for His power, and trusting in His promises.

Effort indicates that God expects us to do our part—to work hard to live the new life. Faith and effort must go hand in hand. One without the other will end in defeat, not victory.

Goodness refers to good intentions. Without a desire to do good (the right thing), you will miss the first step in your new life. Add goodness to your faith.

Knowledge refers to a correct understanding about the essentials of new life in Christ. Good intentions are good, but they are not enough. Make an effort to learn. Add knowledge to your goodness.

Self-control is a matter of putting knowledge into practice by choosing to obey God rather than one's desires and passions. The Spirit of God gives both the desire and the ability to do this. Add self-control to your knowledge.

Perseverance refers to not giving up when troubles come, and they will. Success comes by sticking to the basics of self-control, knowledge, goodness, and faith with effort in times of testing.

Godliness refers to our reflection of the character of God to others in the face of difficulties. Add God-likeness to your perseverance.

Brotherly kindness is our expression of concern for all of God's family. It depends on exercising all of the foregoing qualities to show brotherly love to even the unlovely. Add brotherly kindness to your godliness.

Love is a big step above brotherly kindness. Christ raised the standard. He loved those who hated Him enough to sacrifice Himself for them. Only with God's power and promises can you meet the standard.

Questions

34a. What does God give us as a resource to change? *(See 2 Peter 1:4)*

34b. What can we escape through God's provision? *(See 2 Peter 1:4)*

Notes

More verses from 2 Peter

2 Peter 1:8-11 For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. ¹⁰Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, ¹¹and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

More Questions

34c. What results can we expect if we add the qualities listed in 2 Peter 1:5-7 to our lives? (See 2 Peter 1:8-11)

Which quality would you like to ask God to develop in your life?

34d. What should we never forget? (See 2 Peter 1:8-11)

Other verses from the Holy Bible

Matthew 5:6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

1 Timothy 6:11 But you, man of God, flee from all this, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, endurance and gentleness.

2 Timothy 2:22 Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Proverbs 4:14-15 Do not set foot on the path of the wicked or walk in the way of evil men. Avoid it, do not travel on it; turn from it and go on your way.

More verses from the Holy Bible

Ephesians 6:11-18 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. ¹²For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. ¹³Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. ¹⁴Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, ¹⁵and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. ¹⁶In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

John 15:5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."

More Questions

34e. What should we do if we want to be filled with righteousness?
(See Matthew 5:6)

34f. What seven things should a man of God pursue? (See 1 Timothy 6:11 and 2 Timothy 2:22)

34g. What should we flee? (See 2 Timothy 2:22)

34h. What instructions are given for victory in your new life?
(See Proverbs 4:14-15 and Ephesians 6:11-18 and John 15:5)

KNOWING GOD THROUGH OBEDIENCE

Lesson Thirty-five

The purpose of this lesson is to discover the dangers of disobeying God compared with the benefits of obeying God. These are found throughout the Holy Bible.

To disobey God is to fail to hear and do what God has told us to do. Disobedience to God's word comes from a sinful heart—a heart that will not trust God. If God's people disobey Him, they receive judgment and necessary discipline and they will be denied God's blessings.

To obey God means to hear God's word and act accordingly with an attitude of submission. To really hear God's word is to obey God's word. True obedience means imitating God in holiness, humility, and love. Obedience springs from gratitude for "the gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Our love for God motivates us to obey Him. Obedience comes from a heart that trusts God. If God's people obey Him, they find the blessings He longs to give to them.

Verses from the Holy Bible

Titus 1:16 They claim to know God, but by their actions they deny him. They are detestable, disobedient and unfit for doing anything good.

Ephesians 5:6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.

Hosea 9:17 My God will reject them because they have not obeyed him; they will be wanderers among the nations.

Matthew 7:21 Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.

2 Chronicles 24:20b This is what God says: "Why do you disobey the Lord's commands? You will not prosper. Because you have forsaken the LORD, he has forsaken you."

Definitions & Explanations

See Titus 1:16

Detestable means abominable or disgusting.

See Ephesians 5:6

Wrath means fierce anger.

* * * * *

Questions

35a. What does the Bible say about those who claim to know God but their actions deny Him? (*See Titus 1:16*)

35b. What will happen to those who disobey God? (*See Ephesians 5:6 and Hosea 9:17 and Matthew 7:21 and 2 Chronicles 24:20b*)

To what extent does your personal obedience match God's commands?

Notes

A **disciple** is a learner. The idea behind being a disciple of Jesus Christ is basically to be a follower of Christ. A disciple of Christ is committed to total allegiance to Jesus. Discipleship is learning how to apply Christ's life-changing principles to one's life. It is a lifelong process. It includes learning about Him, live for Him, serving Him, and looking to Him as the trustworthy authority He is. While we are alive on earth, we are always in the process of "becoming." True disciples do the will of God.

More verses from the Holy Bible

Jeremiah 7:23 Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people. Walk in all the ways I command you, that it may go well with you.

John 14:21, 23-24 Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him. Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

Exodus 19:5 Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession.

1 Samuel 15:22 But Samuel replied: "Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the LORD? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams."

Acts 5:29 Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than men!"

More Definitions & Explanations

See 1 Samuel 15:22

Heed means give attention to with the intent of doing the will of God.

More Questions

35c. What does God promise those who obey Him? (*See Jeremiah 7:23 and John 14:21, 23-24 and Exodus 19:5*)

35d. What is more important in God's sight than offerings and sacrifices? (*See 1 Samuel 15:22*) Why?

35e. How did Peter and the others respond to the authorities who demanded obedience to their rules? (*See Acts 5:29*)

Notes

More verses from the Holy Bible

Ephesians 5:1-2 Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

2 Peter 3:18 But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever! Amen.

Hebrews 6:1a Therefore let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity.

Philippians 3:14 But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Mark 1:17 "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men."

1 John 2:6 Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did.

Matthew 11:15 He who has ears, let him hear.

More Definitions & Explanations

See Ephesians 5:1-2

A fragrant offering is used here as a metaphor expressing that which ascends to God as a result of a pleasing sacrifice.

See Philippians 3:14

Straining means pursuing earnestly.

Notes

More Questions

35f. What instructions does the Bible give to those who desire to obey God? (*See Ephesians 5:1-2 and 2 Peter 3:18 and Hebrews 6:1a*)

What is the next step of maturity in Christ for you?

Write out a prayer to the Lord, expressing the areas of obedience you need to grow in.

35g. How did Paul describe his desire to obey God? (*See Philippians 3:14*)

How strong is your commitment to obey God?

35h. What does Jesus ask us to do? (*See Mark 1:17*)

What does He promise those who do?

35i. What does the Bible say about those who claim to know God?
(*See 1 John 2:6*)

KNOWING GOD THROUGH OBEDIENCE

Lesson Thirty-six

The purpose of this lesson is to discover the benefits of honesty and integrity. These benefits are found throughout the Holy Bible.

Verses from the Holy Bible

John 1:17 For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

John 14:6 Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

1 Chronicles 29:17a I know, my God, that you test the heart and are pleased with integrity.

Proverbs 12:22 The LORD detests lying lips, but he delights in men who are truthful.

Psalms 51:6 Surely you desire truth in the inner parts; you teach me wisdom in the inmost place.

Ephesians 4:25-27, 29 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. "In your anger do not sin": Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

Definitions and Explanations

Truth is that which conforms to facts or what is real. God is truth. God's word is truth. It can be trusted.

Honesty is telling or speaking the truth—what really happened or was said.

Integrity is living the truth in your daily life, doing what is right and fair. Truth, honesty and integrity are related to each other, and are the opposite of deception, falsehood, dishonesty, deceit, malice, slander, gossip and evil.

See Ephesians 4:25-27, 29

Unwholesome means harmful or not helpful.

Benefit here means to meet the needs of those you want to help.

* * * * *

Questions

36a. Who is the source of truth? (*See John 1:17 and John 14:6*)

36b. What pleases God? (*See 1 Chronicles 29:17a and Proverbs 12:22 and Psalm 51:6*)

36c. How should we speak to others? (*See Ephesians 4:25-27, 29*)

In what ways are your conversations pleasing or displeasing to God?

Notes

More verses from the Holy Bible

Proverbs 12:17 A truthful witness gives honest testimony, but a false witness tells lies.

Proverbs 12:18 Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

Colossians 3:8-10 But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

Acts 13:45 When the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and talked abusively against what Paul was saying.

Psalms 31:18 Let their lying lips be silenced, for with pride and contempt they speak arrogantly against the righteous.

Proverbs 26:20 Without wood a fire goes out; without gossip a quarrel dies down.

Proverbs 15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

More Definitions and Explanations

See Proverbs 12:18

Reckless means irresponsible or thoughtless or careless.

See Colossians 3:8-10

Malice is hatred.

Filthy language is shameful, foul or dirty talk, which defiles all who hear.

Notes

More Questions

36d. What is the difference between a false witness and a truthful witness?
(See Proverbs 12:17)

36e. What does the Bible say about reckless words? *(See Proverbs 12:18)*

36f. What kind of things cause people to lie to each other?
(See Colossians 3:8-10 and Acts 13:45 and Psalm 31:18)

What should we do about it?

36g. How can you stop a quarrel? *(See Proverbs 26:20 and Proverbs 15:1)*

Notes

More verses from the Holy Bible

Zechariah 8:16 These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts.

1 Corinthians 13:6 Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

1 John 3:18-19 Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence.

Proverbs 16:13 Kings take pleasure in honest lips; they value a man who speaks the truth.

Proverbs 30:8 Keep falsehood and lies far from me; give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread.

Proverbs 19:22b Better to be poor than a liar.

More Questions

36h. What does God tell us to do? (See *Zechariah 8:16*)

How would you describe your personal honesty?

36i. What is the evidence of true love? (See *1 Corinthians 13:6* and *John 3:18-19*)

36j. What does the Bible say about those in authority?
(See *Proverbs 16:13*)

36k. How can we be victorious and truthful? (See *Proverbs 30:8*)

36l. What importance does God place on honesty? (See *Proverbs 19:22b*)

Make a list of what you have learned about honesty.

In what ways are people dishonest? Be specific.

Is there an area of your life that needs confession or changes in regard to living more honestly?

Notes

KNOWING GOD THROUGH OBEDIENCE

Lesson Thirty-seven

The purpose of this lesson is to discover the source and consequences of lies. This concept is found throughout the Holy Bible.

Verses from the Holy Bible

John 8:44 You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desire. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Psalms 12:2 Everyone lies to his neighbor; their flattering lips speak with deception.

Psalms 58:3 Even from birth the wicked go astray; from the womb they are wayward and speak lies.

Proverbs 10:18 He who conceals his hatred has lying lips, and whoever spreads slander is a fool.

Definitions and Explanations

A lie is a deliberate false statement, story or excuse intended to deceive or avoid the truth. Neither God nor the Bible makes a distinction between big lies or little lies, between white lies or black lies. A lie is a lie.

To slander is to speak critically of another person with the intent to hurt. It means to falsely accuse another. Jesus said, "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment". This should cause each person to be very careful about what they say about others. The Bible shows that slander is a mark of godless people.

Notes

Questions

37a. Who is the source of lies? (*See John 8:44*)

37b. Who tells lies? (*See Psalm 12:2 and Psalm 58:3 and Proverbs 10:18*)

Notes

More verses from the Holy Bible

Proverbs 6:16-19 There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him: haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood, a heart that devises wicked schemes, feet that are quick to rush into evil, a false witness who pours out lies and a man who stirs up dissension among brothers.

Romans 1:18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness,

Romans 2:6-8 God will give to each person according to what he has done. To those who by persistence in doing good seek glory, honor and immortality, he will give eternal life. But for those who are self-seeking and who reject the truth and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger.

1 John 1:6 If we claim to have fellowship with him (God) yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth.

1 John 1:8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

1 John 2:4 The man who says, "I know him (God)," but does not do what he commands is a liar, and the truth is not in him.

1 John 4:20 If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen.

More Definitions and Explanations

(See Proverbs 6:16-19)

Dissension is hostile disagreement.

Notes

More Questions

37c. How does God react to a lying tongue, a heart that devises wicked schemes, a false witness who pours out lies, a person who suppresses the truth, or a person who rejects truth? *(See Proverbs 6:16-19 and Romans 1:18 and Romans 2:8)*

How do you think God reacts to the things you say to or about others?

37d. Who is a liar? (*See 1 John 1:6 and 1 John 1:8 and 1 John 2:4 and 1 John 4:20*)

Notes

More verses from the Holy Bible

Revelation 21:8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars--their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.

Psalms 5:6 You (God) destroy those who tell lies; bloodthirsty and deceitful men the LORD abhors.

Proverbs 20:19 A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid a man who talks too much.

Proverbs 25:18 Like a club or a sword or a sharp arrow is the man who gives false testimony against his neighbor.

Proverbs 16:28 A perverse man stirs up dissension, and a gossip separates close friends.

Proverbs 26:28 A lying tongue hates those it hurts, and a flattering mouth works ruin.

More Definitions and Explanations

(See Proverbs 20:19 and Proverbs 16:28)

A gossip is a person who repeats idle talk and rumors about the private affairs of others whether they are true or not.

Notes

More Questions

37e. What will happen to habitual liars who are not forgiven?
(See Revelation 21:8 and Psalm 5:6)

Do you fear the consequences of lying? Why?

Sometimes there are consequences for admitting or telling the truth. What are some of these consequences that we must be willing to face?

37f. Why should you avoid a person who talks too much?
(See Proverbs 20:19)

37g. How does false testimony, gossip, lying, and flattering affect the other person? *(See Proverbs 25:18 and Proverbs 16:28 and Proverbs 26:28)*

What can you do if someone begins to gossip or tell lies in your presence?

Talk to God about this area of your life. Ask Him to show you how you can please Him more in this area.

**KNOWING GOD
THROUGH OBEDIENCE**
Lesson Thirty-eight

The purpose of this lesson is to discover the blessings and importance of giving and generosity. These truths are found throughout the Holy Bible.

Verses from the Holy Bible

Matthew 6:24 No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

Ecclesiastes 5:10 Whoever loves money never has money enough; whoever loves wealth is never satisfied with his income. This too is meaningless.

Malachi 3:8 "Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings."

Proverbs 3:9-10 Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine.

Definitions and Explanations

(See Matthew 6:24)

Despise means to look down upon or against something or someone.

(See Malachi 3:8)

A Tithe is a tenth part (10%) of increase or income offered to God. The rabbis of the New Testament period understood the law as referring to three separate tithes: a Levitical tithe for support of the Levites and the priests who served in the temple, a tithe of agricultural produce to be used for a family celebrating the Jewish feasts in Jerusalem, and the third year's charity tithe stipulated for the care of orphans, widows, the poor and foreigners.

Offerings are gifts to God over and above the tithes.

(See Proverbs 3:9-10)

Firstfruits mean the first portion and best of all the income we receive, before taxes.

Questions

38a. What choice of masters do we have? (*See Matthew 6:24*)

38b. How will our attitudes of love or hate affect our choices?
(*See Matthew 6:24*)

38c. Who is never satisfied? (*See Ecclesiastes 5:10*)

Which master are you serving?

38d. How can a person rob God? (*See Malachi 3:8*)

38e. How can a person honor God? (*See Proverbs 3:9-10*)

Notes

More verses from the Holy Bible

Deuteronomy 8:17-18 You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth.

1 Samuel 2:7 The LORD sends poverty and wealth.

2 Corinthians 9:6-7 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Luke 6:38 Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Philippians 4:19 And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

Notes

More Questions

38f. Who gives a person the ability to earn money?
(See Deuteronomy 8:17-18 and 1 Samuel 2:7)

Do you give thanks to God for what God has given you?
Why or why not?

38g. How should we give to God? Why? *(See 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 and Luke 6:38)*

What portion of your income would you “decide in your heart” to give to God’s work?

38h. What does God promise to those who give? *(See 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 and Luke 6:38 and Philippians 4:19)*

Notes

More verses from the Holy Bible

1 Corinthians 16:2 On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with his income.

Mark 8:34-36 Then he (Jesus) called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?"

1 Timothy 5:17-18 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching. For the Scripture says, "Do not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain," and "The worker deserves his wages."

2 Corinthians 8:1-4, 13-14 And now, brothers, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. Out of the most severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the saints.

Our desire is not that others might be relieved while you are hard pressed, but that there might be equality. At the present time your plenty will supply what they need, so that in turn their plenty will supply what you need. Then there will be equality.

More Definitions and Explanations

(See 1 Timothy 5:17-18)

Elders in the New Testament churches were spiritual leaders and ministers, not members of a governing council.

Notes

More Questions

38i. What principles of giving did the New Testament church follow?
(See *1 Corinthians 16:2*)

38j. How can I make sure I am not “losing my soul” in my pursuit of money? (See *Mark 8:34-36*)

38k. Who is worthy of our gifts? (See *1 Timothy 5:17-18* and *2 Corinthians 8:1-4, 13-14*)

Are you obeying God in terms of your money? What practical way can you think of to align your finances with God’s word?

Notes

KNOWING GOD THROUGH OBEDIENCE

Lesson Thirty-nine

The purpose of this lesson is to discover our responsibility to live a godly life, communicating the “good news” to others. This is found throughout the Holy Bible.

Verses from the Holy Bible

Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

Acts 22:15 You will be his (God's) witness to all men of what you have seen and heard.

1 John 1:3 We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.

Mark 5:19 "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you."

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

2 Corinthians 5:11,14 Since, then, we know what it is to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. ¹⁴For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that one died for all, and therefore all died.

Definitions and Explanations

See Acts 1:8 and Acts 22:15

A **witness** is a person who bears testimony of what he has seen and knows about a given situation. The Christian witness should tell others what he knows about Jesus Christ and what it means to personally trust Him. If a Christian is not a witness for Christ, then he is disobedient. Witnessing is telling others about Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit and leaving the results to God.

Questions

39a. When a person receives Christ and the Holy Spirit, what is that person empowered to do? *(See Acts 1:8)*

39b. What should we tell others? *(See Acts 22:15 and 1 John 1:3)*

What have you seen and heard about Jesus and the gospel?

39c. Where should we start to tell what the Lord has done for us?
(See Mark 5:19)

What are the benefits for you and others of communicating the gospel?

39d. What is the most important truth we should communicate about Christ? *(See 1 Corinthians 15:3-4)*

Write down the names of four people God has put in your life. Pray for them. Tell them what Jesus has done for you.

39e. What should be our motivation to tell others the good news?
(See 2 Corinthians 5:11, 14)

More verses from the Holy Bible

Matthew 5:14-16 You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.

Luke 9:26 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

Romans 1:16 I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile.

2 Timothy 1:8 So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God.

1 Peter 3:15-16 But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect, keeping a clear conscience, so that those who speak maliciously against your good behavior in Christ may be ashamed of their slander.

John 4:35 Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.

More Definitions and Explanations

See Romans 1:16

Gospel means, good news. Christians use the word to designate the message and story of God's saving activity through the life, ministry, death, and resurrection of God's unique Son Jesus.

Notes

More Questions

39f. Why should we live a godly life? (See *Matthew 5:14-16*)

39g. What will happen to those who are ashamed of Christ?
(See *Luke 9:26*)

39h. Why should we not be ashamed of the gospel? (See *Romans 1:16*)

39i. What should our attitude be when telling others what Jesus means to us? (See *2 Timothy 1:8 and 1 Peter 3:15-16*)

39j. When is it time to talk with others about Jesus Christ? (See *John 4:35*)

Write down your reason for telling your friends and acquaintances the “good news”.

Notes

KNOWING GOD THROUGH OBEDIENCE

Lesson Forty

The purpose of this lesson is to discover how to begin witnessing. The apostle Paul's example is found in Acts 26.

Verses from the Holy Bible

Acts 26:1-3 Then Agrippa said to Paul, "You have permission to speak for yourself." So Paul motioned with his hand and began his defense: ²"King Agrippa, I consider myself fortunate to stand before you today as I make my defense against all the accusations of the Jews, ³and especially so because you are well acquainted with all the Jewish customs and controversies. Therefore, I beg you to listen to me patiently.

Acts 26:4-8 "The Jews all know the way I have lived ever since I was a child, from the beginning of my life in my own country, and also in Jerusalem. ⁵They have known me for a long time and can testify, if they are willing, that according to the strictest sect of our religion, I lived as a Pharisee. ⁶And now it is because of my hope in what God has promised our fathers that I am on trial today. ⁷This is the promise our twelve tribes are hoping to see fulfilled as they earnestly serve God day and night. O king, it is because of this hope that the Jews are accusing me. ⁸Why should any of you consider it incredible that God raises the dead?

Acts 26:9-11 "I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth. ¹⁰And that is just what I did in Jerusalem. On the authority of the chief priests I put many of the saints in prison, and when they were put to death, I cast my vote against them. ¹¹Many a time I went from one synagogue to another to have them punished, and I tried to force them to blaspheme. In my obsession against them, I even went to foreign cities to persecute them.

Explanation

The apostle Paul's spiritual journey is recorded in this 26th chapter of Acts as Paul witnessed about his faith before King Agrippa and his own people, the

Jews. Notice his statement about obedience in verse 19.

Verses from the Holy Bible continued

Acts 26:12-14 "On one of these journeys I was going to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests. ¹³About noon, O king, as I was on the road, I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, blazing around me and my companions. ¹⁴We all fell to the ground, and I heard a voice saying to me in Aramaic, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads.'

Acts 26:15 "Then I asked, 'Who are you, Lord?' "

Acts 26:15-18 'I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,' the Lord replied. ¹⁶'Now get up and stand on your feet. I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you. ¹⁷I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them ¹⁸to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

Acts 26:19-20 "So then, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the vision from heaven. ²⁰First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and prove their repentance by their deeds.

Questions

Paul's Spiritual Journey

40a. What was Paul's life like before he met Jesus?

40b. How did Paul meet Jesus?

40c. What was Paul's life like after he met Jesus?

Next write out your spiritual journey, keeping in mind what you would tell about your faith to others.

My Spiritual Journey

40d. What was your life like before you met Jesus?

40e. How did you meet Jesus?

40f. What is your life like since you met Jesus?

Now tell your story to someone today.

KNOWING GOD THROUGH OBEDIENCE

Summary

Through the study of the lessons in this book we have learned that obedience is beneficial to our relationship with the God who loves us. It can also be beneficial to all those we have contact with.

First, we discovered the benefits of pleasing God. We also learned that those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. Obey God and reap the benefits.

Second, we discovered the advantages of choosing Jesus as Lord. We learned that those who seek the Lord will be rewarded and nothing can separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Choose to obey Him and give Him control of your life.

Third, we discovered the value of a new life in Christ. We learned that God has freed us from slavery to sin. Follow God's instructions to please the Lord and enjoy His righteousness and holiness and life to the full.

Fourth, we discovered how to have victory in our new life in Christ. We outlined the spiritual qualities we need to add to our faith that will keep us from falling and provide us a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior. Make an effort to make these qualities a part of your life.

Fifth, we discovered the dangers of disobedience contrasted with the benefits of obedience. We also learned what a true disciple of Jesus Christ is and does. Make it your goal to continue to learn more and more about the Lord by taking advantage of the provisions God has given you to grow in the knowledge of Him.

Sixth, we discovered the benefits of integrity and honesty. We also learned what truth is and what honesty is, and what guidelines God gives us in His word. Develop a reputation for complete integrity. Then others will believe what you say when you tell them about your faith in Christ

Seventh, we discovered the source and consequences of lies, that a lie is a lie, not a small lie or a big lie, a white lie or a black lie. We also learned what the Bible teaches us about gossip and slander. Tell the truth and you will avoid the disastrous consequences of lying.

Eighth, we discovered the blessings and importance of giving and generosity. We identified what tithes and offerings and firstfruits are. We also learned about the danger of loving money, and who gives us the ability to earn money. Give to the Lord's work thereby laying up treasures in heaven. You cannot outgive God.

Ninth, we discovered our responsibility to live a godly life, communicating the "good news" to others. God has given all of us opportunities to tell others what we have experienced. The power of God will bring others to faith in Christ as we share the good news with them.

Tenth, we discovered one way of getting started to witness about our faith. Write down your spiritual journey and then share your story with as many people as you can.