
***FOLLOWING
ON
TO KNOW
THE LORD***

STUDIES 1 - 10

STUDENT MANUAL

Stephen Nemeth Lectures

Following On To Know The Lord

Studies 1 - 10

Student Manual

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Stephen Nemeth Lectures

BEING SURE OF ONE'S SALVATION

STUDY 1

Scripture Portion: 1 John 5:1-21

The purpose of this series of studies is twofold:

(1) To give practical help and instruction to young Christians, to those who have only just started in the Christian life.

(2) To offer definite Bible teaching to all Christians, especially to show how we may -

2 Peter 3:18 -

and to -

Hosea 6:3 -

As we proceed with these studies we shall see what a glorious, happy and triumphant experience it is to be a Christian and to be going on with the Lord -

abiding in Him -

John 15:4 -

confessing Him before others -

Matthew 10:32-33 -

enjoying fellowship with Him and with His children -

1 John 1:7 -

Hebrews 10:24-25 -

winning others to Him -

John 1:41-42 -

and looking for His coming again -

Hebrews 9:28 -

The first essential, if we are to progress in the Christian life, is that we should be absolutely sure about our own salvation. It is not enough to be saved. We must *know* that we are saved. God's will is that we should not be safe, but that we should *be sure* we are safe!

He loves everybody -

John 3:16 -

Romans 10:12-14 -

He longs for all men to be saved -

2 Peter 3:9 -

He also desires that all who are His should know it.

Compare -

John 20:31 -

1 John 5:13 -

The fact is, however, that many Christians have no assurance of their salvation. This lack of

assurance is most unsatisfactory for the following reasons. Unless we are sure of our own salvation -

- our *TESTIMONY* will be stifled.

Psalm 107:2 -

- our *SERVICE* will be stunted.

Daniel 11:32 -

- we shall not *GROW* spiritually.

Ephesians 4:15 -

- we shall *LACK* peace, joy, confidence and power with God and with men.

2 Timothy 1:12 -

The world and the professing Christian think it is a great presumption for anyone to say that they know they are saved! But listen to -

Job -

Job 19:25-27 -

Paul -

Romans 5:1 -

Ephesians 1:7 -

1 Timothy. 1:12 -

Peter -

1 Peter 1:3-8 -

John -

1 John 2:12 -

1 John 3:14 -

The early Christians certainly had no doubts about their salvation. If we are saved we should have no doubts concerning ours.

Now, the one condition of salvation is faith in the Person and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

John 3:16 -

Romans 1:16 -

Acts 16:30-31 -

It is by believing that we are saved.

Here are three reasons why I, as a believer, know for certain that I am saved.

1. HIS WORK FOR ME MAKES ME SURE.

Our salvation depends entirely upon what the Lord Jesus has done for us. It is not DO, but DONE.

*Upon a life I did not live,
Upon a death I did not die,
Another's life, Another's death,
I stake my whole eternity.*

Our feelings may and will change, but the fact that He in Whom we are trusting has once and for all shed His blood to redeem and to save us, is an accomplished fact. That fact can never alter or change.

Hebrews 9:28 -

Upon the cross of Calvary, the Lord Jesus, in His death, fulfilled all the requirements of the broken law for those who believed on Him. Therefore the law can now have no claim on them whatsoever. As believers, we have already passed out of death unto life. We shall never come into condemnation.

John 5:24 -

Read what the Lord said in **Exodus 12:13 -**

The same is true today. I know I am saved because the blood has been shed. My deliverance from God's righteous judgment is therefore absolutely certain.

1 Peter 1:18-19

John 20:20-21 -

As I gaze, by faith, at the wounds of my Saviour and trust in His atoning blood, I know that I am every bit as safe in Christ as the Israelites were in their homes when, by a simple act of faith on their part, the blood had been struck on the door posts.

Exodus 12:7 -

Romans 8:1 -

2. HIS WORD TO ME MAKES ME SURE.

The family dwelling in a home in Egypt which was sheltered by the blood would have had absolute assurance that all would be well because God had said,

Exodus 12:13 -

It was not presumption on their part to know that all would be well. They were simply resting back in calm assurance upon the promise of God.

It would have been a great presumption had they doubted the word that God had spoken!

The blood of Christ makes us safe. The Word of God makes us sure. We may be absolutely sure of our salvation because we have God's word, which cannot be broken, in which to trust.
For example -

John 3:16 -

John 3:36 -

John 5:24 -

John 10:9 -

Romans 10:9 -

1 John 5:11-12 -

Which is the greater presumption - to believe what God says, or to doubt what God says?

3. HIS WITNESS IN ME MAKES ME SURE.

This witness is twofold.

a. There is the witness of the Holy Spirit.

The moment we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and accept Him as our own personal Saviour, the Holy Spirit enters our hearts to abide there forever.

Romans 8:16 -

Galatians 4:6 -

1 John 4:13 -

How wonderful is this inward assurance of the Holy Spirit!

*If one should ask of me, how can I tell?
Glory to Jesus, I know very well!
God's Holy Spirit with mine doth agree,
Constantly witnessing - Jesus loves me.*

b. There is the witness of a changed life.

2 Corinthians 5:17 -

Compare with -

John 9:25 -

When we find that the things we used to hate we now love, and the things we used to love we now hate, we can be quite sure that the miracle of regeneration has taken place.

Are you saved?

If so, be sure of it!

If not, make sure by receiving the Lord Jesus as your own personal Saviour now.

John 1:12 -

CONFESSING THE LORD BEFORE OTHERS

STUDY 2

Scripture Portion: Romans 10:1-17

There must be very many true, real Christians who love the Lord Jesus and desire to honour Him, who nevertheless fail to experience fulness of blessing in the Christian life.

Why is this? One reason is because they are not confessing their Saviour and Lord, or because they are only partially confessing Him.

For example, they confess Him by life and not by lip, at home but not in the office, before other Christians but not before the world. How easy it is to be like Joseph of Arimathaea - *a disciple of Jesus, but secretly.....!*

John 19:38 -

John 7:13 -

John 12:42 -

Proverbs 29:25 -

Are you a secret disciple?

The key verse of this study is -

Matthew 10:32-33 -

It is important to notice that these are the words of the Lord Jesus. What a wonderful promise is **verse 32**, but it places a responsibility upon us. Surely we should count it the greatest possible privilege to confess Him, our Saviour, Friend and Lord, before men?

Notice, we are not to confess ourselves, our particular church, our denominational link, or simply *the Almighty*. We are to confess the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 10:9 -

1 Corinthians 12:3 -

To confess the Lord Jesus before others means:

To profess faith in Him as my own personal Saviour and Lord, and openly to identify myself with Him, as a believer in Him, as His disciple and His servant.

2. WHY SHOULD WE CONFESS THE LORD JESUS BEFORE OTHERS?

a. The Plan of Salvation includes open confession.

This is made very clear from -

Romans 10:9-10 -

Confession is the evidence of true heart belief. When one really believes and receives the Lord Jesus, then open confession of Him and of one's faith in Him must and will follow. In God's plan of salvation, confession with the mouth is linked with believing in the heart.

John 1:12 -

b. The Lord of the Harvest expects open confession.

The spread of the gospel depends, not upon ministers, evangelists, missionaries, etc., but upon the individual believer, and every believer openly confessing Christ. This is the divine plan for world evangelization as we learn from -

Acts 8:1 -

Notice the words *except the apostles* and compare -

Acts 8:4 -

c. The Day of Judgment requires open confession.

Study carefully **Matthew 10:32-33** -

If we would be confessed by Him before the Father, we must, by His grace, confess Him before men. This is solemn, but, as we have noticed, these are the words of the Lord Jesus Himself.

d. The Sacrifice of Calvary demands open confession.

He loved us so much that He was willing to go to the cross of Calvary for us - *bearing the shame and scoffing rude* - and in order that He might bear *our sins in His own body on the tree*.

1 Peter 2:24 -

He died openly for us. Are we content, and can we live, secretly for Him? He was not ashamed of us. Are we ashamed of Him?

Hebrews 2:11 -

e. The example of Jesus evokes open confession.

1 Timothy. 6:13 -

We are told here that the Lord Jesus witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate. His whole life was a declaration of His Person and of what He had come to do. We are His disciples. It is our highest privilege and our responsibility to identify ourselves with Him openly.

Luke 6:40 -

2. HOW SHOULD WE CONFESS THE LORD JESUS BEFORE OTHERS?

1. Every Christian should start the Christian life by a definite open confession of the Lord Jesus before others.

Immediately after believing there should be a definite open confession of faith in Christ.

This should be by word of mouth-

Matthew 10:32 -

Mark 5:19 -

Romans 10:9-10 -

By taking an open stand on the Lord's side -

Exodus 32:26 -

By a changed life -

John 9:11 -

Acts 4:14 -

b. Every Christian should constantly confess the Lord Jesus before others by word of mouth.

That is to say, Christians should not only confess the Lord Jesus at the start of the Christian life, but they should go on doing so.

Acts 1:8 -

Acts 5:42 -

Acts 8:4 -

Here the word *preaching* means *gossiping*.

Alas, how often we are ashamed of Him! How unworthy and how sinful is our silence!

Many who worship false gods and who are caught up in false systems of religion are ready at all times to speak of their *faith*, and what a challenge this is to those of us who know the true God.

John 17:3 -

2. Every Christian should confess the Lord Jesus before others by baptism. This is a New Testament emphasis.

In the **Acts**, all who believed were baptized. Look up the following references. Notice that, in every case, belief was followed by baptism and baptism was only administered after believing.

Acts 2:38 -

Acts 2:41 -

Acts 8:12 -

Acts. 8:35-39 -

Acts 9:17-18 -

Acts 10:45 -

Acts 10:48 -

Acts 16:14-15 -

Acts 16:30-34 -

Acts 18:8 -

d. Every Christian should confess the Lord Jesus before others by a quiet, consistent Christian life. That is, by what we are and by what we do, by what we are not and by the things we do not do.

The most powerful confession of Christ and testimony for Him is that of a true, Spirit-filled life - in the home, office, factory, shop, hospital - at work and at play!

Matthew 5:16 -

Notice the words *so* and *see*.

1 Peter 3:1-4 -

3. Every Christian should confess the Lord Jesus before others by definite association with God's people in worship and in service.

Hebrews 10:25 -

The very fact of going to church is a confession of Christ before men. There are dozens of ways of serving Him and thus of confessing Him.

What is our enabling?

1 Corinthians 12:3 -

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EVERY CHRISTIAN'S GREATEST NEED

STUDY 3

Scripture Portions: John 14:15-18, 25-26; 16:1-15

Every Christian's greatest need is to enter in to the secret of a victorious life and of power in service. What is this secret? It is found in -

Ephesians 5:18 -

When we become Christians, when we are born again, we receive the Holy Spirit.

John 3:3-8 -

Romans 8:9 -

We are indwelt by the Holy Spirit .

1 Corinthians 3:16 -

1 Corinthians 6:19 -

2 Corinthians 6:16 -

We are baptized with the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13 -

We are sealed with the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 4:30 -

But, having *received* the Holy Spirit, our need is to be *filled* with the Holy Spirit.

Carefully consider the following references in -

Acts 2:4 -

Acts 4:8 -

Acts 4:31 -

Acts 6:3 -

Acts 7:55 -

Acts 9:17 -

Acts 11:23-24 -

Acts 13:9 -

There are so many angles from which we can approach this study. Here are five progressive truths about the Spirit-filled life.

3. To be filled with the Holy Spirit is to be possessed, controlled and dominated by the Holy Spirit.

Perhaps you will have wondered why in -

Ephesians 5:18 -

the apostle Paul contrasts drunkenness with being filled with the Spirit with God's greatest and holiest provision? The Ephesians would not be in any doubt as to what Paul had in his mind. It was a pagan belief that God dwelt in the blood of the grape. Therefore, the more wine a man drank and the more he became possessed or intoxicated with that wine, the more he would become possessed of his god.

Paul is therefore telling the Ephesians that, whereas at one time, they thought that by becoming drunk, they were becoming god-possessed, now they must become intoxicated and become truly God-possessed - Spirit-filled.

They were not to be filled with the wine from some earthly vineyard, but they were to be filled with the Holy Spirit Who had been sent from heaven.

Acts 2:4 -

To be filled with the Holy Spirit, then, means to give Him full control of our lives. It means that the human personality becomes controlled by the divine personality.

In the following scriptures, we have examples of the use of the word *filled*. You will see that the word *filled* means to *grip, possess, control*.

Luke 5:26 -

John 2:7 -

John 16:6 -

Acts 5:3 -

Ephesians 3:19 -

The divine personality does not obliterate the human personality, rather, He possesses, controls and energizes it that it may fully function to His glory. To be filled with the Holy Spirit, then, means that He takes full possession of -

our body -

Romans 6:13 -

Romans 12:1 -

our mind -

Philippians 2:5 -

and our spirit -

1 Thessalonians 5:23 -

2. To be filled with the Holy Spirit is God's provision for every Christian from the moment of conversion.

Many new converts do not realize this and do not enter into a life of the Holy Spirit's fullness at the time of their conversion. In some cases, due to lack of instruction, they never understand or enjoy this wonderful provision which God has made for every one of His children.

Think of this. The Christian is a reincarnation of Christ. He is one in whom the life of the risen Lord Jesus Christ is being reproduced. How is His life reproduced in us? By the Holy Spirit. His desire for us is not simply life, but abundance, fullness of life.

John 10:10 -

The way to experience **John 10:10** is by -

Ephesians 5:18 -

We look upon the Spirit-filled life as the abnormal life meant only for a few of God's children. God's plan is that it should be the normal life of every one of His children. It is not a luxury. It is not optional. It is a necessity. Therefore, God presents it to us in the terms of a command.

Ephesians 5:18 -

4. To be filled with the Holy Spirit is the secret of victorious living and fruitful service.

Will you pause and do a little honest, heart-searching before the Lord? What is the reason for all the weakness, fruitlessness, faithlessness and failure in our spiritual experience? Why are our lives so much less than we expected them to be and that God desires them to be? Why is so much of our service ineffective and productive of so little fruit?

There is only one answer: we are not filled with the Holy Spirit.

4. To be filled with the Holy Spirit is not a once-and-for-all experience never to be repeated.

It is important for us to be clear about this in order that disappointment and defeat may be avoided. There is an initial infilling with the Holy Spirit, which may take place at conversion but which often takes place subsequently to conversion. But this infilling of the Holy Spirit must be constantly repeated.

Some of the same disciples who were filled with the Holy Spirit in -

Acts 2:4 -

were again filled with the Holy Spirit in -

Acts 4:31 -

The tense of **Ephesians 5:18** is present continuous. The literal rendering of the last part of this verse is, *be ye being filled with the Spirit*.

We may grieve the Holy Spirit and lose, not His presence, but His infilling.

Ephesians 4:30 -

When this happens, we need to be filled again.

5. To be filled with the Holy Spirit requires the fulfilling of certain definite conditions.

There must be **REALITY**, sincerity, earnestness, seriousness.

b. **REPENTANCE** comes next. This includes confession, turning from all known sin, and cleansing.

Proverbs 28:13 -

1 John 1:9 -

4. **RESTITUTION** may be necessary. So far as it is within our power, wrongs must be put to right.

Luke 19:8 -

- d. There must be a definite **RECEPTION** of the Holy Spirit, not of His presence, for if we are Christians, He is already within us, indwelling us, but of His infilling, to possess us. We may ask for this infilling.

Luke 11:13 -

5. *RELIANCE*. Having asked that God will graciously fill us with His Spirit, we must dare to believe that our prayer is not only heard, but answered.

1 John 5:14-15 -

*Make us in Thy royal palace,
Vessels worthy for the King;
From Thy fulness fill our chalice
From Thy never-failing spring.*

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THE KIND OF CHURCH TO JOIN

STUDY 4

Scripture Portions: Acts 2:41-47; Hebrews 10:19-25

There are very many true believers who, for one reason or another, do not link up with any church or assembly. The loss to themselves is very great quite apart from the loss which others experience. Some of God's children have good and genuine reasons for not joining a church. Others have reasons that are not good, in fact, are unworthy.

Some Christians experience a genuine difficulty in finding a God-honouring ministry - a Bible church with which to join. Can a truly born again person join a modernistic church or a worldly church?

2 Corinthians 6:14-18 -

Some Christians, due to the kind of work in which they are engaged, are prevented from regularity of worship. Therefore, they do not join a church. But it would be a great blessing to them to find a spiritual home.

Again, some Christians feel they are not good enough to join a church. The church, however, is meant for sinners - saved sinners. If entrance to the church was only given to those who felt good enough, no one would join!

Then, of course, there are those who feel that no church is good enough for them! This is a most obnoxious form of spiritual pride. You will never be a member of a perfect church, anyway, because, having joined, you will be there yourself!

There are some Christians who, at one time, belonged to a church, but through some unfortunate experience, they have severed their connection. There are a great many who do not want to assume any responsibility with regard to Christian service or giving. But - failure to join a church for this reason is unworthy.

It is important to make clear the difference between **the Church** and **a church**. *The Church* is that great invisible, universal living organism consisting of every born again person.

Ephesians 1:22-23 -

A *church* is the visible, local assembly of people who call themselves Christians.

Romans 16:5 -

1 Corinthians 1:2 -

1 Corinthians 16:19 -

Galatians 1:2 -

Colossians 4:15 -

1 Thessalonians 1:1 -

Revelation 1:11 -

Every believer belongs to *the* Church, even if he does not belong to *a* church. Everyone who belongs to *the* Church should link up with *a* church.

Acts 2:47 -

Here are some suggestions as to the kind of church to join.

6. A church where there is found a true spirit of Christian worship and fellowship and a sphere for Christian service.

These are our three great needs:

6. worship -

John 4:23-24 -

7. fellowship -

Malachi 3:16 -

Hebrews 10:25 -

c. service -

1 Thessalonians 1:9 -

Seek out an assembly of God's people where you feel *at home* in worshipping the Lord, in fellowship with His people and in service for Him.

2. A church where membership is not made too easy.

Not, of course, that there should ever be an exclusive spirit in a church. On the other hand, you will wish to join a church where the minister and the members require to know that you -

8. are really born again -

John 3:5 -

9. are seeking, by the grace of God, to live a consistent Christian life -

Ephesians 5:15 -

God is glorified when a church sets a high standard for membership.

7. A church which makes much of the Bible and stands wholeheartedly for the *whole counsel of God*.

We are living in days of apostasy -

2 Timothy 3:1 -

Jude 4 -

days when there is a great departure from the truth. The true Christian, therefore, will desire to join a church which stands for the full inspiration and authority of the whole Bible.

2 Timothy 3:16 -

2 Peter 1:21 -

A church which honours the Person and the work of our Lord Jesus Christ -

10. His full deity.

John 20:28 -

b. His perfect humanity.

1 Timothy 2:5 -

11. His virgin birth.

Matthew 1:18 -

d. the infallibility of His teaching.

John 5:22-23 -

12. the reality of His miracles.

John 20:30-31 -

f. the substitutionary nature of His death.

Isaiah 53:5 -

2 Corinthians 5:21 -

13. His bodily resurrection.

John 20: 27 -

h. His glorious ascension.

Luke 24:50-51 -

1. His present exaltation.

Acts 5:31 -

14. and His second advent.

Acts 1:9-11 -

Avoid being a heresy hunter. But, whatever you do, do not join any church which does not stand for and proclaim the whole counsel of God.

Acts 20:27 -

8. A church which is separate from all secular, secondary and worldly methods, movements and organizations which are disloyal to the Bible.

It is not the business of a church to run a big social program in which place is given, time is spent and money is expended on worldly entertainments. None of these come within the scope of the work of the church. Read the Book of **Acts** and see for yourself. The program of the church must be, in every respect, honouring to the Holy Spirit.

Acts 15:28 -

5. A church which emphasizes the ministry of the Holy Ghost and the vital power of prayer.

Acts 9:31 -

gives us a picture of a model church. Wherever a church emphasizes the need for prayer, you can be certain that that church is out to honour the Holy Ghost. That is the kind of church to join - the prayer meeting church! Compare -

Acts 1:13 -14 -

Acts. 3:1 -

Acts 4:23-31 -

Acts 12:5 -

9. A church which is not only evangelical, but evangelistic.

That is, a church which is not only sound (because you can be sound yet sound asleep) but sound in belief and at the same time reaching out in its ministry to those who are lost. We must not only hold *fast* the faithful Word -

Titus 1:9 -

but we must hold *forth* the Word of life -

Philippians 2:16 -

Some churches are evangelically sound, but they are evangelistically dead.

10. A church which is Christ-centered and not denominationally-centered or ecumenically-associated.

To join a church will mean linking up with one denomination or another, or one assembly or another. But, remember, it is the local assembly of God's people with whom you are linking up. In that assembly there must never be an over-emphasis on denominationalism, which only leads to the *I am of Paul* or *I am of Apollos* spirit.

1 Corinthians 3:4-7 -

This is carnal, sectarian and sad in the extreme.

On the matter of ecumenism, true believers have this already. It does not need to be organized or *joined*.

Galatians 3:27-28 -

There is an organized ecumenism which must, at all costs, be avoided and denounced.

2 Corinthians 6:14-17 -

Jude 3 -

When you come to think of it, the kind of church which we have outlined above is only a New Testament church after all.

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THE SUPREME IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER

STUDY 5

Scripture Portions: Luke 11:1-13; 18:1-8

To be a born again soul, prayer is as essential as breathing. To neglect it must result in weakness and defeat. It is not only important that Christians should pray, but it is of supreme importance. This fact makes our present study one to which we should give special heed. Christians need instruction about prayer: its meaning, its promises, its method and its value.

Luke 11:1 -

How wonderful to be taught to pray by John. How much more wonderful to be taught by the Lord Jesus!.

Romans 8:26-27 -

What is prayer? C. H. Spurgeon said that, *The heart of prayer is the prayer of the heart.* It does not consist simply of words, gestures, forms or eloquence. *Prayer is the address of a poor creature on earth to a great Creator and loving Father in Heaven.*

Ponder this simple definition: it reveals the supreme wonder of prayer that a poor sinful being can commune with the high and lofty One.

Isaiah 57:15 -

*Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer, the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.*

11. THE SUPREME IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER IN THE LIFE OF
THE CHRISTIAN.

15. Prayer is of supreme importance in the life of the Christian because of the importance it is given in the Word of God.

The Bible is full of the subject of prayer. Imagine what a mutilated book we should have if every reference to prayer were taken out of it.

The fact of the emphasis on this subject of prayer which is made in the Word of God indicates to us the supreme importance placed upon it by the Holy Spirit Who is the Author of the book.

2 Timothy 3:16 -

2 Peter 1:21 -

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16. Prayer is of supreme importance in the life of the Christian because of the teaching of our Lord.

Here again, imagine the four Gospels with every reference to prayer cut out of them. How mutilated the books would be! Over and over again our blessed Lord stressed the importance of prayer, gave wonderful promises in relation to prayer and encouraged His disciples (and us) to pray.

Matthew 18:19 -

Matthew 21:22 -

Mark 9:23 -

Mark 11:24 -

John 14:13-14 -

He, in fact, is our great example in prayer.

Luke 3:21 -

Luke 5:16 -

Luke 6:12 -

Luke 9:18 -

Luke 9:28 -

Luke 11:1 -

Luke 22:41-42 -

17. Prayer is of supreme importance in the life of the Christian because it is the first instinct of the new life.

Just as the first instinct of a newly-born babe is to cry, and in so doing to use its lungs, so the first instinct of the newly-converted soul is to cry.

Romans 8:15 -

Notice the illustration of this simple truth in -

Acts 9:11 -

where we read of Saul, immediately after his vision of the ascended Lord, praying.

- d. Prayer is of supreme importance in the life of the Christian because it is the Christian's vital breath and native air.*

The Christian life is a new life - His life, the life of the risen Lord Jesus implanted in us by the Holy Spirit.

1 John 5:13-14 -

This new life can only be sustained by prayer, and only by prayer can we develop into robust, healthy Christians. Without prayer we shall be anaemic, lifeless and ineffective. This means that we should pray -

privately -

Matthew 6:6 -

frequently -

Psalm 55:17 -

regularly -

Daniel 6:10 -

in times of trouble -

Psalm 50:15 -

in fact, without ceasing -

1 Thessalonians 5:17 -

18. Prayer is of supreme importance in the life of the Christian because it is such a glorious privilege to pray.

The Christian life is full of privileges, but can you imagine any greater privilege than to enter into the holiest of all, into the throne room of the King, and to bow in humble worship at His feet, to speak with Him face to face and as friend with friend? How great is this privilege!

Hebrews 4:14-16 -

Hebrews 10:19-22 -

19. Prayer is of supreme importance in the life of the Christian because of all it can accomplish in supplying every need.

It is perfectly true that *more things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of*. But think of the wonderful accounts of the power of prayer which have been recorded for us in the Word of God. How many can you enumerate?

In the light of these, is it not amazing that we do not pray more? For the believer, prayer is the divine method for supplying every need.

Philippians 4:19 -

The reason we have not, is because we ask not.

James 4:2 -

If only we would ask, we would receive.

Luke 11:9-10 -

What is it you need? Money? A house? Food? Employment? The salvation of some loved one? Then ask!

20. Prayer is of supreme importance in the life of the Christian because only through prayer can God's will be accomplished.

His working depends upon our asking.

James 5:17 -

He waits to be enquired of.

Ezekiel 36:37 -

He has ordained it thus.

The purpose of prayer is not to make God alter His will, but to provide Him with a channel through which He may accomplish His will.

12. THE SUPREME IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER IN THE LIFE OF
THE CHURCH.

It is only necessary to read the Book of **Acts**, which contains the inspired history of the early Church, to become convinced that the ministry of prayer was foremost in the life and the service of the Church.

The Church was born in a prayer meeting as we discover by comparing -

Acts 1:13-14 -

Acts 2:1-4 -

These early believers also attended the regular prayer meetings in the temple.

Acts 3:1 -

Moreover, in times of special testings, they held special times of prayer.

Acts 4:23-31 -

Acts 12:1 -

Acts 12:5 -

Acts 12:17 -

Acts 16:25 -

They believed that prayer was a priority matter.

Acts 13:1-4 -

Yes, and when they bade one another farewell, they prayed.

Acts 20:36 -

Years ago, Dr. Reuben Archer Torrey said:

Prayer is the key that unlocks all the storehouses of God's infinite grace and power. All that God is, all that God has, is at the disposal of the pray-er. But we must use the key. Prayer can do anything that God can do, and as God can do anything, prayer is omnipotent.

May we prove it in our lives and in the life of the Church.

NOTES

NOTES

THE WONDER OF GOD'S GUIDANCE

STUDY 6

Scripture Portion: Psalm 25:1-22

Over and over again we find the subject of God's guidance brought before us in the Word of God.

In the Old and New Testaments we have wonderful promises of guidance and examples of those who sought and found the Lord's will for their lives. We also have a number of very clear statements which show us our need of guidance.

For example -

Jeremiah 10:23 -

In the psalm which we have chosen for the scripture reading in connection with this study, you will notice that the psalmist assumes the need for guidance. Of course, not one of us would question the fact that God's people do need guiding. They need to pray. *Shew me Thy ways.....Lead me.....Guide me.....*

Psalm 25:4-5 -

Psalm 25:9 -

For examples of God's guidance in the lives of His people we think -

of Abraham going out of his native country not knowing where he was going, being wholly dependent upon the guidance of God.

Genesis 12:1 -

of Moses and the children of Israel being led by the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night.

Exodus 13:21-22 -

and of Joshua -

Joshua 1:6-9 -

In the New Testament, one of the most striking examples is that of Philip, who was guided of the Lord to leave Samaria and to win the eunuch to Christ.

Acts 8:5 -

Acts 8:26 -

These examples, and many others of which we can read, establish the fact that God does guide His people.

Let us think of the Nature of God's guidance and of the Method of God's guidance.

13. THE NATURE OF GOD'S GUIDANCE.

21. God's guidance is DIVINE guidance.

We need to stress this in order to emphasize its quality. There can be no possibility of a mistake in the guidance which God gives His children. The secret of divine guidance is the Guide.

Psalm 16:11 -

22. It is CLEAR guidance.

The psalmist prayed to be led in a plain path.

Psalm 27:11 -

The Lord's promise to us is -

Proverbs 3:6 -

Isaiah 35:8 -

The Lord is always more anxious than we are that we should be absolutely clear as to His will.

Psalm 25:12 -

c. God's guidance is CONTINUAL guidance.

Psalm 48:14 -

Psalm 73:24 -

Isaiah 58:11 -

His guidance is for the whole life, until the Lord comes or we go to be with Him.

23. It is GRADUAL guidance.

Psalm 37:23 -

A step at a time and a stop at a time. A moment by moment experience of His leading of which we may be conscious, but of which are more often unconscious.

e. His guidance is sometimes STRANGE to us.

An example of this is found in -

Exodus 13:18 -

The natural caravan route was along the sea coast to Gaza, a comparatively short distance. By way of Sinai the route was very much longer.

God led His children by the long way round. He often does this for our discipline and training.

God's greatest concern for you and for me is the moulding of our character.

Deuteronomy 8:2-3 -

24. It is INDIVIDUAL guidance.

It does not come to two people alike. He guided the wise men by a star, but we have no record of His guiding anyone else in this way.

He has a specific purpose for each one of His children. Therefore, His guidance is adapted to each individual need.

Acts 9:6 -

g. It is COMPREHENSIVE guidance.

That is, He is willing to guide us concerning every detail, great and small, which has to do with our life down here. No matter is too small, and certainly no matter is too great, for us to bring to Him in order that we may know His will concerning it.

Ephesians 5:17 -

How wonderful it is that God condescends to guide His children! How frequently we must have missed His guidance! How earnestly He desires us to travel in the pathway of His choosing!

What is the Method by which He guides us?

14. THE METHOD OF GOD'S GUIDANCE.

25. First, by His WORD.

The Bible is our chart and compass, our guide book for the whole of our earthly pilgrimage until at last we are received into glory.

Psalm 73:24 -

It is a lamp and a light.

Psalm 119:105 -

Through His Word the Lord guides us.

(1) **By clear direction.** For example -

Should a Christian marry an unbeliever? We have the clear answer to this in -

2 Corinthians 6:14 -

(2) **By general principles.**

There are some matters concerning which the Word of God has nothing specific in the form of any clear direction to say about these things. But, there are very clear principles laid down which show us how the Lord would have us act.

John 7:17 -

(3) **By warning us of false ways.**

All the way through the Bible there are warning notes to which we must, at all costs, give heed - and remember. He will never guide us to take any step which is contrary to His Word.

26. He guides us by His SPIRIT.

Have a careful look at -

Nehemiah 9:19-20 -

How wonderfully God guides us by His Holy Spirit.

John 16:13 -

Sometimes by constraining us -

Acts 10:19-20 -

At other times by restraining us -

Acts 16:7 -

By an inward urge which may be difficult to describe but which is unmistakable when it is experienced!

c. He guides us by His EYE.

We learn this from -

Psalm 32:8 -

In the olden days the host at a feast would sit at the head of the table entertaining his guests.

His servants would stand nearby, watching his every movement and the host would direct them with his eye.

How necessary it is to keep looking unto Him if we are to receive His guidance!

Hebrews 12:2 -

27. He guides us by His SERVANTS.

He guides us by the wise counsel of trusted friends.

Proverbs 11:14 -

There are times when it is helpful to confer with flesh and blood.

Galatians 1:16 -

e. He guides us by His PROVIDENCES.

Suddenly He sets before us an open door.

Revelation 3:8 -

Or we hear a voice behind us.

Isaiah 30:21 -

Notice two concluding things.

- (1) If God guides us in the five ways mentioned above, we must -**
 - (a)** be familiar with His Word.
 - (b)** live in subjection to His Spirit.
 - (c)** keep our eyes upon Him.
 - (d)** cultivate the right kind of friends.
 - (e)** watch for His providential workings.

- (2) We may be sure of God's guidance when each of these five lines along which He guides harmonize and point in the same direction.**

NOTES

A LESSON IN STEWARDSHIP

STUDY 7

Scripture Portion: 2 Corinthians, Chapters 8 and 9

The key verses for this study are -

Proverbs 3:9-10 -

In these verses we find a precept and a promise placed side by side. As Christians, we are to honour the Lord. That is, we are to give Him the first place, not only in our hearts, homes and businesses, but with regard to our money.

Matthew 6:33 -

We belong to the Lord by creation -

Ezekiel 18:4 -

and by redemption -

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 -

In like manner, all that we possess belongs to Him.

Deuteronomy 8:18 -

1 Chronicles 29:11-14 -

Hosea 2:8 -

1 Corinthians 4:7 -

So, strictly speaking, it is wrong to speak of our possession as *ours* or *mine*. If we belong to Him, all our possessions belong to Him.

It is very significant that the converts at Pentecost were not only added to the church and were baptized, they did not only continue in prayers and in breaking of bread, etc., but the question of their money came under vital consideration.

Acts 2:44-45 -

True conversion should touch not only the heart but the pocket. Yet there must be many Christians who are not surrendered to the Lord on the money question. They are robbing God -

Malachi 3:8-11 -

Consequently, they are poor spiritually, and, in some measure, temporally too, for God always blesses the liberal soul.

Proverbs 11: 25 -

Here are two simple propositions upon which we shall base our consideration of this theme.

FIRST PROPOSITION:

The Bible teaches that every Christian should give a fixed portion of his or her income to the Lord. This should be done as a first claim, regularly, systematically, proportionately and thankfully.

SECOND PROPOSITION:

The Bible also teaches that, where Christians thus honour the Lord with their substance, the Lord prospers them both spiritually and temporally because they have thus honoured Him.

15. Let us consider the first proposition stage by stage.

This is something the Bible teaches.

We are not outlining man's method or idea. As far back as -

Genesis 14:20 -

Genesis 28:22 -

we read of Abraham and of Jacob honouring the Lord with their substance. We know that God was pleased with their action.

God commanded the Jew to tithe -

Leviticus 27:30 -

In many references in the Word of God, it is made quite clear that it is God's will that every one of His children should give back to Him a fixed portion of his or her income, to be used as He directs and for His glory.

Deuteronomy 26:12 -

Proverbs 3:9 -

Malachi 3:8-11 -

1 Corinthians 16:2 -

Read also **2 Corinthians 8:1-15; 2 Corinthians 9:1-15; and Philippians 4:10-20.**

This matter touches every Christian.

It does not refer to just a few Christians, but to all Christians.

Notice the first two words in -

2 Corinthians 9:7 -

The rich man is to give of his substance to the Lord, and the poor widow can also give

of her substance.

Mark 12:42 -

c. We should give a fixed portion of our income.

1 Corinthians 16:2 -

We may decide to give one-twentieth, one-tenth, one-fifth or one-half. The portion we give should be out of all our income, that is, all that we receive, which includes our regular salary or wage, bonuses, special gifts, etc.

28. Our giving is to the Lord.

This is important. Primarily, we do not give to His people or to His work, but to Him. The channel through which we give to Him may be our local church or assembly or a missionary society. But once we realize that our giving is to Him, then our giving will be sanctified and each act of giving will become an act of worship. Our giving will also become sacrificial.

2 Samuel 24:24 -

e. All this is to be done regularly.

Think what it would mean if every Christian obeyed -

1 Corinthians 16:2 -

There would be no lack of funds in church work, for the training of missionary candidates, for the supply of copies of the Word of God for free distribution, or for the support of foreign missions, etc.

29. Systematically.

God wants us to be practical in our giving.

It is a good plan to keep a purse, a box or a bag into which the Lord's portion may be regularly placed; or a banking account can be opened and, at regular intervals, amounts may be placed into this to be used specifically for His work.

Here is a suggestion. Buy a small cash book. On one side of the page, record all that you receive. On the other side record all that is given to the Lord's work. In this way it will be easy to see whether you are giving to Him the portion that you have decided upon.

You are the Lord's steward, so be a wise, careful steward and be systematic in the matter of your giving.

1 Corinthians 4:2 -

g. Proportionately.

That is, our giving is to be based upon our receiving. Those who receive less will give less.

1 Corinthians 16:2 -

2 Corinthians 8:12 -

2 Corinthians 9:7 -

You will see that a Christian is to give *as God hath prospered him.....according to the a man hath, and not according to that he hath not.....according as he purposeth in his heart.*

As to the proportion we are to give, that is a matter we must decide before the Lord. But, the minimum that the Jew was required to give was one-tenth.

30. Thankfully.

God loves a cheerful giver.

2 Corinthians 9:7 -

In the two chapters which give us the New Testament teaching on giving, strong motives are given for our giving.

1 Corinthians 8:9 -

1 Corinthians 9:15 -

16. Let us conclude by considering the second proposition.

We would expect God to bless His children spiritually in response to their giving to Him. Of course He does this, but, in addition, He promises to bless them temporally. We must never give to Him in order to get from Him. But, as we give, we shall receive. The measure of our receiving will be in proportion to our giving.

Let the following scriptures speak to you.

Proverbs 3:9-10 -

Proverbs 11:24-25 -

Malachi 3:10-11 -

Matthew 6:33 -

Luke 6:38 -

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 -

NOTES

NOTES

WINNING THE LOST TO THE SAVIOUR

STUDY 8

Scripture Portion: Acts 8:1-8 and 26-40

The title of this study was not chosen at random. You will notice that it contains three very important words. It is around these three words that we shall introduce the three divisions of our theme.

We shall consider the great matter of soul-winning, its importance and the responsibility of every Christian to be a soul-winner, and the methods we are to adopt.

17. First of all, let us think of the *SAVIOUR*.

Of all the names given to our blessed Lord, surely this is the most precious. It was even by divine announcement -

Matthew 1:21 -

Mary, the mother of Jesus, spoke of the One who was to come as *my Saviour* -

Luke 1:47 -

Our Lord Jesus Himself made it perfectly clear that the primary purpose of His advent, crucifixion, resurrection and ascension was the salvation of men and women.

Let us be absolutely sure about the fact that the one supreme purpose of His coming from heaven to earth was to save the lost.

Luke 19:10 -

1 Timothy 1:15 -

Hebrews 7:25 -

He did not come primarily to be our teacher, our reformer or our example - or even to be our king. He came to win lost sinners to Himself - to save the lost.

In the Gospels, we have vivid pictures of Him doing this work. For nineteen hundred years, He has not ceased to do it.

31. He is the UNIVERSAL Saviour.

That is, He is the Saviour of all men.

John 1:29 -

John 3:16 -

John 10:9 -

John 10:16 -

Romans 10:12-13 -

32. He is the ONLY Saviour.

That is, there is none other.

Isaiah 45:22 -

John 10:9 -

John 14:6 -

Acts 4:12 -

c. He is the PERFECT Saviour.

That is, no case is too hard for Him.

Hebrews 7:25 -

18. Now let us think of the word *LOST*.

Why was it necessary for the Saviour to come? Because, apart from Him, all men are lost. This solemn word *lost* describes the deep spiritual need of mankind, the need of everyone everywhere who has never been saved by Jesus Christ. It is our Lord's description.

In **Luke, chapter 15**, the sheep was lost, the silver was lost, and the son was lost. Look up and compare with -

Matthew 18:11 -

To be lost is to be perishing -

John 3:16 -

Under condemnation -

John 3:18 -

Under the wrath of God -

John 3:36 -

Spiritually dead -

Ephesians 2:1 -

Bound for a Christless eternity -

Matthew 13:49-50 -

How great and how urgent is the need of every lost one!

19. Finally, let us think of the word *WINNING*.

The supreme passion in the heart of the Saviour is the winning of the lost. The supreme need of every lost soul is to be won to the Saviour.

Now notice this: the winning of the lost to the Saviour is to be the supreme business of every Christian.

Notice, the supreme business of every Christian.

Matthew 28:19-20 -

Mark 1:17 -

Acts 1:8 -

Notice that all these references apply to each one of us just as much as to those who originally heard these words.

Every Christian is to be a soul-winner. This is the Lord's purpose, plan and program for world evangelization.

Here are seven simple secrets for successful soul-winning.

33. Recognize that winning the lost to the Saviour is your life work.

Think this out carefully and prayerfully.

Whoever you are, however young or old, whatever your circumstances, you are to be about your Father's business.

Luke 2:49 -

John 20:21 -

You are to be constantly following your Saviour so that He may make you a fisher of men.

b. Place yourself at the disposal of your Lord for this great work.

Get alone with Him - not once, but every day. Hear Him saying to you -

Mark 1:17 -

In response, say to Him, *Here I am, Lord, at Your disposal. Make me a fisher of men!*

Philip was at the Lord's disposal.

When he was in the midst of a revival at Samaria and the Lord called him away to go into the desert to win the Ethiopian eunuch, he was ready to go.

Acts 8:5 -

Read also **Acts 8:26-40.**

There is absolutely no doubt that if we are fully at the disposal of the Lord, He will use us to the salvation of others.

34. Trust the Lord to use you in His own way and time.

Look up and get the significance of -

Genesis 24:27 -

We may be unconscious of the fact that He is using us, or of the way in which He is using us, as in the case of Stephen.

Acts 7:58 -

Or, we may know that He is using us, as in the case of Ananias -

Acts 9:10-17 -

d. Ask Him to show you what to do.

We must plan to win souls -

Acts 9:6 -

We must set out to win them, as a fisherman sets out to catch fish, as a man sets out to win a girl's affection, or as an athlete sets out to win a race.

- (1) Make a list of those whom you would win.**
- (2) Pray regularly for them.**
- (3) Seek contact with them about their need. Write to them, send a helpful book to them, take them to a service, invite them to your home, etc.**
- (4) Be interested in their interests.**
- (5) Keep on keeping on until they are won.**

35. Be prepared for the Lord to use you where you are.

It may be at home, at school, in business, in hospital, or while you are traveling.

f. Be willing to be just a link in the chain of God's purposes.

It is rarely that God uses one instrument only for the salvation of a soul. In most cases, He uses many instruments. Be willing to do your share by prayer, or conversation, or gentle persuasion.

36. Always remember that you are only an instrument in His hands.

You cannot win a soul, but He can and will do the work of winning others through you. This great work is His work.

1 Coridnthians 3:7-9 -

*Lord, lay some soul upon my heart
And love that soul through me;
Help me that I may do my part
To win that soul to Thee.*

NOTES

GETTING THE MISSIONARY VISION

STUDY 9

Scripture Portion: Romans 10:1-17

In this study we are to think of the need for every Christian and for every church to become missionary-minded and missionary-hearted.

The title of our study implies that there are many Christians and churches who have little or no missionary vision.

Unfortunately, this is true. Some Christians are not very concerned for the salvation of souls here at home, and they are still less concerned for the salvation of the millions of lost souls in other lands.

Some even say that they do not believe in missionary work. Others have been heard to say that charity begins at home. Still others have been overwhelmed with the immensity of the task and have cried out, *The task is impossible!*

A few uninstructed Christians have even said, *Why interfere with the heathen? They have their own religions and we should not go and upset their culture!*

A missionary vision may be defined as: ***A blending of correct INFORMATION and Spirit-begotten INSPIRATION that leads to definite ACTION.***

Now, of course, every Christian should be a missionary, though not necessarily a foreign missionary. But, are we right in speaking of *foreign* missionaries of the *foreign* field? The Lord Jesus said, *The field is the world* -

Matthew 13:38 -

In this study, however, we are thinking of missionary work overseas, where the need is greatest and where so many have still never heard the gospel.

How may a Christian get a missionary vision? Here are some suggestions.

OUR EYES MUST SEE .

There are certain great facts which must be clearly recognized before we can become missionary-minded and missionary-hearted.

Of these, we will mention three.

God's great redemptive purpose is for the whole of mankind.

God loves the whole world.

John 3:16 -

The Lord Jesus died for all men everywhere.

John 1:29 -

1 John 2:2 -

We need Peter's vision.

Compare -

Acts 10:7-16 -

Romans 10:12-13 -

God's plan for making known the gospel is still -

Matthew 28:19 -

This commission is just as binding upon us today as it was upon the first disciples. Have you ever spent ten minutes alone with your Lord and His Word in -

Matthew 28:19 -

Romans 10:14-15 -

c. God's plan in this dispensation is not the conversion of the world, but the evangelization of the world.

The Holy Spirit is engaged in this age in calling out a people who will constitute the Bride.

Acts 15:14 -

Our primary task is not to educate, civilize or even Christianize the world, but to evangelize it.

Acts 1:8 -

OUR MIND MUST THINK.

That, is we must become intelligently informed about three things.

37. The size and extent of the world field.

This demands a careful study of an up-to-date map of the world and, if possible, a scale showing the present population of each continent or country.

38. The relative needs of each continent and country.

For example, in England there are churches in every town and in practically every village, but if 1,000 missionaries were today to land in India, each one could have a parish all his own of over 500 villages. Yes, and in some areas of the world, the situation is even more needy!

c. What is being done.

This information can be gleaned in some measure from missionary magazines and meetings. Anyone who is available for special missionary service, or who is a missionary candidate, should do everything possible to gain as much information as possible about what is actually happening (or not happening) in the field of missionary endeavour.

OUR EARS MUST HEAR.

If our eyes are opened to see, and our mind becomes informed, before long we shall hear a call.

Acts 16:9 -

This call comes from over a billion souls who are still waiting for help. They have never heard of our Saviour - the only One who can really help them. Do we hear their earnest, beseeching call?

4. OUR HEART MUST FEEL.

What we see, think and hear will cause us to feel. Compare -

Lamentations 3:51 -

Matthew 9:36 -

Luke 19:41-42 -

Acts 20:31 -

Are we moved with compassion as we think of the vast multitudes of lost, helpless, hopeless men and women, boys and girls who are bound by fear, superstition and degradation, who are passing one by one away in Christless guilt and gloom?

20. OUR LIPS MUST SPEAK.

If our heart begins to feel the desperate need of those who *forever may be lost*, then we

shall be burdened to pray for labourers to be thrust forth into the world's great harvest fields.

Matthew 9:38 -

Start compiling a Missionary Prayer List.

Start a Missionary Prayer Meeting in your church or home.

Philemon 2 -

Covenant with others to exercise this vital ministry.

Matthew 18:19 -

6. OUR HANDS MUST WORK.

Yes, by now we shall want to do something in a very practical way. Our hands will want to work. How?

By corresponding with missionaries. By making and sending clothing and other articles to missionaries. By welcoming a tired missionary on furlough to our home for a rest. By gathering missionary information for our church. By giving our money.

Galatians 6:10 -

21. OUR FEET MUST GO.

All cannot go but many who could go are not going. Young person, have you placed yourself at your Lord's disposal for missionary service? If not, will you do so now?

Isaiah 6:8 -

*The world's great heart is aching,
Aching fiercely in the night,
And God alone can heal it,
And God alone give light;
And the men to bear the message,
And to preach the living Word,
Are you and me, my brothers,
And all others who have heard.*

Closing challenge:

Can you say -

Acts 26:19 -

NOTES

TRIUMPHING IN TROUBLE

STUDY 10

Scripture Portion: Psalm 142:1-7

It was Joseph Parker, the London preacher of the last century, who said, *No preacher would ever lack a congregation if he preached to troubled hearts.*

Of course he was right, for when we address our words to troubled hearts, we are sure that we are speaking to everyone in the congregation or who reads our words.

Everyone, everywhere, sooner or later, experiences trouble and trial.

Psalm 34:19a -

In this **Psalm 142**, we find the writer, David, in great trouble. He speaks in -

Psalm 142:2 -

of my trouble. The whole psalm teaches us how to be triumphant in trouble - not how to escape trouble, but how to glorify God in the midst of trouble.

22. WHAT ARE WE TOLD ABOUT DAVID'S TROUBLE?

It is important to see how David reacted to his trouble. Before we can do this, notice what he tells us about the nature of his trouble.

David, at this time, was a fugitive. His fortunes were at their lowest ebb. His reputation had gone and he was an outcast.

We do not know exactly what the trouble was to which he referred. This is helpful because it enables us to fit our own trouble into this picture.

We are, however, told three things.

David tells us that his trouble was very severe.

He was *overwhelmed* with it.

Psalm 142:3 -

The word *overwhelmed* really means *wrapped about*, just as smoke from a bonfire billows up and wraps you about - it engulfs you.

Notice also that in -

Psalm 142:6 -

he tells us that, when his trouble came upon him, he was *brought very low*. This indicates a process. He went lower and lower until he felt he had touched bottom. Perhaps you are in the midst of an overwhelming experience at this time?

David tells us that other people had contributed to the severity of his trouble.

Psalm 142:3 -

He says that his enemies had set a *snare* for him. They had set a trap for him.

In -

Psalm 142:6 -

he refers to them as his *persecutors*.

It is bad enough to be overwhelmed with trouble, but it is doubly bad to have trouble brought upon us through the disloyalty and malice of so-called friends.

Is that happening with you?

c. David tells us that no one seemed to understand or care.

This must have been the hardest part of all, for it is a tremendous help if, when we are in the midst of trouble, we feel and know that our loved ones and friends understand the difficulties of our situation. David felt that no one understood. But - he was wrong, of course, because the Lord did.

2 Timothy 4:17 -

It is important now for us to notice what David did when he was in his great trouble, how he reacted, because, when trouble comes upon us the important thing is how we react.

23. HOW DID DAVID REACT TO HIS TROUBLE?

The plain fact of the matter is that he triumphed over his trouble. But notice some things that he did not do when he was overwhelmed with trouble.

39. He did not brood over his trouble and do nothing at all about it.

This is important. Sometimes when we are in the midst of trouble we flop, become inactive and do nothing at all about it - and this is fatal.

40. He did not indulge in self-pity.

He did not feel sorry for himself and wallow in a *poor me* attitude to his situation.

c. He did not become bitter and rebellious.

He did not question God's love, wisdom and providence. He did not become hard, critical and ill because of his trouble.

41. He did not overburden others with his trouble.

As a matter of fact, he tells us that there did not seem to be any others who could help him.

What did David do when his trouble overwhelmed him? He did three very important things.

(1) He brought his trouble before the Lord in prayer.

This is made very clear in -

Psalm 142:1-2 -

As we study these verses we are impressed with the intensity and the urgency of David's prayer in **verse 1**, the definiteness of his prayer in **verse 2**. The fact that his prayer was so practical, also in **verse 2**, for he says, *I shewed before Him my trouble*.

We instinctively think of Hezekiah, and see what he did, when he received a threatening letter from an enemy.

Isaiah 37:14 -

We think of the Christians in the early Church who were so troubled because Peter was in prison, and see what they did.

Acts 12:5 -

This is how to react in a time of trouble. Bring the whole matter and bring ourselves before the Lord and ask for His gracious help. What happened when David did this?

(2) His faith and trust in God was deepened.

Psalm 142:3 -

He tells us that he was confident that God knew his *path*.

This reminds us of -

Matthew 6:32 -

Job 23:10 -

It seems that David looked up into the face of the Lord and said, *It's all right, because the Lord knows all about me!*

See also what he said in -

Psalm 142:5 -

This surely is faith triumphing in the midst of trouble.

It reminds us of -

Psalm 23:4 -

(3) David was filled with hope.

He was filled with confidence concerning the future, that everything would plan out satisfactorily. It is one thing to trust God for the present moment, but what about the unknown future? What about tomorrow, and next week, and next month, and next year?

Shall I come out of my trouble? If we lose hope we become filled with despair.

Acts 27:20 -

See what happens when hope goes. When hope goes we are desolate, but David had hope.

See what he says in -

Psalm 142:7 -

Notice the two *shalls* in this verse. One relates to man and the other to God.

Here, then, is the way to be triumphant in trouble.

(1) Engage in prayer.

(2) Prayer will strengthen faith.

(3) Faith will give hope and confidence concerning the future and God's loving undertaking and ultimate deliverance.

C. H. Spurgeon says, *The gloom of the cave is over the psalm. Yet, as if standing at the mouth of the cave itself, the prophet-poet David sees a bright light a little beyond.*

If you are in trouble, in the cave, in the darkness of trial, remember this - there is a bright light *a little beyond*. Do not lose hope. Put your trust in God Himself and all will be well.

NOTES
