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# Completing the Missional Membership Process

## Step 1 - Missional Membership: Bible Study

We are thrilled that you've made the decision to investigate Missional Membership at CedarCreek. This page outlines the steps to that process. It begins with this manual, which contains a Bible study designed to solidify your understanding of the Bible as well as our CedarCreek mission, values, and core beliefs.

Each section of the study starts with a summary page, which is designed to give you an overview, followed by questions to either discuss or answer in a journal. The study pages following go deeper into each topic. Our hope is the study and questions will help you determine where you are in relation to the different aspects of your spiritual journey, and help you understand what it means to love Jesus, serve others, and tell the world about Christ.

## Step 2 - Missional Membership: Commitment

Once you complete the Missional Membership Bible Study and are ready to become a Missional Member. It is time to complete the commitment form. You can either fill out the form at the back of this booklet and return it to the Welcome Center at your campus, or you can complete the form online at [CedarCreek.tv/membership](http://CedarCreek.tv/membership).

Within 10 to 14 days of our receiving your commitment, you will receive a letter in the mail informing you of your membership status. If you have not heard from us by then, please call our offices to make sure we received your submission.

## Got Questions?

If you have any questions that come up while completing the Bible study or have any other concerns, please contact your Campus or Associate Pastor.

## Annual Renewal of Your Missional Membership

Becoming a member of CedarCreek Church is voluntary. We understand that your situation might change; you might be called to start a

church, to support a church plant, to move for your job, or to be a part of another ministry. Your Missional Membership status at CedarCreek may change, but once you proclaim Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, you are a member of God's kingdom forever! (Galatians 4:7, John 5:24)

At the same time, we want our membership list to accurately reflect who is participating as a Missional Member and who is not. To ensure this accuracy, we annually renew everyone's membership. In this way, we can be sure we don't lose touch. The names on our roles represent real people. Each one continues to affirm that he or she is a Missional Member of CedarCreek Church. We think it is a matter of integrity, both for the church and each member, to be as accurate as possible that Missional Member information truly reflects reality.

Toward the end of each fiscal year, prior to our annual business/vision meeting in June, you will be sent a renewal reminder. We'll ask you to affirm that you are still a Missional Member as defined in our membership process. We hope you may confidently say, "Yes, I am still an active participant, and I am loving Jesus, serving others, and telling the world about Christ to the best of my ability."

## **Why Missional Membership**

Jesus routinely called people to a high level of commitment. He used phrases like "carry your cross" (Matt. 16:24) and "give up everything you own" (Luke 14:33) to describe what kind of life he was calling his followers to lead. At CedarCreek, we believe that we can commit to living a life devoted to Jesus by living out our mission: to love Jesus, serve others, and tell the world about Christ.

In addition, in Ephesians 4, Paul talks about how the church leaders have the responsibility to "equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ" (v. 12). Missional Members commit to the work of continuing to personally grow in our own faith, taking next steps wherever God calls, while also equipping God's people to do his work as our mission reflects; we are on the same page—committed to loving Jesus, serving others, telling the world about Christ, and helping others to do the same. Simply put, Missional Membership is not the end of the race, but the commitment to run it (Hebrews 12:1-2).

# Our CedarCreek Mission

**CedarCreek Church exists to help spiritually restless and unchurched people love Jesus, serve others, and tell the world about Christ.**

At our CedarCreek campuses, we have this mission statement on prominent display. Why? Because we are a community of people who follow Jesus and are inspired by him and his mission:

*“Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach them to obey the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”*  
-Matthew 28:19-20

We take this call seriously because it was Jesus’ last command to his church. In these verses, Jesus gives us what we call today the “Great Commission,” which is our greatest priority. Since this command is arguably the most important command Jesus gives us, we should seek to follow it with excellence.

So, how do we know if we are living out Matthew 28:19-20 effectively? The Bible gives us a measuring stick. People who are fully devoted to living for Christ share the following characteristics:

They **LOVE** Jesus with all of their heart...

They **SERVE** others selflessly and generously...

They boldly **TELL** the world about Christ.

## Taking Your NextStep...

In addition to our mission, at CedarCreek, we look to the early church described in Acts 2 to set the example of how we operate as a church. These



early believers “worshiped together at the Temple each day” (v. 46). They “met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity” (v. 46). And, they even “sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need” (v. 45). In these two verses, we see a pattern: Come, Connect, Commit. This pattern is how people grow in their love of Jesus, their service to others, and their passion to boldly tell the world about Christ. Missional Membership is many things; but most of all, it is taking that NextStep to commit to continuous spiritual growth in association with CedarCreek.

## **Our CedarCreek Vision and Values**

**Transformed Individuals Transform Communities.**

Our dream is to see our communities completely transformed. We believe that happens one individual at a time. When an individual is transformed, they can’t help but make a positive and lasting impact in their community. When you allow God to transform you, it will transform the people around you.

**Irresistible Weekend Experiences. (COME)**

We believe that YOU MATTER! When a person knows they matter to God more than they can imagine, God becomes irresistible. We strive to create weekend experiences where people of all ages are HEARING practical, biblical teaching and are encouraged to take their next step with Jesus, no matter where they are.

**Transformational Connections. (CONNECT)**

We believe that our faith really grows through connection. Connecting with others, through serving teams and LifeGroups, helps us move from hearing about to REGULARLY ENGAGING in, loving Jesus, serving others, and telling the world about Christ.

**Positive and Lasting Impact. (COMMIT)**

We believe that when we are FULLY INVESTING with Jesus, we radically give our time, talent, and treasure to make a positive and lasting impact in others and our community. We invite connected individuals to take the next steps of commitment to LIVE FOR MORE, so that, together, we can tell the world about Christ.

# “We Agree...”

To no one's surprise, one distinction of growing churches is clarity of mission. But one study on church growth found that while mission clarity is important to growth, so is unity behind even the methods of that church. That is, there is generally strong agreement as to the way in which the church accomplishes its mission, including music style, staff attitudes, and other unique expressions of the church. We desire and value such unity at CedarCreek. Even the Apostle Paul elevated unity in the church in Philippians 2:2. “Agree wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one heart and purpose”.

First, our set of agreements help define what our unifying attitudes are towards living out the mission we believe God has called us to as a church:

**We agree** that the cause of the church is the greatest cause on the planet. (Matthew 28:19-20, Matthew 6:33). The cause of the church is worth our very lives!

**We agree** that “You Matter”, and that means doing whatever we can short of sin to reach people who don't know Christ. (1 Corinthians 9:22, 10:33) This includes music styles, personal preferences and outreach methods with the ultimate goal of introducing people to the Gospel message.

**We agree** that a growing, vibrant church is key to fulfilling the mission of the church. (Acts 1:8) If we obey the commands of Jesus, the church will grow and fulfill the mission he called for it to be.

**We agree** to be an example of Jesus' love not only when we walk in the door to church, but in all the places God calls us to ministry (Galatians 6:10, Matthew 5:16). We want to be known as a church that expresses radical love to those who call CedarCreek home, as well as to others.

Then, the **GUEST** principles unify us in the way we live out our mission during the weekend, in a LifeGroup or on a serving team:



**G - God's Heart:** *We Want Every Guest to Sense That They Matter to God and to Us.*  
All of our interactions need to be rooted in the conviction that every person matters to God. Everything we do should help people grow closer to God.

**U - Upbeat:** *Positive People Make an Amazing First Impression.*

- Your body language, attire, sincere smile, and direct eye contact with guests can make an impression before you even speak to them, so be positive and approachable.

**E - Excellence:** *Our Attention to Detail Shows our Guests We Care.*

- Being in the right place, at the right time, with the right look, and the right words is important.
- Have "Owner Mentality" - Be on the lookout for the building's first impressions; help keep your ministry area and the lobby clean and neat. If you see something out of place, pick it up and help keep it looking great!

**S - Seize Wow Opportunities:** *Make Their Experience Something They Can't Wait to Share with Others.*

- Look for ways to exceed their expectations and deliver the unexpected

**T - Take Next Step:** *Always Look for the Opportunity to Help Guests Come, Connect, and Commit.*

- Never underestimate your role in helping people grow closer to God.
- Engage them in conversations and help guide them to the next step.  
It's ok to not be ok, but God doesn't want to leave us there.

# What We Believe

*Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. -2 John 1:9*

Our Statement of Faith summarizes our beliefs as a church. We have mentioned in other places that our theology is not innovative. Anyone familiar with historic Christian doctrine will find that these statements fall in the center of orthodox evangelical theology. In other words, it is biblical theology rather than speculative theology, or theology rooted in tradition. We try not to be dogmatic about matters on which Bible-based believers have held divergent views. We want our core beliefs to be centered on Christ and his message as found in and supported by, the clearest passages in the Bible. More obscure doctrine, or teachings with less support, are left to individuals to sort out on their own – we take no official position in these areas.

The following pages contain our Statement of Faith. Try not to hurry through these pages, but read them slowly and thoughtfully. Ask yourself throughout, “What difference does this truth make in my life? If I didn’t know or believe this, would it matter?”

## The Bible

The sole basis of our beliefs is the Bible, comprised of the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments. We believe that Scripture in its entirety originated with God and that it was given through the instrumentality of chosen people. Scripture speaks with the authority of God and reflects the backgrounds, styles, and vocabularies of human authors. We hold that the Scriptures are infallible and inerrant in the original manuscripts. They are the unique, full, and final authority on all matters of faith and practice, and there are no other writings similarly inspired by God. (2 Timothy 3:16)

## God

We believe that there is one true, holy God, eternally existing in three persons - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - each of whom possesses equally all the attributes of deity and the characteristics of personality. In the beginning, God created the world and all things therein out of nothing, thus

manifesting the glory of his power, wisdom, and goodness. By his providence, he is operating throughout history to fulfill his redemptive purposes. (Genesis 1, Isaiah 40:28, Psalm 62:11)

## **Jesus Christ**

Jesus Christ is the eternal second person of the Trinity. We believe in his deity and in his miraculous conception and virgin birth. He lived a life of perfect obedience to the Father and voluntarily atoned for the sins of all by dying on the cross as their substitute, thus satisfying divine justice and accomplishing salvation for all who trust in him alone. He rose from the dead in the same body, though glorified, in which he lived and died. He ascended into heaven and sat down at the right hand of the Father, where he, the only mediator between God and man, continually makes intercession for his own. He shall come again to earth, personally and visibly, to consummate history and the eternal plan of God. (John 1:1-5, Isaiah 7:14, Luke 1:34-35)

## **The Holy Spirit**

As believers submit to the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Trinity, they are enabled to live a life of holiness and obedience. The Holy Spirit was sent into the world by the Father and the Son to apply to mankind the saving work of Christ. He enlightens the minds of sinners, awakens in them recognition of their need of a Savior, and regenerates them. At the point of salvation, he permanently indwells every believer to become the source of assurance, comfort, strength and wisdom. He uniquely endows each believer with spiritual gifts for the building up of the church. The Holy Spirit guides believers in understanding and applying the Scriptures. His power and control are appropriated by faith, making it possible for the believer to lead a life of Christ-like character and to bear fruit to the glory of the Father. (John 16:5-15)

## **Salvation**

The central purpose of God's revelation in Scripture is to call all people into fellowship with him. Originally created to have fellowship with God, man defied God, choosing to go his independent way. Thus alienated from God, mankind suffered the corruption of his nature, rendering him unable

to please God. The fall took place at the beginning of human history, and all individuals since have suffered these consequences and are in need of the saving grace of God.

The Salvation of mankind is, then, wholly a work of God's free grace, not the result, in whole or in part, of human works or goodness, and must be personally appropriated by repentance and faith. Salvation is available to all, but it must be received to become a child of God (John 1:12). When God has begun a saving work in the heart of any person, he gives assurance in his Word that he will continue performing it until the day of its full consummation. (John 3:16, Romans 10:9)

## **Human Destiny**

Death seals the eternal destiny of each person. For all mankind, there will be a resurrection of the body into the spiritual world and a judgment that will determine the fate of each individual. Unbelievers will be separated from God into condemnation. God's judgment will reveal his justice in consigning them to perpetuate in eternal retribution for their own rejection of God. Believers will be received into eternal communion with God and will be rewarded for works done in this life. (Romans 6:23)

## **The Church**

The result of being united with Jesus Christ is that all believers become positional members of his body, the Church. There is one true universal Church, comprised of all those who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. The Scriptures command believers to gather together to devote themselves to worship, prayer, and the teaching of the Word of God. The Scriptures also command believers to devote themselves to the observance of Baptism and Communion as the sacramental ordinances established by Jesus Christ. We believe that Baptism by immersion, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, is commanded by God. It is subsequent to conversion and is not a saving ordinance but an obedient outward expression of an inward work of the Spirit of God. (Matthew 3:13-17).

We believe that Communion is a symbol of the broken body and shed blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. It represents the death, burial, and resurrection of our Lord, and a looking forward to the second coming of Christ to receive his own (1 Corinthians 11:23-24). The Scriptures also command believers to devote themselves to fellowship, to service to the

body through the development and use of talents and gifts, and to outreach to the world. Every member of Christ's body should share their Christian witness with others. (Acts 2:42)

## **Faith and Practice**

Scripture is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice. This church recognizes that it cannot bind the conscience of individual members in areas where Scripture is silent. Rather, each believer is to be led in those areas by the Lord, to whom he or she alone is ultimately responsible.

*We believe the Statement of Faith to be an accurate summary of what Scripture teaches. All members shall refrain from advocating doctrines that are not included in the Statement of Faith in such a way as to cause dissension.*

# LOVING JESUS:

## SUMMARY ON GOD'S GRACE

Most people would admit that they're not perfect; that they have made some mistakes. However, many do not realize the depth of their mistakes – they don't realize how sinful they really are. If we simply made some mistakes, we could work out of those mistakes and find right standing before God by being "good enough." However, this is not the case. In Romans 3:10-12, the Apostle Paul describes the human condition. He then summarizes it in verse 23.

***<sup>10</sup>As the Scriptures say, "No one is righteous—not even one. <sup>11</sup>No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God. <sup>12</sup>All have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one." ...<sup>23</sup>For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. – Romans 3:10-12,23.***

Here, scripture tells us that *all* have sinned and fall short of God's standard. We *all* have sin. When we dive further into scripture, we realize that there's nothing we can do to earn God's favor, rather, it is a gift from God (Rom. 6:23; Eph. 2:8-9). As sinners, we are in desperate need of God's grace. Grace is what separates the gospel message from every other religion. Once we realize our need for God's saving grace, we can repent of our sins and turn to him for salvation.

After we become a follower of Jesus, baptism is the next step. Since baptism is a commandment in scripture, and a public declaration of our faith in Christ, we ask that all Missional Members be baptized at an age where they understand the gospel message, though not necessarily at CedarCreek.

In Romans 6:4-5 Paul explains the spiritual significance of baptism, ***"For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. <sup>5</sup>Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised as he was."*** When we go under the water in baptism, we are symbolizing the spiritual truth that we have died to our sin. Not only does our submersion into the water represent a union with Christ, but our coming out of the water does as well. When we come out of the water, we show that just as Jesus proved he conquered death when he rose from the tomb, we symbolize our conquering of our sin *only* through the resurrection of Jesus. Baptism represents our sin no longer having



any power over us, because Christ died for them on the cross (represented by our submersion) and that we are given new life through his resurrection (represented by our rising out of the water).

*Talk about or journal your story - when did you start following Jesus?*

*Have you been baptized? If yes, what was your experience like? If no, what has been holding you back?*

*How are you experiencing God's activity in your life currently?*

# Loving Jesus:

## God's Grace: Receiving the Gift of Eternal Life

In the introduction, we identified that individuals who were living for Christ shared the following characteristics:

They **LOVE** Jesus with all of their heart...

They **SERVE** others selflessly and generously...

They boldly **TELL** the world about Christ.

In this first section of Loving Jesus, we are going to explore God's grace and how our understanding of God's grace radically transforms our lives. You may have come from a spiritual tradition where the term had a usage different from what is found in the Bible. So, we all need to understand the biblical meaning of grace and then solidify our understanding of our own beginning with God. For some of you, this study may be the first time that you truly understand the power of God's grace. Our prayer is that at the end of this section, each one of us will be able to proclaim: "I understand God's grace, and I know that I am a recipient of it."

### Our Need for God's Grace

Are you a good person? Most people pride themselves on being better than the next guy. However, if we do not think we are any worse than the people around us, that can erroneously lead us to believe that we do not need any special help from God.

Read Romans 3:10-18, 23 and explain how the Bible describes our human condition and our need for God.

*<sup>10</sup>As the Scriptures say, "No one is righteous—not even one. <sup>11</sup>No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God. <sup>12</sup>All have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one." <sup>13</sup>"Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave. Their tongues are filled with lies." "Snake venom drips from their lips." <sup>14</sup>"Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness." <sup>15</sup>"They rush to commit murder. <sup>16</sup>Destruction and misery always follow them. <sup>17</sup>They do not know where to find peace." <sup>18</sup>"They have no fear of God at*

all.” ...<sup>23</sup>*For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.*

**Answer:**

To forgive someone literally means to release that person from indebtedness. But if you forgive a debt, the money must then come from somewhere else - usually you, the debt-forgiver. In the spiritual realm, God’s forgiveness means we are released from spiritual debt. But our sins do not just vanish into thin air, so God had to provide a solution.

What do we deserve because of our sin? What does God offer and how?

**Romans 6:23** – *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**Answer:**

**Read Romans 5:8. How and when did God show his love for us?**

**Romans 5:8** – *But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.*

**Answer:**

Our life as a Christ-follower should never be attached to shame! Why do we not have to be ashamed about being honest when admitting our sinful condition?

**Romans 8:1** – *So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus.*

**Answer:**

No matter what you have been told, you cannot and you do not have to earn God’s favor! Unfortunately, there are lots of Christians who do not

believe that. Read Ephesians 2:8-9 and complete the statement below.

**Ephesians 2:8-9** – *God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. <sup>9</sup>Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.*

Finish this statement: *I can't or don't have to earn God's favor because...*

## **Recognizing Our Need for Salvation**

**Once we are in that position where we have been honest about our need for God's help and forgiveness, what does the Bible say is the next step? (See also John 1:11-12, Acts 16:30-31 and Galatians 2:16)**

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

**Answer:**

## **Baptism: The Outward Sign of God's Grace**

While we respect the religious heritage of those who have been baptized as infants, we believe Scripture teaches that baptism should come after a person has personally received Christ.

We, therefore, require that a person is baptized by his or her own choice to be a Missional Member at CedarCreek (although that baptism does not need to have occurred at CedarCreek). If you have not yet been baptized since you became a Christian, we ask that you do so at one of our baptism services so that we can celebrate your commitment to Christ with the rest of the church members.

### **When should someone be baptized?**

Many people, perhaps including you, were baptized as a child. But the pattern in the New Testament (example: Acts 18:8) is "believe - then be baptized". Why do you think it would be appropriate for a person to be baptized AFTER his or her conversion instead of before it?

**Acts 10:47-48** – *“Can anyone object to their being baptized, now that they have received the Holy Spirit just as we did?”* <sup>48</sup>*So he gave orders for them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Afterward Cornelius asked him to stay with them for several days.*

**Answer:**

According to Romans 6:4-5, what is signified by baptism?

**Romans 6:4-5** – *For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives.* <sup>5</sup>*Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised as he was.*

**Answer:**

According to the following verses, what was the response of new believers, those who had recently received God’s grace, which visibly demonstrated what God had done in their lives? (See also Acts 8:36-38 and Acts 16:14-15)

**Acts 2:37-38, 41** – <sup>37</sup>*Peter’s words convicted them deeply, and they said to him and to the other apostles, “Brothers, what should we do?”* <sup>38</sup>*Peter replied, “Each of you must turn from your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”* <sup>41</sup>*Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church—about three thousand in all.*

**Answer:**

## **Summary Statement on “God’s Grace”**

Christ followers understand and have individually received Christ’s saving grace. They have abandoned all attempts to earn God’s favor through accomplishments of their own and find security only through Christ’s sacrificial death on their behalf.

In obedience to Christ’s command, they have undergone water baptism as believers, giving outward witness to the inner cleansing and

renewal experienced in him.

*Note: Much misunderstanding exists about what it means to be a “Christian.” Church attendance, belief in God, strong commitment, etc. are all good, but none of them make you a Christian in the biblical sense. If you are at all unclear as to whether or not you are a Christian, we would like to clear up any confusion. Please do not feel embarrassed if you are not sure. Do not go any further on this response sheet for now. Set up a time as soon as possible to meet with your LifeGroup leader, your Ministry Team leader, or a staff person to discuss your uncertainties. This matter is of vital importance to every Missional Member (every person, really!).*

# LOVING JESUS:

## SUMMARY ON PURSUING CHRIST-LIKE VIRTUE

As Christ followers, we are committed to being conformed to the image of Christ and developing Godly characteristics in our thoughts, actions, words, and relationships. We pursue it and subject ourselves to the Spirit's promptings, being quick to flee from temptation or anything that is dishonoring to God.

We also are committed to responding in a positive way when confronted by others regarding areas of our life that do not demonstrate Godly character. We seek help and support from LifeGroup members or other trusted Christians to be accountable in areas of concern. The Apostle Paul talks about this when he writes,

***<sup>1</sup>And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask? <sup>2</sup>Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is. Romans 12:1-2***

We have been saved by God and into God's family. He now invites us to live for him for the rest of our lives. In order to do this, we have to change the way we think. When our thinking is centered on Jesus, it will change our thoughts and ultimately, we pursue Christ-like virtue through pursuing Christ himself.

*After following Jesus, what in your life changed?*

*What areas of your life need improvement?*

# Loving Jesus:

## Pursuing Christ-like Character

There is a point at which we must recognize that there is a God, and it is not us. Yet, the Bible calls us to reflect God's character in our lives. What does that mean? How do we do it? One thing is sure, we cannot guess or apply our own definitions.

In this section, we are going to unpack the following definition of what it means to live like Christ: *to think, speak and act like Jesus would in your situation*. Another phrase for that definition is Godly character or Christ-like virtue.

The value of developing Christ-like virtue is that as we imitate Christ in our homes and workplaces, every interaction has the potential to draw people to Christ. Furthermore, we get to tap into a divine supply of strength, integrity, love and hope that only comes from Christ.

Let's take a look at what it takes to develop the type of character God wants us to have.

### The Battleground

Do you struggle with wanting to do the right thing, but sometimes choosing to do the wrong thing? It is frustrating, isn't it? Why do we still struggle even though we have proclaimed ourselves as followers of Christ?

The Bible describes a battle between two natures raging within us: our old nature before coming to Christ, referred to as the flesh, and our new nature now that we are in Christ, referred to as the Spirit.

**In the spaces provided after the verses, list the deeds, or "fruits", of the flesh and Spirit according to Galatians 5:16-26. (Also see Romans 8:5-9)**

***Galatians 5:16-26*** – *So I advise you to live according to your new life in the Holy Spirit. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. <sup>17</sup>The old sinful nature loves to do evil, which is just the opposite from what the Holy Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are opposite from what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, and your choices are never free from this conflict. <sup>18</sup>But when you are directed by the Holy Spirit, you are no longer subject to the law. <sup>19</sup>When you*



*follow the desires of your sinful nature, your lives will produce these evil results: sexual immorality, impure thoughts, eagerness for lustful pleasure, <sup>20</sup>idolatry, participation in demonic activities, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, divisions, the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group, <sup>21</sup>envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other kinds of sin. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup>But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, and self-control. Here there is no conflict with the law. <sup>24</sup>Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. <sup>25</sup>If we are living now by the Holy Spirit, let us follow the Holy Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. <sup>26</sup>Let us not become conceited, or irritate one another, or be jealous of one another.*

#### Fruit of the Flesh

(Underline the ones that are your biggest struggles)

#### Fruit of the Spirit

(Circle the ones that you already practice)

**Notice how the “Fruit of the Spirit” is bundled together. The Holy Spirit intends to nurture all of these in our lives. So, no matter the area where you struggle, God intends to grow that area of your life. Look at verse 22. What does it mean for us to allow the Holy Spirit to control our lives?**

**Answer:**

### Pursuing Christ-like Character...

Read Romans 12:1-3. The most important part of pursuing Christ-like character is allowing God permission to change and transform your life. The Apostle Paul gives us some instructions in this verse as it pertains to our role in the transformation process. What is our role? (also see Philippians 4:8-9;

Colossians 3:1-2 and Ephesians 4:20-24))

**Romans 12:1-3 – And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will accept. When you think of what he has done for you, is this too much to ask? <sup>2</sup>Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will know what God wants you to do, and you will know how good and pleasing and perfect his will really is. <sup>3</sup>As God’s messenger, I give each of you this warning: Be honest in your estimate of yourselves, measuring your value by how much faith God has given you.**

**Answer:**

Remember, there is nothing that you can do to earn God’s favor. Additionally, once you come to faith in Christ, you are already pure and holy in God’s eyes through Christ (Isaiah 1:18). However, God wants you to live up to, and live out, these standards in your everyday life here on earth. Read Ephesians 4:25-32. What should you practice and what should you avoid? **Ephesians 4:25-32 – So put away all falsehood and “tell your neighbor the truth” because we belong to each other. <sup>26</sup>And “don’t sin by letting anger gain control over you”. Don’t let the sun go down while you are still angry, <sup>27</sup>for anger gives a mighty foothold to the Devil. <sup>28</sup>If you are a thief, stop stealing. Begin using your hands for honest work, and then give generously to others in need. <sup>29</sup>Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them. <sup>30</sup>And do not bring sorrow to God’s Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he is the one who has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup>Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of malicious behavior. <sup>32</sup>Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.**

Practice

Avoid

EXTRA: Of the behaviors you've listed, put a check mark beside the ones you need to focus on most.

The word "holy" means "set apart." Therefore, Christ-like virtue should be a defining characteristic of anyone who claims to be a follower of Christ—not so that we can position ourselves as better than others, but so that we can reflect Christ to our world. How does holiness manifest itself in Colossians 3:12-14?

**Colossians 3:12-14** – *Since God chose you to be the holy people whom he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. <sup>13</sup>You must make allowance for each other's faults and forgive the person who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. <sup>14</sup>And the most important piece of clothing you must wear is love. Love is what binds us all together in perfect harmony.*

**Answer:**

**What is it that creates unity?** \_\_\_\_\_

If one word could describe Jesus Christ, it would be "love." His love is selfless and centered on others. He desires his followers to love the same way. 1 Corinthians 13 is perhaps the greatest love chapter in the Bible.

**1 Corinthians 13:4-7** – *Love is patient and kind. Love is not jealous or boastful or proud <sup>5</sup>or rude. Love does not demand its own way. Love is not irritable, and it keeps no record of when it has been wronged. <sup>6</sup>It is never glad about injustice but rejoices whenever the truth wins out. <sup>7</sup>Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance.*

Which of the characteristics in that passage are EASIEST for you to practice?

Which of the characteristics in that passage are HARDEST for you to practice?

# **Summary Statement on Pursuing Christ-like Character**

Christ followers are committed to being conformed to the image of Christ and developing Godly characteristics in their thoughts, actions, words, and relationships. They are under the control of the Holy Spirit and subject themselves to the Spirit's promptings, being quick to flee from temptation or anything that is dishonoring to God.

As Christ followers seek to be Christ-like in all their behavior, they will respond in a positive way when confronted by others regarding areas of their lives that do not demonstrate Godly character. They will seek help and support from their LifeGroup members or other trusted Christians to be accountable in areas of concern.

# LOVING JESUS:

## SUMMARY ON SHARING GOD'S RESOURCES

The Bible has a lot to say about money. Why? Because we need guidance to deal with the things we struggle the most in life. In Luke 16:10-12, Jesus gives us a general principle on how to handle our money. He says,

***<sup>10</sup>“If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won’t be honest with greater responsibilities. <sup>11</sup>And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven? <sup>12</sup>And if you are not faithful with other people’s things, why should you be trusted with things of your own?”***

Simply put, it’s not the amount of money that we have, but what we choose to do with it. This also includes the “stuff” we have. God has given different resources to different people and expects all of them to use them wisely. In 2 Corinthians 9:6-7, Paul tells us that God loves when we love to be generous. While giving seems to be an uncomfortable topic to talk about in church, it shouldn’t be! God has given each of us a spirit of generosity and has blessed us each uniquely so that we can bless others. As followers of Christ, we have the opportunity to be the most generous people. He gave his life for us, so giving a portion of what we have should be our response. When we give freely and joyfully, we can see our gifts making a huge impact.

*What do you think it looks like to be a generous person?*

*What should a Christ follower’s attitude toward giving be? Why?*

*Do you feel like you’re on the right track? If not, what might need to change?*

# Loving Jesus: Generously Sharing God's Resources

## Money.

If there ever was a topic that most people do not like to discuss, this is it, especially when we talk about money and God or church. What makes us so uncomfortable talking about money? *Do you feel a little warm right now?*

God knows that money would play a big role in our lives. There is a natural tension that accompanies the subject of money—a tension that we must manage. God knows this, and that is why the Bible comes with so much instruction about how to handle our money. Did you know that the Bible talks about money more than anything else? There are over 800 verses about money in the Bible.

God instructs us to handle money in a way that honors him and blesses us as well. We believe he blesses an open hand more than a closed fist, and we love what well-known pastor and author Andy Stanley says about God's attitude toward us and money:

***God doesn't want to take your money.  
He just doesn't want your money to take you.***

In this section, we are going to discuss what the Bible has to say about the topic of money. We are also going to look at what your response should be and how you can honor God in this area of your life. There is a significant tie between your faith and your view of money. For some of you, this portion of the study might be an unexpected spiritual breakthrough for you. We recognize that people come from various attitudes and backgrounds when it comes to the topic of giving. Our desire is to help you understand what the Bible says about living generously in a practical way.

## **PRIORITY, PERCENTAGE, and PROGRESSIVE**

One of the major themes in the Bible, especially as it pertains to money, is the concept of “generosity.” Biblical generosity is giving as a result of a transformed heart. So, what does that look like in your life? How can you know if you are growing spiritually in this area of your spiritual journey?

In his best-selling book, *How to be Rich*, Andy Stanley provides an easy-to-apply framework for us to consider when deciding how we can honor God with our money. There are three concepts that we can apply when it comes to becoming generous in a way that honors God: PRIORITY, PERCENTAGE, and PROGRESSIVE.

**Priority** giving means that no matter how rich or poor you might feel, right now is the time to be generous. Andy Stanley explains, “If you wait until you’re rich, you’ll never start, because rich people live in denial that they’re rich. The best way to make giving a priority is to make it the very first check you write every month.”

**Percentage** giving means knowing what your percentage is, instead of just an amount. If you just focus on amounts, you’ll either become discouraged when it isn’t very much or you’ll become prideful if you feel it’s a lot. Statistics show that as people increase in wealth, their percentage of giving goes down. They have more, but they give less. Why? Because the amount of money they give away is going up, so they rationalize that they are being more generous while they keep a greater percentage for themselves.

**Progressive** giving means that you continue to grow in generosity as you grow in your faith. This simply means that over time you raise the percentage of giving.

## **What does the Bible say about how we should manage our money?**

Look around at your home, car, clothes, and other belongings. You might have paid for these articles by cash, check or credit as a result of your job. But, do they really belong to you? Read Psalm 24:1. Who owns all of your stuff? Why is this true whether you believe it or not?

**Psalm 24:1**— *The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it. The world and all its people belong to him.*

**Answer:**

## God calls us to manage his stuff...

Everything is God's, yet he gives it to us to watch over and manage. Jesus tells a story to the crowd about three individuals who managed their boss's money in different ways. This is a long reading, but an important lesson about being a good wealth manager for God should emerge. What do you learn about God's expectations for how we manage the resources that he gives to us?

**Matthew 25:14-30**-<sup>14</sup>“Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone.<sup>15</sup> He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip.<sup>16</sup> “The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more.<sup>17</sup> The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more.<sup>18</sup> But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master's money.<sup>19</sup> “After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money.<sup>20</sup> The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, ‘Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.’<sup>21</sup> “The master was full of praise. ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!’<sup>22</sup> “The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, ‘Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.’<sup>23</sup> “The master said, ‘Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!’<sup>24</sup> “Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, ‘Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn't plant and gathering crops you didn't cultivate.<sup>25</sup> I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.’<sup>26</sup> “But the master replied, ‘You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn't plant and gathered crops I didn't cultivate,<sup>27</sup> why didn't you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.’<sup>28</sup> “Then he ordered, ‘Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver.’<sup>29</sup> To those who use well what they are given, even



*more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away.<sup>30</sup> Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

**Answer:**

Why do you think the master was so angry with the third servant who tried to keep his money safe? What spiritual application should we draw from the third servant?

**Answer:**

**The reason why this section has so many verses is because the Bible has A LOT to say about money. Why? Because we need guidance to deal with the thing that we will struggle most with in life. What is the moral of the story Jesus summarized in Luke 16:10-12?**

*Luke 16:10-12 – “Unless you are faithful in small matters, you won’t be faithful in large ones. If you cheat even a little, you won’t be honest with greater responsibilities. <sup>11</sup>And if you are untrustworthy about worldly wealth, who will trust you with the true riches of heaven? <sup>12</sup>And if you are not faithful with other people’s money, why should you be trusted with money of your own?”*

**Answer:**

## **Attitudes toward Money and Giving**

*Do I give? How much do I give? Will I have enough if I do? Read the following scripture. How are believers instructed to approach giving? How can this approach decrease some of the tension AND increase the chance we will be motivated to honor God with our money?*

**1 Corinthians 16:1-2 – Now about the money being collected for the Christians in Jerusalem: You should follow the same procedures I gave to the churches in Galatia. <sup>2</sup>On every Lord’s Day, each of you should put aside**

**some amount of money in relation to what you have earned and save it for this offering. Don't wait until I get there and then try to collect it all at once.**

**Answer:**

Did you realize that you are rich? If you make \$35,000 per year, you are in the top 4% of earners in our world. If you make \$15,000 per year, you are in the top 20%. Read 1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19 with the understanding that you are the rich people that the scriptural author is talking about. What kind of responsibility comes with being rich?

***1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19 – Yet true religion with contentment is great wealth. <sup>7</sup>After all, we didn't bring anything with us when we came into the world, and we certainly cannot carry anything with us when we die. <sup>8</sup>So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content. <sup>9</sup>But people who long to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many foolish and harmful desires that plunge them into ruin and destruction. <sup>10</sup>For the love of money is at the root of all kinds of evil. And some people, craving money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows. <sup>17</sup>Tell those who are rich in this world not to be proud and not to trust in their money, which will soon be gone. But their trust should be in the living God, who richly gives us all we need for our enjoyment. <sup>18</sup>Tell them to use their money to do good. They should be rich in good works and should give generously to those in need, always being ready to share with others whatever God has given them. <sup>19</sup>By doing this they will be storing up their treasure as a good foundation for the future so that they may take hold of real life.***

**Answer:**

Our giving response is directly related to our attitude. What attitudes should characterize giving according to 2 Corinthians 9:6-7?

**2 Corinthians 9:6-7 – Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But one who plants generously will get a generous crop. <sup>7</sup>You must each make up your own mind as to how much**

**you should give. Don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. For God loves the person who gives cheerfully.**

**Answer:**

## **Biblical Tithing**

We uphold the Old Testament instruction that God's people give back the first 10% of their income to him. Furthermore, in response to Christ's lavish grace, the New Testament goes on to teach proportional giving and spurs us to do even more to advance the kingdom locally—and beyond—as God individually prospers and leads.

What percentage is common to the following biblical stories of giving?

***Leviticus 27:30, 32*** – <sup>30</sup>“A tenth of the produce of the land, whether grain or fruit, belongs to the Lord and must be set apart to him as holy.” –<sup>32</sup>The Lord also owns every tenth animal counted off from your herds and flocks. They are set apart to him as holy.

**Answer:**

In this next passage of scripture, God provides some harsh words to those who do not recognize his lordship over all things. However, God also invites us to challenge him in the area of giving. Why does God use such harsh language to the people? What is God's purpose behind issuing that tithe challenge?

***Malachi 3:8-10*** – “Should people cheat God? Yet you have cheated me! But you ask, ‘What do you mean? When did we ever cheat you?’ You have cheated me of the tithes and offerings due to me. <sup>9</sup>You are under a curse, for your whole nation has been cheating me. <sup>10</sup> Bring all the tithes into the storehouse so there will be enough food in my Temple. If you do,” says the Lord Almighty, “I will open the windows of heaven for you. I will pour out a blessing so great you won't have enough room to take it in! Try it! Let me prove it to you!”

**Answer:**

## **Summary Statement on Generosity**

Followers of Christ realize that God is the owner and giver of all things and that we are God's managers of all that he has entrusted to us. In light of this, they desire to be responsible caretakers of the material resources that God has entrusted to them.

# LOVING JESUS:

## SUMMARY ON BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW

A worldview is a set of beliefs that influence the way we see and operate in the world. As followers of Christ, our worldview comes from the Bible and its teachings.

The Bible is an ancient text that God has given us to reveal the truth about himself and about us. In 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Paul writes, ***16All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. 17God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.*** Here, we learn that the Bible is inspired by God, and can correct, teach, and prepare us. It is living and active, and can penetrate any heart (Heb. 4:12).

In the Bible, we learn about who God is. We learn that he is present everywhere at all times (Ps. 139:7-10), that he knows everything (Heb. 4:13), that he is all-powerful (Gen. 1:1), that he is all good (Ps. 145:17), and much more. These are called God's attributes. But what about who God is (his nature)?

From Scripture, we find the truth that God is triune in nature – that he is three persons in one God. The trinity consists of God the Father (Matt. 6:9-13), God the Son (John 1:1-3), and God the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8). While the fullness of the trinity remains a mystery to humans, we can understand the basics. God is one God in three persons who all share the same attributes mentioned above.

Jesus, being the second person of the trinity is God. He is not simply a man with great teachings, but actually God in the flesh (John 1:1-3, Col. 2:9). By acknowledging this, we acknowledge that Christ's teachings are binding on all Christians, and thus influence our worldview.

Knowing what the Bible is, who God is, and what he's like is what creates in us a biblical worldview. As followers of Christ, we are bringing his message into the world, and in this, we represent him.

*What about the teachings of Jesus have influenced the way in which you view the world?*

# Loving Jesus:

## Constructing a Biblical Worldview

Why do you believe what you believe about God, Jesus Christ or the Bible? Having a solid biblical foundation is so important to maintain a growing and vibrant life in Christ. In this section, we are going to look at the foundation that God wants to put into your life. The foundation of our faith is based on what we believe. Ultimately, we need to understand those right beliefs will lead to right behaviors.

Loving God with all of your mind seems to be academic – as if love and intellect contradict each other. However, the reality is that people who struggle with one particular sin or another tend to have one or more flawed beliefs. A flawed belief is like a weak spot in a foundation because it makes the rest of the house unstable and vulnerable to damage.

As we engage in the process of establishing a correct foundation or what we refer to as a “biblical worldview,” the goal is for us to make sure that we have a correct understanding of who God is and the role that the Bible plays in our lives.

The clearer God becomes to us – as well as how he works - the more solid our foundation becomes and the clearer our personal mission will be.

### *The Doctrine of the Bible, God, Jesus and Holy Spirit*

*This seems basic, but we're going to say it anyways: The Bible is God's main method of communication to us. It is important for us to understand how we got the Bible. Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17. Where did scripture originate?*

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** – *All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens out and teaches us to do what is right. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. <sup>17</sup>God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.*

#### **Answer:**

Our Bible is not just a book or online app that we casually read when convenient. Read Hebrews 4:12. What makes the Bible different than other

books?

**Hebrews 4:12** – *For the word of God is full of living power. It is sharper than the sharpest knife, cutting deep into our innermost thoughts and desires.*

**Answer:**

## **GOD IS OMNIPRESENT, OMNISCIENT, OMNIPOTENT**

God exists in three Persons; the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, also known as the Trinity. In this section, we will take a closer look at three of the major doctrines in which every follower of Christ should be grounded.

How would you describe God's character to someone who needed to know? What do these Biblical authors say about God's omnipresence (all-presence)? (See Jeremiah 23:23-24)

**Psalms 139:7-10** – *I can never escape from your spirit! I can never get away from your presence!<sup>8</sup> If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the place of the dead, you are there.<sup>9</sup> If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans,<sup>10</sup> even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me.*

**Answer:**

**Hebrews 4:13** – *Nothing in all creation can hide from him. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes. This is the God to whom we must expose all that we have done.*

**Answer:**

**Matthew 19:26** – *Jesus looked at them intently and said, "Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But with God everything is possible."*

**Answer:**

**The Bible gives us an extraordinary picture of how Jesus entered into life on earth. Read Matthew 1:18, 22-25. What is unique about Mary's conception?**

*Matthew 1:18, 22-25 – Now this is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant by the Holy Spirit....<sup>22</sup>All of this happened to fulfill the Lord's message through his prophet: <sup>23</sup>"Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and he will be called Immanuel (meaning, God is with us)." <sup>24</sup>When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord commanded. He brought Mary home to be his wife, <sup>25</sup>but she remained a virgin until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus.*

**Answer:**

Most every major religion acknowledges Jesus Christ. However, many believe that Jesus was a "wise man," "good teacher," or "good moral authority." However, they are missing something very important: Jesus was fully divine.

**What do the following verses tell you about the Deity of Christ? (Also see Matthew 1:23)**

*John 1:1-3, 14, 18 –<sup>1</sup>In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup>He existed in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup>God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him. <sup>14</sup> So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son. <sup>18</sup> No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us.*

**Colossians 2:9 – For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body...**

**Answer:**



Jesus' claim of deity fueled the religious leaders' desire to kill him. According to this verse, why did the Jews want to kill Jesus?

**John 10:33** – *They replied, “We’re stoning you not for any good work, but for blasphemy! You, a mere man, claim to be God.”* (Also see John 5:18)

**Answer:**

The word “Trinity” means “three-in-one” and references the unity of God the Father, God the Son (Jesus Christ) and God the Holy Spirit. Of the three members of the Trinity, people are the least familiar with the Holy Spirit. What do the following verses say about the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives? (See also Ephesians 1:13-14)

**Romans 8:9-11** – *But you are not controlled by your sinful nature. You are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. (And remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to him at all.)<sup>10</sup> And Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you have been made right with God. <sup>11</sup>The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you.*

**Answer:**

Since the Holy Spirit lives within us, he is there to accomplish a specific purpose. There are several verses listed for you to read. After each of those verses, answer how does the Holy Spirit help us to live out our faith? (Also see John 14:16-18, 26; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11; 1 Corinthians 12:5-11)

**John 16:13-14** –<sup>13</sup>*When the Spirit of Truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future.<sup>14</sup>He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me.*

**Answer:**

**Acts 1:8** – *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere –in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the Earth.”*

**Answer:**

**Romans 8:26** – *And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don’t know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words.*

**Answer:**

**1 Corinthians 12:4** – *There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all...*

**Answer:**

Just as you came to Christ of your own free will, you can also choose to follow or reject the Spirit’s promptings. What is the warning given to Christ followers? (Also see 1 Thessalonians 5:19)

**Ephesians 4:30** – *And do not bring sorrow to God’s Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption.*

**Answer:**

# LOVING JESUS:

## SUMMARY ON DEVELOPING INTIMACY WITH GOD

When in a relationship with a significant other, we desire intimacy with them. We want to be close to them, and we enjoy being around them. The same thing applies to our relationship with God. We live a life of pursuit of him because our deepest desire is to know him more.

We can pursue intimacy with God through many different avenues, all of which can be placed in three general acts: prayer, worship, and Bible study.

By doing all of these things, we become closer to Christ and get to know him on a deeper level. In 1 Timothy 4:7-8, Paul writes, ***7Do not waste time arguing over godless ideas and old wives' tales. Instead, train yourself to be godly. 8Physical training is good, but training for godliness is much better, promising benefits in this life and in the life to come.***

Often, we can allow the things of this life to distract us from intimacy with God. Paul here is urging us as followers of Christ to practice spiritual disciplines not only because it's the right thing to do, but because it leads to amazing joy found only in intimacy with God.

As Christ followers, we know the grace of God that saved us is only the beginning of his work in us. We gratefully respond by actively pursuing a lifelong process of spiritual growth in Christ and seek to become conformed to his image. To this end, we consistently nurture our own spiritual development through prayer, worship, and Bible study.

We regard the Bible as the final authority in all areas that it teaches about and desire to be wholly obedient to it. As Christ followers, we honestly confront areas of personal sin and engage the Holy Spirit's power in seeking to turn from it.

*Do you have patterns of spiritual disciplines (reading, praying, worshiping, etc.) in your life? If so, which ones?*

*If not, which one can you start today? How will you make it a part of your every day?*

# Loving Jesus:

## Developing Intimacy with God

The purpose of this section is to discover a balance between owning the responsibility to grow, which requires resisting what keeps us from growing, and trusting in the help and power of the Holy Spirit to bring about the Christ-like character in us. That tension will be with us all of our lives. But if we commit to moving forward, we will experience the blessings of God's grace active in our everyday lives—and marvel at the resultant miracle of our spiritual growth.

In Colossians 2:6-7, the Apostle Paul uses several different words or phrases to describe the quality of faith the people had. List as many terms as you can find from those verses.

**Colossians 2:6-7** – *And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to live in obedience to him. <sup>7</sup>Let your roots grow down into him and draw up nourishment from him, so you will grow in faith, strong and vigorous in the truth you were taught. Let your lives overflow with thanksgiving for all he has done.*

**Answer:**

In Ephesians 4:14-15, Paul describes two contrasting scenarios: traits that should no longer characterize believers, and then traits that should be evident in a Christian. Complete the lists that follow these verses.

**Ephesians 4:14-15** – *Then we will no longer be like children, forever changing our minds about what we believe because someone has told us something different or because someone has cleverly lied to us and made the lie sound like truth. <sup>15</sup>Instead, we will hold to the truth in love, becoming more and more in every way like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.*

Traits that should no longer characterize believers...

Healthy traits a Christian should possess...

## **What is Jesus saying about growing as a Christian in John 15:4-5?**

**John 15:4-5** – *“Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful apart from me. <sup>5</sup>Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.”*

**Answer:**

## **Tools for Developing Intimacy with God**

### **THE BIBLE**

What do the following verses teach about the importance of Scripture in the life of a growing Christian? (Also see 1 Peter 2:2-3, Psalm 1:2-3 and Psalm 119:9-24)

**Hebrews 4:12** – *For the word of God is full of living power. It is sharper than the sharpest knife, cutting deep into our innermost thoughts and desires. It exposes us for what we really are.*

**Answer:**

### **PRAYER/SOLITUDE/WORSHIP**

While God does the transforming, Jesus modeled how we can regularly initiate connection with God. What does Luke 5:16 tell us about Jesus’ prayer life and his need to be alone periodically? What are the implications for you personally?

**Luke 5:16** – *But Jesus often withdrew to the wilderness for prayer.*

**Answer:**

Some of us have grown up in traditions where prayer was only at certain times and under certain conditions. However, Ephesians 6:18 gives us

some direction. How and when are we instructed to pray?

**Ephesians 6:18** – *Pray at all times and on every occasion in the power of the Holy Spirit. Stay alert and be persistent in your prayers for all Christians everywhere.*

**Answer:**

Spiritual disciplines, such as prayer and Bible study, are practices that can help us connect with God. In 1 Timothy 4:7-8, the scriptural author draws a correlation between the importance of physical fitness and spiritual fitness. What kind of enduring benefits does spiritual fitness offer us that far exceed physical fitness?

**1 Timothy 4:7-8** – *Do not waste time arguing over godless ideas and old wives' tales. Spend your time and energy in training yourself for spiritual fitness. <sup>8</sup>Physical exercise has some value, but spiritual exercise is much more important, for it promises a reward in both this life and the next.*

**Answer:**

One of the popular questions that people ask is, "If I am saved, then does it matter if I keep on sinning? Won't God just forgive me?" Read Romans 6:1-11. As long as we are forgiven, why does it make any difference whether we sin or not?

**Romans 6:1-11** – *Well then, should we keep on sinning so that God can show us more and more kindness and forgiveness? <sup>2</sup>Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it? <sup>3</sup>Or have you forgotten that when we became Christians and were baptized to become one with Christ Jesus, we died with him? <sup>4</sup>For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives. <sup>5</sup>Since we have been united with him in his death, we will also be raised as he was. <sup>6</sup>Our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin. <sup>7</sup>For when we died with Christ we were set free from the power of sin. <sup>8</sup> And since we died with Christ, we know we will also share his new life. <sup>9</sup>We are sure of this because Christ rose from the dead,*

*and he will never die again. Death no longer has any power over him. <sup>10</sup>He died once to defeat sin, and now he lives for the glory of God. <sup>11</sup>So you should consider yourselves dead to sin and able to live for the glory of God through Christ Jesus.*

What is the encouragement that verses 9-11 give us about being free from the power of sin?

**Answer:**

No matter how hard we try, we are going to make mistakes sometimes. We will sin. When that happens, to whom should we confess our sins? What should be the result of confession?

***Psalms 32:3-5*** – *When I refused to confess my sin, I was weak and miserable, and I groaned all day long. <sup>4</sup>Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. <sup>5</sup>Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide them. I said to myself, “I will confess my rebellion to the Lord.” And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.*

**Answer:**

## **Summary Statement on Developing Intimacy with God**

Christ followers know the grace of God that saved them is only the beginning of his work in them. They gratefully respond by actively pursuing a lifelong process of spiritual growth in Christ and seek to become conformed to his image. To this end, they consistently nurture their spiritual development through prayer, worship, and Bible study.

They regard the Bible as the final authority in all areas that it teaches about and desire to be wholly obedient to it. Christ followers honestly confront areas of personal sin and engage the Holy Spirit's power in seeking to turn from sin.

# SERVING OTHERS:

## SUMMARY ON SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND CONNECTING

One of the key concepts of Missional Membership is the recognition that every member is to be regularly and intentionally fulfilling the role God has specifically wired them to fulfill. Since the beginning of the Christian church, God has called people to do the specific things that he created them to do.

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, ***“There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. <sup>5</sup>There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. <sup>6</sup>God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. <sup>7</sup>A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.*”**

Imagine if every person in the church had the same gift. The church would not last! God has created his church to be a diverse community of Christ followers all bringing their unique gifts and strengths to help.

The last sentence in the passage is important, ***“A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.”*** Paul tells us that he has given us gifts—whether they are teaching, giving, shepherding, craftsmanship, hospitality, leadership, etc.—so that we can *help* other people! God didn’t design us in a unique way so that we can keep it all to ourselves. Instead, he encourages us to help others with what he has given us. We can only do this through connection and relationship, which can happen on a serving team or in a LifeGroup.

When we sit with members of a LifeGroup or serving team, someone can powerfully remind us of what we may be unable to see—that God is working in us, we are loved by him more than we can imagine, that our work for him is worth it, and that the affection of God is not just for “the world,” it is for us. It’s through these relationships and actively serving that we grow closer to the image of Christ.

*Have you taken a spiritual gifts test? If so, what are your gifts? If not, visit [CedarCreek.tv/spiritualgifts](http://CedarCreek.tv/spiritualgifts) or talk to your facilitator if you are part of our one-day membership event.*

*Are you involved in a group or serving team currently? If so, what do you enjoy most about it? If not, journal or discuss which step of connection you are ready to take.*



# Serving Others:

## Developing Your Spiritual Gifts

There are lots of gifts that God gives us. We already talked about receiving the gift of grace. Now, we're going to talk about the gifts given by God's Holy Spirit at the time we become believers. These gifts arrive in the form of special abilities given to us by God in order to carry the gospel message into the world. Each believer receives a unique combination of spiritual gifts. When we understand and use our different gifts in harmony with each other, the Church functions in unity and has the greatest impact in our world today.

One of the key concepts of Missional Membership is the recognition that every member is to be regularly and intentionally fulfilling the role God has specifically wired them to fulfill.

In this section, we are going to look at how our spiritual gifts are distributed and the importance of understanding the impact of using our spiritual gifts.

## The Need for and the Privilege of Serving

What was Paul's attitude toward working in God's service in 1 Timothy 1:12?

***1 Timothy 1:12 – How thankful I am to Christ Jesus our Lord for considering me trustworthy and appointing me to serve him...***

**Answer:**

## Different Parts, One Body

The Bible compares the Church to a human body, with Christ as the head and all of us as different parts, or members, of the body.

Summarize, in a sentence or two, what Paul is trying to convey in 1 Corinthians 12:14-26:

***1 Corinthians 12:14-26 – Yes, the body has many different parts, not just***

one part. <sup>15</sup>If the foot says, "I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand," that does not make it any less a part of the body. <sup>16</sup>And if the ear says, "I am not part of the body because I am only an ear and not an eye," would that make it any less a part of the body? <sup>17</sup>Suppose the whole body were an eye—then how would you hear? Or if your whole body were just one big ear, how could you smell anything? <sup>18</sup>but God made our bodies with many parts, and he has put each part just where he wants it. <sup>19</sup>What a strange thing a body would be if it had only one part! <sup>20</sup>Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. <sup>21</sup>The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you." <sup>22</sup>In fact, some of the parts that seem weakest and least important are really the most necessary. <sup>23</sup>And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect from the eyes of others those parts that should not be seen, <sup>24</sup>while other parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together in such a way that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. <sup>25</sup>This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other equally. <sup>26</sup>If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.

**Answer:**

According to 1 Corinthians 12:4-7, what is the ultimate reason we each have differing abilities within the church? (See Romans 12:4-8)

**1 Corinthians 12:4-7** – Now there are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but it is the same Holy Spirit who is the source of them all. <sup>5</sup>There are different kinds of service in the church, but it is the same Lord we are serving. <sup>6</sup>There are different ways God works in our lives, but it is the same God who does the work through all of us. <sup>7</sup>A spiritual gift is given to each of us as a means of helping the entire church.

**Answer:**

What do you think Jesus meant by "bearing fruit" in John 15:8, 16-17?

**John 15:8, 16-17 – My true disciples produce much fruit. This brings**

***great glory to my Father. <sup>16</sup>You didn't choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name. <sup>17</sup>I command you to love each other.***

**Answer:**

Why would Jesus make such a close connection between bearing fruit and showing ourselves to be his disciples?

**Answer:**

What does 1 Corinthians 15:58 have to say about the standard for all believers for participation in ministry? What is a key motivating factor?

***1 Corinthians 15:58*** – *So my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and steady, always enthusiastic about the Lord's work, for you know that nothing you do for the Lord is ever useless.*

**Answer:**

## **Summary Statement on Your Spiritual Gifts**

Christ followers recognize that the church is composed of interdependent members, each uniquely gifted by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of building up the body and furthering the ministry of the church.

You are encouraged to discover, develop, and deploy those God-given gifts and to seek a place of service within the church, with the support and affirmation of the body. A spiritual gifts assessment is available at [cedarcreek.tv/spiritualgifts](http://cedarcreek.tv/spiritualgifts), and you should talk over your results with your campus pastor or group leader before, during, or after you complete this Bible study.

# **Serving Others: Connecting to God's Family**

A home is a place for two groups of people: family or friends and guests. How you interact with and “love others” is based on your understanding of what it means to be a healthy family/friend. In other words, it is based on your definition and expectation of community.

We have seen in the previous study that God gave us his Word, prayer, and his Holy Spirit to live in us and help us grow. These are valuable tools. But they are not all he has given us. He also gave us each other!

When we sit with members of our LifeGroup or Ministry Team, someone can powerfully remind us of what we may be unable to see - that God is working in us, that we are going to make it, that the affection of God is not just for “the world,” it is for me.

It is easy to come to large group gatherings and get a false sense of your spiritual or personal condition. Furthermore, large meetings where anonymity is honored give us no opportunity to enter into someone else's needs and be God's agent of help to them. The value of connecting to God's family is that somewhere, on a regular basis, with a few other believers, all missional members have face-to-face meetings that help shape them - places they give and receive care.

We believe that a CedarCreek LifeGroup or close Ministry Team is an optimal place for that to happen. But we realize that some individuals may be committed to the value of significant relationships without being in a formal group at a particular time. So we give a lot of latitude as to what kind of group this might be. At a minimum, it must be with other believers where you get to know them and they get to know you, and Christ is central to the group. We would also consider groups not formally connected with CedarCreek, but there are some disadvantages to those, and groups here at CedarCreek will most clearly mirror our values. The key, however, is to get in a LifeGroup or Ministry Team and grow to become a more mature disciple of Jesus Christ.

## The Community of Believers

The early believers in Christ did not want to live the new life they'd found alone. What do you learn about their relationships with each other from the following verses?

**Acts 2:44-47** – *And all the believers met together constantly and shared everything they had. <sup>45</sup>They sold their possessions and shared the proceeds with those in need. <sup>46</sup>They worshipped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity—<sup>47</sup>all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their group those who were being saved.*

Answer:

**Acts 4:32-35** – *All the believers were of one heart and mind, and they felt that what they owned was not their own; they shared everything they had. <sup>33</sup>And the apostles gave powerful witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and God's great favor was upon them all. <sup>34</sup>There was no poverty among them, because people who owned land or houses sold them <sup>35</sup>and brought the money to the apostles to give to others in need.*

Answer:

In Hebrews 10:24-25, the writer of Hebrews actually gave a command about community life. How would you rephrase this passage in modern terms?

**Hebrews 10:24-25** – *Think of ways to encourage one another to outbursts of love and good deeds. <sup>25</sup>And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage and warn each other, especially now that the day of his coming back again is drawing near.*

Answer:

## *The Few in the Midst of Many*

***In addition to large groups, where else did Christians get together according to Acts 2:46?***

***Acts 2:46*** They worshipped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity.

**Answer:**

*What do you suppose they got out of these smaller, house-sized group meetings that they didn't get out of bigger gatherings?*

**Answer:**

Mark 6:30-32 reveals that Jesus often withdrew from the larger crowds to be alone with his few disciples. What are some benefits of being in a smaller group?

**Mark 6:30-32** – *The apostles returned to Jesus from their ministry tour and told him all they had done and what they had taught. <sup>31</sup>Then Jesus said, "Let's get away from the crowds for a while and rest." There were so many people coming and going that Jesus and his apostles didn't have time to eat. <sup>32</sup>They left by boat for a quieter spot.*

**Answer:**

What would you be missing out on if you only came to CedarCreek Church on the weekends? Why are small group-style relationships so important to the pursuit of God-honoring lives?

**Galatians 6:1-3** – Dear brothers and sisters, if another Christian is overcome by some sin, you who are godly should gently and humbly help that person back onto the right path. And be careful not to fall into the same temptation yourself. <sup>2</sup>Share each other’s troubles and problems, and in this way obey the law of Christ. <sup>3</sup>If you think you are too important to help someone in need, you are only fooling yourself. You are really a nobody.

**Answer:**

When Jesus traveled, large crowds often gathered around him. However, there were times when Jesus needed just a few people by his side. What is the relational significance of what Jesus did in Mark 14:32-35?

**Mark 14:32-35** – And they came to an olive grove called Gethsemane, and Jesus said, “Sit here while I go and pray.” <sup>33</sup>He took Peter, James, and John with him, and he began to be filled with horror and deep distress. <sup>34</sup>He told them, “My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and watch with me.” <sup>35</sup>He went on a little farther and fell face down on the ground. He prayed that, if it were possible, the awful hour awaiting him might pass him by.

**Answer:**

## **Christ-like Attitudes in Every Relationship**

Read Philippians 2:1-8. Verse 5 says that we should have the same attitude that Christ did. Describe that attitude, using verses 3, 4 and 7 as references.

**Philippians 2:1-8** – Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and sympathetic? <sup>2</sup>Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one heart and purpose. <sup>3</sup>Don’t be selfish; don’t live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself. <sup>4</sup>Don’t think only about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing. <sup>5</sup>Your attitude should be the same that Christ

Jesus had. <sup>6</sup>Though he was God, he did not demand and cling to his rights as God. <sup>7</sup>He made himself nothing; he took the humble position of a slave and appeared in human form. <sup>8</sup>And in human form he obediently humbled himself even further by dying a criminal's death on a cross.

**Answer:**

What do the following Scriptures teach about the characteristics of a good follower in the church? (See also 1 Corinthians 16:15-16)

**1 Thessalonians 5:12-13** – *Dear brothers and sisters, honor those who are your leaders in the Lord's work. They work hard among you and warn you against all that is wrong. <sup>13</sup>Think highly of them and give them your wholehearted love because of their work. And remember to live peaceably with each other.*

**Answer:**

**Hebrews 13:17** – *Obey your spiritual leaders and do what they say. Their work is to watch over your souls, and they know they are accountable to God. Give them reason to do this joyfully and not with sorrow. That would certainly not be for your benefit.*

**Answer:**

2 Timothy 2:23-24 points out that, unfortunately, quarreling can happen among members of the church. How would you put into your own words what our attitude and response should be?

**2 Timothy 2:23--24** – *Again I say, don't get involved in foolish, ignorant arguments that only start fights. <sup>24</sup>The Lord's servants must not quarrel but must be kind to everyone.*



**Answer:**

Even though we are all members of the body of Christ, relational difficulties will arise. Yet, Jesus already gives us a framework for resolving our conflict. How does Jesus outline the procedure for conflict resolution in Matthew 18:15-17?

**Matthew 18:15-17** – *“If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the fault. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. <sup>16</sup>But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup>If that person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. If the church decides you are right, but the other person won’t accept it, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector.*

**Answer:**

What is the issue the following verses have in common?

**Romans 16:17** – *And now I make one more appeal, my dear brothers and sisters. Watch out for people who cause divisions and upset people’s faith by teaching things that are contrary to what you have been taught. Stay away from them.*

**James 4:1-3** – *What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Isn’t it the whole army of evil desires at war within you? <sup>2</sup>You want what you don’t have so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous for what others have, and you can’t possess it, so you fight and quarrel to take it away from them. And yet the reason you don’t have what you want is that you don’t ask God for it. <sup>3</sup>And even when you do ask, you don’t get it because your whole motive is wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure.*

**Answer:**

## Summary Statement on Connecting to God's Family

A Christ follower honors God's call to express and receive love to and from others and to actively participate in the ministry of the church in order to grow closer to the image of Christ.

For this reason, Christ followers give priority to attending the corporate gatherings of the church for the purpose of worship, teaching, and participation in the sacrament of Communion, and are connected relationally to a small group of believers for the purpose of mutual encouragement, support, and accountability.

Christ followers also:

- ☒ Pursue Christ-honoring relationships at home, within the church, and in the marketplace, and are committed to pursuing the biblical pattern of reconciliation when conflict arises.
- ☒ Support the leadership of the church and are biblically submissive to it. Scripture does not suggest blind submission – we are all under the authority of God and his Word. Missional members must be willing to go directly to the appropriate leader when issues of concern arise, with the desire to engage in honest and respectful dialogue. Complaints should never be taken to uninvolved members of the body in ways that promote rumor or divisiveness.
- ☒ Affirm and uphold the fundamental truths of Scripture (as summarized in our Statement of Faith) and refrain from promoting other doctrines in ways that cause dissension.

# TELL THE WORLD ABOUT CHRIST: SUMMARY ON REACHING THE WORLD

We know Jesus has called his followers to bring the good news to the world (Matt. 28:18-20), but what role do we play? The Apostle Paul answers this question in Romans 10:14-15 <sup>14</sup>***But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?*** <sup>15</sup>***And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is why the Scriptures say, “How beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news!”***

You may have heard that simply living a good life in front of others is what we can do to witness to those who do not follow Christ, but that’s not what Paul says here. Instead, Paul is telling us that we need to actually talk about Jesus to people. We need to actually share the good news with the people around us. That is why we are so committed to telling the world about Christ. It simply isn’t enough to live a good life in front of other people. We need to always point to Jesus so that those around us know exactly *why* we are living a good life. We need to share our personal story of what Christ has done in our life and invite others to experience him too.

Jesus’ love for us was shown on the cross, and our love for people is shown in pointing others to the cross and to Jesus’ love for them.

*Have you ever shared (or witnessed someone else sharing) the gospel with someone else?*

*What was it like?*

# Tell the World About Christ

## Motivation to Reach the World

In Acts 1:6-8, Jesus makes it clear that God plans to use his followers to spread the message of salvation. Like the apostles, we can get distracted by other things, but Jesus gives us clarity in verse 8. What is our laser-focused mission?

**Acts 1:6-8** – *When the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, are you going to free Israel now and restore our kingdom?”<sup>7</sup> “The Father sets those dates,” he replied, “and they are not for you to know.<sup>8</sup> But when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you will receive power and will tell people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”*

### Answer:

2 Corinthians 5:17-21. How do you feel knowing that God’s plan to reach the world involves you being his messenger?

**2 Corinthians 5:17-21** – *What this means is that those who become Christians become new persons. They are not the same anymore, for the old life is gone. A new life has begun!<sup>18</sup> All this newness of life is from God, who brought us back to himself through what Christ did. And God has given us the task of reconciling people to him.<sup>19</sup> For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people’s sins against them. This is the wonderful message he has given us to tell others.<sup>20</sup> We are Christ’s ambassadors, and God is using us to speak to you. We urge you, as though Christ himself were here pleading with you, “Be reconciled to God!”<sup>21</sup> For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.*

### Answer:

## Share the Gospel with People

Making connections may be one of the big obstacles that you are facing in becoming involved in the Great Commission. It is sometimes difficult to find the time and energy to build new relationships. Still, to fulfill the Great Commission, we have to expend the energy to build these new friendships, and then let people know what Christ has done on their behalf. For some reason, this scares people. It shouldn't! It should be the natural outcome of a life of full devotion to Christ. If we don't open our mouths and verbally share the gospel message with those who need to hear it, all our other efforts are worthless.

Read Romans 10:14-17 and explain why actually sharing the message of Christ, not just living a good life in front of others, is absolutely necessary to see people come to know Christ.

**Romans 10:14-17** – *But how can they call on him to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they never heard about him? And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them? <sup>15</sup>And how will anyone go and tell them without being sent? That is what the Scriptures mean when they say, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!” <sup>16</sup>But not everyone welcomes the Good News, for Isaiah the prophet said, “Lord, who has believed our message?” <sup>17</sup>Yet faith comes from listening to this message of good news—the Good News about Christ.*

### Answer:

Understanding the message of the gospel is the first step in telling others. Read each passage below and paraphrase the important points that each one has to teach us about the gospel message.

**John 1:12** – *But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.*

### Answer:

**John 14:6** – *Jesus told him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one*

can come to the Father except through me.”

**Answer:**

**Acts 4:12** – *There is salvation in no one else! There is no other name in all of heaven for people to call on to save them.*

**Answer:**

**Romans 3:23** – *For all have sinned; all fall short of God’s glorious standard.*

**Answer:**

**Romans 6:23** – *For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**Answer:**

**Romans 10:9-10** – *For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. <sup>10</sup>For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved.*

**Answer:**

**Ephesians 2:8-9** – *God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. <sup>9</sup>Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.*

**Answer:**

## **Eternity is in the balance....**

Another motivating force for becoming an effective ambassador for Christ is the reality of hell. Even though you may hate to think about it, hell is a real place and real people go there. There are many people in your life who will face a Christ-less eternity if they don't find forgiveness in Christ. The stakes are "sky high" and eternity is hanging in the balance.

As you read the following two passages about hell from the Bible, what things do you learn about hell and what feelings do you experience?

**Matthew 13:41-42** - *"I, the Son of Man, will send my angels, and they will remove from my Kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil, <sup>42</sup>and they will throw them into the furnace and burn them. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."*

**Answer:**

**Revelation 20:15** - *And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire.*

**Answer:**

Does the reality of hell motivate you to share your faith? If so, how? If not, why do you think it has no motivational power on you?

**Answer:**

A third, more positive motivating force for becoming an effective ambassador for Christ is the joyous celebration that occurs when someone comes to know Christ as their Lord and Savior. Just imagine what it would be like - what an incredible thrill you would have - if someone you had been praying for looked you in the eye and said to you, "Thanks for being faithful to what God called you to do. Thanks for reaching out to me. Thanks

for praying for me. Thanks for putting up with my rebellion. Thanks for loving me when I wasn't all that loveable. Jesus saved me, but thanks for leading me to his cross."

Once you have led someone into a right relationship with God through Christ, you will never be the same. The passion to reach out grows each time you experience the joy of seeing a person become a devoted follower of Christ. Absolutely nothing compares!

### ***Summary Statement on Sharing the Love of Christ***

Christ followers realize that they have been commissioned by the Lord himself to spread the Good News of Jesus and his death on the cross for the forgiveness of sins. Each follower has the responsibility to pray for lost people, reach out to them, and then share a personal testimony of what Christ has done. By serving during our services and inviting friends, neighbors, co-workers and family members, the members of our church "team up" to spread the gospel.



# PERSONAL & SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

The *Leadership* Pipeline is designed to help move people from where they currently are in the church leadership development process to higher levels of leadership and influence.

Most people are NOT at their fullest potential as a leader and can increase their leadership capacity which is what we hope this pipeline will accomplish. In fact, almost everyone can advance at one or more levels through learning, studying, practice, application and surrounding yourself with the right people. Interestingly, studies show that you have a high probability of becoming like the five people closest to you, so pick your closest acquaintances carefully!

In the rare event an individual is actually working at their capacity, there is the danger for burnout or boredom if they stay in that spot long term and cease to grow. They need a challenge. The best antidote for this is that they would invest in helping others at lower levels move up through the pipeline, possibly even surpassing them. This follows the 2 Timothy 2:2 principle where the Apostle Paul passed on to his young disciple Timothy everything he could with the expectation that Timothy would do the same. We are to train others!

We never want to see leadership development stop. It's also imperative that a leader's *position* is matched well with their *capacity*. When this happens, not only does the individual flourish but so do the church and eventually even the world. What we hope is that as leaders grow and advance that they will bless the world with their lives by possibly even considering becoming part of other existing churches where there is need and opportunity for them or even assist in starting new churches. It is unrealistic that one church can place every qualified leader in a staff position and fulfill all of their dreams. The world is big. The Great Commission is bigger than one church can handle. Therefore, be Kingdom

mindful and “bless the world!”

Commit today to growing in your personal leadership development as well as helping others in their journey.

Below and on the following pages, you will have an opportunity to review the different levels of our CedarCreek Church Leadership Pipeline. Even if you start at the lowest level, we believe that God can use this information to cast a vision and hopefully inspire you to develop your leadership gifts.



# **STEP ONE: Lead Self (Mostly Do)**

**In this beginning role, an individual takes responsibility for his or her own personal, spiritual, and leadership development. Here are some qualities that define the features of someone who successfully leads self:**

- a. Self-Disciplined - Identifies and works towards areas of improvement.
- b. Teachable - Is open to feedback and able to follow leadership loyally.
- c. Faithful - Can be trusted to complete tasks/objectives.
- d. Commitment - Membership Process/Agreement.
- e. Initiative - Self-starter, not waiting on others to lead/feed them.
- f. Self-awareness- Sets and follows self-imposed boundaries.

## **PRACTICAL STEPS TO SUCCESSFULLY LEAD YOURSELF:**

1. Establish regular personal daily disciplines.
2. Commit to regularly attending weekend services and weekly Bible study.
3. Complete Spiritual Gifts Assessment and begin serving.
4. Take advantage of leadership training opportunities and resources such as Leadership Summit and recommended books.

# **STEP TWO: Leading Others (Do and Delegate)**

**In this developmental area, an individual understands that each person is called to influence and invest in others. In addition to the continued attention to the necessary attitudes and behaviors of leading one's self, Leading Others requires the following skills:**

- A. Recruit - Identifying and asking self-lead people to join team/ organization.
- B. Train - Able to demonstrate, coach, and train others on the mission and objectives.
- C. Delegation - Takes responsibility for the task and accomplishes that

through others providing adequate feedback.

D. Influence - People feel motivated and inspired to be a part of the team.

E. Shepherding- Taking responsibility to help others grow spiritually and personally.

### **PRACTICAL STEPS TO SUCCESSFULLY LEADING OTHERS:**

1. Activate leadership abilities.

2. Take advantage of leadership training opportunities and resources such as Leadership Summit and recommended books.

## **STEP THREE: Leading Leaders (Some Do, Delegate & Develop)**

**As leadership responsibilities grow, developing leaders recognize the importance of moving away from time-consuming hands-on tasks in order to pour maximum time and energy into delegating responsibilities and developing leaders who will oversee task completion. Leading leaders requires the ability to attract, empower, and develop leaders in ministry.**

**To lead well at this stage, individuals must maintain the attitudes, knowledge, and skills developed in Step One and Step Two. Additionally, Step Three skills responsibilities include:**

A. Developer - Recruit, influence, and train leaders utilizing the tools listed above.

B. Team Builder - Creating synergy through leaders/teams working together.

C. Shepherding - Taking responsibility to help others grow spiritually and personally.

D. Focus - Learning to “do what only you can do,” delegating and developing the rest

E. Identifying new talent through the application of the 4-C's [Character, Competency, Chemistry, Commitment].

# **STEP FOUR: Leading Ministries**

## **(Less Do, Some Delegate & More Develop)**

- ☒ Ownership - Feels responsible to seize opportunities, solve problems, and implement ministry strategy/plan
- ☒ Empowering - Equips and releases leaders to execute the ministry plan.
- ☒ Collaboration - Seeking to learn best practices through sharing ideas.
- ☒ Conviction - Paying attention to the spiritual health of your ministry, volunteers, and team.
- ☒ Creative//Innovative - Discovering new ways to create excitement and momentum.
- ☒ Place the right people in the right places.

## **Leadership Opportunities at CedarCreek Church**

### **Leadership Roles Requiring Missional Membership**

Greeter/Usher Leader

Parking Lot Leader

Security Team

Sparkle Crew Leader

Brew Crew Leader

Prayer Team Leader

Medical Team Leader

Campus Administrator

LifeGroup Leader

MOMentum Campus Lead Mom

MOMentum Mentor Mom

Celebrate Recovery TEAM (Campus Ministry Coach, Training Coach,

Encourager Coach and Assimilation Coach)  
Celebrate Recovery Open Share Group Leader  
Celebrate Recovery Step Group Leader  
Worship Leader  
CedarCreek Students - Fusion Class Director  
CedarCreek Students - Fusion Camp Community Group Leader  
CedarCreek Students - Vertical Class Director  
CedarCreek Kids Preschool or Elementary Teaching Teams  
CedarCreek Kids Group Leader  
CedarCreek Kids Large Program Host  
CedarCreek Kids Volunteer Coach

### **Leadership Roles not requiring Missional Membership**

CedarCreek Students Fusion Weekend Facilitator - MM (if out of high school) - SLT (if in high school)  
CedarCreek Students - Vertical LifeGroup Group Facilitator - At least 1 year out of high school  
CedarCreek Students - Fusion LifeGroup Group Facilitator - 16 and at least a sophomore in high school  
CedarCreek Students- Fusion Weekend Group Facilitator - 16 and at least a sophomore in high school  
CedarCreek Students - Fusion Weekend Check-in  
CedarCreek Students - Fusion LifeGroup Check-in  
CedarCreek Students - Vertical LifeGroup Check-in  
CedarCreek Students - Fusion Camp Cabin Leader - 16 and at least a sophomore in high school

# **Am I Ready to Lead a Group?**

With our mission to help the unchurched and spiritually restless learn to love Jesus, serve others and to tell the world about Christ, then it makes sense that as we reach people, more leaders will be needed to shepherd those new Christ followers. As a Missional Member, we hope you will strongly consider whether or not God might be calling you to lead a LifeGroup for adults, or a group in student ministries or children's ministry. If you'd like to know more about leading a group, let your campus pastor know so that our staff can help you take that next step.

# Missional Membership Commitment Form

*Remember, missional membership is a next step of commitment and represents a process and a journey. It's not about being perfect or checking all the "right" boxes, it's about a willingness to engage in love, serve, tell with Jesus every day and with CedarCreek as your church. We're glad to have you take this next step on the journey.*

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Campus you attend:  Findlay     Perrysburg     South Toledo     West Toledo     Whitehouse

1. I regularly attend CedarCreek Church as my primary place of worship.  
 Yes     No
2. I have completed the Missional Membership Bible study on my own or attended a missional membership event.  Yes     No
3. I have read and agree with the way we do church and what we believe doctrinally.     Yes     No

## Baptism

4. Select the statement that best describes you. (check one)  
 I have been baptized SINCE accepting Christ as my Savior. (Date: \_\_\_\_\_)  
 I have not been baptized but will do so at the next baptism service on (Date: \_\_\_\_\_).  
 I was baptized as an infant or child, but not since making the personal decision to accept Christ as my Savior.  
 I have not been baptized and would like to talk to someone about baptism.

## Personal Discipleship

5. Select the statement that best describes you. (check one)  
 I have established a regular pattern of Bible study and prayer in my life most days of the week.  
 I do not have a regularly established pattern/or have lapsed, but I am committed to developing a regular personal daily discipline (Bible study/prayer) over the next year.



6. Are you intentionally moving closer to God in the places where you are struggling with sin?  Yes  No

7. I would like to talk to someone about my personal discipleship.

Yes  No

### **Relational Life**

8. Select the statement that best describes you. (check one)

I have extended forgiveness to the people in my life who might have caused me harm or hurt me in any way.

I find myself unable to forgive some people who have hurt me, but I would like help to get started on this difficult process.

9. If for some reason I drift off track spiritually, I will allow other Christ followers to speak God's truth into my life in a loving and respectful way.

Yes  No

10. If another believer in my relational circle drifts off track spiritually, I will lovingly, yet respectfully, confront him or her with God's truth.  Yes  No

11. I would like to talk to someone about my relational life.  Yes  No

### **Generosity**

12. I commit to evaluating my motivation for giving and to reaching a tithe of 10%. Then, I will give above and beyond as God leads.  Yes  No

13. I would like to talk to someone about generosity.  Yes  No

### **Personal Ministry**

14. Select the statement that best describes you

I am currently involved in a LifeGroup and/or serving at CedarCreek Church.

I am not in a LifeGroup or serving.

I am currently involved in a LifeGroup and/or serving inside CedarCreek, or outside of CedarCreek through one of our strategic partnerships such as the reading initiative, or others.

I would like to talk to someone about my personal ministry.

## Evangelism

15. I have people that I am currently praying for the opportunity to share the gospel with or to invite to church.  Yes  No

16. I will commit to inviting unchurched or spiritually restless individuals to church to hear the gospel message.  Yes  No

17. I will be prepared and willing to share my spiritual journey and explain the gospel message if the situation arises.  Yes  No

18. I would like to talk with someone about evangelism.  Yes  No

## STATEMENT OF COMMITMENT

I hereby affirm that I have completed the personal study materials either on my own or at a missional membership event. I commit myself to the vision and values of CedarCreek Church, specifically, to love Jesus, serve others, and tell the world about Christ. I now desire to be confirmed as a Missional Member. I also authorize the church to store and use the information I've provided below.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I, \_\_\_\_\_, after interviewing the above applicant do hereby confirm him/her as a Missional member of CedarCreek Church and confer all the rights and responsibilities that come with full membership in the local church.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Confirmer/  
Relationship to applicant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Please print all information below*

Last name \_\_\_\_\_ First name \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Sex: Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status: Single \_\_\_\_\_ Married \_\_\_\_\_ Divorced \_\_\_\_\_ Widowed \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's name if married \_\_\_\_\_

Is spouse a member? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

The month/year I started attending CedarCreek \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

My home campus is: \_\_\_\_\_ Findlay \_\_\_\_\_ Perrysburg \_\_\_\_\_ South Toledo \_\_\_\_\_ West Toledo \_\_\_\_\_ Whitehouse \_\_\_\_\_

Before coming to CedarCreek, I was a follower of Christ: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Before CedarCreek, I was active in another church: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Name of the church I previously attended: \_\_\_\_\_

I now serve in the following ministry area(s)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

My ministry team leader is:

\_\_\_\_\_

My spiritual gifts are:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Your Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

I am in a CedarCreek LifeGroup: Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

My LifeGroup Leader(s) \_\_\_\_\_