

**DOOR
WAY
GOAL**

Beginning the Christian Life

Teachings for those who want to be disciples of Jesus Christ

BOOKLET NO. 1

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**BEGINNING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE
BOOKLET NO. 1**

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The first Christians thought of their relationship with Christ the Lord as a **WAY**, something in which they should walk, a clear and defined course for their lives (compare John 14:6 with Acts 9:2; 19:9,23; 22:4; 24:14,22). That **WAY** has an entrance —a **DOOR**—, as well as a **GOAL**. These three terms:

DOOR

WAY

GOAL

constitute the points of orientation for this series of Bible studies.

Preface

This series of Bible studies, called **DOOR, WAY and GOAL**, is the result of the joint work of a group of pastors from the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina. It was born with the purpose of providing teaching material for the formation of disciples, and it developed because of the need and the growth of the work of God. It is designed especially for use by those responsible for small home groups, to provide them a summary for the study and teaching of the “counsel of God” (Acts 20:27), although it is not limited to that context.

The material is presented in several booklets with different themes. This is the first in the series.

The intention of this work goes beyond giving a Biblical illustration to those who study; it attempts to promote in them fundamental decisions, with the goal that their lives be formed according to the will of God. The lessons have been aimed in this way understanding that the Christian life is eminently practical. In the New Testament it is compared with a **WAY**; it must be walked, lived, before being able to analyze it.

Starting from the figure of the Christian life as a **WAY**, the beginning of the way is marked by the figure of a **DOOR**, and invites those interested to aim toward the **GOAL**: the eternal purpose of God.

Here the reader and student will find lessons well established in the Holy Scriptures about subjects such as the kingdom of God, the Lordship of Christ, repentance, baptism, the fullness of the Holy Spirit and the eternal purpose of God, all in easy-to-understand language and with a logical and instructive development.

Jointly, the lessons offer the orientation necessary to reach the supreme objective of our life: living for the glory of God. Of course, this will not happen without a humble and diligent attitude and a definite determination to obey the divine mandates. He who meets these conditions will find wisdom, who expresses her voice in the ancient proverb: “whoever finds me finds life and receives favor from the Lord” (Proverbs 8:35).

IMPORTANT NOTE: Keep in mind that the Introduction A and B are for those who are going to teach the lessons, and not for the new disciples. The lessons for the disciples begin with the section titled: **THE DOOR**.

INTRODUCTION (A):

The Foundation Established by God

Jesus Christ is the revelation of God. This revelation came to the apostles by the words of Jesus and by the Holy Spirit, that they might in turn communicate it to all men of all times. What they preached and taught constitutes the immovable foundation of the church until the end of the world.

In a world like ours where there are so many ideological and philosophical trends, fallacies, beliefs and religions, on what do we foundation do we stand to believe what we believe? How can we know that what we were taught is the truth? Is it possible to know with certainty the truth about God, man, life, death, eternity, the supreme purpose of all things? Is it possible to know with clarity the will of God for man?

From ancient times man lost communion with God, because of his sin, sinking into the darkness of his ignorance. In this condition, he found it impossible to know on his own the truth about God and his will.

The only possibility to escape from the darkness of reason that confused his ideas was that God communicate in person with humanity. And that is precisely what he did.

1. God made himself known to man in Jesus Christ

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son.

Hebrews 1:1,2

Throughout the centuries God spoke to man many times through the prophets. His words are recorded all throughout the Old Testament. But the full revelation of God to mankind came through his Son: *God ... has spoken to us by his Son.*

This transcendent and glorious historical fact constitutes the fundamental rock of our faith. One day, almost two thousand years ago, God became man in the person of his Son and thus he made himself known among mankind.

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the revelation of God, “the Word” of God for all men.

No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

John 1:18

Now we cannot say that God is a distant and unknown supreme being, because he has made himself known in Jesus Christ.

2. The Word is the key element of his communication

Jesus taught the truth and the will of God by his example and his **words**. If he had lived among men without speaking, without communicating by the word, we would not know anything about him nor the Father; neither would we have known the will of the Father for us. The revelation, the knowledge of God and his will, was communicated to us through the words of Christ (see John 7:16,17 and 12:44-50).

3. Jesus communicated that revelation especially to his apostles

For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

John 17:8

Jesus Christ didn't write even a single book; there does not exist even a fragment written by him. He communicated the revelation of the Father through his words to twelve men that he had previously chosen to be his disciples, and later his apostles. Those twelve lived together with Jesus. They saw his life, they saw his glory and received his word. They were entrusted with the revelation.

Everything we know about Jesus and his teachings has come to us through the apostolic writings. We have no other trustworthy source of information. Jesus trusted in the later work of the Holy Spirit in his disciples to remind them, teach them and guide them into all truth, so that they could know with depth, exactitude and clarity the whole counsel of God. When the Holy Spirit came over them, they understood that revelation (see John 14:26 and 16:12-15).

4. Jesus charged the apostles to communicate all his words to everyone in the world

After his resurrection, Jesus ordered the apostles to, after having received the Holy Spirit, make disciples of all nations, baptizing them ... and teaching them to obey everything he had commanded them, assuring them that he would be with them that he would be with them until the end of the world (see Matthew 28:18-20).

We must teach all men of every nation, and until the end of time, the same things that Jesus taught to his disciples. What Jesus taught, and the apostles transmitted to us is the **universal and eternal word** of God. **Universal** because it is for everyone in the world. **Eternal** because it is the word of God and, as such, is permanent and immutable. Jesus said: *Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away* (Luke 21:33). All these teachings are recorded in the apostolic writings (gospels and epistles), which make up the New Testament.

5. The Holy Spirit completed the revelation of the apostles

After the outpouring of the Spirit, there was a period during which God completed the revelation by the Holy Spirit to the apostles and prophets, especially regarding the mystery of Christ and the church (see Ephesians 3:5, 9). These truths are recorded in the apostolic epistles.

6. The apostolic foundation is unique and universal

7. The apostolic foundation does not admit modifications

8. Reiterations and corrections

9. Historical deviations

10. Restoration of the apostolic foundation

INTRODUCTION (B):

Proclamation (Kerugma) and Doctrine (Didache)



- 1. The first heading.**
- 2. The second heading.**

To be translated.

THE DOOR

THE DOOR
LESSON 1:

The Kingdom of God

Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Matthew 6:10

1. The Government of God

What is a kingdom?

A kingdom is a form of government where the authority resides in a king. That government extends over all the territories and people who are under the dominion of the king. In biblical times, the majority of peoples were governed by kings. Therefore the nations were called kingdoms.

What is the kingdom of God?

It is the government of God. God is the source of all authority. He is the absolute king of the universe by inherent right, by being its creator, owner and sustainer. He is the supreme authority over everything that exists, over the visible and the invisible, over creation, the angels, humanity, history, the nations and future events. Since he is the authority, one day he will judge everyone with righteousness. God is King of the universe and eternal King (Psalm 93:1,2; 97:1,2; 99:1; 145:13; 146:10).

There are two aspects to the government of God:

A) The natural government of God over creation. God exercises his government over the universe in a natural way. The galaxies, constellations, stars, suns, planets, the earth, the different species of fauna and flora, all varieties of biological life, the cell, the molecule, the atom, etc.: everything, **absolutely everything** is ruled by God.

He created all things by his word. He commanded and they were made (Hebrews 11:3). He “sustains all things by his powerful word” (Hebrews 1:3). Nature obeys the government of God in a spontaneous and natural way (obviously it does not have to do with a conscious and voluntary submission as in the case of man).

B) The moral government of God over man. Man is a moral being, created by God in his image and likeness, with attributes of personality: spirit, will, intellect and emotions. God exercises his moral government over man expecting of him a conscious and voluntary subjection.

God, the supreme authority, expresses his will to man by means of his word. Man, a being created with moral responsibility and the capacity to decide, is **responsible to obey consciously, voluntarily and intelligently** the word of God, recognizing and respecting in this way the reign of God over his life.

2. The Situation of Man with Regard to the Kingdom of God

The creation of man.

God created man and woman in his image and likeness.

Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 1:26,27

The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.

Genesis 2:7

We already mentioned that man, made in the likeness of God, had a spirit and attributes of personality. Likewise, that divine image was seen in his moral attributes. In their state of perfect innocence, Adam and Eve reflected divine holiness, righteousness, and love.

God exercises his government over man (Genesis 1:28-31).

In full exercise of his authority, God governs man and woman by his word: "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it". Man was to work the ground and take care of it (Genesis 2:15). He could eat of the fruit of the trees, of the animals and of the plants. He could have a sexual life with his wife, since they were one flesh (2:24,25).

He who was the supreme authority established limits on man's conduct. He said, "You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die" (2:16,17).

Everything was beautiful and good while man and woman lived in submission to the authority of the eternal king, that is, while they lived under the moral government of God.

The entrance of sin in human life (Genesis 3).

Deceived by Satan, the woman first, then her husband, rebelled against the will of God, eating the forbidden fruit. Thus they sinned.

What is sin? Exactly this: rebellion against God. Insubordinating oneself before his authority. It's doing my own will. Doing what I feel like, what I want, what I think best; in this way ignoring the authority and reign of God. This is exactly what Satan wanted and still wants to accomplish in everyone.

The present condition of man.

Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.

Romans 5:12

In the same way as Adam, we have all sinned against God, by the sinful inheritance we have received as well as by our personal attitudes before God. Everyone lives as they please, doing their own will. The consequences of this rebellion are easily seen: selfishness, pride, fears, anxiety, depression, sicknesses, rage, insecurity, hate, crime, grudges, family problems, lies, divorce, enmity, etc. All are symptoms of death: spiritual death and, finally physical death, and then eternal condemnation.

How many evils come upon humanity from not living under the kingdom of God! How sad is the present condition of man! On top of the evils, man has no resource in himself to repair or reverse this situation which, essentially, is a spiritual problem.

3. The Gospel of the Kingdom of God

Jesus went into Galilee proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

Mark 1:14,15

Jesus went everywhere preaching and teaching about the kingdom of God. That was his primary theme, and it could almost be said, his only theme. Having already considered what the kingdom of God is, it's now fitting to ask: What is the gospel of the kingdom?

Gospel means *good news*. Jesus announced to men the good news of the kingdom of God. It was good news because the long awaited moment announced by the prophets had arrived. And it's still good news because God, in his love, has sent his Son, not to condemn the world, but to save the world.

We men, excluded from the presence of God by our rebellion, now receive the good news that the kingdom of God has come near us, and that through repentance – a change of attitude – and faith in Christ, we have been given the wonderful possibility to be born anew by virtue of the death and resurrection of Christ, to enter thus into the kingdom of God.

On our part this means a total commitment to live under the government of God, subjecting ourselves to the authority of Jesus Christ. On God's part, it means total forgiveness of our sins, a new life, being made sons and daughters of God, and living in his kingdom here and now, as well as for eternity.

4. The Two Kingdoms

Everyone of us lives according to certain norms and habits, even if they are no more than our whims that change from moment to moment. Human beings can be divided into

those who live as they want and those who live as God wants. They are two concepts of governing life that are diametrically opposed to one another.

In the sacred scriptures these two governments are identified as **THE KINGDOM OF GOD** and **THE DOMINION OF DARKNESS**. Both terms appear in the Epistle of Paul to the Colossians where the apostle, speaking of God, affirms:

For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.

Colossians 1:13

In this way, the Bible makes clear that Satan is he who rules the kingdom of darkness, while Jesus Christ exercises government over the kingdom of light.

The Dominion of Darkness

He who tries to live according to his own judgement deceives himself. While one does as he pleases, he thinks things are going well, when in reality he is destroying himself and falling into the trap of the devil. Therefore, we should realize that the root of man's evil is in his rebellion, his selfishness, his attempted independence from God. In not taking God into account, and not recognizing him as owner and king over his life, he is following the same path as Satan and will end up as a result under his dominion.

Satan is called in the Bible "the prince of this world" (see John 12:31; Ephesians 2:2). With his demons, he exercises an evil spiritual power whose purpose is to upset, ruin, and finally, destroy man. For this reason there is so much confusion and evil all around us, and often in human beings themselves. The activity of Satan in the world is laid out in many biblical texts, such as the following: Ephesians 2:1-3; 6:11-13; John 10:10; 2 Corinthians 4:3,4.

It is important to understand that our human resources are not sufficient to confront him or to avoid falling into his clutches. We must depend on Christ. "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work" (1 John 3:8). Luke also gives testimony of "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil" (Acts 10:38).

The Kingdom of Jesus Christ

When the Scriptures refer to the kingdom of God, they are not talking about heaven or the place where God inhabits, but of the **government of God**. God made the world, and as creator he has the right to govern it. His government is exercised in the light, with righteousness, holiness and love.

Government always reflects the character of the governor. In this case, Jesus Christ is the one who governs with authority that springs from his death and resurrection, through which he revealed the love and righteousness of God, and gained the right to rule over the entire world.

Furthermore, since God made man in his image, man will never be able to live well or be fulfilled apart from the will of God. Without him, you cannot be the person God wants you to be.

We have all been born into the kingdom of darkness by being descendents of Adam, but God wants to transfer us to his kingdom. For that reason he sent his Son who calls us to follow him, to be his disciples. True conversion is to be freed from the power of darkness and to be transferred to the kingdom of light.

Having considered what the kingdom of God is, we will analyze in the next lesson things concerning the entrance into this kingdom.

For thought and discussion:

1. In what way does God exercise his government in the world? What does God's moral government mean?
2. What attitude should we have toward the government of God? Why are we lacking before his government? What evidence is there of our condition before God?
3. Why is the gospel good news from God for human beings? What does God want to do in us through the gospel?
4. How can the meaning of the kingdom of darkness be defined concisely? Why is it so serious to live according to your own judgement, doing whatever you want?
5. What are the principal characteristics of the kingdom of God? Is the kingdom of God far away or nearby? Does it deal with a future reality or a present one?

THE DOOR
LESSON 2:

Jesus Christ is Lord!

Jesus Christ is the Son of God: being God, he became man. God made himself known to man in Jesus Christ, who by his example and his words taught us the will of God. Sent by the love of the Father, he came to the world to save us and adopt us as sons and daughters of God. He died for our sins; the Father raised him from the dead and, seating him at his right hand on the throne of the universe, he made him LORD. God wants everyone to believe in Jesus Christ and be saved, recognizing him as Lord.

1. Jesus Christ is the Son of God

*In the beginning was the Word,
and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.
He was with God in the beginning.*

John 1:1,2

(The expression “the Word” refers to the Son of God; see John 1:14).

We all began our existence the day we were conceived by our parents. Jesus, however, existed since the beginning. The Son always existed together with the Father. He is the Son of God, and at the same time, God; just as we are sons of men and, at the same time, men. The apostle John proclaims with complete clarity: “the Word was God”. **Jesus Christ is God.**

Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

John 1:3

God created all things by his Son. Everything that exists was made by Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:16,17). All this reveals the infinite greatness, wisdom and power of the Son of God, declaring him creator of the universe.

2. Jesus Christ, being God, became man

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

John 1:14

*... who being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,
but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.*

Philippians 2:6,7

He who has existed since the beginning, and who was with God and who was God, *was made flesh*, that is, he became man. Jesus Christ, being God, did not cling to his divine condition, but he humbled himself and became man. How great is the mystery of the incarnation! God became man in Jesus; the Creator took on the form of a creature!

Jesus was born of the virgin Mary, she having conceived by the Holy Spirit, without the intervention of man (Matthew 1:18-25). This fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14 (given seven hundred years before Christ): “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel” (which translated is: *God with us*).

At thirty years of age Jesus began his public ministry among men, healing them, freeing them, forgiving them their sins and teaching them about the kingdom of God.

3. God made himself known to man in Jesus Christ

No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known.

John 1:18

Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.

John 14:9

Jesus Christ is the revelation of God. He made God known to us. Now we cannot say that God is a distant and unknown being, since he made himself known in Jesus Christ. God communicated himself, expressed himself, spoke, and presented himself to mankind in his Son.

Jesus Christ made known to us the character of God. By him, we know that God is love; that he is merciful, just, holy, patient, compassionate, wise, perfect. “For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him” (Colossians 1:19).

Jesus Christ, by his example and his words, taught us the will of the Father. His life and his conduct are the living teaching that God gave us that we might be like him. As a man he was tempted in everything, just like us, but he never sinned (see

1 Peter 2:21-23). He always did what pleased the Father, and he was obedient to him even to death. Jesus Christ is the model that God has presented us that we might all live as he lived: in holiness, love, humility and service.

Those who followed him were called his disciples. To them he taught more carefully his doctrine. What he taught them is the **UNIVERSAL AND ETERNAL WORD** of God. It is **universal** because it is for everyone in the world, and **eternal** because what he taught is permanent, unchanging throughout all centuries. He said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away" (Luke 21:33).

We as mankind have no reason to live disoriented or confused, because Jesus Christ taught us the will of the Father with complete clarity. His teachings are recorded for us in the apostolic writings that are in the Bible.

4. Jesus Christ came to save us and make us sons and daughters of God

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.

John 3:16,17

Jesus Christ came into the world, sent by the love of the Father, to establish the government of God among mankind and save us from our sins, from their consequences and from eternal condemnation.

Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

John 1:12

Jesus Christ came to restore us to the condition of sons and daughters of God, through the new birth.

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.

John 10:10

The thief who has destroyed us is Satan. Jesus Christ came to free us from Satan, from his destructive works and from his lies, and give us life: new life, abundant life, eternal life.

Jesus Christ came into the world to reconcile us with God and with our fellow man. He came to make us new creatures and to make us the people of God.

5. Jesus Christ died for our sins

Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

John 1:29

But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Isaiah 53:5,6

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 5:8

Jesus bore in his body all our sins and rebellion, and he suffered our punishment on the cross. He died in our place, and by doing so paid our debt before the righteousness of God.

Previously, when an Israelite sinned, he had to take a lamb to the priest to be sacrificed in place of the sinner; he shed his blood and died to grant us forgiveness from our sins and reconcile us with God.

6. Jesus Christ rose from the dead and is the Lord!

... that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

1 Corinthians 15:3

God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact.

Acts 2:32

... God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both LORD and CHRIST.

Acts 2:36, emphasis added

... and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Philippians 2:8-11

Jesus Christ, who being God became man and died for our sins, on the third day rose from the dead, having conquered sin, sickness, death, and Satan himself. After having

presented himself alive to his disciples with many convincing proofs during forty days (Acts 1:3), he ascended to heaven.

Because of his humiliation and obedience unto death, the Father raised Jesus Christ from the dead and elevated him to the highest place, seating him at his right hand on the throne of the universe, and proclaimed him **LORD**, thus giving him the highest honor and the maximum hierarchical title any being can receive; so that **everyone** may bow their knee before him, and everyone may recognize that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Afterward, Jesus Christ will come again to this world to judge all mankind (see Acts 1:9-11; Romans 2:16).

7. What should be our response before Jesus Christ?

If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

Romans 10:9,10

We must believe in Jesus Christ with all our heart. Believe that he is God, and that he became man. Believe that he died for our sins and that he rose from the dead. Believe that he lives and that he is seated at the right hand of the Father.

We must bow our knee before him and recognize him as Lord. Bowing the knee before him means setting aside our pride, our rebellion, our independence, and take on a humble posture before him, submitting ourselves completely to his will. Confessing with our mouth that Jesus Christ is Lord means accepting definitively the authority and government of Jesus Christ over our lives. It is accepting Christ as our Boss, our Owner, and the Maximum Authority over us.

Our confession of faith. Now bow your knee before Jesus Christ and, believing in your heart, proclaim with your mouth your faith, in these terms:

I BELIEVE that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; that, being God, he became man.

I BELIEVE in his word and in all his teaching.

I BELIEVE that he died for my sins and suffered the punishment that I deserved.

I BELIEVE that he rose from the dead with power, ascended into heaven, and was exalted to the right hand of the Father.

I BELIEVE with all my heart, and proclaim with my mouth that **JESUS CHRIST IS LORD**. I bow my knee before him, and submit myself to his government, and proclaim him as Lord of my life, committing myself to be his disciple forever.

For thought and discussion:

1. Where was Jesus Christ before being born of the virgin Mary in Bethlehem? Why did he become man?
2. Why did Jesus die for us?

3. What does the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead mean for us?
4. What does it mean to “confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord” according to Romans 10:9? What does it mean to “believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead”?

THE DOOR
LESSON 3:

Repentance

Repentance is a change of attitude. The natural attitude of every man toward God is rebellion. To repent means to put off that attitude and submit to the government of God to live, from then on, according to his will.

From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.

Matthew 4:17

But unless you repent, you too will all perish.

Luke 13:3

In the past, God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.

Acts 17:30

When Jesus began his public ministry, his first message to people was "Repent". It was also the first command given by Peter upon concluding his preaching on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38). In Athens, Paul, preaching to the Greeks, said to them that God commands all people everywhere to repent.

What is repentance? What is its true meaning? Of what must we repent? How should we repent? These and other questions we will attempt to clarify in this lesson so that we all may experience a true repentance before God.

1. What is repentance?

We must not confuse repentance with remorse. Remorse is to feel bad for having done something bad. Repentance is much more than that.

Repentance is not merely feeling regret for having offended God. Contrition without conversion leads us to continue committing the same sins over and over. Neither is it only a question of repenting of certain gross sins that weigh on our conscience.

Metanoia (Greek word that appears in the original version of the New Testament), translated *repentance*, means *change of attitude and mentality*. The attitude that we must abandon is **rebellion**.

2. Rebellion

The natural attitude of every man toward God is rebellion. We say natural, because we have inherited it from our first ancestors, Adam and Eve.

What is rebellion? It is the refusal to recognize a legitimately established authority. God is the supreme authority. Adam and Eve rebelled in Eden and followed their own will (Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-6). Rebellion is living as one wishes, doing whatever one pleases.

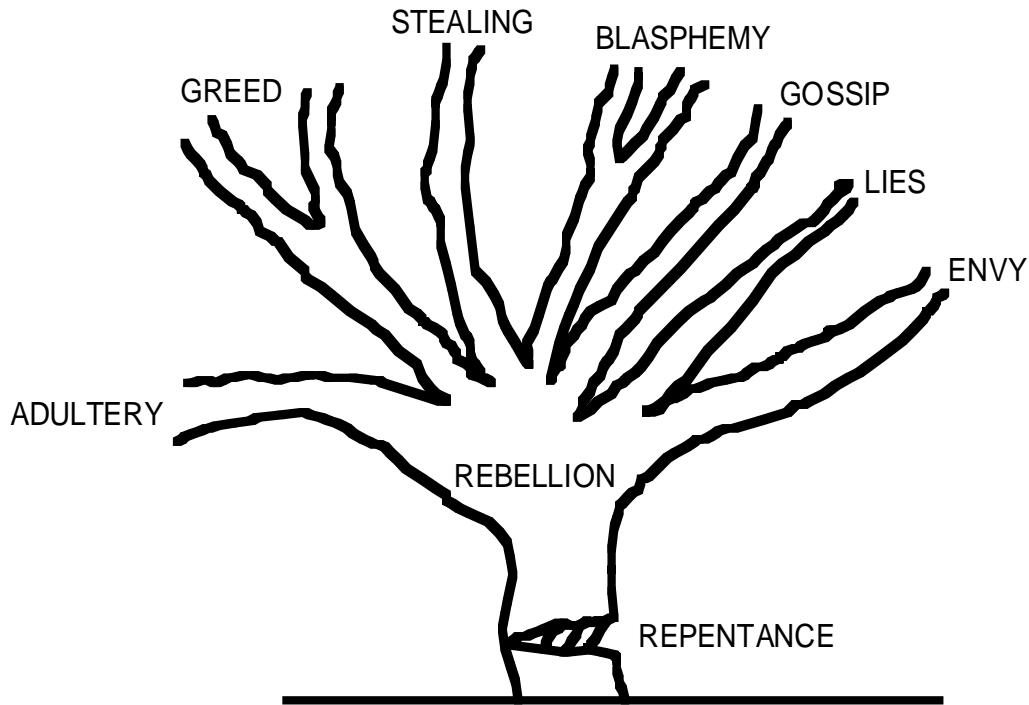
All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.

Ephesians 2:3

The flesh is our sinful human nature. All of us by nature are rebellious toward God and have a selfish and proud heart. We want to do as we see fit, we want to be “free” and live our own way. We don’t want anyone to order us and tell us what we must do. That attitude of rebellion and independence is our greatest sin and the one that generates all the other sins we commit.

Why do people deceive, treat their neighbors badly, steal, insult, not forgive, commit adultery, etc.? Because they do their own will and not the will of God: that is rebellion. Rebellion is the root and the cause of the sinful deeds that we commit.

Comparing our life with a tree, if we only repent of certain evil deeds it would be like cutting some branches off the tree, while the trunk (rebellion) stays standing; so, the branches grow out again. Changing our attitude is cutting down the tree, putting off rebellion and pride before God and submitting ourselves completely to his will.



3. The new attitude toward God: Submission

Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

Matthew 11:29

These are words spoken by Jesus. Taking his yoke means subjecting ourselves to him to live obedient and submitted to him in everything. The change consists in that, while before we lived as we wanted, now we commit ourselves to live as Christ wants. We adopt a new attitude, we receive a new gentle and humble heart, and the only thing we want to do is the will of God. Before the government of God there exist only two possible postures: rebellion or subjection. I live as I want, or I live as he wants. Having repented means having passed from the first to the second position.

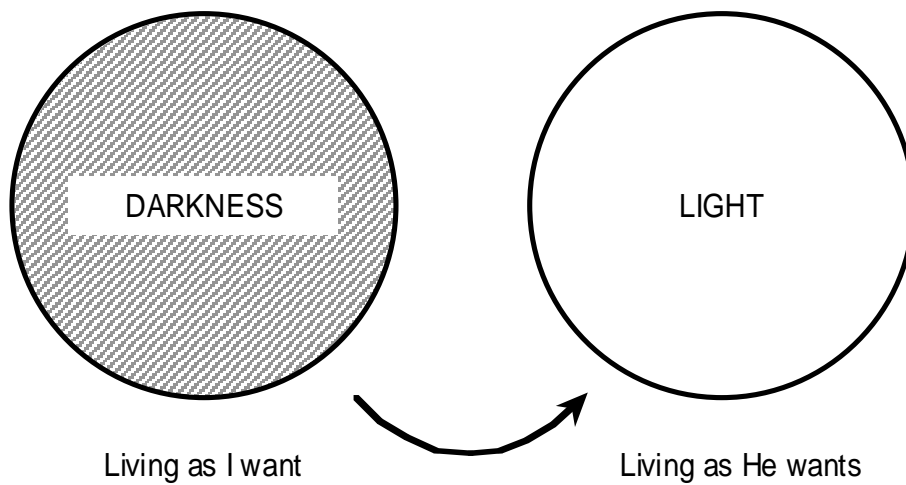
4. Other aspects of repentance

1) To renounce Satan and the kingdom of darkness and surrender to Jesus Christ and his reign.

For he [God] has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves.

Colossians 1:13

In this world, according to the spiritual order, there are only two kingdoms. Since the fall of Adam, we are all born into the kingdom of darkness, whose prince is Satan. He with his demons, deceives, controls, and operates in all men to ruin and destroy them. Upon repenting, we renounce Satan, we renounce continuing to sin, living as we please and, rejecting the lies and deceptions of the evil one, we surrender to Jesus Christ that he might govern our lives.



2) To deny oneself and put Christ in the center of life.

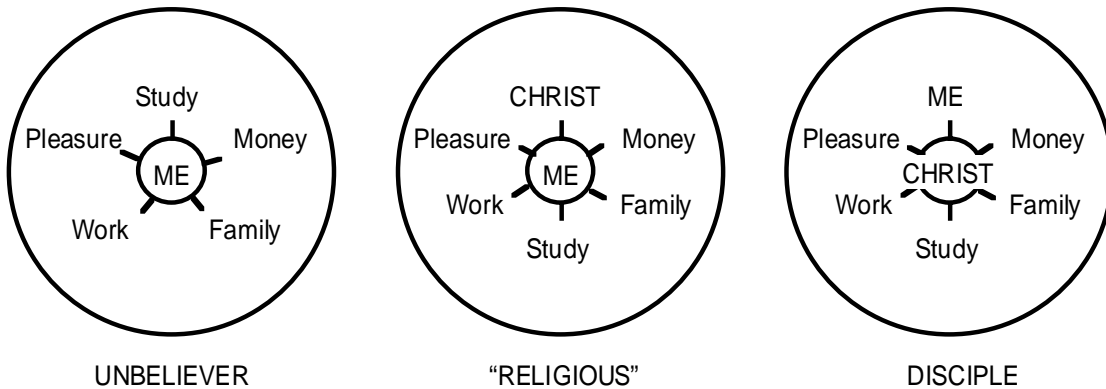
Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.”

Mark 8:34,35

Because of the selfish nature of our heart, we have all developed a self-centered lifestyle. That is, I am the center of my own little world. Everything I do is for me: live, study, work, earn money, have a family, rest, etc. All of my efforts are oriented toward myself.

The “religious”[†] person who has not denied himself is in a similar condition, with the only difference being that he also has God “at his service”. The “religious” person conceives of God as the one who protects him, helps him, blesses him, heals him, etc., while still being himself the center of his life. He doesn’t live for God, he lives for himself.

Denying myself means renouncing being the center of my life; it is saying NO to the selfishness of my heart, and NO to living for myself. No longer will I be the center of my life, but Christ. No longer will I live for myself, but for him and by him. I will be at his service. Christ said: “Whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it”. If I work, it will be for him. If I have a family, if I study, if I rest, if I earn money, etc., I will do it all for Christ Jesus.



3) To put Christ first.

Anyone who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

Matthew 10:37

[†] With this term we are referring to one who practices externally a religion without an experience of conversion and communion with God.

If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters—yes, even his own life—he cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:26

Commonly, “I and mine” occupy first place. Jesus Christ demands a complete change. He is God and as such must occupy first place in our life and affection. Above everything, we owe love, loyalty and service to him. He must be the most important person in our life and the one we love more than our loved ones and more than our very selves.

4) To renounce everything we possess.

Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple.

Luke 14:33

Man, in general, in his ignorance and selfishness, considers himself owner of what he possesses. In reality, the legitimate owner of all that we possess is God. All our belongings, including material goods, family, time, abilities, house, money, future, etc., all is God’s.

My change of attitude consists in that, before I considered that everything I possessed was for me and mine, but now I renounce everything I have and I turn it over to Christ. Everything is at his complete disposition for what he orders. The disciple is a simple steward of the goods he possesses.

5. How should we repent?

1) Humbling ourselves before God and surrendering ourselves to him for him to change us.

Humble yourselves before the Lord.

James 4:10

We must humble ourselves before God with all our heart, throwing away our pride, rebellion, selfishness, our wrong behavior, our sins and everything in our life that may have been an offense before God.

2) Confessing our sins and abandoning them.

He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

Proverbs 28:13

Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds.

Acts 19:18

Upon repenting, we must confess our sins with our mouths. Certainly we won't remember every sin we've ever committed, but we will remember the kind of sin. To confess, we mention the kind of sins committed and the specific sins we remember, for having been a burden on our conscience. The Holy Spirit will illuminate us. Confession must be sincere and without intentionally hiding anything. It must be done with repentance, that is, with the determination to abandon the sin.

Restitution: Confession should be made with restitution when this is necessary and possible (Luke 19:8; Romans 13:7,8; Leviticus 6:2-5). We should return what was stolen, pay what was withheld, repair any damage caused, ask forgiveness of anyone offended, tell the truth to those we've deceived and assume the responsibility for the consequences of our sins.

3) Forgiving those who have offended us.

For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

Matthew 6:14

We must forgive with our whole heart everyone who has failed and offended us. We can only do it through Jesus Christ, freeing us in this way from all grudges, bitterness and resentment.

4) Renouncing every kind of occultism and every demonic spirit.

A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly.

Acts 19:19

If in the past we've had anything to do with or practiced some type of occultism—witchcraft, spiritism, quack healing, Satanism, “transcendental meditation”, or similar things— and if we have had “cursed” objects, books, clothing, photos, fetishes, etc. tied with these practices, in the name of Jesus we should renounce it all, burn it, break every pact, confess it as sin, renounce every evil spirit and be freed in the name of Jesus.

5) Submitting ourselves totally to Christ, recognizing him as our Lord.

(We have already clarified this aspect under the previous theme: **JESUS CHRIST IS LORD**).

6) Believing with all our heart that the Lord, by his power, will change our lives.

We believe the following promises of the Lord:

I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Ezekiel 36:26

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

2 Corinthians 5:17

7) Being willing to be baptized.

The concrete way of expressing our decision to follow Jesus Christ and be his disciples is baptism. He who **believes** and recognizes Jesus Christ as his Lord and **repents** of his old life, **is baptized** to bury in the death of Jesus the old life and begin a new life in Christ.

For thought and discussion:

1. What does repentance mean? Why is it important that our attitude before God is characterized by repentance?
2. How is man's natural rebellion defined? How does this rebellion manifest itself?
3. Why does the lack of repentance imply that one remains under the dominion of Satan?
4. What effect does denying oneself and submitting to Christ produce in life?
5. In a practical sense, how does repentance manifest itself?

THE DOOR
LESSON 4:

Baptism

Baptism is the act by which *through faith* we unite ourselves with Christ to bury in his death our old life and begin by the power of his resurrection a new life.

After his death and resurrection before ascending to heaven, Jesus Christ gave a universal command to his disciples, saying:

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 28:19

Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

Mark 16:15,16

The apostles, from the Day of Pentecost, began to preach the gospel and teach those who believed to be baptized as an act and sign of conversion:

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.

Acts 2:38

But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Acts 8:12

And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on his name.

Acts 22:16

1. What is baptism?

The word **baptize** means *submerge*; therefore in the New Testament those who converted were baptized in water by immersion (see Acts 8:36-38). Baptism is the act by which **through faith** we unite ourselves with Christ to bury in his death our old life and begin by the power of his resurrection a new life (see Colossians 2:12).

The water has a double symbolism: **destruction** (death) and **salvation** (life). Like the sinners in the days of Noah were destroyed by the waters of the flood, and by the same waters Noah and his family were saved in the ark, in the same way our selfish, proud old man is submerged in baptism to die in the death of Christ. Then we are reborn by the resurrection of Christ into a new life (see 1 Peter 3:20,21).

2. The requirements for being baptized

According the passages already considered (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16) through **faith, repentance, and baptism**, we receive forgiveness of sins and salvation, by virtue of the sacrifice of Christ and his resurrection. For baptism to have significance and value, it is an indispensable requirement that the one being baptized have faith in Jesus Christ and repent. Observe:

1) *Faith comes before baptism.*

“Look, here is water. Why shouldn’t I be baptized?” Philip said, “If you believe with your heart, you may.” The eunuch answered, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” And he gave orders to stop the chariot. The both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

Acts 8:36-38

With respect to faith, we should respond to the following questions:

- Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?
- Do you believe that he died for your sins?
- Do you believe that God raised him from the dead?
- Do you confess and recognize Jesus Christ as Lord?

2) *Repentance comes before baptism (see Acts 2:38).*

We should respond to the following questions:

- Have you changed your attitude?
- Are you willing to subject yourself to and obey Christ in everything?
- Do you renounce Satan and sin, and accept the rule of God in your life?
- Have you put God before your father, mother, spouse, children, brothers and even before your own life?
- Do you recognize Christ as owner of your life and all your belongings?
- Are you willing to follow Jesus and be a true disciple until the end?

If your answer to all of these questions is **Yes**, totally and sincerely, you can be baptized.

He who believes and repents is baptized. On the other hand, if someone is baptized without believing and without repenting, does that baptism count for anything?

3. The spiritual meaning of baptism

There are two elements present in baptism: the **external** which is the water, and the **invisible grace** which is Christ. According to Romans 6:3, we are not baptized merely in water, but in Christ. The grace of baptism is not perceived just by the act of being baptized, but through a living faith in Jesus Christ, who upon our being baptized operates in us by his word and his Spirit.

Having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

Colossians 2:12

1) *Baptism is participation in the death and resurrection of Christ.*

We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, he cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over him. The death he died, he died to sin once for all; but the life he lives he lives to God.

In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Romans 6:2-11

We observe:

- v. 2: “we have died to sin”.
- v. 3: “we have been baptized into his death”.
- v. 4: “we were buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”

Baptism in Christ is to be united with his death to die to the old life, to sin, to lust. It is the **end** of the old life and the **beginning** of the new life. It is death and resurrection. When we are baptized we are placed “in Christ”.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

2 Corinthians 5:17

2) Through baptism we are incorporated in Christ.

Through baptism we are united with Christ

But he who unites himself with the Lord is one with him in Spirit.

1 Corinthians 6:17

By baptism a Christian clothes himself with Christ.

For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Galatians 3:27

From now on he belongs to Christ; he is consecrated to him.

For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

Romans 14:7,8

3) Through baptism we are incorporated into the church which is the body of Christ.

We are united with the people of God. We are made members of the church.

Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Acts 2:41,42

For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.

1 Corinthians 12:13

4. Performing the baptism

1) Prior preparation:

Prayer, repentance, confession of sins, casting out of demons (if necessary), teaching about baptism.

2) In the moment of baptism:

Confession of faith (Romans 10:9; Acts 8:36-38).

Invocation (Romans 10:13; Acts 22:16).

Proclamation and immersion. The baptizer proclaims, “According to your confession of faith, I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen”. The he submerges the persons whole body in the water and raises them up again.

3) Thanksgiving for the forgiveness of sins, for new life, and for being made sons and daughters of God.

5. What follows baptism

1) Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38,39; 19:5,6).

2) Discipleship (Matthew 28:19,20). This includes teaching, communion with brothers and sisters, etc.

For thought and discussion:

1. What role does faith play in baptism? On what is faith for baptism founded?
2. What place does repentance have in relation to baptism?
3. How can the act of baptism be a true spiritual experience? What happens spiritually?
4. In what sense does baptism mark the end of our rebellion and independence? What change does baptism produce in the relationship between the one being baptized and other Christians?

THE DOOR
LESSON 5:

Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is a promise and a gift from God for his children. Christ is the one who baptizes, giving us power to testify, to obey all his commands, and to be transformed to his image. It is received by “drinking” with faith.

Upon repenting from our heart and being baptized, by faith in the power of God, we have died and been risen with Christ. The apostle Paul defines this experience in this way:

... having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead ... God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins.

Colossians 2:12,13

This new life in Christ really is marvelous. He who has placed his trust in Christ Jesus as his Lord and Savior, uniting himself with him by faith through baptism, can say confidently:

Christ is my Lord. I belong to him; he governs my life (Romans 10:9; 12:1,2).

He has forgiven all my sins (Colossians 1:13,14; 2:13).

He has given me a new life (2 Corinthians 5:17).

He has adopted me into his family as a son or daughter of God (John 1:12,13; Ephesians 1:5).

From such a position the perspective is beautiful, isn't it? But, that's not everything! Now we're going to see the next step: **being filled with the Holy Spirit.**

1. Jesus promised to send the Holy Spirit to his disciples

Before ascending to heaven in victory after his death and resurrection, Jesus said to his disciples:

I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.

Luke 24:49

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

Acts 1:8

John the Baptist had anticipated this great event when he announced the relationship between his preaching of repentance and the ministry of Jesus:

I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Matthew 3:11

The Bible tells how a hundred and twenty Christian disciples were baptized in the Holy Spirit ten days after Jesus had ascended into heaven:

When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.

Acts 2:1-4

2. Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit, called the third person of the Divine Trinity, is the one who carries out the purpose of God in the world. Christ himself taught his disciples the need for an intimate and vital relationship with him. It is the Spirit who convicts of sin, reveals Christ to the sincere heart, backs the preaching of the gospel, effects salvation in the one who believes, and enables Christian disciples to extend the kingdom of God among men.

With the death, resurrection and exaltation of Christ to his heavenly throne, a new age began: **THE AGE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**. Christ had said to his disciples that after ascending into heaven, he would send the Holy Spirit upon them who would fill them with power and boldness, to preach the gospel in all the world and make disciples of all nations. This promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost.

When the disciples received the Spirit, under his inspiration they began to worship God in unknown tongues. When the Jews gathered in the street heard this and understood what they said in their own languages, they were astonished and confused, wondering what this was all about. The apostle Peter, with his colleagues, responded to their question by preaching the gospel to them under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The result was amazing: three thousand people converted to Christ and passed from death to life through the waters of baptism!

At the end of his sermon Peter told them that, after repentance and baptism, they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. From that point on the preaching of the gospel

was accompanied by the manifestation of the power of God and the salvation of multitudes.

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:38

3. The baptism of the Spirit according to the scriptures

It is evident that the baptism of the Holy Spirit has a solid biblical base. We have already seen that:

It was foretold by John the Baptist that Jesus would baptize in the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11).

Christ instructed his disciples that he would send them the Spirit (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:5,8).

On the day of Pentecost the apostles and more than one hundred other disciples were baptized in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-4).

Furthermore, the book of Acts shows that the same experience was for all Christians:

The apostles announced that this promise was for all those God calls to salvation:

... and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.

Acts 2:38,39

Those who were converted and baptized were guided by the apostles to this experience:

Samaria:

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:14-17

Saul of Tarsus:

Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, “Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 9:17

Cornelius and his family:

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, “Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.”

Acts 10:44-47

“As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit came on them as he had come on us at the beginning. The I remembered what the Lord had said: ‘John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ So if God gave them the same gift as he gave us, who believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I to think that I could oppose God?”

Acts 11:15-17

In Ephesus:

While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?” “John’s baptism,” they replied. Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve men in all.

Acts 19:1-7

4. What is the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

There are several terms Christ and the apostles used to refer to this experience:

baptism in the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11)

baptism with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5)
the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38)
the promise of the Father (Luke 24:49)
being filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4; Ephesians 5:18)
receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:47)
the gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out (Acts 10:45)

We observe some biblical truths about this experience:

It is a **promise** and a **command** (Acts 1:4,5)

It is a **gift** (Acts 2:38). It is not a prize granted by virtue of the one who receives, but a gift given by virtue of the giver.

It is a **definite**, personal, conscious and transforming **experience**.

It is **for all the children of God** (Luke 11:9-13; Acts 2:39; Galatians 4:6).

Christ is the one who baptizes; the Holy Spirit is the means, and the disciple is the candidate (Matthew 3:11). Christ who is in us wants to baptize us in the Holy Spirit, submerge us, fill us, flood us, overflow, make the rivers of living water flow, loose his power in us.

5. What About Speaking in Tongues?

In several of the biblical passages cited above we have seen that the disciples spoke in tongues when they were filled with the Holy Spirit. What does the Bible teach about this?

It is a consequence and evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit

It is the “water” that overflows from the mouth (see John 7:37-39, where Jesus speaks of the rivers of living water that will flow from within us).

It is indescribable praise. There is no language capable of expressing adequately the wonders of God (Acts 2:11; 10:46).

The apostle Paul teaches more about speaking in tongues in 1 Corinthians 14:

It is speaking to God in a language incomprehensible to man (v. 2).

It is praying with the spirit to God (vv. 14,15).

The understanding is unfruitful, but the spirit is edified (vv. 4,14).

Paul recommends that all speak in tongues (v. 5).

He commands to remain silent in the church when there is no interpretation, and to speak to oneself and to God (v. 28).

He rejoices that he speaks in tongues more than all the disciples in Corinth (v. 18).

6. You Too Can Receive Him!

Now you too should receive the Holy Spirit. Why do you need him? Let’s review some of the reasons:

that God may work freely in your life.

that you may be inspired in your faith and obedience to the Lord.
 that you may know Jesus Christ more and more.
 to give you courage and boldness to give testimony of him.
 to go with you, help you and give you counsel in the difficult moments.
 to teach you to pray according to the will of God.
 to conform you to the image of Christ in all areas of your life.

The fullness of the Holy Spirit is the free provision of God for all Christians. Since it is a divine gift, it can't be complicated or difficult. Receive with faith and simplicity, trusting in the goodness and generosity of God. Keep in mind the following guidelines in preparing your heart before the Lord:

1. **The Holy Spirit is already in the people of God**, here on the earth. Therefore, another Christian disciple can go with you and pray for you, that you may receive this gift of God.
2. If you have received Christ, with the forgiveness of sins, **you are already in a position to receive the Spirit**. Faith and repentance have prepared you for this step. It is not necessary to meet any other conditions.
3. **Ask the Father with faith** to fill you with the Spirit. God is pleased to answer this prayer (Luke 11:13).
4. Now, **open your whole being to God**, to love him, to be filled with him, to receive his inspiration, that the Spirit may work freely in your life. Be glad in his presence; rejoice in his love. Begin to "drink" of the Spirit in your heart of hearts (John 7:37-39).
5. Then, **let the rivers of God flow from within you**. With an attitude of faith and expectancy, yield to the operation of the Spirit of God. He doesn't always work in the same way, but he distributes gifts and grace according to his sovereign will. As you are conscious of this internal operation, express it with faith, be it in other tongues, in an inspired word, with a gift of faith or with a revelation of the grace of God. Don't complicate it, but in simplicity manifest what God has given you. This is the way the spiritual gifts function.
6. Afterward, **continue living in dependence on the Holy Spirit**. He inspires you, corrects you and orients you, that your life becomes more and more like Christ's.

For thought and discussion:

1. Why should we as Christians experience the baptism in the Holy Spirit?
2. What are the characteristics of a life full of the Spirit?
3. What are the terms used in the Bible to refer to the work of the Holy Spirit, and what does each one mean?
4. Can all Christians experience the fullness of the Holy Spirit?

THE GOAL

THE DOOR
LESSON 6:

The Eternal Purpose of God

The eternal purpose of God is to have a big family with many children like Jesus Christ. Man was created to know and serve God as Father, delighting himself in his love, but his rebellion caused him to stray. The death and resurrection of Jesus provides him the way of redemption and restoration to the original divine purpose. Therefore, the disciple finds in Christ salvation as well as the model to follow in his conduct and dedication in order that his life might be for the glory of God. He has provided us with all the means necessary to reach this purpose by virtue of our union with Christ.

We indicated at the beginning of this series that the lessons are divided into three main headings: **THE DOOR**, **THE GOAL** and **THE WAY**. This follows the fact that the life of the Christian is a **WAY**, and every way has a beginning (the **DOOR**) and an end or destination (the **GOAL**). Having considered the **DOOR** in the preceding lessons, we now move ahead to study the **GOAL**.

1. The goal of the Christian disciple

A disciple of Christ is he who, having known Jesus Christ as Lord of his life, has been baptized and has received the gift of the Holy Spirit, so beginning a new life, a new way. Upon embarking on a path it is fundamental to know its destination or goal.

I press on to take hold of that for which Christ took hold of me ... I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

Philippians 3:12-14

We learn three very important things from this testimonial passage from the apostle Paul:

2. God has an eternal purpose for us

3. The development of the purpose of God

4. God's big objectives

5. Conclusion

Not yet completed.