



Theme Thoughts

How do you treat your Bible? Is it just another book that is tucked casually between a couple of others on your bookshelf, or hidden under a couple of magazines on your night stand? How do you act in church? Is it a place that you honor, or do you consider it merely another building? How do you use the Lord's name? Is it thrown lightly into your conversation, and used as just another word to express your feelings? Is prayer a vital part of your life? Or do you resort to prayer only when you want something from God, or when you have a problem you can't handle by yourself?

Your answers to these questions can help you to zero in on the theme for this quarter—Respect for Things Holy.

Just what is the definition of the word "respect"? Webster informs us that it means, "to feel or show honor or esteem for something." Respect for the things of God and the principles outlined in His Word are of vital importance to the Christian.

Why? you might ask.

Let's SEARCH for the answer to that question as we study these lessons together.

Bible

TEXT: Psalm 119:1-16; 2 Timothy 3:16; Revelation 22:19

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: 2 Peter 1:19-21

KEY VERSE: Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever. — Psalm 119:160

God has many ways of revealing Himself to mankind. The most commonly known is through His written Word, the Holy Bible. Men of God, over a period of time, recorded the Bible as they were directed and inspired by the Holy Ghost. The Bible tells how God revealed Himself to people of ancient times, and also how He will reveal Himself to us today. The Bible is different from all other religious literature because the Bible is the revelation of God, inspired by God, disclosing God's plans and purposes for the ages of time and eternity, and centering in Jesus Christ the Savior of mankind.

1. In 2 Peter 1:19, Peter parallels the "word of prophecy" to a light that shines in a dark place. Elaborate on this parallel, bringing out ways the Word is similar to light.

2. 2 Peter 1:20,21 indicates that holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost and recorded what God revealed to them. How can we be sure the Bible is not just a collection of private interpretations? Substantiate your answer with Scripture.

3. In the Old Testament, most of the writers did not even know each other, while the New Testament writers were acquainted. Still the fact that their accounts are in harmony is remarkable. Name some of the men who were inspired by God to write portions of the Holy Bible.

4. Our text brings out that the Bible is given for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. Give a Biblical example, or one from your own experience, illustrating how the Bible can be used in each of the ways mentioned.

5. Many people today are living unclean lives. Psalm 119:9 offers the solution to this problem: take heed to the Word. Define *heed* as used in this context.

6. The benefit of having God's Word in the heart is that one will be kept from sin. Sin separates one from God, it engenders untold suffering, and in the end, unforgiven sin brings eternal punishment. Hiding God's Word in the heart and doing what the Scriptures say, are the solutions for conquering sin. How does one hide the Word of God in his heart?

7. It is not necessary that we understand everything that is written in the Bible, but we must believe everything recorded in it. What will happen to one who takes away any part of the Word of God?

8. Food is necessary for our physical bodies. Our spiritual lives also need sustenance and this is found in the Word of God. Using Hebrews 5:13,14 as a basis, an analogy can be made between the birth of a baby and the new birth of a beginning Christian. Compare the subsequent physical and spiritual growth and development of each. Ask yourself these questions: How long have I been saved? Does my spiritual growth reflect proper spiritual nourishment? Food cannot provide our physical bodies with nourishment before it is ingested. Have I been taking the Word of God into my spiritual life in order to benefit by it?

God's House

TEXT: 2 Chronicles 5:11-14; Matthew 21:12-16

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: 1 Chronicles 29:1-9; Isaiah 56:7; 1 Timothy 3:14,15

KEY VERSE: Lord, I have loved the habitation of thy house, and the place where thine honour dwelleth.

— Psalm 26:8

A house of prayer! Yes, that is what God wants His house to be called. God's plan, which He gave to Moses, included the construction of a church in the wilderness—a tabernacle with a place where God's presence would dwell. Today, God desires His presence to be in every church and in every life. If the manner of worship and respect for God's House is followed as prescribed in His Word, God is pleased to dwell in that church.

1. Hebrews 10:25 cautions us against "forsaking the assembling of ourselves together." This shows us the importance of attending church. What are some of the blessings or benefits of church attendance?

2. Jesus drove out the money-changers and condemned other vices which corrupted His Temple. In reading Ecclesiastes 5:1,2, what instruction is given concerning our conversation in His House?

3. In what way can we honor God's House other than by our attendance and watching our conversation?
See 2 Chronicles 29:15.

4. In what ways might a person, knowingly or unknowingly, dishonor the house of God by his behavior?

5. When the Temple which Solomon built was dedicated, the trumpeters and singers were as one—unity prevailed. The unity of the worshipers brought an overwhelming demonstration of God’s glory. God’s glory, or presence, is just as surely in His house today, and because His presence is there His house should be honored. Describe how you think a church service would be carried out if Christ were visibly present.

6. The names of six individuals are listed below. They are famous or infamous characters, depending on their attitudes toward God’s House and holy things. Tell what each did, and the result of his/her action.

Nadab and Abihu — Leviticus 10:1,2

King Josiah — 2 Kings 23:1-3; 2 Chronicles 34:26-28

King Uzziah — 2 Chronicles 26:16-20

King Hezekiah — Isaiah 37:14,15,33-35

Anna — Luke 2:36-38

How can these people be examples to us today?

7. How much money did King David give toward the building of God’s House? Why do you feel he gave such a large amount?

8. David’s generosity affected his countrymen and they also offered willingly for God’s House: 5,000 talents and 10,000 drams of gold, 10,000 talents of silver, 18,000 talents of brass, 100,000 talents of iron, also precious stones. The people rejoiced and King David rejoiced with great joy. What does this tell us about the value of a good example in regard to honoring God’s House?

Lord's Name

TEXT: Leviticus 24:10-16; Ezekiel 36:21-23

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Leviticus 19:12; Daniel 2:20-22

KEY VERSE: The name of the Lord is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe.

— Proverbs 18:10

It is very important that we be careful not to dishonor the Name of the Lord, or to use His name lightly in any way. In Old Testament times God ordered that anyone who blasphemed His name should surely be put to death. Those who lightly esteem God's honor might think it unfair to judge a man an offender for a word; but God lets them know that they must not make light of words which come from malice against God in the heart of him that speaks.

1. In realizing the importance of keeping the Lord's name holy, we should try to understand just who God is. Give a short definition of your concept of God.

2. Using the following Scriptures, find some of the names which refer to God. Beside each of these, write what facet of God's greatness we find exhibited.

Genesis 17:1

Exodus 3:14

Deuteronomy 32:8

Joshua 3:10

Isaiah 43:15

3. Taking the Lord's name in vain can include not only using His name as a swear word, but also using it lightly in slang terms or euphemisms derived from swear words. Give the dictionary definitions for the following common slang terms.

Gee

Darn

Gosh

Golly

Doggone

Heck

4. The Bible teaches us that, as the Son of God, Jesus is entitled to be equal with God (John 5:18; Philip-
pians 2:5,6). The Prophet Isaiah gives to Christ some of the same names attributed to God (Isaiah 9:6).
How, then, do you feel the Commandment given in Exodus 20:7 applies in relation to Jesus?

5. The Holy Ghost, the Third Person of the Trinity, is entitled to all the honor and respect given to God the
Father and God the Son. In fact, Jesus gives us to understand that sin against the Holy Ghost is the most
serious offense of all (Mark 3:22,28-30). Explain this.

6. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus instructs us that we are not to swear at all, but that our communi-
cation should be yes or no. What do you feel is the meaning of this statement of Christ's? See Matthew
5:33-37.

7. It is dishonoring to God's name to say or do anything that would cast doubt on His power, or put Him on
the same plane as a man. During Hezekiah's time, King Sennacherib dishonored God and suffered His
wrath because of this. Read 2 Kings 18:28-35 and 19:35-37, then describe what happened to this king.

8. Using Mark 12:30,31 as a basis, think of the ones you love the most. Name some ways you show
honor and respect for them, and compare this to the respect we owe God, our greatest Friend.

9. Our love for the Lord and His name is to be taught diligently to our children. Using Deuteronomy 6:4-7,
how can parents teach their children this respect for the Lord's name?

10. How is it possible to dishonor the Lord's name, even though we may never swear or use any ques-
tionable slang terms?

11. The Bible shows that in the end everyone is going to bow to God and every tongue will confess to Him
(Romans 14:11,12; Philippians 2:9-11). What comparison can be made between those who are forced to
do so then, and those who do so willingly from their hearts now?

Vows

TEXT: Deuteronomy 23:21-23; 1 Samuel 1:9-18,24-28; Ecclesiastes 5:2,4,5

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: Genesis 28:10-22

KEY VERSE: I will pay thee my vows, which my lips have uttered, and my mouth hath spoken, when I was in trouble. — Psalm 66:13,14

A vow is a specific promise made to God, a voluntary covenant sometimes made in a time of trouble. A vow may be to give a gift, to do something to honor God, to do something in His service, or perhaps to abstain from doing a certain thing. Our service to God does not necessarily demand vows of us, but when a vow is made, God requires that it be paid. Therefore a vow should not be made rashly.

1. There is a difference between a vow and a consecration. A vow is a special promise that a person pledges to God, that which would not necessarily be included in his consecrations. God requires consecrations of our lives, our talents, and our time. Of what value, then, is a vow? When are vows often made?

2. In Hannah's vow, she spoke in her heart; her lips moved but her voice was not heard. She was misunderstood by Eli, the priest, but how do we know that God received her vow?

3. How soon did Hannah pay her vow? Why should we be quick to pay our vows?

4. In our text the Bible speaks about being rash with our mouth in connection with making vows. In other words, the writer would admonish us to proceed with caution or deliberation when making vows to God. Vows are sacred to God and binding upon the person who makes them. Under what circumstances might a vow be considered a sin?

5. The Bible says that the man who does not pay his vow is a fool. What circumstances might cause a person to not want to pay his vow?

6. In his vow Jacob asked for God to keep him, for raiment to wear, for bread to eat, and for a return to father's house in peace. If God would do these things for him, then Jacob would do certain things for God. What advantage would Jacob gain by making this vow—a voluntary promise to God?

7. In his vow, Jacob promised that the Lord would be his God, the pillar would become God's house, and that he would pay tithes of all that God gave him. What evidence do we have that Jacob paid his vow?
See Genesis 32:24-30; 35:6-15.

Lord's Supper/Foot Washing

TEXT: Mark 14:12-16,22-25; John 13:2,4-17; 1 Corinthians 11:27-30

KEY VERSE: If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.— John 13:17

RESOURCE MATERIAL: Tract No. 69 — Ordinances

“Something ordained or decreed by God,” is one definition of an *ordinance*. Many accept the Lord's Supper as being ordained by God, while relegating Foot Washing to insignificance, even though both were set forth by Jesus as ordinances to be observed by His followers. God had instructed the Jews to keep the Passover feast once a year. Jesus was keeping the Passover feast with His disciples, and during the meal, He instructed His disciples to observe another supper—the Lord's Supper. Though there is no saving grace in the ordinance itself, it depicts the total work of Christ in man's behalf.

1. The Children of Israel were to take a lamb from the flock on the tenth day of the month and keep it separate until the fourteenth day when they were to kill it in the evening and eat it roasted with fire. They were to place the blood over their doors. What did this point to?

2. What does our observance of the Lord's Supper point to?

3. What do we partake of at the Lord's Supper? What is represented by the bread? by the grape juice?

4. The disciples and Jesus were present at the first Lord's Supper. These men were His most trusted followers, those closest to Him. Explain who is to partake of the Lord's Supper today by defining what is meant by the word *unworthily* in 1 Corinthians 11:27. Explain what it means in the next verse when it says, "let a man examine himself."

5. Explain what it means to discern the Lord's body.

6. How did Jesus' washing the disciples' feet differ from the foot-washing customs of the day?

7. Why did Peter change his mind after first telling Jesus, "Thou shalt never wash my feet?"

8. 1 Timothy 5:10 lists several good works which Paul said were commendable. What are they?

9. Read Matthew 28:19,20. How does this Scripture relate to Foot Washing?

The Risen Christ

TEXT: Luke 24:1-12

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES: Job 19:25; 1 Peter 1:3

KEY VERSE: Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live. — John 11:25

The story of the Resurrection of Jesus is given us by all four writers of the Gospels because the truth of the Resurrection is the cornerstone of the Christian faith. Had Christ remained in the grave there would have been no New Testament. The Resurrection changed the course of history. It established the risen Christ as the source of redemption and transformed the tragedy of the Cross into the source of life and hope for all mankind.

1. Jesus rose from the dead on the first day of the week. What significance does this have for the Christian?

2. To substantiate that Jesus had indeed risen from the dead, name some witnesses to whom Christ appeared on this Resurrection day (Mark 16:9; Luke 24:13-15,34; John 20:19). Describe the probable emotions the disciples felt when Christ died, and then as they realized He actually was alive again.

3. Verse 2 of Luke's account says they found the stone rolled away from the door of the sepulchre. It was large, sealed with the Roman seal, and guarded by a band of soldiers. How was the stone moved? See Matthew 28:1,2.

4. Some women went early in the morning to anoint the body of Jesus. When they arrived at the tomb, what did they find and how did they respond?

5. Read carefully the message of the angels, verses 5 to 7. Then write how this message affects your life now.

6. To whom did the women who visited the tomb tell of their experience, and how was their story received?

7. Using John 20:8 and Luke 24:12, describe in your own words the reaction of John and of Peter when they saw the neatly arranged graveclothes and the empty tomb.

8. What is the Christian's assurance that if he dies he will be resurrected with a new glorified body? See John 14:19, Romans 8:11, and Philippians 3:20,21.

9. How many people were in the largest group recorded as seeing Jesus after His Resurrection? See 1 Corinthians 15:6.

10. Suppose a friend asked you the question, "How do you know Christ really rose from the dead?" How would you answer?

Self

TEXT: Genesis 1:26,27; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 6:19,20; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Ephesians 2:19-22

KEY VERSE: Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? — 1 Corinthians 3:16

Jesus asked, “What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?” (Matthew 16:26). This question clearly defines the value of man’s soul in God’s estimation. God also said, “Behold, all souls are mine” (Ezekiel 18:4). God loves the souls of men so greatly that He sent His Son to earth to provide salvation for whosoever believes in Him. God is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.” 2 Peter 3:9

1. We have been studying about being respectful toward things that are holy. In this lesson we will be studying the relationship between God and mankind. In what way or ways can a man qualify as being holy?

2. God did not send Jesus to earth to die for His friends only. “God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. . . . For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life” (Romans 5:8,10). Name several notable sinners who were saved through the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in New Testament times. Name several who have been saved in our time.

3. Sometimes in our endeavors to serve God we are disappointed that our efforts fail to succeed to the extent that we desire. Our purpose may be ever so high and noble, but the end result is so short of our expectations. Peter fully expected that he would remain the faithful disciple, though every other might fail. Jesus knew before it happened that Peter would deny Him, yet what was Jesus’ attitude toward Peter? If we are trying to do our best for Him, what is Jesus’ attitude toward us?

4. When we want to be our best for the Lord it is necessary to keep our focus on Him. Twelve spies went into the Promised Land to see what kind of land it was. They all consented that it was a good land—all that God had promised. But ten spies brought back a discouraging report: the people of the land were giants, the cities were walled, and it was a land “that eateth up the inhabitants thereof.” Joshua and Caleb, though they saw all these things, kept their focus on God and His promises. Their admonition: “Only rebel not ye against the LORD, neither fear ye the people of the land; for they are bread for us: their defense is departed from them, and the LORD is with us” (Numbers 14:9). How can we keep our focus upon God, thus doing and being what He wants?

5. “Who am I, O Lord GOD?” (2 Samuel 7:18) asked King David when the prophet brought him word that the Lord had promised to establish his house and kingdom forever. The young man David had started from very unpretentious beginnings, and he seemed to maintain an attitude of humility throughout his life, even after becoming king of the Children of Israel. What are some of the other evidences that we have in Scripture that show David’s humility? (See 1 Samuel 24:14 and Psalms 34:6; 40:17.) Why is it important that we maintain a humble attitude before God? See James 4:6.

6. As Solomon’s Temple was being built in Jerusalem, it was intended to be “exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries” (1 Chronicles 22:5). The people gave willingly of their substance in order that the House of God might be renowned throughout the world as the place where God’s Spirit dwelled. This was to be a house of sacrifice and worship for all who came according to God’s Word. Of what material is God’s temple made in the world today? What similarities might be drawn between Solomon’s Temple and God’s temple today?

7. Solomon’s Temple was dedicated and the glory of the Lord filled the house. “Now have I chosen and sanctified this house, that my name may be there for ever” (2 Chronicles 7:16). And so it is with God’s temple today. “If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are” (1 Corinthians 3:17). In what ways might the temple of God be defiled in our time?

Doctrines and Guidelines

TEXT: 1 Corinthians 10:23,24,31-33; 1 Timothy 4:13-16; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; 4:1-5; 1 John 2:15-17

KEY VERSE: Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle. — 2 Thessalonians 2:15

RESOURCE MATERIAL: Tract No. 76 — A Christian's Standard

The Word of God gives us fundamental truths or doctrines, which help us understand the basic principles of the Bible. It also gives instructions on how we as individuals or as part of the church may please God. The doctrines set forth in the Word are the foundation of the Gospel. The ministry has the authority and responsibility to teach the doctrines, using them as a basis for discipline and establishing guidelines in the church. By adhering to these teachings and guidelines, the individual and church are brought into perfect union with Christ and with each other.

1. One definition of the word *doctrine* is, "a particular principle taught or advocated." What is our responsibility regarding the doctrines as given in God's Word? See John 7:17.

2. In 2 Timothy 4:1,2, we read about the authority and responsibility of the ministry to preach the doctrines and establish the guidelines for the individual and the church. What do you feel is the meaning and importance of each of the instructions stated?

3. Having recognized the authority and responsibility of the ministry, what does Hebrews 13:17 tell us is the responsibility of the believer? What are the consequences if one fails to fulfill these responsibilities?

4. It has been said that the doctrines are the “bones” of the Gospel, for they form the framework of our belief. What doctrines are taught by the following Scriptures?

Mark 1:15 and Acts 20:21

John 1:12,13 and Romans 5:1

John 17:15-17 and Hebrews 12:14

Luke 24:49 and Acts 2:4

James 5:14-16

John 14:3 and 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

5. God has a reason for all things. He inspired the Word from which doctrines originate. What is the end result of obeying the doctrines of God's Word?

6. 1 John 2:15-17 is just one of the Scriptures that can be used in helping to establish guidelines for Christian living. What do you think this Scripture means when it refers to loving the world?

7. In considering our Key Verse, what do you think is meant by the phrase, “stand fast, and hold the traditions”?

Lord's Day

TEXT: Isaiah 58:13,14; Matthew 12:1-13

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: Exodus 20:8-11

KEY VERSE: And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow. — Acts 20:7

The basic principle of setting aside one day of the week to worship God and rest from work, is as old as Creation. It precedes even the Mosaic Law. During the time of Moses, God gave the Children of Israel specific rules to follow concerning that holy day. The Sabbath day, our Saturday, is still observed by the Jewish nation as their day of rest, and it is also remembered as a perpetual covenant. (See Exodus 31:16.) The Sabbath Day is not to be confused with the Lord's Day. When Jesus arose from the grave on the first day of the week, a new era began—not that the Law was destroyed, but fulfilled. The Lord's Day, our Sunday, is the day set aside by Christians around the world as a day of rest and of honor to our Lord Jesus Christ. The child of God looks forward to each Lord's Day, when he can gather with fellow Christians and set aside worldly concerns, enter into the house of God and reap the promised blessings of the Lord.

1. In Genesis 2:2,3, we read that on the seventh day God rested from all His work, the creation of the world. The word sabbath means “to rest from labor.” What do you think is meant by the statement that tells us, God “blessed” and “sanctified” it?

2. When God gave the Ten Commandments to the Children of Israel, what were they commanded to do on the Sabbath Day? (See Exodus 20:8-11.) Under the Law, what could happen to a person who worked on the Sabbath Day? See Exodus 35:2.

3. To the Pharisees who complained because His disciples picked corn on the Sabbath, Jesus said, “the Son of man is Lord even of the Sabbath day” (Matthew 12:8). Explain what you think is meant by that verse.

4. Under the Law, the Israelites were instructed to bring the offering of the “firstfruits.” This offering was made “on the morrow after the sabbath” (Leviticus 23:9-12). Christ’s Resurrection took place on the first day of the week, which is “on the morrow after the sabbath.” Paul tells us that Christ became the first fruits of them that slept” (1 Corinthians 15:20). What significance does this have on the fact that Christians today observe Sunday as the “Lord’s Day”?

5. Look up the following Scriptures and list the significant events that occurred on Sundays.

Mark 16:9, Luke 24:13, Luke 24:36, John 20:26, Acts 2:1, Acts 20:7, Revelation 1:10,

6. The Lord’s Day is distinguished from the Sabbath Day of the Mosaic Law not only because it is on a different day, but because none of the Old Testament Sabbath regulations were transferred to the Lord’s Day. When the Apostles and elders met in Jerusalem to give rules for the Gentile Christians (Acts 15:1,2,19-29), why do you think they didn’t include a demand for Sabbath observance in the rules? See Romans 14:1-6; Galatians 4:9-11; Colossians 2:16,17.

7. The Lord’s Day is in the possessive form and means, “belonging to the Lord.” Just as the Old Covenant related the Sabbath to God’s Creation of the World, under the New Covenant we relate Sunday, the Lord’s Day, to our new creation in Christ Jesus. Every Sunday, therefore, is a weekly memorial to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. We can see in 1 Corinthians 16:1,2, and also in our key verse that the Early Church consecrated the day to worship and almsgiving (but not to earning). What are some of the things Christians today can do to show respect for the Lord’s Day?

8. In Isaiah 58:13,14 we read the promise that God gave to the Jews if they would honor the Sabbath Day. List the things God required of the people in order to receive that promise. Can we also expect to receive such blessings if we honor the Lord’s Day?

Thought Provoker: The legalistic burdens of the Sabbath Day have been removed by Jesus, but are we guilty of removing the blessing from our sabbath, the Lord’s Day? Are children today growing up without knowing what the Lord’s Day is really about: Are we taking full advantage of that Day to wait upon God in prayer, to delight in His Word, and to fellowship with other Christians? Is Sunday the happiest day of our week?

Consecration

TEXT: 2 Samuel 24:17-25; Romans 12:1,2

KEY VERSE: I will surely buy it of thee at a price: neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which doth cost me nothing. — 2 Samuel 24:24

RESOURCE MATERIAL: Tract No. 46 — Consecration

There is nothing so honored of God as a holy, consecrated life, nothing as essential to growth in Christian experience, and nothing that will as surely bring the presence of God into the life. Consecration is the route to everything we receive from God: salvation, sanctification, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, divine healing, or any other blessing. Consecrations of years back will not suffice to retain God's blessing, but one's life must be yielded to God daily.

1. In Old Testament times what things were often used to show consecration (Exodus 29:21,22)? Why do you think God instituted the rituals surrounding these sacrifices?

2. Why did David insist on paying for the threshing floor and the oxen? What would have been the probable result if David had accepted Araunah's offer and sacrificed without any payment?

3. What was the result of David's actions at this time?

4. How can we tell that Job's life and possessions were consecrated to God? See Job 1:21.

5. When God called upon Abraham for a deep consecration, what was his reaction (Genesis 22:2,3,9-13)?

Was Abraham's consecration of Isaac complete before this trial came? Explain.

6. What types of offerings are we to give in consecration today?

7. What were the words of Saul when Jesus appeared to him on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:6)? How does his response relate to being truly successful in the Lord's service?

8. Before he came to Jesus, Saul had great hopes and ambitions: he studied the Law of Moses under Gamaliel, the foremost teacher of that day; he had ambitions of becoming a ruler of the Jews; perhaps he would one day be a member of the Jewish high court, the Sanhedrin. But he forsook all those worldly ambitions in order to follow Christ. How can we know that the Apostle Paul had made deep consecrations to God? See Philippians 3:7,8.

9. What was Jesus Christ's constant attitude toward His heavenly Father? See Matthew 26:39 and John 4:34.

Family Altar

TEXT: Deuteronomy 6:1-15; 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURE: Deuteronomy 11:18-21

KEY VERSE: Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it. —
Proverbs 22:6

A family altar or a systematic approach to devotions and religious instruction is a practice ordained by God. It is the responsibility and privilege of parents to present the knowledge of God to their children. This can be done through the study of the Word of God, prayer, and through the example lived by the parents. Instruction in God's Word was not optional. God commanded the Children of Israel to diligently teach their children.

1. Some of the earliest examples of family altars are found in the Old Testament. Using the following Scriptures as references, finish the verses and name the person each verse is referring to.

Genesis 18:19 — For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him,

Joshua 24:15 — But as for me and my house,

2. The family altar includes praying for the children as well as instructing them in God's Word. How often and for what reason did Job do this? See Job 1:5.

3. God commanded the Children of Israel to teach the Law to their children so it would be well with them, "lest the anger of the LORD thy God be kindled against thee." Compare running a relay race to passing on the Word of God to our children.

4. If a man is faithful to teach his children the truth of God's Word, what is the reward or promise (Proverbs 22:6)? In view of this Scripture, how is it that some people who received godly training in their youth are not Christians today?

5. The family altar is not just a few moments of meditation, but the spirit of family worship should prevail continually. There are many things which can choke out the Word and make it unfruitful. It is important that the concerns of the parents do not negate the time of family worship. What can be done to keep the spirit of worship in the home?

6. How old should a child be before the parents start teaching him the Word of God? (See Isaiah 28:9 and 2 Timothy 3:15.) What are some of the ways in which teaching can be started at an early age?

7. Should the responsibility of teaching the Word of God to children be that of the Sunday school teacher and the preacher alone? Qualify your answer.

8. Reading lengthy portions of Scripture and having prayer might be a very limited form of family worship. List some interesting ideas for variety during this valuable time together.

THOUGHT PROVOKER: The average child watches 18,000 hours of television by the time he graduates from high school. This is about 2 hours and 45 minutes each day. Do you think God should have equal time?

God's Power

TEXT: Psalm 139:1-14 — Omnipresence; Psalm 135:5,6; Mark 4:35-41 — Omnipotence; Hebrews 4:13; 1 John 3:20 — Omniscience

KEY VERSE: Thine, O Lord, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine, thine is the kingdom, O Lord, and thou art exalted as head above all. — 1 Chronicles 29:11

The all-powerful (omnipotent), all-knowing (omniscient), and ever-present (omnipresent) God can be understood in a measure by looking at what God created. The God who controls the universe also sees and knows all the actions and understands the thoughts of mankind. God is a spiritual, holy, loving, and just God who dwells in Heaven and, by His Spirit, also dwells in the hearts of believers.

1. What aspect of God's greatness is evidenced in the account of Jesus stilling the tempest? See Mark 4:35-41

2. What did Jesus say to the elements and what was the result? Compare this calming of a physical storm to the calming of a spiritual "storm."

3. There was an element of faith in the question, "Carest thou not that we perish?" But, using Matthew 8:26 and Luke 8:25, what other element was present?

4. God's power can only be available to us by faith (Matthew 21:22). There is a measure of faith in every person. There is an unlimited power source in God, which becomes accessible to us as we exercise our faith in Him. How can we do this?

5. God, being omniscient, knows the thoughts of our hearts. Name several specific ways this should affect our personal lives.

6. In Psalm 139:7 it says, "Whither shall I flee from thy presence?" If we love and obey God, why would we want to flee from His presence?

7. God created and sustains each one of us (Hebrews 1:2,3). To what extent does He still have control of mankind?

8. Does God control your personal life now? What steps can each of us take to give Him control more fully?

God's Work

TEXT: Matthew 25:14-30; 1 Peter 4:10,11

KEY VERSE: Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear. — Hebrews 12:28

In this parable a master distributes talents to his servants according to their abilities, to be put to profitable use. Expressions such as, "using his talents well," are probably derived from the figurative use of the word *talents*. In this lesson we will draw a parallel between the monetary talents mentioned in the parable and the talents or abilities God entrusts to us. We will find that those who choose to use their talents in God's work are rewarded by Him, while those who are unfaithful and careless with their talents will not only miss the blessings in store for them, but will suffer eternal loss.

1. In dealing with this parable a number of facts are presented:

How many talents did each servant receive?

Why did they receive different amounts?

From whom did the servants receive their talents?

For what purpose were they given?

When the lord of those servants returned, how many talents did each have?

2. Even though this parable was given in reference to monetary talents, in what way could it be similar to, or have a spiritual parallel to a Christian's experience?

3. Make a list of talents or abilities that you believe can be used in the work of the Lord.

4. In the Biblical parable, it is apparent that the servants did more than just put their talents out to the exchangers, or to gain interest. How do you suppose the servants increased their talents?

5. How can our God-given talents be improved? Give an example.

6. Put yourself in the place of an office manager: There is a job to be done and you must decide which worker should be given the job. What would you base your decision on? Which of these criteria could be applied to the receiving of spiritual abilities and talents?

7. What is required of us in order to receive a reward for the use of our talents? What are the results if we do not use them?

8. How does one qualify to have his talents used in the work of the Lord?

9. How does a person show by his life that he is consecrated and faithfully pursuing the course the Lord has laid out for him? What are some of the ways the Lord's work is benefited when this is done?