

2018 DIOCESAN ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

1 THESSALONIANS 4: 1-12

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SUB-THEME 1
INTRODUCTORY STUDIES

STUDY 1

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	INTRODUCTORY STUDIES
TOPIC:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TEXT:	1 THESSALONIANS 4: 1-12, EPHESIANS 5: 8-16
AIM:	To help participants understand the broad concept of living to please God, how to please Him, and the consequences of doing otherwise.

INTRODUCTION

Living to please God literally means living to give God pleasure in our daily walk with Him. It begins from the heart of one that has deep love for God, and is therefore constrained by this love to walk with Him consistently in utmost loyalty, living according to His precepts and commandments.

Living to please God should be the ultimate goal of every bona fide child of God, and this should be evidenced in the ways and manners we relate with Him and with other people in any given environment, circumstance or situation. Brainstorming on the following study guides should help broaden our perspectives on this study.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. Explain in very clear terms what you understand by the phrase “living to please God.”
1Thess. 4: 1, Eph. 5: 8-10
2. In which specific areas are believers exhorted to strive to please God in their lives? 1
Thess. 4: 3b-8, 9-12, Eph. 5: 11, 17-21, Heb. 13: 15, 16, 1 John 3: 21, 22
3. From the following scriptures, identify and discuss some evidences of a life that is
pleasing to God? Matt. 7: 16-20, Heb. 11: 6, Rom. 8: 14, Heb. 13: 16, 1 Tim. 2: 1-4
4. What are the benefits of living in ways and manners pleasing to God? Prov. 16: 7, John
8: 29
5. What happens when we live in ways and manners that displease God? Discuss with
example

CONCLUSION:

The life that is pleasing to God is that which glorifies Him, and this is a task we all owe Him in our personal and communal lives - in families, careers, vocations, businesses, neighbourhoods, communities, churches, etc. Pleasing God should be the core motive behind all our decisions,

actions and or inactions. Anything contrary to this would inadvertently pitch us on a collision path with Him.

MEMORY VERSE:

Eph 5: 8: “For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.”

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Are you walking in ways pleasing to God?

STUDY 2

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	INTRODUCTORY STUDIES
TOPIC:	THE NATURE OF GOD
TEXT:	JOHN 4: 24, 1 Timothy 1: 17
AIM:	To help participants seek clear and in-depth knowledge of God, His nature, His purpose for humankind, and how such knowledge should help them live in ways that are pleasing to Him.

INTRODUCTION

There is no gainsaying that urging people to live lives pleasing to a God who is literally a stranger to them is bound to be a futile exercise. Evidences abound of the fact that majority of the persons who warm the churches' pews on a consistent basis are grossly ignorant of the true nature of God whom they profess and claim to serve. More worrisome is the fact that many of these still conceptualize God from certain philosophical viewpoints which cast God in the mould of some impersonal power or influence. But we learn from the Holy Scriptures that the God of the Church is a Person, and except for man's physical existence, shares all the attributes of the human person whom He made in His own image and likeness. In this study we will strive to see how a clear knowledge of the true nature of God will help us live lives that are pleasing to Him.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. What do you understand by the concept "the nature of God, and how would you describe God? John 4: 24, 1 Tim. 1: 17
2. God is portrayed in the pages of scriptures as a Living Being with distinctive personal characteristics. From the following passages, identify and explain some of these Divine characteristics, 1 Tim. 1: 17, Mal. 3: 6, James 1: 17, Jer. 32: 27, Psa. 139: 7-9, 1 Chr. 28: 9.
3. a. Aside from the divine characteristics already discussed, God has certain moral attributes He shares with man. Discuss them in the light of the following scriptures; 1 Pet. 1: 15-17, Psa. 116: 5, 6, 1 John 4: 8, 1 Cor. 1: 9.
b. How should knowledge of the divine moral attributes already discussed help us conduct our own lives as God's covenant people?

4. Do you think that a clear knowledge of the true nature of God has any positive bearing on living to please God?

CONCLUSION

A significant aspect of the personal and moral attributes of God reflected in the scriptures is the fact that He “has a personal soul with feelings of grief, anger, repentance, jealousy, hate, fellowship, delight, and other soul passions like other beings.” (Dake Annotated Bible, p. 169) Knowledge of this and other facts about God should help us, the bona fide Christians, understand the necessity and urgent need of living to please God.

MEMORY VERSE:

John 4: 24, “God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Would you sincerely say that you have a fair knowledge of whom God really is?

STUDY 3

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	INTRODUCTORY STUDIES
TOPIC:	BASIC REQUIREMENTS TO PLEASING GOD
TEXT:	MICAH 6: 6-8
AIM:	To help participants understand that there are conditions which are indispensable in the believer's endeavours to please God and the implications of ignoring or making light of them.

INTRODUCTION:

Living to please God should be the primary focus of every bona fide citizen of the heavenly kingdom. Yet it is imperative to equally understand that doing so effectively is subject to strict adherence to certain basic scriptural standards or requirements.

In their honest endeavour to please God, many church folks focus essentially on strict observances of such religious rituals as quiet time, Bible studies, fasting, etc, and doing these without due recourse to meeting the scriptural conditionality for doing so. In this study, we will be brainstorming on these basic scriptural requirements to pleasing God and the dire consequences of renegeing on them.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. What does the phrase "basic requirements to pleasing God" mean to you?
2. Identify from these scriptures, and discuss, the basic requirements to pleasing God. John 3: 3, Heb. 11: 6, Rom. 8: 8, Psa. 147: 10, 11, Phil. 2: 13, Mic. 6: 6-8
3. In the light of the above scriptures, what should be the implications of struggling to please God in ways and manners which do not conform to the stipulated standards? Read Matt. 7: 21-23
4. Someone once boldly declared; "God is not infinitely pleased with me because of what I do but because of who I am." Given the subject of our discussion, to what extent would this be true?

CONCLUSION:

We must reiterate that God is not as pleased with us because of our dogged commitment to sheer religious observances and the work we do for Him as He is when these are positively

anchored on certain fundamental spiritual principles. Knowing these conditions and adhering strictly to them put believers on the pedestal whereon pleasing God would not demand excessive struggle.

MEMORY VERSE:

Micah 6: 8b: “And what does the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God.”

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Are you sincerely anchoring your walk with God on the standards prescribed in the scriptures?

STUDY 4

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	INTRODUCTORY STUDIES
TOPIC:	COST OF LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TEXT:	Lk 9:23; Lk 14:25-35; Phil 3:4-9
AIMS:	To help us recognize that there are costs to living to please God and then identify and justify why the costs are worth paying.

INTRODUCTION

Living to please God essentially means following Christ. Reading through the Gospels, it is of importance to note that all who offered to or were called to follow Jesus did so at a cost. Starting from the first set of apostles (Peter, Andrew, James and John), whom we learnt, “left all and followed Him” (see Luke 5:11).

Our Lord Jesus never allowed anyone to follow him without making it obvious that following Him comes at a cost. He was not willing to allow any follow Him who would not pay the cost. The prevalent message in today's world seems to be that of Christianity at no cost to the believer which is at variance with everything Christ taught. In this study we will be looking at recalling to our minds that pleasing God comes at a cost and that it is worth paying that cost.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. What do you understand by the phrase, “cost of living to please God”?
2. From the following scriptures identify the cost(s) that was required of these persons who sought to or were asked to follow Jesus? Mk 1:16-20; Lk 9:57-62; Lk 14:25-27
3. From the following scriptures, why do you think these men thought it was worth it to pay with their life the cost of pleasing God? Mat 13:44; 2Cor 4:16-18; Eph 1:15-18
4. Discuss in practical terms, the kind of costs we may be required to pay in the world of today in our social, family, work and private life, to live a life that pleases God.
5. Following the lives of men like Peter, James, John, Paul, Stephen in the Bible who gave their all to please God, would you say their lives were wasted or worth it? Why or Why not?

CONCLUSION

Cost means what I must give up (pay or sacrifice) to obtain something. Usually as rational beings, we measure what we are willing to pay for something by how much we value that item. For example, someone might be ready to give up his arm or leg to save a child, but may hesitate if it will cost him his life. Living to please God means living as Christ has called us to live, this may mean giving up our time, effort, money and some time freedom or life to do that thing that is pleasing to God. I will only be willing to give these up to the extent that I value the life that I have received in Christ.

MEMORY VERSE

Lk 9:23 And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

EXAMINE YOURSELF

Have you seen the prize? Have you counted the cost? Is it worth paying to you?

SUB-THEME 2

LIFESTYLE THAT PLEASES GOD

STUDY 5

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	LIFESTYLE THAT PLEASES GOD
TOPIC:	LIFESTYLE OF PURITY
TEXT:	Exo 25: 11,17,24,29,31,36,38,39; 1 Thessalonians 4: 1-8 , Mat 5:8
AIM:	Participants should be able to explain why we should and how we can live a life of purity.

INTRODUCTION

Purity can be defined as being free from adulteration, impurity, defilement or corruption of any kind. It means that a particular thing is in its pure original and true state without anything adulteration.

From the 25th to the 39th chapter of the book of Exodus, the word pure was mentioned 31 times in the KJV version of the Bible (pure gold, pure oil, pure myrrh, pure frankincense, pure candlestick etc) and each time it was in relation to the items that will be placed or used in the tabernacle. God would not accept anything that was not pure as part of what to use in building the tabernacle where he was to dwell or in the garment to be worn by the High Priest who was the only one allowed to come into the Holy of Holies where God will meet with him.

In the New Testament the scriptures declare to us that we are the temple of God (1 Corinth. 6: 19), and if God required the temples made of hand by men to be filled with vessels made of pure materials; what do we think is required of us whom these symbols of the tabernacle in the old testament spoke of. In our study we will be looking at why purity is required of us and how God has made it possible for us to live such a life.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. What do you understand by the term purity? What are some words used to describe a lifestyle that is the opposite to a lifestyle of purity?
2. What do the following scriptures teach us about purity and living to please God? Genesis 39: 7-12; Jam 1:27; 3: 17a; 1Tim 1:5; Matt. 5: 8; Mk 7:18-23.
3. From the following scriptures how can we maintain a lifestyle of purity in the world of today? 1Jn 3:3; Ps 119:9; Phil 4:8; Mat 12:33-35; 1Cor 15:3

4. What are some of the challenges a believer faces maintaining a life of purity in today's world.

CONCLUSION

Most times we limit purity to sexual purity, but looking through the scriptures it is obvious that the lifestyle of purity we are called to is not limited to abstaining from sexual immorality or fornication. We are called to purity (freedom from adulteration or contamination), in every area of our life- in our thinking, wisdom, speech, religion, faith, and love etc.

As shown to us in the building of the tabernacles in the Old Testament, God required purity in the materials to be used in making the vessels that would be part of His temples. Much more is required of us whom these tabernacles of old were a shadow of. Our faith in Christ and reliance on His Spirit in us enable us to live such a life of purity even in a world where it looks almost impossible to do so.

MEMORY VERSE

Mat 5: 8 "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God"

EXAMINE YOURSELF

Are you pursuing purity in every area of your life?

STUDY 6

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	LIFESTYLE THAT PLEASES GOD
TOPIC:	LIFESTYLE OF LOVE
TEXT:	1 Cor 13: 1- 8; 1 Thessalonians 4: 9-10; 1 John 4: 7-21
AIM:	Participants will understand what it means to live a lifestyle of love and why God requires it of His children.

INTRODUCTION

The word love is a word commonly used in the world but could also be said to be the most easily misunderstood. If we take a sample of the poems, songs, books, films ever written or produced in the world today it would not be surprising to find out that love is the topic of majority of them. Yet we live in a world where the stark reality of lack of love confronts us daily in the suspicion and hatred among different denominations in the church, murders, killings, kidnappings, terror attacks, rapes of minors and adults, neglect and exploitation of the poor and weak, corrupt practices by those in governance, market and pulpit.

What exactly then is love and how do we know we are living a lifestyle of love? In 1 Jn 4:8, the apostle of love, John declares to us that God is love. We must discard all we now know about love and turn to God who Himself is love to truly learn what love is and how we can live such a lifestyle.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. How would you describe the term love, and the phrase, lifestyle of love?
2. Identify the key characteristics of love as described in 1 Cor 13:4-7 and what we can learn from them in terms of how we should feel or act.
3. In 1 Cor 12:31, the verse immediately preceding 1 Cor 13, Paul introduced love as a more excellent way compared to the best of spiritual gifts. Why do you think he described it so? 1 Cor 13:1-3; 1 John 4: 7-8; Jn 13:35
4. How can we as believers learn to live a lifestyle of love that pleases God? Jn 1:12; Rom 5:5; 2 Pet 1:3-10

CONCLUSION

Two common objections against living a lifestyle of love as described is that, living so will make such a person a doormat (stupid or naive) and secondly how can you show love to someone when your feelings are mostly of dislike towards the person. A response to the first objection would be to look at Jesus, who lived out his life of love while on earth. For the second objection, a look at our key passage 1 Cor 13:4-7, clearly shows that love is not about how we feel, but about what we do in spite of how we feel about the person.

A personal exercise as we conclude, pick a piece of paper and draw two columns; name the first column 'Love Strengths' and the other 'Love Weaknesses'. For each of the 16 characteristics listed in 1 Cor 13:4-7 put your name in place of love (e.g. Nosa is Kind, Nosa is not puffed up etc.) and see if it sounds true of how you act towards others. If yes put it in the first column, if not the second. Give thanks to God for the strengths in the first column, ask God for help in your area of weaknesses, and trust Him to make you grow more into the likeness of Christ.

MEMORY VERSE

Jn 13:35: By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

EXAMINE YOURSELF

Are you acting on God's commandment for us to love?

STUDY 7

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	LIFESTYLE THAT PLEASES GOD
TOPIC:	LIFESTYLE OF FAITH
TEXT:	MARK 11:12-24; GENESIS 12:1-5; HEBREWS 11:1-6
AIMS:	(i) To highlight the meaning and importance of the lifestyle of faith (ii) And to demonstrate that without faith no one can please God.

INTRODUCTION

Faith has been defined as “*assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen*” (Heb. 11:1). Everything about our walk with God bothers on faith. It is by faith we believe we are children of God by adoption; by faith we believe there is God as we have never seen Him; and by faith we receive our forgiveness of sins, sanctification, miracle, and so on. The Christian journey is a journey of faith from the beginning to the end. This is why it is impossible to please God without faith.

Our study highlights the importance of the life of faith. God also demands that we obey Him by faith and by so doing, we will receive His blessings.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. In your own understanding, how can you explain the meaning of faith and the lifestyle of faith
2. Discuss the lifestyle of faith in the light of the following Scriptures:
 - a. Our utterances Mark 11:14,21
 - b. Believe/Expectation Mark 1:23
 - c. Obedience Gen. 12:1-5
 - d. Offering to God Heb. 11:4
 - e. The Rapture Heb. 11:5
2.
 - a. Discus evidence of faith in the life of a Christian James 2: 14-19
 - b. How and why is it impossible to please God without faith? Heb.11:6
- 3 Discuss the danger of lack of faith in the life of a believer

4.
 - a. How can we build a life of faith? Rom. 10: 8-10
 - b. Discuss how believers could live a life of faith in our challenging society.

CONCLUSION:

By living a life of faith, believers can quench all flaming darts of the enemy. Activate your faith today and you will enjoy your Christian walk even in threatening circumstances.

MEMORY VERSE:

2Cor. 5:7: *“For we walk by faith, not by sight”*

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Are you truly living by faith or by sight?

STUDY 8

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	LIFESTYLE THAT PLEASES GOD
TOPIC:	LIFESTYLE OF PRAYER
TEXT :	LUKE 2: 36-38; ACTS 4: 23-33
AIM :	To teach the importance of prayer in the life of a believer

INTRODUCTION

An old Scripture Union song has the lyrics: *“Prayer is the key; Prayer is the master key...”* Prayer is so essential in the life of a believer because it is the only means by which we communicate with God. We express our worship, stewardship, gratitude, feelings and supplications through prayers. Through prayers, we draw incredible divine strength, power, courage, wisdom, etc for our earthly manifestation. Hence, it is often said that a prayerless Christian is a powerless Christian.

STUDY GUIDE

1. How can you define prayer in the light of the following Scriptures: Matt.6:9-13; 26:39; Luke 2:36-38
2. a. Discuss elements of prayers from the following passages: Acts 4:23-33; Phil. 4:4-7; Matt. 6: 9-13
b. What should be believers’ expectations after prayers? Luke 11:5-13; Acts 12:12-17; Mark 11:24
3. a. Discuss hindrances to prayers in the light of the following Scriptures: Luke 18: 1-8; Mark 25-26; Psalm 51:17; 66:18
b. Discuss dangers of prayerlessness according to Matt. 13: 24-25; 26:41
4. Discuss how we can improve on our daily lifestyle of prayer. Luke 18: 1; 1 Thes. 5: 17, Eph. 6: 18a

CONCLUSION

Prayer is not optional to a Christian. There is no alternative to prayers. For the church to experience revival and the move of the Holy Spirit, there must be a deliberate engagement to fervent and effectual prayers.

MEMEORY VERSE:

Luke 18:1b: “... *men ought always to pray and not faint*”

EXAMINE YOURSELF: Have you been sleeping of recent?

STUDY 9

- THEME:** LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
- SUB THEME:** LIFESTYLE THAT PLEASES GOD
- TOPIC:** LIFESTYLE OF FELLOWSHIP
- TEXT:** Acts 2: 42-47; Hebrews 10:25
- AIM:** To discuss the meaning and importance of lifestyle of fellowship and how it can help believers in these perilous days

INTRODUCTION:

Fellowship simply means “friendly association” especially with people who share common interest. God Himself initiated fellowship in the Garden of Eden. He comes around in the Garden, “*watching in the garden in the cool of the day*” (Gen. 3:8) obviously to share fellowship with the man and woman. Fellowship generates warmth, gives identity and equally builds up the body of Christ.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. In your own words, discuss the meaning of fellowship and what it means to have a lifestyle of fellowship
2. Read Acts 2: 42-47, discuss what happens when there is genuine fellowship under the following:
 - a. Devotion Acts 2:42
 - b. Signs and wonders Acts 2:43
 - c. Warmth Acts 2:44
 - d. Selflessness Acts 2:45
 - e. Worship/Communion Acts 2: 46-47
 - f. Are these still in existence today?
3.
 - a. Read Eccl. 4: 9-12: What do we learn further about the importance of fellowship?
 - b. Discuss what fellowship is NOT and hindrances to fellowship
4. Discuss how believers can encourage one another through fellowship, Heb. 10:24-25
5. Is it possible for believers to stand alone without fellowshiping with others?
Heb. 10: 24-25; Eccl. 4: 9-12
 - b. How can we improve on genuine fellowship in our churches today?

CONCLUSION

God in His wisdom knows we need one another to grow. Let us therefore, not despise fellowship. It will help in building and preparing us for eternity in heaven.

MEMEORY VERSE:

Heb. 10: 25: “Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching”

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Are you *in* or *out* of fellowship?

STUDY 10

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	LIFESTYLE THAT PLEASES GOD
TOPIC:	LIFESTYLE OF SOUL WINNING
TEXT:	ACTS 8:1-40; PROV. 11:30
AIM:	To help the participants understand that soul winning pleases God and to see the need for and benefits of soul winning

INTRODUCTION:

The Bible records that man became a living soul after God breathed into Adam's (the first man created) nostril (Gen 2:7) and in Gen. 12:13 & Ez. 18:4 & 20 the Bible made us to understand that the soul controls life. It can also sin (Lev. 5:1). The Miriam Webster Dictionary defines soul as "the spiritual part of a person that is believed to give life to the body and in many religions is believed to live forever".

Therefore, any person whose lifestyle is characterized by soul winning is an important tool in God's kingdom as he/she saves a soul from death and by so doing helps to populate heaven and depopulate hell in fulfillment of God's mandate in Matthew 28:19. God calls a soul winner "wise" in other words he/she is always in tune with heaven's needs. (Prov. 11:30). May God help us to be part of His end time army in Jesus' name. Amen

STUDY GUIDE:

1. In your own words what do you understand by a lifestyle of soul winning?
2. Soul winning is God's heartbeat, read the following scriptures and discuss. Mt. 28:16-20, Mk. 16:15-18, Lk. 24:47-49, Acts 1:8
3.
 - a. Read the following passages and state some biblical methods of soul winning. Acts 1:1-2, Jn. 4:28-30, 1:40-41, Lk 10:1, Mt. 10:5-8, Acts 8:5-8,26-40
 - b. From the above scriptures, who can win souls for Christ
4. What are the rewards for soul winning?
 - a. Here on earth – Acts 8:6-7, 8, 12, 14; Dan 12:3, Lk 12: 8, 1Cor. 9: 16-17
 - b. Here after (in Eternity) – Rev. 3: 21; Dan. 12: 3
5. Persecution and obedience led some of the early disciples to win souls Acts 8:1, 26
What opportunities do you have today?

CONCLUSION:

Jesus won souls through his lifestyle and ministry (Acts 1:1-2), the woman of Samaria won souls through her testimony (Jn. 4:28-30), Andrew brought his brother Simon to Christ on one-on-one evangelism (Jn. 1:40-41), Jesus sent his disciples two by two (Lk. 10:1), Jesus also sent his disciples as a group (Mt. 10:5-8), Philip was sent on a personal evangelism to the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40). Soul winning (Evangelism) has been and is still God's heartbeat. It is Christ's first injunction to His disciples after His resurrection (Mt. 28:16-20, Mk. 16:15-18, Lk. 24:47-49, Acts 1:8)

Therefore, be wise and win souls for Christ!

MEMORY VERSE:

Prov. 11:30 – "The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life and he that winneth souls is wise"

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Are you winning souls for Christ or for Devil?

STUDY 11

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	LIFESTYLE THAT PLEASES GOD
TOPIC:	LIFESTYLE OF STUDY
TEXT:	DAN. 9:2-3; 2 TIM. 2:15-16
AIM:	To remind believers to go back to a lifestyle of studying God's word for in it we will find prosperity and good success.

INTRODUCTION:

Daniel set his heart to study (read, memorize facts etc.) Israel's history as recorded in 2 Chr. 36:21 & Jer. 25:11 and found out that Israel would be in captivity for seventy (70) years. The Berean Christians were considered more noble than the Thessalonians because they studied the Scriptures after Paul preached to them (Acts 17:10-11). In Joshua 1:8, God commanded Joshua "this book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success".

It is obvious from the above scriptural lessons that a lifestyle of studying God's word will lead to prosperity and good success. It has the power to admonish, guide, remind and correct us to ensure that we do not miss the mark and go astray.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. a. What do you understand by a lifestyle of study?
 b. What tools do we need to study effectively?
2. Read the following passages and discuss the benefits of studying God's Word. 2 Tim. 2:15, Josh. 1:8, Jn. 7:52, Mt. 4:4-10, Lk. 4:4-10, Col. 3:16, Ps 119:99-100
3. What is the relationship between studying God's Word and growing in faith? Heb 4:2, Rom 10:17, Acts 20:32
4. Studying God's Word can bring one out of captivity. Discuss. (1Tim 4:15)

CONCLUSION:

God could not keep His secret from Abraham because He testified of Abraham that he would command his children and his household after him and they shall keep the way of the Lord (Gen. 18:19). If we must be like Abraham and teach our children and household after us the

way of the Lord, we must study to know God's Word. We cannot give what we do not have! Therefore study His Word to enrich yourself with His power to do His will.

MEMORY VERSE:

2 Tim. 2:15 – “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”.

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

What are you teaching your children and household?

STUDY 12

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

SUB-THEME: LIFE STYLE THAT PLEASES GOD

TOPIC: LIFE STYLE OF GIVING

TEXT: 2 COR. 9:6 -15, ACTS 9:36 - 43

AIM: To remind believers that giving is an essential part of our Christian life; to highlight the importance/benefits in giving, and the fact that giving does not necessarily depend on the quantity of the gift but the quality of our heart and motive.

INTRODUCTION

A careful examination of God's creation will teach us that just as there are physical laws which brings order out of chaos in the Universe, God has also put in place spiritual laws which governs life. One of which is the law of generosity or giving. The Scripture says that "whoever sows generously will also reap generously" (2 Cor. 9; 6). It is this basic attitude of the early Christians that laid the foundation for every expression of giving we have now. Giving was expressed in their understanding of stewardship and is a mark of a surrendered life.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. a. What do you understand by the phrase "life style of giving"
b. Mention the various Biblical examples of giving in the following passages:
Num.18:6-15;30; Num. 28 & 29; Deut.15:1-11; 18:4; 26:12, 2 Chro. 31:3, Neh. 7: 70 - 72; 10:32 - 39; Lev. 22:21; Ezra 3:5; 8:24-36
2. How are Christians commanded to give? 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Deut. 15:10; Prov.21:26; Rom. 12:8.
3. What lessons can we learn from the giving life style of the following Bible characters
 - a. Abel - Gen. 4:2- 4; Heb.11:4
 - b. Abraham - Gen. 18:2-7, 22:6-10; Heb. 11:17-19.
 - c. Dorcas - Acts 9:36; 39
 - d. Banabas - Acts. 4:36 – 37
 - e. God - Matt. 6:34 - 44; John 3:16,

4. What are the benefits of living a life style of giving? Gen. 18:6-10, 1 Kings 17:7-16; 2 Kings 4: 8-17; Matt. 26:6-13; Luke 6:38; Acts 9:36 – 41.

CONCLUSION

Christians have been called into a life style of giving. This is in conformity with the principle of love (John 3:16). Giving is not a loss but a form of saving. It results in substantial benefits for those who give. God measures our giving and in return to give us. The measure of blessing and reward we receive will be in proportion to how we generously have given to others. Giving must be a life style not compulsion.

MEMMORY VERSE:

2 Cor. 9:7b. God loves a cheerful giver.

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Are you a receiver or a giver?

STUDY 13

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB-THEME:	LIFE STYLE THAT PLEASES GOD
TOPIC:	LIFE STYLE OF INTEGRITY
TEXT:	GEN. 41:37-40; JOB 2:3, 9
AIM:	This study is to consider the meaning and absolute need for integrity among Christians.

INTRODUCTION

One sure way of disarming your enemies from accusing you of wrong doing is to exhibit a life style of integrity. It is a life of high moral and spiritual standard, void of lying, cheating, dishonesty, insincerity, etc. Integrity is the inner sense of wholesomeness carrying the quality of honesty, truthfulness, accuracy and consistency of character. A life style of integrity is the individual moral and ethical standard. Integrity holds to the Pauline principles of thinking and acting on whatever that is true, whatever that is noble, whatever that is right, pure, admirable and lovely. (Phil.4:8) It is void of hypocrisy.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. a. In your own words, explain the meaning of life style of integrity
b. Substantiate this statement in the light of our topic "Once integrity is lost, all is lost"
Prov. 28:18
2. Is it possible for a Christian to live an outstanding life of integrity among a heathen and corrupt society? Explain. Dan.1:8; 6:1 – 5, Gen. 39: 1 – 12.
3. a. What could make many trusted believers compromise their integrity?
b. Mention the consequences, Matt. 24:12; 2 Tim. 4:10, Job 2:9 - 10, 1 Kings 21:1- 10, 2 Kings 5:20 - 27.
4. Discuss the benefits of living a life of integrity in our home, work place, Church and Society. 1 Kings 9: 4 - 5, Psalm 25:21, 41:12; Prov. 10:9, 11:3, 13:6.

CONCLUSION

Threats, challenges and pressures of life should not make us to change our integrity. We are called to speak and walk in the way of Jesus, whether as a Priest, businessman, politician, public servant or worker in the private sector. We must at all time set the standard principles of life to walk in them. We must exhibit the character of truthfulness, faithfulness, humility and accountability.

MEMORY VERSE:

Prov. 11:3: “The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithfully are destroyed by their duplicity” (NIV)

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

If you are to be tried for your integrity, will you be found guilty or upright?

SUB-THEME 3

AREAS/DIMENSIONS OF LIVING A LIFE THAT PLEASES GOD

STUDY 14

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

SUB-THEME: AREAS/DIMENSIONS OF LIVING A LIFE THAT PLEASES GOD

TOPIC: FAMILY LIFE – MARRIED COUPLE

TEXT: EPHESIANS 5:21 - 23, 1 PETER 3: 1 – 7

- AIM:**
- a. To explain how much God expects couples to live with great spiritual and moral principles and impact on the environment
 - b. To show that home is the starting point for spiritual and moral behavior that pleases God.

INTRODUCTION

The relationship among married couples at home is the building block on which the various social characters of the society begin. If the characters and behavioural pattern are not inherited from parents to offspring, it could be developed or learnt over time through constant family interaction. God so much depends on parents for the character molding (modeling) of their children as well as that of the society. Parents in their calling are responsible for training their children to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just. This is possible only where the parents themselves are upright and pleasing before God in their beliefs and conduct.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. What do you understand by the concept, family life and married couples?
2. Point out and discuss the expected characters of married couples that will be pleasing to God from the passages Eph. 5:21-29, 1 Pet. 3:1-7, Col. 3:19; 1 Tim. 2:9-13; Gen. 2:25.
3. What are the factors confronting many married couples from living a life that is pleasing to God? Heb.13:4-5; Gen. 3: 1-7; Matt. 6:25; 1 Kings 21:4-7
4. How can couples overcome these moral and spiritual hindrances? 2Tim. 2:15; Luke 22:40; Matt. 26:41; Eph. 6:12-14; Prov. 7:1-4; 6:20-29

CONCLUSION

God instituted marriage for mutual exchange and expression of love, to build a home, to provide unity, peace and harmony. Married couples are to reflect the unity and union of the Godhead.

This can only be achieved when individuals understand the uniqueness of his/her role and responsibilities.

The man is to love his wife, they are to put aside their own interest and care for the other while the wife willingly follow the leadership of their husband by so doing, they can raise a godly generation that is pleasing to God.

MEMORY VERSE:

Ephesians 5:33 “Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself and let the wife see that she respect her husband”.

EXXAMINE YOURSELF:

Is your marriage pleasing to God?

STUDY 15

- THEME:** LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
- SUB THEME:** AREAS/ DIMENSIONS OF LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
- TOPIC:** FAMILY LIFE 2: ENGAGEMENT AND COURTSHIP
- TEXT:** MATTHEW 1: 18-21
- AIMS:** To help participants understand the meaning engagement and courtship, and that:
- a. Courtship period is for sexual purity
 - b. Men are to be just in their relationship
 - c. It is good to listen to the Holy Spirit in every decision making.

INTRODUCTION:

Courtship is a period of seeking to know God's will and to gain love or affection from an intended partner. Its purpose is to provide a would-be couple time to discover, assess, and evaluate their compatibility as potential for a lifelong marriage relationship. Courtship is not a time of experimentation but of exploration, or a mutual commitment made between a man and a woman, only as a result of knowing God's will for each other, for the purpose of *“getting to know each other and their background better and preparing themselves for marriage within the next few time with the clear understanding that if the courtship does not work out, both persons are to be mature enough to part as friends, without resentment and with all due respect for each other's feelings”*.

Engagement is a time of serious step of firm commitment to marry having received clear guidance from the Lord in the decision to marry, a time to plan for the marriage proper. The length of an engagement will vary according to different circumstances. Courtship is the prelude to a possible engagement. The Scripture refer to engagement as betrothal or espousal as shown in the case of Mary and Joseph and also mentioned in the Song of Solomon.

STUDY GUIDE:

- a. In your own understanding, what is the difference between Courtship and Engagement?
Gen. 24:1-4, 9, 12-15.

- b. From to our text, explain types of engagement and compare it with what we find today among our society? Matt. 1:18-20, Judg. 14:1-4, 7-20.
- c. What is the role of the Holy Spirit, and prayers in any relationship during Courtship and Engagement? John 16:13, Matt. 6: 10
- d. From practical examples, outline possible dangers of wrong courtship, and how a Christian should go about it to avoid possible mistakes against God and man.

CONCLUSION:

For a Christian, any of the decisions we take could easily determine happiness or misery and spiritual success or failure for the persons concerned for life. Right decisions in courtship by the guidance of the Holy Spirit and prayers are dependent on understanding clearly what one's spiritual responsibilities and convictions are.

MEMORY VERSE:

Matt. 6:10, “Your kingdom come: Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven”

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Are you following biblical principles in your marriage engagement?

STUDY 16

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	AREAS/ DIMENSIONS OF LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TOPIC:	FAMILY LIFE 3: PARENTING
TEXT:	ROVERBS 6: 22-24, GENESIS 18: 16-19, 1 SAMUEL 2: 12-17, 27-29
AIMS:	At the end of the study, participants shall be able to understand: a. What true parenting is b. The importance of training our children in godly ways. c. The consequences of not training our children in godly ways.

INTRODUCTION:

Christian Parenting is a systematic and continuous training, guiding and upbringing process of a child to grow maturely both physically, socially, psychologically and spiritually in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. Parenting is duplicating our Christian nature in our younger ones. It takes time, care, persistence and persuasion to achieve.

God commands parents to train and bring up their children in the knowledge and fear of Him. The fifth commandment has a promise of good and long life for every child who obeys in good parenting (Ex.20:12). It is the role of parents to do that. Today, this responsibility has been shifted by most parents to schools, neighbours, house helps and others in the streets due to parents are now too busy with economic pursuance. Parenting is more than giving children daily food and clothing. It encompasses all about their entire wellbeing. However, the consequences of this neglect have a lot of negative impact in our society.

STUDY GUIDE

1. What is your understanding of Parenting for a child of God?
2. From our text above, mention some of the importance of training our children in the ways of God?
3. Explain the dimension parents can lead their children to live a life pleasing to God (Gen. 18:18-19; Prov. 22:6, Job 1:4-5; 2 Tim. 1:5; Eph. 6:4)
4. a) What are the consequences of failing in this duty? Discuss with lessons from the family of Eli and his children (1 Sam. 2: 12-17, 27-29). b) What can parents do to avoid missing true parenting in the Christian home?

CONCLUSION: Our children are vulnerable if we neglect them. We should train and bring them up in the ways of God. We are also going to give account of them to God who gave them to us.

MEMORY VERSE:

Prov. 22:6, “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it”

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

How are you raising the Children God has put under your care?

STUDY 17

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	AREAS/ DIMENSIONS OF LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TOPIC:	WORKPLACE (VOCATION, BUSINESS, CAREER, ETC.)
TEXT:	PROVERBS 22:29, 24: 30-34, COLOSSIANS 3: 23.
AIMS:	At the end of the lesson, we shall understand: a. The need for diligence in all things we do. b. The reward of a lazy person.

INTRODUCTION

God is not a lazy God as many of us think today; neither is He a magician who multiplies people's lazy efforts. One cannot reap where he did not sow and whatsoever a man's sows the same he reaps. Today's prosperity messages we hear all around us seem to create a danger in our faith if we fail to understand that God as a God of principle blesses the works of the diligent, and rejects the slothful in all ramifications.

Adam and Eve were created by God and put in the garden to work. All men whom God had called and used were all busy when He called them (the Prophets and the 12 Apostles). Many in our society and in churches, who are complaining of poverty, are daily folding hands, idle at home and yet praying and waiting on God to multiply blessings on empty plans. May this study help us to understand that God desires us to work so that He can bless the work of our hands.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. What is your understanding of a workplace? In your class today, introduce yourselves to someone sitting beside you on your specific profession, career or work?
2. In Prov. 22:29, 24: 30-34, describe the entire house and business of a lazy man?
3. What is the Lord's command in whatsoever you find yourself doing today? Col.3:23, Eccl. 9: 10
4. Discuss ways we can make our lives pleasing to God through our work? Use practical examples (2 Tim. 2: 15; Luke 16: 10-12; 19: 12-17)

CONCLUSION:

Work is dignity. Whatever your hand find doing, do it unto the Lord, for His blessing shall rest upon the work of your hands.

MEMORY VERSE:

Col.3:23, “And whatever you do, do it heartily as to the Lord and not to men”

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

If you present your work to God now, will you receive a royal commendation?

STUDY 18

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB-THEME:	AREAS/DIMENSION OF LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TOPIC:	CHRISTIAN MINISTRY/ SERVICE
TEXT:	ROMANS 12:1-21
AIM:	To stir up genuine revival and Godly zeal in our Christian ministry/service for a healthy church and God's kingdom promotion.

INTRODUCTION:

Christian Ministry/service is an act of carrying forth Christ mission in the world. All through the scripture, it is seen as service to God and others out of devotion to Christ and love for others (Mk 10:42). Every genuine child of God is endowed with a gift/ grace to do at least one ministry or the other. Many today have their own gifts either unutilized or under- utilized due to carelessness or ignorance. As a result, many of our churches are currently unhealthy as the true mark of a healthy church is when every member is actively and meaningfully involved in ministry/service as directed by the Holy Spirit. God expects the application of our utmost zeal and fervent spirit in our daily discharge of these ministries and their final fulfillment.

Jesus' pattern in ministry and even that of His disciples was such that received not services but gave it to people (Matt. 20:28). Anointed with Holy Ghost and power, Jesus pursued His ministry to the end and no wonder God was pleased with Him. As His disciples of today we have sufficient grace and anointing commensurate with every level of our responsibilities. May the revival flame of God rekindle our zeal for His acceptable service/ministry as we go through this study.

STUDY GUIDE:

- 1) What does the term Christian ministry / service entail? Phil. 2:12-13, Act 10:38, Act 13:1-5
- 2) Identify the various gift/grace available to the church for a pleasing Christian ministry/service unto God. Rom. 12:6-8, 1 Cor. 12:1-11
- 3) Is any of these gifts superior to others; if no, how can a church harness the effective use of all the members' ministries without over emphasizing one against the other? 1 Cor. 12:20-26 Act 10:38

- 4) Differentiate between the terms slothfulness and Lukewarmness, pointing out how to guard against their manifestation in our Christian service today. Rom. 12:9-21 ,Rev 3:15-19; Prov. 6: 6-11, 2 Tim 4:5
- 5) What should be the driving force of any Christian service that should please God? Rom 12:9,16,1 Cor. 14 : 12, Col. 4:17

CONCLUSION:

Christian ministry/service is not just working tirelessly in a church without understanding the expectation of God we are serving. We serve not to please man or even our own gain as many do today. Love for God and preference for one another should always propel us for any Christian service that aims to please God. Moreso, relying on the strength of the Holy Spirit will help one to overcome the present nonchalant and low attitude among the body of Christ toward the fulfillment of our Christian ministry.

MEMORY VERSE:

Col. 4:17, "Take heed to the ministry which you have received in the Lord, that you may fulfill it"

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

What is your Ministry/Service in your Church? Is it pleasing to God?

STUDY 19

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB-THEME: AREAS/ DIMENSIONS OF OUR LIVING TO PLEASE GOD.
TOPIC: POLITICS
TEXT: ROMANS 13:1 -7; Dan 6: 1 -5

AIM: To encourage Christian to show active and exemplary participation in our national politics as a means of promoting Godliness and good governance that pleases God.

INTRODUCTION:

Politics is the activities, actions and policies used to gain and hold a position of governance over a human community/society. As followers of Christ, our attitude and involvement with these activities must be of Christ in order to please God. Some truths are obvious about Christian interest on these political activities. First, God will permeate and supersede every aspect of life and as such His fixed plans and purpose are inviolable. No government or political activities can thwart God's will (Dan 4:34-35) since He sets up and dethrones kings (Dan 2:21). An understanding of this will help one see politics as a mere method God uses to accomplish His will.

Secondly, Christ must be the Lord of our political views. People whose lives are otherwise in submission to Christ have a tendency to violate His Lordship when issues of politics are raised.

Finally we must grasp the fact that no political government can save us, rather only God can. As such, Jesus nor His disciple ever spent time and energy schooling believing on how to reform the corruption and evils of the world through government alone but majorly through proclamation of Gospel and living lives that give clear evidence to Gospel transforming power. Knowledge and practice of these truths will distinguish a Christian in active politics from others as the strength to please God lies on them.

STUDY GUIDE:

- 1) What do you understand by the term politics? How can you further prove/ disprove this statement, “Christianity and politics do not mix”, and what should be the Christian’s stand on politics?
- 2) Using the life examples of Joseph and Daniel, how can our modern Christian politicians develop such good Christian attitudes that see Government officials as ” ministers of God to thee for good”. Rom 13 :3-4 Dan 5:13-17, Dan 6: 3- 11; Gen 41 : 53-57; Gen 47 :13- 26
- 3) How can we effectively use the following God’s political expectations on us to please Him.
 - (i) Political officers as a matter of personal calling before God and not for all. Rom 12 :8; Gen 41 : 37 -40,
 - (ii) Being Subject to government and honor those in authority Rom 13 :1,7, 1 Pet 2 : 13 – 17, Act 4 ; 19 – 20
 - (iii) Doing right and paying taxes. Tit 3:1 -2, Rom 13 : 6 -7, Matt 22 :17 -21
 - (iv) Pray, evangelize and disciple them. 1 Tim 2: 1- 4; Matt 28 :19.
- 4) What are the warnings/dangers every political Leader must keep to if God is to be pleased? Matt. 24:45-51, 1 Cor. 5:10

CONCLUSION:

Politics just like every other vocation should be actively practiced by personal calling and convictions and not a game for all as in our present society. Total abstinence from it by Christians makes it difficult to enforce God’s ordinance and counsel into our society which we are all enjoyed to be subject to without resisting. The politics that please God is the one that recognizes its authority as from God and as such yields itself as instrument to accomplish the will of God.

MEMORY VERSE:

Rom. 13: 1, “There is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God”

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

As an Administrator, are the charges against you baseless as in Daniel’s case.

SUB-THEME 4

CHALLENGES IN LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

STUDY 20

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB –THEME:	CHALLENGES IN LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TOPIC:	WORLDLY ALLUREMENTS
TEXT:	1 JOHN 2: 15 – 17, JOSHUA 7: 1 – 20, 26
AIM:	To encourage Christians to seek Godly understanding of the worthlessness of this world and the wisdom to keep distance from its enticement in order to please God effectively.

INTRODUCTION:

The term WORLD most often in the scripture refers to the vast system of this present age under satanic promotion and slavery. It consists of both the evils, immoral and sinful pleasures of it as well as the spirit of rebellion or indifference to God and His revelation existing within all human enterprise not under the Lordship of Christ. Worldly allurements therefore is the satanic use of these ideas through government, culture, religion, economic, mass media etc to distract God's people and oppose God and His righteous standard.

The resultant effect include raising believers whose claim to love God is blinded by selfishness, as the fire of God's true love and service which produces life that pleases God has gone off. However God's sovereignty over the whole world is undisputable as all things happen under His permissive will. He has purposely limited His supreme power and rule over the present world temporary waiting for the time determined by His wisdom. Then all the evil systems of the world and Satan will be destroyed for the rightful kingdom of our Lord and His Christ and He shall reign forever and ever (Rev 11: 15).

STUDY GUIDE:

- 1) What is worldly allurements? Differentiate between the terms WORLD and EARTH pointing out what believers' practical commitment to each should be.
- 2) From the following Scriptures, discuss the three ways this sinful world unleashes its open hostility against Christians. 1 John 2: 16; Gen 3 :6 -7; Josh 7 : 20 – 22; 2 Sam 11:2-4; James 1 : 13 – 15; James 4 : 15 – 16
- 3) Using some personal examples, explain how a Christian should live out the following Scriptural injunctions over the world.

- (i) Being strangers/ pilgrim in the world. Heb 11: 13, 1 Pet 2:11
 - (ii) Come out of the world John 15:9
 - (iii) Love not the world 1 John 2:15, Jas 4: 10, Matt 6 : 24
 - (iv) Be delivered from and overcome the world. Col 13-14, 1 John 5: 4
 - (v) Die to the world Gal 6: 14
- 4) What are the divine provisions to Christian's living in victory over the world. 1 John 5: 4, Rev 12: 11, Rom 8 :8 – 14, Gal 5 : 16 – 18

CONCLUSION:

It is only the Christian faith that is anchored on Christ that can overcome this present worldly allurements. Such faith is the type that sees eternal realities, experiences the power of God and love for Christ to such an extent that the sinful pleasures and values of this decaying world is not anything to be attracted to nor to be looked upon. May such faith be renewed in us again so that living to please God will be our daily pursuit.

MEMORY VERSE:

1 John 5: 4, "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world- our faith"

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

The pleasures of the world, and pleasing the Lord, which one has higher value in your life?

STUDY 21

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	CHALLENGES IN LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TOPIC:	ECONOMIC PRESSURE
TEXT:	HEB. 13:5-6; MATT. 6:25-34
AIM:	To let us know as children of God, that God is our main source of supply; and that even in recession time, God will never leave or forsake you.

INTRODUCTION:

It is an acknowledged truth that the world is passing through recession, Nigeria is no exception. Recession occurs after a period of surplus or boom (Gen. 41:1-8; 14-33). Recessions cause economic pressure in a society. What then is Economic Pressure? It is when an individual, society or country is facing undesirable economic hard times. It may occur when unemployment rates are higher than usual; when cost increases, when purchasing power reduces, when demand is greater than supply etc.

Economic Pressure is felt and responded to in different ways by different people or society. As a child of God, this study is to strengthen your faith and trust in God. It will make us understand that God is our All sufficiency (2 Cor. 3:5; 9:8).

STUDY GUIDE:

1. In your own words, define economic pressure as it relates to an individual. How are you affected today?
2. What are the factors (causes) responsible for economic pressure? Gen. 41:25-36; 2 Kgs 5:20-27; Prov. 14:34b; 29: 18; Eccl. 10:16; Isa 1:4.
3. From the following Scriptures, how can children of God cope or survive economic pressure. Psalm 23; 34: 8-10; 37:4; Prov. 20:13; 22:29; 28:19; 29:18; Eccl. 9:10; Prov. 21:25; Matt. 6:24-34; 7:7-8; 25:14-30; 2 Cor 5:7; Jas 2:26; Rom 1:17; Heb 10:38; Hab 2:4; Heb 13:5-6.

CONCLUSION:

As a child of God, when you choose not to live by faith, you are attracting displeasure to yourself. Without faith, it is impossible to please God. Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness (Rom 4:3). We must learn to rejoice and be glad in the Lord (SS&S 207), no matter the situation. Remember, the Earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein (Ps 21:1).

MEMORY VERSE:

Psalm 37:4 "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart".

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

How much do you trust in the Lord to take care of you?

STUDY 22

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	CHALLENGES IN LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TOPIC:	HEALTH CHALLENGES
TEXTS:	Mark 5:24-34; Matt. 15:21-28
AIM:	(i) To encourage believers to improve on their health status ii. To challenge us on how to appropriate the healing power of God when we have health challenges

INTRODUCTION:

Around the globe, Nigeria inclusive, the problems and challenges caused by ill health pose major threats and burden to individuals and the society. With the economic cost of diseases, the bite of poverty and corresponding low profile living in the country, it is apparent that the society is in dire need of effective health care system. World Health Organization information reveals that over 7.5 million children under age 5 die from malnutrition and other preventable diseases every year. Worldwide, at least 2.6 million people die each year as a result of being overweight or obese. Malaria causes some 225 million acute illnesses and 1 million people die annually.

In this study, we shall examine the implications of health challenges to believers in Christ and equip them with scriptural and divine solutions to them. We shall endeavour to see how we can improve our health through healthy living lifestyle, dietary habit and cope with the challenges of ill health.

STUDY GUIDE:

1.
 - a. Explain the term “health challenge”
 - b. What do you understand by healthy living?
2.
 - a. What are the major health challenges affecting the world today?
 - b. Is there any of the above mentioned cases that defy treatment even with advancement of medical technology?
 - c. How does this affect the believers especially in their commitment to please the Lord?

- d. What is your take on the woman with issue of blood (Mk 5:24-29); the man born blind (Jn 9:1-15); the lame man at the beautiful gate (Acts 3:1-16)
- 3. Not neglecting medical treatment, regular exercises, and good diet are a sure preventive measures, and a necessary phenomenon for attaining optimum health. Discuss.
- 4a. Are there Scriptural provisions available for believers in combating health challenges? Psalm 107:20; Rom 10:17; 3 John:2; Hab 2:4; Heb 10:25, Ex 15:26
- b. Is there anything the Church can do when a member is faced with health challenge? Matt 25:36; Mk 16:18b; Jas 5:14-15; Psalm 35:13

CONCLUSION:

Nobody is immuned from health challenges. Not all health challenges are as a result of ones sin (Job 2:1-7). Health challenge is one of the afflictions and attack of Satan to believers. We must check our lifestyle, what we eat etc. in order not to cause our health challenge by ourselves. In every situation or circumstance of our lives, we must trust God for absolute deliverance and victory. Job says “For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God”.

MEMORY VERSE:

Exodus 15:26c “For I am the Lord that healeth thee”.

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

How do you appropriate the healing power of God in time of health challenge?

STUDY 23

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	CHALLENGES IN LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TOPIC:	DELAYED EXPECTATIONS (IN MARRIAGE, CHILD BEARING, EMPLOYMENT, ADMISSION ETC)
TEXTS:	GEN. 16:1-6, PROV 23:18; 3:5-7
AIM:	To let us know that God's time is the best; and that delay is not denial.

INTRODUCTION:

Life is full of storms and challenges. Waiting for God to fulfill His promise is one of the hardest tasks a Christian can face in life. It is worthy to note that the strongest weapon a believer has, is patience. Ancient & Modern 356 will help us in this study. Stanza 7 says, "Not Mine, Not Mine, The Choice; In Things or Great or Small; Be Thou My Guide, My Strength, My Wisdom, And My All".

In as much as we have our expectations and aspirations, at times, they can be delayed. Delay can mean, a slow down or a period of time by which something is late or postponed. Habakkuk says, "For the vision is yet for an appointed time but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry". (Hab. 1:3). As you go through this study, may the Lord meet your expectations in Jesus name, Amen.

STUDY GUIDE:

- What do you understand by "Delayed Expectations – in Marriage, Child bearing, Employment, Admission etc".
 - Being practical, are you experiencing delayed expectations. If yes, explain.
- While experiencing delayed expectations, is it good to help God? (Gen. 16:1-6; 21:9-12, Ex. 32:1-10)
- What are the possible effects or implications of helping God when experiencing delayed expectations? (Gen. 16:4-6, 7-12, 15; 21:9-10; 2 Sam. 6:6-7; Prov. 3:5-7)
- Are there Scriptural remedies/blessings to delayed expectations? Hab. 1: 3; Isa. 40:29-31; Gen. 17:1-2; Gen. 18:9-14; 1 Sam. 1:20; Esther 4:16; 8:15-17; Daniel 2:18-23; Lk. 2:25-30.

CONCLUSION:

Do you lean on your own understanding? Trust in God and you will see Him fulfill your heart desires. It is true that one's expectations might be delayed, remember, we serve a living God. God hath not cast away His people which He foreknew. Look unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.

MEMORY VERSE:

Hab. 1: 3: "For the vision is yet for an appointed time but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry"

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Do you think that God has failed you?

STUDY 24

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB-THEME:	CHALLENGES IN LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TOPIC:	SATANIC ONSLAUGHTS
TEXTS:	Job 1:6-22, 2 Cor. 10: 4-6, Ephesians 6:10-17,
AIM:	To show believers that satanic onslaughts are real and how to handle them victoriously.

INTRODUCTION:

Satanic onslaughts refer to the various forms or shades of attack unleashed against believers in Christ from satanic strongholds or pit of hell (kingdom of darkness). Usually, Satan manipulates natural phenomenon or human persons against the believers, so as to subdue them to do his will. The experiences of Job from our text, underscore the fiery nature of this onslaught against believers and the Church at large.

Same scriptures also point to us the need to live courageously in firmness of faith, so as to appropriate the grace of victory in our quest to please God.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. What do you understand by the term “satanic onslaught”? How can you describe the situation of Job from our text?
2. How can a believer in particular and the church in general identify when there is satanic onslaught or when the devil is on the rampage? Job 1:6-22, Eccl. 6:10-16, John 10:10, Eph. 6:10-16,
3. Identify and discuss various types of satanic onslaught you have seen in the life of believers and the church in recent times.
4. (a) How can believers and the church quench the darting flames of satanic onslaught on them? Eph. 6:13-16, John 1:12, 2 Tim. 2:3-7, Heb. 11:32-34.
(b) What is the Scriptural assurance of victory over satanic onslaughts? Deut. 20:4, Isaiah 54:17, Rom. 8:37, 1 Cor. 15:57, 2 Cor. 2:14, Lk. 10:19, Job 5:12

CONCLUSION:

Satanic onslaughts are not fictions, they are real. Multitudes of satanic armies have been unleashed against believers and the church in these last days. No wonder George Duffield admonished believers to “stand up for Jesus, the soldiers of the cross, lift high his royal banner for we must not suffer. From victory unto victory he lead his armies till every foe his vanquished”. The above extract reflects the eternal promise of Christ to the church, as the gate of hell shall never prevail against her.

MEMORY VERSE:

Lk. 10:19 “Behold I give unto you the power to tread on serpents and the scorpions, and over all the powers of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you”.

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Have you gotten the power, to tread upon the serpents and the scorpions or are you shivering over the rainfall of satanic attacks?

SUB-THEME 5

BLESSINGS OF LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

STUDY 25

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB-THEME:	BLESSINGS OF LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TOPIC:	DIVINE PEACE
TEXT:	Proverb 16:7, Psalm 37: 37
AIM:	To teach believers what divine peace is all about, the various shades of divine peace, factors that hinder the attainment of divine peace in a believers life and the basic steps we can take to access divine peace.

INTRODUCTION:

Divine peace is the peace that comes from God; the peace that God gives to a person. Solomon was one person that experienced divine peace, unlike David his father, who has several troubles to contend with including household and external battles.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. What does the phrase “divine peace “mean to you as a believer?
2. Discuss the various aspect of divine peace outlined hereunder:-
 - a. The Peace of Reconciliation (Peace with God); this refers to the peace of salvation, where man is brought into a relationship with God through faith in Christ Jesus. Rom. 5:1, Gal. 6:12-16, Eph. 2:14-16
 - b. The Peace of Fellowship (The Peace of Conscience Void of Offence); this is the personal peace which God gives to an individual through fellowship with the Lord and through walking in concord with God with all known sins confessed and turned over to God’s grace and knowledge of all things. 1 John 1:19, 3:19-21, Gal. 5:22, 1 Tim. 1:5, Acts 24:16

- c. The Peace of Assurance (The Peace of God); this is the peace that comes from being confident of God's supply and that God is in control. This is the peace that settles our nerves, fills our mind, and allows us to relax even in the midst of uproar around us. Phil 4:6-9, Gal. 5:22, Ps. 119:165, Prov. 3:13-17.
 - d. The Peace of Harmony (Peace with Others); this is the peace of unity and oneness in the body of Christ, that is oneness of mind and purpose. God reaps a harvest of peace where there are believers sowing and watering their mind with the word of God. But Satan seeks to reap a harvest of discord through feelings of hurt, unwillingness to forgive and selfish ambition when people refuse to operate on the principles and promises of God's word. Mark 9:34, 50, Acts 2:42-47, Eph. 4:3, Phil. 2:2-4, 1 Thess. 5:13, 1 Cor. 2:6-11,
 - e. The Peace of the State (Public Peace); this is the peace which a state (nation) enjoys. That is a state or society without war or turbulence. This aspect of peace comes through good rulers or government acting in accordance with principles of God's word and through strong nucleus of godly citizens who apply and live by the truth of the scriptures. Acts 24:2, Rom. 13:1-7, 1 Tim. 2:2.
 - f. The Peace of Pronounced Blessing; this refers to the wish and prayer for spiritual and physical prosperity, security and the safety of others. This is seen in most salutations of Paul and in John 20:19, 21, 26
 - g. The Peace of Orderliness; this refers to the peace that comes from doing things decently and in order. 1 Cor. 14:40
 - h. Global Peace; this refers to a situation devoid of wars or conflicts within the circles of the world. However, global or world peace will only be attained with the return and reign of Jesus Christ and until then, there will be wars and rumors of wars. Matt. 24, Rom. 16:20, Rev. 20
3. Identify the spheres or areas in which divine peace exists in your life as a believer and the church in general.
 4. What are the factors that can hinder a believer from enjoying this divine peace? Gen. 2:16-17, Isaiah 59:2
 5. What basic steps can one take to have access to divine peace? Exo. 40:36-38, 2 Chron. 14:2-7, Psalm 119:105, Job 22:21-22, Isaiah 54:13

CONCLUSION:

To access the divine peace of God in our lives, we must accept Christ as our Lord and personal savior, remain in Him and uprightly live for Him in all circumstances.

MEMORY VERSE:

John 14:27 “Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid”.

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Do you have this peace that surpasses all human comprehension?

STUDY 26

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB-THEME:	BLESSINGS OF LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TOPIC:	GENERATIONAL PROSPERITY
TEXTS:	Genesis 26:12 – 25, Isaiah 1:19-20,
AIM:	To teach believers that true prosperity comes from God alone especially to those who live to please Him

INTRODUCTION:

Generational prosperity therefore, could be defined as a continuous, going and eternal progressive state of success and blessings in a given lineage or family. It is not a momentary or passing phenomenon. It is the characteristics of that family or lineage that God has blessed.

According to Kenneth Copeland “the world’s definition of prosperity is financial, political and military power. But true prosperity is the ability to use God’s ability and power to meet the needs of mankind- spirit, soul, body, financially and socially”

Biblical prosperity therefore includes: Spiritual prosperity (John 3: 3 – 7), Mental prosperity (Phil. 4: 6 – 7), and Physical prosperity (3John 2). We shall therefore discuss in this study, what generational posterity means, identify God’s promises of prosperity, the truth of the gospel of prosperity in relation with the scriptures and our views on contemporary prosperity preachers and the perils/blessings of prosperity.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. (a) Define the term “generational prosperity”

(b) Identify God’s promises of prosperity in the following scriptures: Gen. 2:12, 13:12, 24:1, 2Cor. 9:8, Phil.4:19, Isaiah 51:1-2, Gen. 26:12-13, Deut. 8:18, Isaiah 60:5, Luke 6:38, 8:1-3, Mark 10:17-31, Mark 8:20

2. Discuss the truth of the Gospel of prosperity in relation to these scriptures – 3 John 2, Luke 5:31, 15:27, Rev.2:9, Pro. 13:7, 2 Cor. 6:4-5, Rev.3:17
3. What is your view/take on contemporary “prosperity preachers” and their effect on the church? 2 Tim 3:1-9.
4. Where does true generational prosperity come from? Gen. 33:11, 49:24-26, Deut. 6:10-12, 2 Chron. 31:21, Psalm 1:1-3, 127:1, 128:1-2 Job 8:5-6,
5. (a) What are the dangers of ascribing our successes or prosperity to our personal effort and work? Deut. 5:20, 8:10-18, 31:20, 32:15, Jer. 5:7, Hosea 13:6, Dan. 4:30

(b) What are the perils of prosperity and why do you think many generations of people do not prosper in the church today? Deut. 6:10-12, 31:15, 20, 2 Chron. 12:1, 26:16, Prov. 1:32, 30:9, 1 King 11:4

CONCLUSION:

God desires the prosperity of His people even in all things (3 John 2). As believers we must appropriate the prosperity provisions God to our advantage. The early church did it by her extraordinary giving ability and she prospered beyond human imagination. We too can emulate the Kennedy's and the Carson's of our generation and carve out a niche for divine prosperity for our generations.

MEMORY VERSE:

Psalm 128:1-2 "Blessed is everyone that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways. For thou shall eat the labour of thine hands: happy shall thou be and it shall be well with thee".

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Do you know that the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein? Do you know that you have the grace to appropriate upon your generation the prosperity of Divinity? The Kennedy's of America did it, you too can do better.

STUDY 27

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	BLESSINGS OF LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TOPIC:	DIVINE SECURITY
TEXT:	Psalm 91, 125
AIM:	To help brethren understand the scope of divine security and how to access them.

INTRODUCTION

Security has been one of the greatest challenges of man. It is all encompassing. It is not just enough to acquire something, the sustainability of what has been acquired is much more important. Yet above all is the security of life both here on earth and in eternity with the Lord.

Security according to Online Merriam Webster dictionary is "the quality or state of being secure; such as freedom from danger, fear or anxiety. It is also something given, deposited, or pledged to make certain the fulfillment of an obligation; a surety".

Divine security is a surety God's presence affords. A guarantee that; "He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty" (Psalms 91:1).

Divine security is the function of our trust in God's presence and His promises. Hence in this study we will critically examine the essence of divine security.

STUDY GUIDE:

- 1) In your own word explain the term Divine Security?
- 2) a) From the following scriptures (Psalms 18:1-3; 91:1-4; 125:1-3; Genesis 15:1), point out the words/phrases that x-ray the dependability/guarantee of Divine security?
b) How will you know that you are divinely secured? (Genesis 28:11-18; Matthew 28:20; Act 27:23-25; Phil.1:21)
- 3) Why is divine security necessary to us? (Genesis 35:1-5; 1 Sam. 18:11-13; 23:26-28; Psalms 91:3-8; 125:1-3; John 16:33; Act 27:20-25)
- 4) What are the consequences of not being divinely secured? (Numbers 16:32; Deut.1:42-45; Matt. 7:27)

CONCLUSION

The place of divine security in the life of a believer cannot be overemphasized. It is a surety and seal of God's coverage over our lives. It is our sure guaranty in times of danger, famine, lack, war and all manner of calamities. When one is not under divine security, he will easily fall prey of the schemes and snares of the enemy.

MEMORY VERSE:

Psalms 125:2 "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people from henceforth even forever"

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Do you have the assurance and seal of divine security over your life?

STUDY 28

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME: BLESSINGS OF LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TOPIC: DIVINE PROMOTION
TEXT: DANIEL 6:1-5; PSALM 75:6-8
AIM: To help participants understand that durable promotion can only come from the Lord, the possessor of all things.

INTRODUCTION

Promotion is an integral part of man's life. No one wants to remain at a stage for too long. We long to move forward in all human endeavours. However, in most cases, it often ends as effort in futility without the Lord as indicated in Psalms 127:1 that "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain".

Divine promotion is therefore the lifting and advancement in rank, position, anointing and so on that comes neither from the east nor from the south but from the Lord God. This kind of promotion is often overwhelming and durable. Unlike promotion that comes from man, divine promotion strives even in famine, lack and in all life circumstances.

This study will therefore x-ray the criteria and biblical examples of divine promotion as well as its enemies and how to curb them.

STUDY GUIDE:

- 1) In your own word what is Divine promotion?
- 2) Identify from the following Scriptures the criteria for Divine promotion (Deut 6:5; 8:18-20, James 4:6,10; Isaiah 1:29, 2 Chron.7:13-14; Matt. 7:7; Psalm 112:1-3; 118:8,9; 1Kings 3:4; Daniel 6:1-3)
- 3) Analyse the following Biblical Examples of Divine promotion (Genesis 39:6, 21; 41:14-44; Daniel 2:46-49; 1Kings 3:5-13).
- 4) Discuss the enemies of Divine Promotion and how to overcome them; (Proverbs 16:18; 29:23; Isaiah 1:20; Proverbs 11:24; 12:24; 13:18; 14:34; 20:13; 28:19)

CONCLUSION:

Divine promotion is key to life. It comes neither from things nor from men but from the Lord, the creator and possessor of heaven and the earth. To experience divine promotion in your life, you must fear, love and trust God. You must also be a true worshipper of God.

Moreso if you must sustain divine promotion in your life, you must be humble, selfless and sacrificial. You must also eschew sin, pride, laziness, stinginess and ingratitude. Refusing to abide by these instructions will definitely result in demotion, shame, poverty, frustration and even destruction.

MEMORY VERSE:

Psalm 75:6 KJV "For promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south".

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Are you on the right track to durable divine promotion?

STUDY 29

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME: BLESSINGS OF LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
TOPIC: DELIVERANCE
TEXT: PSALM 34:19-20; DANIEL 3:14-30
AIM: To help believers understand deliverance in its entirety and how to access it

INTRODUCTION

Right from the fall of the first Adam, man has been entangled by all manner of sins and huddles in life. Man has been in perpetual bondage longing to be delivered until the second Adam - the Lord Jesus came for the liberation of mankind. He is the truth personified. In John 8:32 the Lord declared ' and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free”

Deliverance is the act of being rescued, ransomed or set free from sin, ignorance, fear, bondage, danger, evil lifestyles or demons. This can only be made possible by knowing the biblical truth and believing in the finish work of our Lord Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. This deliverance once obtained must be maintained. In this study, we will analyze the concept of deliverance and how it can be maintained.

STUDY GUIDE:

- 1) In your own word what is Deliverance?
- 2) From the following Scriptures identify what an individual need to be delivered from:
Romans 6:14-18; 8:6-8; 1 John 4:4-5; James 4:7; Luke 7:21; Psalms 34:4,17; 107:6; Daniel 3:17; 2Cor. 10:3,4; Gal. 5:1; 2 Sam. 22:2-3; 1Cor.15:55-57
- 3) From the following Scriptures describe how a believer can maintain his deliverance;
Romans 6:18; 6; 2Cor. 10:6; Eph. 6:10-18; Col. 2:6-10; 1Peter 1:15, 16; 1 Thesis. 5:17, 23; Act 24:16
- 4) What are the consequences of not maintaining your deliverance? Matt. 12:43-45; John 5:14; Heb. 10:26,27; 2 Peter 1:9

CONCLUSION:

Deliverance is the rescue or emancipation from sin, fear, danger, ignorance, oppression, bondage, curse, selfishness, carnality, Satan and death. Once delivered by the Lord, one need to abide in word of God, cultivate God's presence (fellowship) and devote himself/herself to prayers. This is because our enemy the devil is constantly prowling about looking for whom he may devour. Hence Jesus will always say go and sin no more lest the worse things happen to you.

MEMORY VERSE:

Psalms 34:19 KJV "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all".

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Are you in constant touch with the truth that sets free?

SUB-THEME 6
SPECIAL STUDIES

STUDY 31

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

SUB THEME: SPECIAL STUDIES

TOPIC: PURPOSE OF THE FIRST ADVENT

TEXTS: Luke 4: 18-19; 19: 10; John 10: 10

AIM: To help participants understand the meaning of advent, the purpose of the first advent and how to appropriate the benefits of the first advent.

INTRODUCTION:

Advent is the Church season that begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, or the nearest Sunday to November 30. It is the beginning of the Church year, and it lasts for four Sundays. According to www.gotquestion.org from an article ‘What is Advent?; the word advent itself means “arrival” or “an appearing or coming into place”. The Advent celebration is both a commemoration of Christ’s first coming and an anticipation of His second coming. Hence, Christians often speak of Christ’s “first advent” and “second coming” to earth. In this study, however, we shall be focusing on the first advent.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. In your own understanding, explain further what it means by first advent. What does this suggest about the second coming? (Acts 1: 11)
2. From the following scriptures, what is the purpose of the first advent? John 3: 16; 1 Tim. 1: 15; Luke 19: 10; Luke 4: 18-19; John 10: 10
3. In what ways can you personally appropriate the benefits of the first advent? John 3:3, 16; Acts 2: 36; Titus 2: 11-13; Phil. 2: 10-11; Gal. 5: 22-25; 1 Corinth. 15: 19
4. We have noted that one key purpose of the first advent is to give salvation to everyone who believes.
 - a. Have you received this salvation through personal faith in Christ Jesus?
 - b. If yes, briefly share some experiences and challenges
 - c. If no, could you avail yourself of this golden opportunity now?

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the first advent is no doubt, to give salvation to everyone who has expressed personal faith in Christ Jesus. And this is available to everyone by grace no matter ones racial, denominational or national cleavages. Hence, the Lord declared that He came “to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19: 10 NKJV). Appropriating the benefits of His first coming is the key to living a fulfilled life that pleases God.

MEMORY VERSE:

John 10: 10b, "I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly"

EXAMINE YOURSELF

Do you have this life overflowing in you?

STUDY 32

THEME:	LIVING TO PLEASE GOD
SUB THEME:	SPECIAL STUDIES
TOPIC:	LIGHT FOR THOSE IN DARKNESS
TEXTS:	Luke 1: 79; Isa. 60: 1-3

AIM: To help participants understand the meaning of Christmas, the reasons for the birth of Christ, and how they can personally live in the reality of the light of God.

INTRODUCTION:

Today is Christmas. All over the world, Christians commemorate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a mystery beyond human comprehension that God became incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and was made man. Besides commemorating His birth, it's also a good season to reflect on the reason for His birth, which is salvation and light for those who sit in darkness. What a Good News, that the people who were once in darkness, have now seen a great light!

STUDY GUIDE:

1. In your own word, what is Christmas, and what do you understand by the phrase, **Light for those who sit in darkness** (Luke 1: 79)?
2. From the following Scriptures, identify the reasons for the birth of Christ. Matthew 4: 15-16; Luke 1: 79; Luke 2: 10-11; John 1: 4-5; John 3: 16; Isa. 9: 6-7
3. The light is shinning for those who sit in darkness, yet many are still living in darkness, Why is it so? John 3: 3, 19; 2 Corinth. 4: 4; 1 John 5: 19
4. How can you personally come to the light and continue to live in the reality of the light? John 3: 3, 16; Phil. 2: 15-16; Col. 2: 6-7; 1 Thes. 2: 12; 4: 3-4

CONCLUSION:

By the mercy and love of God, the light of God is shinning all over the world; and those who are still sitting in darkness, have chosen to do so. But for us who by His grace, have come to the light, must endeavour to live in the reality of the light. How glorious it is to live and walk in the light of God!

MEMORY VERSE:

John 3: 19; "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil"

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

The light of God is shinning. Is it shining in your life?

STUDY 33

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

SUB THEME: SPECIAL STUDIES

TOPIC: THE EPIPHANY

- **TEXTS:** Matt. 2: 1-12; 3: 16-17; Rom. 8: 19

AIM: To help participants understand the meaning of Epiphany, the various ways God manifested His Son to the world, and how they can personally respond to the manifested Christ.

INTRODUCTION:

According to dictionary.com, Epiphany is a Christian festival, observed on January 6 every year, commemorating the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles in the persons of the Magi, the three wise men from the east. It could also mean a moment of sudden and great revelation or

realization. Hence, it's a time of spiritual awareness or realization of God's great plan of salvation for man in the person of Christ.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. In your own understanding, what is Epiphany?
2. From the following Scriptures, in what ways did God manifest and does manifest His Son as the Saviour of the world? a) Isa. 7: 14; b) Luke 2: 8-11; c) Matt. 2: 1-2 d) Matt. 3: 16-17; e) 1 John 5: 8; f) John 5: 39
3. Read Matt 2: 1-12. Taking lessons from the Magi, in what ways can you personally respond to the manifested Christ in your life? a) Matt. 2: 1-2; Heb. 11: 6 b) Matt. 2: 10; c) Matt. 2: 11a, John 4: 24; d) Matt. 2: 11b; e) Matt. 2: 12; Mark 9: 7; Heb. 1: 2
4. Read Rom. 8:19, a) briefly explain what it means, and b) in view of that, what is your confidence at that glorious moment of earnest expectation?

CONCLUSION

The Scripture says that God, who at various times and various ways, spoke to the people of old by the prophets, has in our own time, spoken to us and is still speaking to us by His Son, whom also He had expressly manifested to us. Christ, been manifested to us as the Saviour of the world, so that only those who diligently seek Him by faith, with all their hearts are said to be wise.

MEMORY VERSE:

Matt. 2: 1-2, "Wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, We have seen His star in the east and have come to worship Him"

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Wise men seek Jesus with all their hearts. Are you?

Let's Sing the Hymn A & M 79, stanza 1

As with gladness men of old

Did the guiding star behold,
As with joy they hailed its light,
Leading onward, beaming bright,
So, most gracious Lord, may we
Evermore be led to thee

STUDY 34

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

SUB THEME: SPECIAL STUDIES

TOPIC: WALKING IN THE POWER OF HIS RESURRECTION

TEXTS: Philippians 3:7-16; Matt 28:1-8

AIM: To enable participants understand the Power of Christ's Resurrection and how to walk daily in it.

INTRODUCTION:

The resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead is a major doctrine of the Bible. It is an attestation that God raised His Son from the grave after three days. The doctrine is the heart of our faith, and the uniqueness of Christianity. Though critics still doubt it, it was evidenced in the scripture that Jesus resurrected. This was shown in His appearance to the two disciples on

the way to Emmaus (Luke 24:29-33), the doubting Thomas (John 20:27), Peter and other disciples (John 21:5-7), Paul and others.

The Resurrection, was not just an ordinary event but a demonstration of God's power in making His Son who was dead to rise again the third day. In this study, we shall examine the importance of that power, and how to walk daily in it.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. From the following Scriptures what is the evidence that Christ actually rose from the dead? (Ps 16:10, 1 Corinth 15:3-8, John 20:1-9, 20-27, Luke 24:29-33)
2. By what power was Christ raised? Acts 2:24, John 17:18, Rom 8:11
3. In the light of the above, what is the purpose of the resurrection? Luke 24:45-46, 1 Corth 15:12-19, 20-23 Rom 1:4, Acts 17:31.
4. In the light of question 3 above
 - (a) How can we experience the power? (John 1:12, Phil. 3: 10, Heb 4:12, 1 Corinth 1:4-5, Eph 1:15-20)
 - (b) Explain how we can walk victoriously in that power today (Gal 5:16, 18, Rom 6:1-8, Phil 3:10-12).

CONCLUSION:

There is no doubt that Jesus Christ rose from the dead after three (3) days, through the power of the Holy Spirit. You need to experience that same power through conversion, daily dyeing to sin and self, and totally submitting to the leading of the Holy Spirit.

MEMORY VERSE:

Philippians 3:10, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable into his death".

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Are you walking in the power of his resurrection?

STUDY 35

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

SUB THEME: SPECIAL STUDIES

TOPIC: ASCENSION OF CHRIST

TEXTS: Acts 1:9-11, Luke 24:50-51 Mark16:19

AIM: To help participants understand the importance of Christ' Ascension to our Christian Faith and how to prepare for the ascension of believers at His second coming.

INTRODUCTION:

“Ascension” literally means going up from a lower place to a higher place. Jesus ascended from earth to heaven forty days after His resurrection. It was necessary to return back to His Father after accomplishing His mission on earth. As the power of the grave could not hold Him back, so the gravitational forces could not pull Him down. The same power that raised Him

also lifted Him to the sky to the presence of God. What are the biblical proofs of His ascension, and the blessing the church derives from it? These and more we will discover in this study

STUDY GUIDE:

1. What do you understand by the term Ascension of Christ? Why must Christ ascend to heaven after His resurrection John 16:17, Rom 8:34, John 14:2, Heb 4:14-16, Eph 4:8-13.
2. The Ascension was a commissioning event by Jesus. Discuss Acts 11:3-9, Matt 16:15-20
3. What were the Biblical proofs about the ascension of Jesus Christ? (Ps 68:18, Ps 24:7 John 6:62, John 20:17)
4. In what ways does the second coming of Jesus Christ relate to His ascension? Acts 1:11, 3:20-21
5. “Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thess 4:17) Identify and discuss ways to prepare ourselves for this glorious event- the ascension of believers (Heb 12: 14, Heb10:19-25).

CONCLUSION:

The ascension is a major biblical doctrine, which describes the returning back into the presence of God by Jesus Christ after His earthly mission. It was predicted by the Old Testament prophets, talked by Jesus Himself and experienced by the disciples. Its importance hinges on the coming of the Holy Spirit and His gifts; the priestly intercessory ministry of Jesus Christ for the believers; and as a pledge for His second coming to ascend with the believers to heaven. We therefore must appreciate His prayers for us at the altar in heaven, and prepare ourselves for His second coming.

MEMORY VERSE:

Ps 68:18, “Thou has ascended on high, thou has led captivity captive; thou hast relieved gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them”.

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

How ready are you for the ascension of believers?

STUDY 36

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

SUB THEME: SPECIAL STUDIES

TOPIC: PENTECOST

TEXT: Acts 2:1 – 4, 14 – 21, Acts 1:8

AIM: To understand the purpose of Pentecost and how to avail ourselves of its benefits

INTRODUCTION:

The Pentecost also called the Whit Sunday is derived from the Greek name “Pentecost” which means fiftieth. It is celebrated on the 7th Sunday after Easter or 50 days after Easter. The event is to mark the descent of the Holy Spirit on the disciples as promised by Jesus before His ascension. Originally, it used to be a day of celebration of wheat harvest in the Old Testament

which requires all Jews wherever they reside to return home for such celebration. In this study, we shall learn about the importance of Pentecost to the church of Jesus Christ.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. What do you understand by the concept, Pentecost? What was the promise of Jesus before His ascension in Acts 1:5, 8, Luke 24:49 and how was it fulfilled? (Acts 1:1-4).
2. Why was it necessary for the Holy Spirit to come upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:8, John 14:26, 16:7-14, 15:26-27, Rom. 8:13-17).
3. Identify the gifts of the Holy Spirit in these passages (1 Corinth 12:4 – 10; 28-31, Rom. 12:3-8; Eph 4:11-12, 1 Peter 4:10-11). Do you possess any of these gifts and are using them?
4. Describe the spiritual state of the disciples before and after the day of Pentecost (Acts 1:12-14; 2:1-4, 42-47, Acts 5:23-24, 31-37). Are the present day Christians spiritually prepared as they were?
5. What factors are responsible for poor evidence of the power of the Holy Spirit in our churches today?

CONCLUSION:

Jesus made a promise to His disciples that He would send the comforter, the Holy Spirit to help them in life and Ministry. That was fulfilled fifty days after His resurrection - on the day of Pentecost. It was necessary for the Holy Spirit to come, because through His power and gifts, believers will be spiritually equipped, and the Kingdom of God will increase in number and spiritual strength. We must therefore open our hearts to receive Him, so that the acts of the Holy Spirit will manifest in our time.

MEMORY VERSE:

Acts 1:8, "But you shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost in come upon you and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Have you received the Holy Ghost since you believed?

STUDY 37

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

SUB THEME: SPECIAL STUDIES

TOPIC: ENGAGING THE UNITY OF THE TRINITY

TEXT:

STUDY 38

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

SUB THEME: SPECIAL STUDIES

TOPIC: THE TRUE CHRISTIAN MOTHER

TEXT: Rom.16:1-2, Pr.31:10-31

AIM: To enable participants know who a true mother is and God's expectation on them

INTRODUCTION:

In this uncertain hour when the very foundation of the Christian home seems to be yielding to the battering rams of unbelief, selfishness and immorality, there is a great need to consider the subject of motherhood. There can be no great men and women without great mothers. Abraham Lincoln said, '**all that I am or hope to be I owe to my angel mother**'. Living for Christ in the home is the acid test for any Christian. It is far easier to live an excellent life among your

friends than it is to live for Christ in the home. Your own family circle knows whether Christ lives in you and through you.

Our nation is in desperate need of consecrated Christian mothers. If we have more Christian mothers, we would have less delinquency, immorality, godliness and fewer broken homes. Every mother owes it to her children to accept Christ as her personal savior so that she can be the influence for good in the lives of those whom Christ has graciously given to her. The influence of a mother upon the lives of her children in her home cannot be measured. They know and absorb her example and attitudes when it comes to questions of honesty, life habits, kindness and hard work.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. Who is a true Christian mother?
2. Why is it necessary to have true Christian mothers? Discuss Rom.16:1-2, Pr.31:2-6, 10-31
3. From the following Scriptures, what is God's expectation on Christian mothers?
 - a. Availability – Morning, noon and night Deut.6:6-7
 - b. Involvement – Interacting, discussing, thinking and processing life together Eph.6:4
 - c. Helping a child to develop skills, discover his or her strength Rom.12:3-8, Prov.22:6
 - d. Discipline – Teaching the fear of the Lord, drawing the line consistently, lovingly and firmly Eph.13:24, 19:18, 22:15, 23:13-14
 - e. Teaching the scripture and biblical world view Ps 78:5-6, Deut.4:10, Eph.6:4
 - f. Nurture – Providing an environment for constant verbal support, freedom to fail, acceptance, affection, unconditional love Titus 2:4, 2Tim 1:7, Eph.4:29-32, Eph.5:1-2, Gal.5:22, 1Pet.3:8-9
 - g. Modeling Integrity – living what you say, being a model from which a child will learn. Deut.4:9, 15, 23, Prov.10:9, 11:3, Ps 37:18, 37
4. Relate reasons which account for the scarcity of true Christian mothers in our society today?
5. How can a godly mother live out her ministry in an ungodly world. Titus 2:5, Pr.31:30-31

CONCLUSION:

The Bible never states that everyone should be a mother however it does say that those whom the Lord has blessed to be mothers should take it seriously. Mothers have a unique and crucial role in the family. Motherhood is not a chore just as a mother bears a child during pregnancy and just as a mother feeds a child during infancy so mothers play an ongoing role in the life of

their children whether they are infants, teenagers or adults with children of their own. While the roles of motherhood must change and develop, the love, care, nurture and encouragement of a mother should never cease.

MEMORY VERSE:

Pov. 31:10, “Who can find a virtuous wife? For her worth is far above rubies”

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

What is your worth as a true Christian mother?

STUDY 39

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

SUB THEME: SPECIAL STUDIES

TOPIC: REAL MEN OF EXPLOITS

TEXT: Daniel 11:31-32; 33-35

AIMS:

1. to examine the meaning of the term ‘exploits’ as used in the text;
2. to identify who the real men of exploits are with some biblical and contemporary examples;
3. to explore the prize of doing exploits for God and challenge us to become real men of exploits today.

INTRODUCTION:

So many times, we make the mistake of interpreting some of the words in the bible with the mind-set of our modern language with the consequence that we are taken far away from the intended meaning. The text we are considering here is a clear example of this textual injustice. It is a prophecy concerning a future perilous time that was to severely test the faith of the chosen nation.

Historically, this event is said to have already been fulfilled when **Antiochus Epiphany** offered pig upon the altar in the holy Temple, thereby desecrating it, an incident that led in part to what is commonly called the Maccabean Revolt led by Judas Maccabee who, together with his revolt company should be more appropriately the ‘men of exploits’ in the text. They are the real men of exploits.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. What do you understand by the term exploit, and from the key texts who can be described as ‘real men of exploits’?
2. From the following texts, identify some men of exploits in the Bible; explain what they did and implications for faith. Num. 25:6-13; 1 Sam.17:22-26; 48-53; 2 Sam.23:8-21
3. Drawing from the above, cite some modern day examples of ‘real men of exploits’ in today’s church?
4. What are some of the likely prize of being a real man of exploits for God? Daniel 3:14-23; 6:10-16; Acts 6:8-15; 7:54-59; Neh.2:10
5. In the light of the correct understanding of the key text, and Jude 1-3, what is the challenge before the ‘real men’ of today’s Church?

CONCLUSION:

Let’s wake up. We cannot be sleeping, while the devil is busy sowing tares in our field! Let all ‘real men’ become defenders of the faith. Let’s all say no to fake Christianity and resolve to firmly resist deceptive gospel in all its varied forms no matter what it costs. Let our fathers rise and face up to the challenge of defending our homes, families and the church against falsehood. Let our men stand up and bravely defend the church against the scourge of the seduction of Christianity.

MEMORY VERSE:

Dan. 11: 32b, “The people who know their God shall be strong and carry out great exploits”

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Are you truly a ‘real man of exploit’?

STUDY 40

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

SUB THEME: SPECIAL STUDIES

TOPIC: PENTECOST

TOPIC: EXPLORING THE LAWS OF SEEDTIME AND HARVEST

TEXT: Genesis 8:20-22

AIM: To identify the different seasons of life mentioned in the key text with a view to helping us understanding the underlying principles and how they apply to our lives as God’s people

INTRODUCTION:

Generally, life is a cycle of seasons. The Scripture listed six seasons as follows: ‘seed’ time (a time for seed planting); ‘Harvest’ time, a time for reaping and rewards. This is followed by ‘winter’ (cold/dry) season, when nothing seems to be working. Then there is ‘summer’ (heat)

season, a time of embrace when one feels generally relaxed and at ease. Then we also have 'Night' season, a time to dream, when no one appears to notice us; and finally, there is the 'Day' season, when one begins to easily get noticed. However, the focus of this study is on the principles of seed time and harvest.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. Identify the six different phases in the seasonal cycle as mentioned in Gen.8:22
2. What are the characteristics of each of these six seasons as we know them in our world, that is, physically; and how may we apply them in our spiritual walk?
3. What specific principles govern seedtime and harvest? Gen. 8:20-22; Exo.23:16 (cf. 2 Thes.3:10); Psalm 126:5; Mal. 1:6-8, 14; Luke 6:38; 2 Cor. 8:5; 9:6; Gal.6:7.
4. "Anyone who has not sown has no right to expect any form of harvest, just as anyone who has sown should expect to harvest". Discuss.
5. In the light of the above, would you say God has any right to expect bountiful harvest from us individually and collectively? If yes, why is it that many do not see any need to sow or invest meaningfully into God's work?

CONCLUSION:

It should never be forgotten that certain principles govern seed time and harvest, that is, sowing and harvesting or reaping. What we sow is what we reap. Therefore, we can conclude that God Almighty has every right to expect bountiful harvest from all of us because He has invested so much in our lives. Our yearly harvest time can be an opportunity to express to Him just how much we are grateful.

MEMORY VERSE:

Gen.8:22, "While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease"

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

If you have not sown, what right do you have to expect to harvest?

STUDY 41

THEME: LIVING TO PLEASE GOD

SUB THEME: SPECIAL STUDIES

TOPIC: GENUINE CHRISTIAN REVIVAL

TEXT: Acts 2

AIM: To examine the meaning of revival, explore some elements and outcomes of genuine revival, and challenge us to a lifestyle that can usher in revival in the Church.

INTRODUCTION:

Revival has been described as an awakening, a renewal, God's special time of blessing in overwhelming reality. At revival, one is left with a profound realization of God's awesomeness, greatness, power, holiness and worthiness. Correspondingly, one is also gripped with a sense of shame, sinfulness and unworthiness; just as more is accomplished in a relatively short time that

one could not dream of accomplishing in perhaps several years of strenuous labour and ministry. Genuine revival is the focus of this study.

STUDY GUIDE:

1. Read 2 Kings 23:1-25; Neh.8:5-9; Eze.37:1-14; Acts 2:1-13; 14-47:
 - a. What genuine Christian revival?
 - b. Identify the agent of all genuine revival (see also Ps.85:6; Habakkuk 3:2)
 - c. Identify the instrument for provoking genuine revival
 - d. Discuss at least five elements of genuine revival
 - e. explain the role of leaders of the Church in promoting genuine revival
2. Identify and explain the results or outcome of genuine revival in the life of the Church from the texts above? See also Acts 4:32-37;5:7; 19:17-20
3. From the above, what kind of lifestyle, habit or practical actions can bring genuine revival in the Church? Consider especially 2 Kings 23:4-8, 15, 21; Ezra 9:1—6; 10:1-6;10-17; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Cor.5:6-7
4. In the light of these truths, what are some of the issues the Church must deal with in order to cultivate an enabling environment for genuine revival to come and or thrive?

CONCLUSION:

Revival Days are abnormal days in the life of the Church. They are supernormal, supernatural and profound. They are days in the life of the Church when God so manifests His presence that one is left in no doubt as to how real it is. But the Holy Spirit is the Agent acting upon the Word of God which is the principal instrument. However, leaders of the church must be alive to their responsibilities.

MEMORY VERSE:

Hab.3:2, “O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known, in wrath remember mercy”

EXAMINE YOURSELF:

Are you a promoter or killer of revival? Think about it!

