

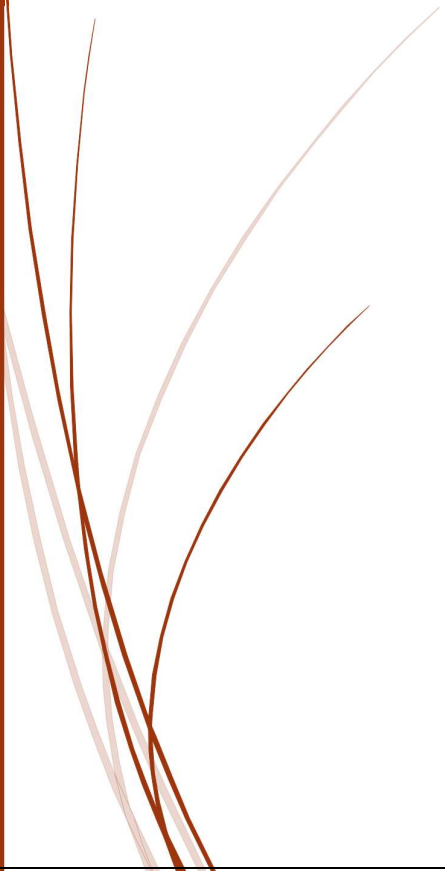
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# Five Follow-up Lessons for New Believers

Adapted from the Cru website:  
<https://www.cru.org/us/en/train-and-grow/help-others-grow/discipleship/basic-follow-up-classic-version.html>



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DISCIPLE MAKING MINISTRIES



## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

### A committed Christian is...

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## **Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers**

### **Unit 1: Your New Life in Christ**

Knowing Jesus Christ is the most exciting relationship you can have. It is the beginning of a life of tremendous adventure with an all-loving, all-powerful God.

The *Would You Like to Know God Personally* booklet concisely explains all a person needs to know to begin a new life in Christ. A brief review of this will help us as we look at some principles of growing in your relationship with Christ:

**PRINCIPLE 1:** God loves you and created you to know Him personally.

**PRINCIPLE 2:** Man is sinful and separated from God, so we cannot know Him personally or experience His love.

**PRINCIPLE 3:** Jesus Christ is God's only provision for man's sin. Through Him alone we can know God personally and experience God's love.

**PRINCIPLE 4:** We must individually receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord; then we can know God personally and experience His love.

**KEY QUESTION:** How can a person who has received Christ know with certainty that he will spend eternity with God?

You can *know* that you have a secure personal relationship with God.

### **CONFIDENCE IN YOUR NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST**

You can be confident in your new relationship with Christ because you have been completely forgiven and accepted by God. Only Christ's death on the cross is sufficient to provide this proper relationship with God.

**READ Ephesians 2:8-9.** Three important words in these verses explain the basis of our acceptance before God.

**GRACE:** *Unmerited favor, an underserved gift*

Q. What role did grace play in establishing your relationship with God?

A. *You didn't deserve this relationship nor did you earn it by any good works. Rather it is a free gift from God that you accepted when you received Christ.*

**SAVED:** *Rescued, spared from disaster*

Q. What do you think this verse means by saying you are saved? From what are you rescued?

A. *Romans 6:23 says that the final result of sin is death. When you received Christ's death on the cross as a payment for your sins, you were rescued from eternal condemnation ... from having to pay the penalty for your own sin.*

## **Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers**

*FAITH: Belief, trust, commitment of mind, attitude, action*

Q. What does faith have to do with receiving Christ?

A. *Simply put, faith is believing or trusting God and His Word. When you received Christ, you put your trust in Christ and His death for your sin. Instead of believing in your own ability to earn God's favor, you now trust that you have been reconciled to God through what Christ has done for you.*

**KEY QUESTION:** Suppose you were standing before God and He asked you, "Why should I let you into heaven?" What would you say?

### **UNDERSTANDING TRUTHS ABOUT YOUR NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST**

There are many exciting things that are true in your new relationship with Christ. Understanding these truths will help you build a firm foundation on which to grow.

*Christ forgave your sin.*

**Read Colossians 1:13-14.** When you trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of your sin, all your sins were forgiven ... past, present, and future.

*What difference do you think it makes to know your sin is forgiven?*

*Christ made you a child of God.*

**READ John 1:12.** When you received Christ, you began a loving relationship with God. Christ came into your life and He will never leave you.

*Christ came into your life and He will never leave you.*

**Read Hebrews 13:5.**

*Under what circumstances might Christ leave you?*

*According to this, how many times it is necessary to receive Christ?*

*Christ gave you a new life.*

**READ 2 Corinthians 5:17.** When you trusted Christ to be your Savior and Lord, you began a new spiritual life. God will increasingly produce many new qualities in you as you grow in Him.

*Christ gave you eternal life.*

**Read 1 John 5:11-13.**

*On what is eternal life based? \_\_\_\_\_*

*When does a person's eternal life begin? When will it end? \_\_\_\_\_*

## **Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers**

**KEY QUESTION:** If you were to die tonight, how sure are you that you would spend eternity with God?

0.....25.....50.....75.....100%

These wonderful benefits are based totally on Jesus Christ. None of them can be earned. You received them the moment you placed your faith in Christ.

Are any of these truths especially meaningful to you right now? If so, why?

### **DEALING WITH DOUBT IN YOUR NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST**

Even though feelings are important, your relationship with Christ is based on facts, not on feelings that can change daily.

Doubt, questions, and varying emotions are common parts of everyone's life, but they are very unreliable gauges of anyone's relationship with Christ. The Christian lives by faith in the trustworthiness of God and His Word.

This train diagram illustrates the relationship between fact (God and His Word), faith (your trust in God and His Word), and feeling.



The train will run with or without the caboose, however, it would be useless to attempt to pull the train by the caboose. In the same way, Christians do not depend on feelings. Place your faith in the trustworthiness of God and His Word. The more you learn of His Word, the more you will be able to answer any doubts with solid facts. Your feelings will begin to respond to the truth of God's Word and not your circumstances.

### **GROWING IN YOUR NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST**

*Since you have ...*

... trusted in Christ's payment for your sin,  
... understood the basis of your new relationship with God, and  
... looked at five truths about your new relationship with God,

*... you can be confident in your new relationship with Christ.*

## **Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers**

Throughout this week, begin to make these truths part of your life as you grow in Christ:

- *You are forgiven:* Colossians 1:13-14; 2:13
- *You are a child of God:* John 1:12; Romans 8:15; 1 John 3:1
- *You are indwelt by Christ:* Revelation 3:20; Galatians 2:20
- *You have a new life:* 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:4, 5
- *You have eternal life:* 1 John 5:11-13; John 5:24; 10:27-29

Take one truth each day and reflect on it. Read the verses listed by each truth. Thank God that this is now true of you.

Knowing these essential truths is critical to our growth in Christ. What happens when we struggle and fall short in our efforts to live the Christian life?

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

### Unit 2: Your New Life in God's Love

**Remember:** Your *relationship* with God is secure because, through Christ, you are *forgiven* and *accepted* by God.

In addition to providing this secure *relationship*, God also desires for you to walk closely with Him and communicate with Him throughout each day. This is called *fellowship*.

When we choose to sin, our *relationship* (our position as God's children) is not affected, but our *fellowship* is interrupted.

Father-child example: Your relationship with your earthly father is permanent. No matter what you do, you will always be his child. But suppose you rebelled against your father and angrily left home in spite of his efforts to reconcile your grievances.

*Would you still be your father's child?* \_\_\_\_\_

*What would happen to your fellowship?* \_\_\_\_\_

Consider these differences between your *relationship* and *fellowship* with God:

#### *Relationship with God:*

- Began when you received Christ (John 1:12)
- Is everlasting (1 Peter 1:3-4)
- Maintained by God (John 10:27-29)
- Never changes (Hebrews 13:5)

#### *Fellowship with God:*

- Began when you received Christ (Colossians 2:6)
- Can be hindered (Psalm 32:3-5)
- Maintained in part by us (1 John 1:9)
- Changes when we sin (Psalm 66:18)

*How can we consistently experience fellowship with God?* \_\_\_\_\_

### THE NEED FOR GOD'S LOVE AND FORGIVENESS

Sin is a barrier for both Christians and non-Christians. Sin keeps us all from experiencing God's love. But many people are confused by what sin is and what it is not.

**What is sin?** It's more than cheating, lying, immoral behavior, etc. These actions are only the results of an attitude of sin. A simple definition of sin is: doing what we want instead of what God wants – both in actions and attitudes.

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

What are the results of sin? \_\_\_\_\_

For non-Christians, sin prohibits a *relationship* with God.

### **Read Romans 3:23.**

What about unbelievers who try to live good, moral lives? \_\_\_\_\_

Are they separated from God? \_\_\_\_\_

Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

For Christians, sin inhibits *fellowship* with God.

### **Read 1 John 1:6-8.**

**SUMMARY:** All of us sin. Therefore, you and I both need to experience God's forgiveness for our attitudes and actions.

## THE BASIS FOR GOD'S LOVE AND FORGIVENESS

Christ's death is the basis for forgiveness to bring us into a proper **relationship** with God.

### **Read 1 Peter 3:18.**

Christ's death is also the basis for forgiveness in our daily **fellowship** with God.

### **Read Colossians 2:13-14.**

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*"You were dead in sin and your sinful desires were not yet cut away. Then He gave you a share in the very life of Christ, for He forgave all your sin, and blotted out the charges proved against you, the list of His commandments which you had not obeyed. He took this list of sin and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ's cross" (Living Bible).*

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In the day when this was written, "list of sins" meant an itemized bond nailed to the prison cell door. It listed every crime for which the prisoner had been convicted. When the sentence was served or restitution paid, the authorities removed the list and wrote "paid in full." The prisoner used this as proof that he could never be tried for those crimes again. The believer who trusts Christ's payment for sin can never be tried again. You have full pardon from God.

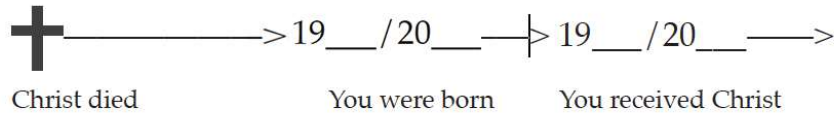
What has God done with your sin? \_\_\_\_\_

How many of your sins did Christ die for? \_\_\_\_\_

When Christ died on the cross for you, how many of your sins were in the future? \_\_\_\_\_



## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers



What difference will it make in your daily life to know you are totally forgiven? \_\_\_\_\_

### YOU CAN EXPERIENCE GOD'S LOVE AND FORGIVENESS EVERY DAY

Even though you are totally forgiven, you still need to deal with your sins on a day-to-day basis in order to experience continuing fellowship with God.

Put yourself in the father-child illustration.

What would you do to restore fellowship with your father? \_\_\_\_\_

Let's look at how you restore your fellowship with God.

#### **Read 1 John 1:9.**

#### *Confession - agreeing with God about sin.*

When God brings to your attention the fact that something you have done is sin, confess it. This confession involves at least three factors:

1. Agree with God that you have sinned.
2. Agree that God has already forgiven you.
3. Trust God to change your attitudes and actions toward Him and away from your sin.

By turning back to God and away from your sin, you will experience His love and forgiveness provided by Christ's death on the cross. Instead of guilt, condemnation, and punishment, your fellowship with God will be restored.

#### *Confession - putting it into practice.*

1. Ask God to reveal sin in your life.
2. List these on a piece of paper. Be completely honest as this is just between you and God.
3. After completing your list, write over it the promise of 1 John 1:9.
4. Thank God for the forgiveness He has provided for you through what Christ did on the cross.
5. Tear up the list and throw it away.

How often do you need to confess your sins to God? \_\_\_\_\_

#### *Confession - experiencing the results.*

What should you do if you still feel guilty after you have confessed your sins? \_\_\_\_\_

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

Read Psalms 32:5; 103:12; Isaiah 43:25.

- What do these passages say about guilt and forgiveness? \_\_\_\_\_
- How would your life be affected by applying these truths? \_\_\_\_\_
- In light of what we have looked at concerning guilt and forgiveness, how would you complete this statement?

“When I have confessed all my sins, I \_\_\_\_\_.”

### GROWING IN GOD’S LOVE AND FORGIVENESS

Take some time before you go to bed tonight to apply the things you have learned about God’s love and forgiveness. Make a “sin/forgiveness” list.

Try to spend 15 minutes or so each day alone with God in Bible reading and prayer. Here are some suggestions.

1. Read the story of the young man who ran away from his father and wasted his inheritance. The story was told by Jesus and is found in Luke 15:11-32.

*What does the story illustrate about our relationship with God, our forgiveness, and our fellowship with Him?* \_\_\_\_\_

2. Read Galatians 5:16-23. Notice the differences that will take place as you allow God to work in your life. As you become aware of an area of your life that displeases God, deal with it according to 1 John 1:9 and enjoy your fellowship with God.

3. Read Psalm 32. *What was David’s experience with confession in the psalm? How did he feel before he confessed his sin? How did he feel after dealing with his sin?* \_\_\_\_\_

Understanding God’s great love and forgiveness allows Christians to enjoy a growing fellowship with Him. *But why are many Christians not experiencing the power God has made available to live the Christian life?* \_\_\_\_\_

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

### Unit 3: Your New Life in the Spirit

**Remember:** In order to experience God's love and forgiveness you must confess your sin as you become aware of it, and turn again to your heavenly Father.

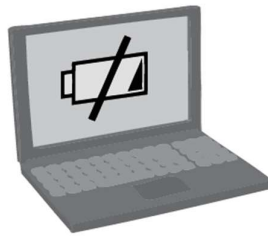
An amazing transformation has begun to take place since you received Christ as your Lord and Savior.

You are now beginning to live the Christian life, which isn't a standard of performance nor a code of ethics, but a vital, personal relationship with a loving God.

#### **Read John 7:37-39.**

Unfortunately, not every believer experiences the power to live his life as God intended.

Just as our relationship with God is totally dependent on what God has done through Jesus Christ, so the power to live a dynamic Christian life also comes totally from God.



This computer has all the potential to do what it was created to do, but it has no power of its own.

Similarly, through your new identity in Christ, you have all the potential you need to live as a new creation in Christ. But you must continually draw from the proper source of power.

### **THE HOLY SPIRIT IS THE POWER SOURCE OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE**

*Who is He?* \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Read 2 Corinthians 3:17-18.**

*Why did He come?* \_\_\_\_\_

1. To glorify Christ (John 16:14)
2. To lead you into all truth (John 16:13)
3. To dwell in you (Romans 8:9)
4. To convict the world of sin and justice (John 16:8)

*What part does the Holy Spirit play in your relationship with God?* \_\_\_\_\_

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

### Read Romans 8:14-16.

- What does He desire to produce in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read Galatians 5:22-23.

- How do you think these qualities of God's character (fruit of the Spirit) will grow in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read John 15:4-5.

- What does Jesus say we are to do in order to see this fruit produced in us? \_\_\_\_\_
- Which of these qualities would you most like God to begin developing within you? \_\_\_\_\_
- What does He desire to equip you to do? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read Acts 1:8.

- What is a witness? \_\_\_\_\_
- What does it mean to you to be a witness for Christ? \_\_\_\_\_
- Why do you think the Holy Spirit's power is needed to be a witness? \_\_\_\_\_



### Summary:

The degree to which these traits are manifested in one's life depends upon the extent to which the Christian trusts the Lord with every detail of his life, and upon his maturity in Christ.

One who is only beginning to understand the ministry of the Holy Spirit should not be discouraged if he is not as fruitful as more mature Christians who have known and experienced this truth for a longer period.

### **MANY CHRISTIANS ARE NOT EXPERIENCING THE HOLY SPIRIT'S POWER**

You became a Christian through the Holy Spirit's work (John 3:1-8).

From that moment you have been indwelt by the Spirit (John 14:16-17).

Though all Christians are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, not all Christians are filled with (directed and empowered by) the Holy Spirit.

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

The Bible tells us there are three kinds of people:

### **Natural.**

(1 Corinthians 2:14)  
Those who have not trusted Christ's death to pay for their sins and thus the Holy Spirit does not indwell their lives.



### **Self-Directed**

S—Self is in control  
+— Christ does not indwell the unbeliever

### **Carnal.**

(1 Corinthians 3:1, 2)  
Those who have trusted Christ to pay for their sins, but who are trusting their own efforts to live the Christian life (*Carnal* refers to "flesh" as opposed to Spirit."). When you trusted in Christ for the forgiveness of your sin, all your sins were forgiven... past, present, and future.



### **Self-Directed**

S—Self is still in control  
+— Christ indwells the believer, but is not allowed to direct the life

### **Spiritual.**

(1 Corinthians 2:15)  
Those who have trusted Christ as their Savior and are trusting in the power of the Holy Spirit to live the Christian life.



### **Christ-Directed**

+— Christ has been placed in control  
S— Self is yielding to Christ's direction

The Spirit-filled life is the Christ-directed life by which Christ lives His life in and through you in the power of the Holy Spirit.

## YOU CAN BE FILLED WITH (DIRECTED AND EMPOWERED BY) THE HOLY SPIRIT

You can be filled with the Holy Spirit only by faith, by trusting God to produce in you the fruitful life He promised.

You must prepare your heart in three ways.

1. **Desire** sincerely to be filled (Matthew 5:6).

*Why do you think it is important to God that you desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_*

*How would you express your level of desire to be directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_*

2. **Confess** all known sin (1 John 1:9; Psalms 66:18).

*Why do you think it is important to confess all known sin in order to be filled with the Spirit? \_\_\_\_\_*

3. **Yield** your total life to Christ (Romans 12:1-2). (Yielding involves your willingness to obey God in anything He has shown you to do.)

*What do you think yielding every area of your life to Christ would involve? \_\_\_\_\_*

## **Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers**

*You must respond by faith, trusting the Holy Spirit to empower your life for Christ.*

God has *commanded* you to be filled with His Spirit (Ephesians 5:18).

God has *promised* to answer all your requests which are in accord with His will (1 John 5:14-15).

You can be filled with the Holy Spirit by faith alone. This prayer is a good way to express that faith:

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*“Dear Father, I acknowledge that I have sinned against You. I thank You that You have forgiven my sins through Christ’s death on the cross. I now invite Christ to take His place on the throne of my life. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit as You commanded me to be filled, and as You promised that You would do if I asked in faith. I pray this in the name of Jesus. As an expression of my faith, I now thank You for directing my life and filling me with the Holy Spirit.”*

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How accurately does this prayer reflect the desire of your heart? \_\_\_\_\_

If this is the desire of your heart, you can pray this prayer and be filled with the Holy Spirit.

### **YOU CAN BE CONTINUALLY EMPOWERED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT (SPIRITUAL BREATHING)**

This week, if you find that you have retaken control of your life through sin – any definite act of disobedience – simply breathe spiritually (exhale the impure and inhale the pure). This important exercise will enable you to continue to experience Christ’s loving control in your life.

Exhale-Confess your sin (1 John 1:9; Hebrews 10:1-25).

*What are the three factors involved in confession?*

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

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

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

*Inhale-Yield control of your life to Christ* (Romans 12:1-2).

*Claim*, by faith, the fullness of the Spirit in your life (Ephesians 5:18).

*Trust* that He now directs and empowers you (1 John 5:14-15).

Continue to spend 15 minutes alone each day in Bible reading and prayer.

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

### Unit 4: Growing in Your New Life

**Remember:** The Holy Spirit can empower you to live a Christ-directed life. As you continue to breathe spiritually (exhale – confess your sin; inhale – yield control to Christ), you will experience a deepening fellowship with God enabling you to grow in Christian maturity ...

Maturity takes time – there are no shortcuts.



IT'S A LIFELONG PROCESS.

#### WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO GROW IN CHRIST?

It means to increase in knowledge of Christ and love for Him.

##### **Read Philippians 3:7-10.**

- *Why did Paul count all things as loss? \_\_\_\_\_*

##### **Read Matthew 22:37-38.**

- *There are more than 600 commands in the Old Testament. Why do you think Jesus singled this one out? \_\_\_\_\_*
- *How would loving God with all your heart, soul, and mind affect your life? \_\_\_\_\_*

Just as it is a natural process for a child to grow in a loving relationship with a parent, so it is also natural for you to grow in your love relationship with God.

#### HOW CAN YOU GROW IN CHRIST?

If you met a guy or girl whom you enjoyed, what would you do to get to know that person better?

Communication is vital to any relationship, including your relationship with Christ. Since communication must be a two-way street, you need to let Him speak to you and you need to speak to Him.

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

*Four principles of communication that will help you grow in your relationship with Christ as you walk in the power of the Holy Spirit.*



*1. God communicates with you through the Bible, revealing His character and His will.*

**Read 2 Timothy 3:16-17.**

- *How would you define each benefit described? \_\_\_\_\_*
- *Which of those uses of the Bible would be most helpful to you right now? \_\_\_\_\_*
- *How would you evaluate the helpfulness to your life of the Bible reading you have done so far? \_\_\_\_\_*

*2. You communicate with God through prayer, sharing your thoughts, your needs, and your desires to do His will.*

**Read Philippians 4:6-7.**

Pray about everything.

Pray specifically – so you can see God answer specifically.

Pray honestly – share your needs and desires to do His will (1 John 5:14-15).

- *How can you know if what you are praying for is really something within God's will? \_\_\_\_\_*

*3. You communicate with Christians (fellowship); gaining from their experience and helping them through yours.*



Just as logs burn more brightly when placed together, so Christians need each other for warmth and encouragement.



## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

### Read Hebrews 10:24-25.

- Why is it important to spend time with other Christians? \_\_\_\_\_
- How important would this be in your own life now? \_\_\_\_\_
- Where could you find supportive Christian fellowship on a consistent basis? \_\_\_\_\_

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*The Greek word for fellowship, koinonia, means “sharing in common.” We desperately need to share our Christian experience with others who love God and walk with Him, and likewise allow them to share with us. The church where we can meet other Christians and hear God’s Word is God’s appointed place for Christians to meet. Bible studies and meetings on campus are also extremely helpful. - Dr. Bill Bright*

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### 4. You communicate with non-Christians (witnessing); sharing your relationship with Christ.

#### Read 1 Peter 3:15.

- What would motivate you to tell another person about Christ? \_\_\_\_\_

*SUMMARY: Read 1 Corinthians 3:6-7. God is the source of your growth. You cannot develop spiritual maturity just by “trying really hard.” As you read the Bible, pray, tell people about Christ, and spend time with other believers, God will be at work in you producing fruitfulness and maturity.*

### WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT AS YOU GROW IN CHRIST?

List some characteristics that you expect to occur as God produces growth in your life. \_\_\_\_\_

2 Peter 1:5-9 gives us a picture of growth.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO NOW?

Try to set aside time for personal Bible study and prayer.

A good passage is John 15:1-17.

As you read, underline particularly meaningful verses.

When a verse speaks strongly to you, 1) copy the verse on a sheet of paper, 2) summarize what the verse means, and 3) write down how you can apply that verse to your life.

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

Verses	Meaning	Application

In addition, some other suggested passages are the ones in this lesson: Colossians 1:9-12; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27.

Join a Bible study group where you can enjoy fellowship with others who are also learning more about this new life in Christ.

Talk to someone about Christ.

- *Who would you like to talk about the good news of God's love and forgiveness? \_\_\_\_\_*
- *When would be a good time to call to set up a time to see this person? \_\_\_\_\_*
- *Who would you like to have help you share this good news? \_\_\_\_\_*

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

### Unit 5: Your New Life in Relationships

**Remember:** As you grow in your relationship with God, He will *reveal* His character and will; the Holy Spirit *enables us* to live a life which reflects *both*.

A father will tell his son not to touch a hot stove top. He does so **not** because he wants to squelch his son's curiosity or take away his fun. Rather, he gives the prohibition because he knows that the stove will burn his child. His motivation is to protect his son from harm as well as provide safety.

#### WHY WAIT FOR SEX? BECAUSE GOD SAYS TO WAIT

**Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8.**

The apostle Paul was complimenting the Thessalonians on their walk with God. Because their desire was to walk with and please God, Paul was encouraging them "to excel still more." His emphasis was in the area of purity in relationships and, specifically, the sexual area.

- *By whose authority is this commandment given?* \_\_\_\_\_
- *What is God's will?* \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Key Points:**

1. God desires our comprehensive sanctification. In other words, it is His will that we develop His character in every area of our lives. Purity and holiness are part of God's character.

*"For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality..."*  
*1 Thessalonians 4:3*

2. God desires Christians not to defraud each other in relationships. We defraud someone when we cause them to step outside the boundaries God has established.

*"...See that no man transgress and defraud his brother in the matter..."* 1 Thessalonians 4:6

On the surface, the Bible appears to be full of negative commandments which seem imposing and dreary. However, we need to remember that God has only one motivation – *love*. When we understand that He always seeks what is best for us, these commandments become positive.

#### **GOD'S COMMANDS: BOTH TO PROTECT YOU AND TO PROVIDE FOR YOU**

Behind every negative command are two positive principles. One is to *protect* us, the other is to *provide* for us. In other words, when God says, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," He is **not** being a cosmic killjoy, as we will see.

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

God's command to wait for sex until marriage is given in order to:

<u>Protect</u>	<u>Provide</u>
Your mind from images of the past	Freedom to enjoy your future spouse without detracting mental images
You from mistrust and suspicion in relationships	A foundation of trust for your current and future relationships
You from confusing the intensity of sex with the intimacy of love	You with intimacy: true knowledge of the other person outside the physical
You from the fear and consequences of sexually transmitted diseases	Peace of mind as you enter a marriage commitment
Your Christian testimony	Integrity in your Christian witness that ministers to others
Your fellowship with God	The abundant life

Why do you think God wants to protect and provide for you? \_\_\_\_\_

Look at the following verses and answer in your own words:

Romans 8:38-39; Psalm 103:17-18; Deuteronomy 10:12.

God protects us by giving us *boundaries* and limitations to our activities. They are an expression of His *love* and *wisdom* and they keep us from doing ourselves harm. Not only do His commands keep us *safe* from harm but they are also targeted to *provide* for us in specific ways.

### A CLEAN HEART FOR A NEW START

One of the greatest mistakes people can make is to assume that since they have failed to keep God's command regarding sex, God wants nothing to do with them. This is simply *not true*. God is well aware of our sinful tendencies – that is why Jesus Christ came.

For King David, what began with a stare, led not only to adultery and an unwanted pregnancy, but also to a murder. David really blew it. But consider what happened next.

#### Read Psalms 51:1-17.

David *admitted* his sin and *asked* God for forgiveness. Like David, we can receive God's complete *forgiveness* and make a clean start.

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

Here are several important steps to take:

1. *Confess the sin.*  
Specifically name your sin before God and ask His forgiveness. 1 John 1:9
2. *Forgive yourself.*  
If you are not willing to forgive yourself, you are saying two things to God: (A) Christ's death was not enough for your sins; and (B) you are a higher judge of what can be forgiven than God is. God's grace is extended to you out of His heart of love. When you do not forgive yourself, you throw God's grace right back into His face. If God's grace can't cover your sin, it can't cover any sin. Romans 8:1
3. *Be filled with the Holy Spirit.*  
Allow God's Spirit to fill you with His power to say no to future temptation. Ephesians 5:18
4. *Show fruits of repentance.*  
Repentance means turning around, changing one's mind. Matthew 3:8 says, "bear fruits worthy of repentance." This might mean breaking off a relationship or perhaps making a decision not to be alone together. It might be something else. Whatever it is, your actions should show you have changed. The individual who professes to be a Christian but who continues to practice sin should realize that he or she may not be a Christian at all. John 14:21; 1 John 2:3

God's complete *love* and *forgiveness* enable us to make a *clean start* and to live a life pleasing to Him.

### YOUR NEW LIFE IN RELATIONSHIPS

Our new life in relationships begins with a *decision* to live a life pleasing to Him. Read Daniel 1:8.

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*"But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the king's choice food or with wine which he drank; so, he sought permission from the commander of the officials that he might not defile himself."*

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#### Key word:

Defile: To become impure.

- What was Daniel's decision? \_\_\_\_\_
- What was the result? (Daniel 1:9-13) \_\_\_\_\_

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

### Read Hebrews 13:4.

Starting today, is it your *desire* not to defile yourself and *remain pure* until marriage?

Yes Date \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

No Date \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_

The following will help you maintain *relationships* that please God:

1. *Prayer and Bible Study*

Regularly spending time with God will help you understand and live out His priorities for your life. Psalms 1:1-3; Ephesians 5:8-10; Jeremiah 9:23, 24

2. *Spirit-Filled Life*

The Holy Spirit empowers us to live a life pleasing to God. Galatians 5:16

3. *Accountability*

Our accountability to another person helps maintain our accountability to God. Ecclesiastes 4:9, 10; Proverbs 27:17; Ephesians 5:21

4. *Fellowship*

Seek fellowship with godly people who support and strengthen your convictions. Hebrews 10:24, 25; 2 Timothy 2:22

As you grow in Christ, you will see how God's commandments are given with your *best interest* in mind. Because this is true, *choosing to wait* is the most rewarding decision we can make.

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers

### Appendix: Leader's Guide

You face one of the most important opportunities of any ministry – touching the lives of people. You have the extremely gratifying privilege of helping to establish a new Christian's faith in Jesus Christ. You will have the *joy* of helping this person begin growing toward *maturity* and *fruitfulness* in Christ. This was Paul's great burden:

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*"...we teach everyone we can all that we know about Him, so that, if possible, we bring every man up to his full maturity in Christ. This is what I am working at all the time with all the strength that God gives me..." (Colossians 1:28, 29 Phillips).*

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What a comfort to remember that the same Holy Spirit who draws men and women to Christ is the only One who is truly capable of enabling anyone to grow to *maturity* in Christ. In both cases, He generally uses human instruments. You must be confident of His powerful workings in and through lives as you do your best in follow-up. Take the initiative in the power of the Holy Spirit and always leave the results up to God.

#### *The Goals of Follow-up*

Effective follow-up means having a clear set of *goals*, a plan for accomplishing those goals, a warm *relationship* with the new Christian, and the *assurance* that God is in control of producing the growth. These materials are designed to be used in five separate sessions. They will help you communicate clearly and effectively the basic *steps* for beginning an exciting new life in Christ. The goals of these sessions are:

1. To establish the new Christian's confidence in Scripture as the basis for Christian faith.
2. To help the new Christian understand simple scriptural principles of spiritual growth.
3. To begin building a personal, Christian friendship that leads the new Christian into meaningful relationships and service with a group of fellow believers.

#### *How to Set Up a Follow-up Appointment*

These lessons can be used with anyone who wants to grow closer to God. The person may have just trusted Christ after you shared the *Would You Like To Know God Personally?* booklet, or the person may be a Christian interested in growth. To set up an appointment, begin by sharing a little of your own experience of receiving Christ. Tell how someone helped you, or how God enabled you to begin to grow in your relationship with Christ. Offer the person the same opportunity by meeting with you to learn more about Christ: "Could we meet again in a few days to go over some things that will help you grow in your new relationship with Christ?"

If the answer is yes, set up a convenient time and place. (You may prefer to arrange all five appointments now, or simply set them up one at a time depending on the person's interest.)

If the answer is no, explain the Train Diagram from the *Would You Like To Know God Personally?* booklet.

## Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers



After showing the “*facts*” part, ask if you can share a few more facts on which to base faith in Jesus Christ. Then briefly present the first follow-up sheet.

In any case, invite the person to an activity where Christians will be involved.

### *How to Establish and Maintain a Good Relationship with a New Christian*

To develop good rapport with this person, follow these suggestions:

1. *Be faithful to pray regularly for this person* (Philippians 1:7-8).
2. *Show genuine personal interest.* The new Christian needs to feel important and to know you are always available. People learn best when they feel the teacher cares for them.
  - Be sure to ask about the person’s life: “How are things going for you?” As you show interest, ask questions, and listen, you will become aware of real concerns in their life. Then you can sensitively share how Jesus is relevant to every detail of every human life. Remember, concern for the person is more important than getting through the materials. Be flexible as you walk in the Spirit!
3. *Extend your interest beyond the follow-up meetings.* Begin to build a friendship by doing things together, things you both enjoy. Offer an invitation to do something with other Christians.
4. *Share about things from your own personal life as well as the message* (1 Thessalonians 2:6-7).
  - Be an example of worthy conduct (Philippians 4:9).
  - Be open about how you are also learning to apply the Bible in your life. Describe how the Lord is teaching you through His Word.
  - Be natural in talking to God about your concerns when you are together.
  - Respond with excitement at any new discoveries made by the new Christian. Be careful not to deflate interest by treating something as old, familiar material.
5. *Remember these tips:*
  - Accept the individual on the basis of love and trust, not performance.
  - Smile a lot, maintain eye contact, and use the person’s name.
  - Never laugh at a question or an answer.
  - Never be negative about any other person, group, or organization.
  - Approach follow-up on the basis of sharing rather than teaching (Philippians 2:3, 4; 2 Timothy 2:24). Admit when you don’t know an answer. Look it up together or find the answer later.
  - Be enthusiastic. Your attitude is contagious.



## **Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers**

6. *Find out if the person has a Bible.* If not, contact your local Campus Crusade for Christ group, a local church, the Gideons or other Christian organizations, or buy one at a bookstore.

### *How to Conduct the Follow-up Sessions*

Follow the simple plan below for each follow-up appointment. Use the follow-up sheet as a simple guide through the session. Additional information is provided for each lesson in the Session Plans on the next few pages.

1. *Offer a friendly personal greeting.*
2. *Find a comfortable place where you can sit next to or across from each other with minimal distractions.*
3. *Take as much time as necessary to establish rapport (see above).*
4. *Ask a question to guide the conversation to the follow-up topic.* (The Session Plans that follow include suggested introductory questions.)
5. *After the person responds to your question, lead in a brief prayer.*
6. *Introduce the follow-up sheet for the day.* You may prefer to hold it in front of you, turning it as appropriate when you want the new Christian to read something. Or, you may hold it so you can both see it at the same time. Invite the person to raise any questions as you proceed.

7. *Talk about each point on the sheet:*

- Read aloud (or ask the person to do so) the information given.
- Look up all Bible verses marked “Read...” (Verses in parentheses are to be looked up only if time allows or if the person raises questions on that point. You should be familiar with those verses.)
- Use the questions as beginning points for dialogue. Some other questions you may find helpful in stimulating thoughtful discussions are:

*Why do you think that idea is important?* \_\_\_\_\_

*How would you explain that idea to one of your non-Christian friends?* \_\_\_\_\_

*What other thoughts did that verse trigger?* \_\_\_\_\_

*How might the truth of that verse make a difference to you?* \_\_\_\_\_

8. *Item 4 on each sheet leads into an assignment for the person to do during the week.* Avoid making these sound like homework; they are highly enjoyable, brief activities that will make what was learned in the session seem more meaningful to the new Christian.
9. *At the conclusion of the session, schedule the next time to get together,* calling attention to the box at the bottom of page 2. Have the person write down the time of your next meeting.
10. *Close in prayer.*

## **Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers**

### **Session 1 Your New Life in Christ**

**FOCUS OF THE SESSION:** You can be confident in your relationship with God because of Christ's death on the cross and your trust in Him; God has made many promises to you based on this relationship.

**PREPARATION:** Bring a Bible and a *Would You Like To Know God Personally?* booklet as well as Follow-up Sheet

#1. Become familiar with Ephesians 2:8-9; John 1:12; Revelation 3:20; Hebrews 13:5; Colossians 1:13-14; 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 John 5:11-13, and the Train Diagram. If you used a *Four Spiritual Laws* booklet to share with the person, use that in this lesson instead.

**ESTABLISH RAPPORT:** Ask, "How are things going for you?" Talk for a few minutes about events in each other's week.

**TRANSITION TO TOPIC:** Ask, "What have you been thinking about some of the things we talked about in our last meeting?" Answer any questions the person may raise. Lead a brief prayer, asking God's help in making this time meaningful.

**USING THE FOLLOW-UP SHEET:** Introduce the sheet, "This sheet is a helpful tool to keep us both thinking about the same thing at the same time. We'll work through it together."

After reading through the introductory material and reviewing the *Would You Like To Know God Personally?* booklet, call attention to the key question. Accept the response to this question without attempting to evaluate their answer at this point. Then refer to the transition statement at the bottom of the page and go on to Point 1.

#### **Point 1**

- Read through the information, looking up and reading Ephesians 2:8-9. Then ask the key question.
- If the person indicates some questions or reservations, ask if there is a specific part of Ephesians 2:8-9 that is most difficult to accept. These other references support these key concepts: grace: (Romans 3:23-24); saved: (Luke 19:10); faith: (Romans 3:28).
- If you are unable to fully resolve the person's uncertainties, ask the person to defer coming to a conclusion until more of the Bible has been studied. The basic concepts of spiritual life, while very simple, are profoundly opposed to the normal thought patterns of non-Christians, and frequently are not immediately accepted by new believers. The purpose of this question is to see if the person does understand that salvation is by faith, not by works.

#### **Point 2**

Read through the statements and the verses, focusing attention on the questions. Again, ask the person to respond to the key question and the question at the bottom of the page.

#### **Point 3**

Read the information about the Train.

## **Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers**

### **Point 4**

Read through the three review statements and the five truths to reflect on during the coming week. Explain what a daily time of Bible reading and prayer has meant to you.

Suggest that the new Christian begin a daily time of Bible reading and prayer. Rereading the references on the follow-up sheet or beginning to read the Gospel of John are good starting points. You may want to give the person a Follow-up Sheet #2 in preparation for your next meeting.

You may also want to:

- Invite the person to your weekly meeting (offer to go together).
- Find out if the person has a Bible (if not, help them get one).
- Introduce Transferable Concept #1.
- Confirm the time and place for the next meeting which will deal with experiencing God's love and forgiveness.

### **Session 2 Your New Life in God's Love**

**FOCUS OF THE SESSION:** You are forgiven through Christ's death on the cross by placing your trust in Him (relationship). You can experience this love and forgiveness moment by moment (fellowship) as you deal with your sin.

**PREPARATION:** Read Romans 3:23; 1 John 1:6-8; 1 Peter 3:18; Colossians 2:13-14; 1 John 1:9; Psalms 32:5; 103:12; and Isaiah 43:25. Be sure you are familiar with the distinction made in this session between relationship and fellowship, and that you are familiar with the material on confession.

**ESTABLISH RAPPORT:** Ask about something the person told you in a previous meeting: "How did your meeting with your advisor come out?" A personalized question such as this shows that you cared enough to listen and remember.

**TRANSITION TO TOPIC:** Recall the biblical truth the person selected at the last meeting. Ask, "What have you thought about that truth since the last time we got together?" Allow the person time to ask questions about last week's discussion. Lead in prayer, thanking God for His many benefits.

**USING THE FOLLOW-UP SHEET:** Read the introductory material aloud, asking the two questions. After a brief look at the Relationship/Fellowship chart, ask if there are any questions. If so, look up the verses that are in parentheses. Use the question to make a transition into Point 1.

### **Point 1**

Focus on what sin is and how it affects both believers and unbelievers.

### **Point 2**

The person should be able to correctly answer the four questions:

- *What has God done with your sins? (forgive them)*
- *How many of your sins did Christ die for? (all)*

## **Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers**

- *When Christ died on the cross for you, how many of your sins were in the future? (all)*
- *What difference will it make in your daily life to know you are totally forgiven?*

### **Point 3**

The answer to the question, “How can you restore your fellowship with God?” is found in 1 John 1:9.

### **Point 4**

Reemphasize the “sin/forgiveness list” activity, pointing out that this is not something to do often, but simply a way to focus attention on how completely we are forgiven. Emphasize the importance of doing the list and promise to talk about how it went the next time you meet. Help the new Christian locate the three suggested passages and suggest using them during the daily time for Bible reading and prayer. Confirm the time and place of your next appointment.

## **Session 3: Your New Life in the Spirit**

**FOCUS OF THE SESSION:** The Holy Spirit is the source of power to live the Christian life and every believer can appropriate this power by faith.

**PREPARATION:** Read John 7:37-39; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; Romans 8:14-16; Galatians 5:22-23; Acts 1:8, and the various references listed in parentheses on the sheet. Be familiar with the three kinds of people and reflect on your own walk in the Spirit.

**ESTABLISH RAPPORT:** By now you should know enough about each other to talk warmly about the events of the past week. Ask about the person’s experience making the sin/forgiveness list.

**TRANSITION TO TOPIC:** Share your own experience this week in confessing sin and turning your focus back to God. Lead in thanking God for His love and forgiveness.

### **USING THE FOLLOW-UP SHEET:**

Read the introductory material on the front of the sheet.

### **Point 1**

In discussing the fruit of the Spirit, you may want to contrast God’s process of developing His qualities within people as opposed to the usual way people go about trying to self-improve.

### **Point 2**

If the person chooses either the natural or carnal circle, ask for a reason. Avoid trying to argue the person into changing, since Christ can only be placed in control of a life by that person’s own sincere desire. Share how walking with Christ has been meaningful to you.

### **Point 3**

Focus on the Heart Preparation section:

- *Why do you think it is important to God that you desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit? Because God does not force Himself on anyone. He knows our hearts and will not act against the true desire within us.*

## **Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers**

- *How would you express your level of desire to be directed and empowered by the Holy Spirit? Because this is a personal question, be sensitive. If the desire is not very strong, ask what seems to be keeping the desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit from growing?*
- *Why do you think it is important to confess all known sin in order to be filled with the Spirit? Until we consciously have clean hearts before God, He cannot fill us.*
- *What do you think yielding every area of your life to Christ would involve? Allow some time for thought on this.*
- *This prayer is not a magical act that fills someone with the Spirit. Emphasize that only faith in God and His Word will appropriate the Spirit's power.*
- *How accurately does this prayer reflect the desire of your heart? Invite the receptive person to pray now or think of a good time to do so. Again, don't force, but indicate that you will check on this matter next time you get together.*

### **Point 4**

Be sure you recall the three factors involved in confession from last week's session:

1. Agree with God that you have sinned.
2. Agree that God has already forgiven you.
3. Ask God to change your attitudes and actions toward Him and away from your sin.
  - Confirm the time and place of your next meeting.

### **Session 4: Growing in Your New Life**

**FOCUS OF THE SESSION:** Growing in your relationship with God involves obedience in four areas of communication.

**PREPARATION:** Read Philippians 3:7-10; Psalm 139:17-18; Matthew 22:36-38; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Philippians 4:6-7; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Peter 3:15; 2 Peter 1:5-9; and 1 Corinthians 3:6-7. Be sure you know of an introductory Bible Study (e.g., Discovery Group) or another Christian group you can help this person become involved with.

**ESTABLISH RAPPORT:** Again, ask about things the person has already indicated are of interest and concern.

**TRANSITION TO TOPIC:** Ask if there was an opportunity to apply "spiritual breathing." Ask if they have questions about being filled with the Spirit.

**USING THE FOLLOW-UP SHEET:** This session is crucial, for it is the springboard for the new Christian to become involved in four significant things:

1. small group Bible study
2. personal time of Bible reading and prayer
3. witnessing about their faith in Jesus Christ
4. a weekly meeting with other Christians

## **Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers**

It is important to proceed with sensitivity on these issues, avoid giving the feeling of a sudden avalanche of activities and responsibilities. If you sense four things are too much, too soon, focus on just one or two. A small group Bible study will provide continued growth and involvement with your ministry, which will lead to the other involvements if the person is not yet ready for them. If the person resists the Bible study, continue to develop your friendship and invite the person to various activities where relationships with Christians can be built. Going to church or a weekly meeting can provide fellowship and an atmosphere that encourages growth.

### **Point 1**

The person's answers to the two questions will give the solid clues to the level of interest in pursuing growth opportunities.

### **Point 2**

In addition to asking the question, you might share some of your own experiences in the Word and in prayer.

- After the person responds to finding supportive Christian fellowship, mention your own experience in a small group Bible study.
- Emphasize the summary statement that God is the source of our growth.

### **Point 3**

Reflect an expectant attitude about what God will do in the person's life. Emphasize that growth is usually a very gradual process.

### **Point 4**

Go through the three areas, observing the person's response. If you sense hesitation, focus on involving the person in a Bible study. Invite him or her to accompany you in making a contact to go witnessing. Whatever the person's level of commitment, conclude with a clear understanding of the importance of taking advantage of growth opportunities. Confirm the time and place of your next meeting.

*(Note this series is designed to end either here on the fourth lesson or after the next session dealing with sexual purity. If you are using lesson five, set up the date, time, and place for that lesson. If you are ending after four lessons, make sure the person has a clear understanding of when and where you'll meet next.)*

## **Session 5: Your New Life in Relationships**

**FOCUS OF THE SESSION:** God's will is that you wait for marriage to experience physical intimacy. If you have not waited, there is forgiveness and a new start available in Christ. His commands are given with your best interest in mind.

**PREPARATION:** Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; Hebrews 13:4; Psalm 51; Colossians 3:5-10; Daniel 1; John 4; and the various references listed on this sheet. Since this topic is very personal and prevalent today, prayerfully ask God to make you very sensitive to this person's need.

**ESTABLISH RAPPORT:** Ask about things of interest or concern from last week. Inquire about a point of application.

## **Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers**

**TRANSITION TO TOPIC:** Recall some of the changes the person expected to occur as God produced growth in their life (Point 3 from Session 4 “Growing in Your New Life”). Then ask, “Have you given any thought to how your relationship with God affects the way you relate to the opposite sex? Did you expect any changes in this area?”

### **USING THE FOLLOW-UP SHEET:**

Our society places a strong emphasis on sexuality. Most people feel they have to live up to these unrealistic standards or, in other cases, mistakenly turn to sex in their search for intimacy. Like Paul, you will be helping this person “excel still more” in their walk with God as you help them understand what He has to say about physical intimacy (1 Thessalonians 4:1).

In using this sheet, there is a need to be vulnerable and transparent. Relate anything in your own life which might be helpful, but with discretion. Specifically, be willing to identify with the struggle and temptation in the moral area while choosing to be Spirit-filled. Remember, the more honest you are, the more responsive the person will be.

Even if a person has not sinned sexually, they will learn why they should wait, how to restore fellowship with God if they do sin, and that God has our best interests in mind when He gives commands.

#### **Point 1**

Be sure the person’s responses to the questions are correct. Clarify the key points if needed and emphasize the summary paragraph.

#### **Point 2**

In addition to asking the question, emphasize God’s purpose for sex as highlighted under “provide.”

God created sex to deepen the level of trust and acceptance in a marriage relationship. This can provide lasting enjoyment and total fulfillment if it is used in the right context. That’s why the abuse of sex produces such enormous disappointments.

When we don’t follow God’s instruction, unwanted pregnancies, abortion, STDs, emotional guilt, loss of self-respect, etc., are the eventual and inevitable results.

#### **Point 3**

Even though a person may not have sinned sexually, emphasize that this point shows how to restore fellowship with God.

In order to share God’s perspective on sex with someone else, you need to be comfortable with your own sexuality. This means practicing God’s standards in your own life and experiencing His total forgiveness for yourself if you have ever struggled or fallen in the sexual area.

Two recommended resources:

- Tape by Josh McDowell “Clean Heart for a New Start”
- Book by Dick Purnell Free to Love Again

## **Five Follow-Up Lessons for New Believers**

### **Point 4**

Go through the Scripture passages and questions on Daniel. Explain the cultural significance of Daniel not eating the meat offered to the pagan idols. Then relate it to the cultural significance today of choosing to wait to have sex.

If the person has had sex, emphasize that they can start waiting today. God will bless their decision just as He blessed Daniel's. Go through the four areas of application, highlighting the Scriptures mentioned.

Ask them if they want you to hold them accountable and set scheduled times and questions.

*By the way, who is holding you accountable?*