

VICTORIOUS OVERCOMER SERIES

QUARTER 2 LESSON 1

WHO IS GOD? WHO AM I?

THEME OF THE WEEK: We worship One God, but that One God is made up of three Persons or Parts: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That One God in Three Persons is called the Trinity. Each one of us also has three parts: our body, our soul and our spirit.

MEMORY VERSE: “For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word [Jesus], and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one” (1 John 5:7) (NKJV).

(Read the theme of the week and the memory verse with the group, a time or two, to give the meaning a chance to sink in, then quiz them with the following questions.)

1. How many Gods do we worship?
Answer: One
2. God is made up of how many Persons or parts?
Answer: Three
3. What are the Names of these three Persons?
Answer: God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit.
4. You have how many parts?
Answer: Three
5. What are these parts called?
Answer: spirit, soul and body.
6. Your body is what part of you—show me?
7. Can you show me your soul or your spirit?
Answer: No.

According to the Bible, your soul and your spirit are two different parts of you (Hebrews 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:23). Your soul and your spirit are invisible to your eyes, but they are the parts of you that are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27).

To understand the spirit and the soul, we will need to talk about them separately. Your spirit is the part of you that was made new when you were born again. When a little baby is born, he or she is sometimes called a new-born or a brand new baby. When you asked Jesus to be your Savior and Lord, something happened to your spirit. It was made alive to the things of God. It was born again. The old sinful, dead spirit is now righteous, holy, and clean (2 Corinthians 5:21; 2 Corinthians 5:17). Your new spirit is not a full grown spirit; it is a baby spirit. It is up to you to feed your baby spirit God's milk and God's solid food, the Bible.

The Bible says God's Word is God's milk, and God's solid is obeying God's Word, that is, doing God's will (1 Peter 2:2; John 4:34; Hebrews 5:14). Your born again spirit is the part of you that is in close communication with the Holy Spirit Who lives in you if you are a Christian (Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 6:16).

When you pray to receive Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, His Holy Spirit moves right into your body. That's why the Bible says your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 6:16).

Who lives inside Christians? The Holy Spirit—Who is also known as the Holy Ghost lives inside God's people. Learn to listen to your born again human spirit because your born again human spirit is listening to the Holy Spirit. Which part of you is listening to the Holy Spirit? **(Let the group answer.)** That's right, your born again human spirit.

Your soul, according to the Bible, is not the same thing as your human spirit (Hebrews 4:12). Your soul is your mind, your will, and your emotions or feelings. Your soul is what? **(Answer: Mind, will, and emotions. Have them say what their soul is several times.)** The mind thinks, the will decides, and the emotions feel. Really, we know that the mind tells the will what to decide, and the mind tells the emotions what to feel. Your soul still wants to do things just the same way it always has until you change your soul by letting God's Word change it. The Bible says to renew and wash your mind—that is your soul—with God's Word, the Bible (Ephesians 4:23; 5:26). After your mind gets renewed and washed by God's Word and your will (the decisions you make) and your emotions or feelings really get changed by God's Word, it will be hard to tell the difference between your soul and your human spirit because your soul and your spirit will be working together.

Remember, your spirit is that part of you that is born again. Your soul is your mind, will, and emotions or feelings. Say this with me several times, “I am a spirit; I have a soul, and I live in a body.” Your body will do whatever your mind

tells it to do and your mind should be learning the Word of God and taking orders from your born again human spirit, and your born again human spirit needs to be fed the Word of God and kept clean from sin so that it can listen to the Holy Spirit Who lives within you.

Next week we will learn more about Who God is and about who you are.

What did you receive from today's lesson?

VICTORIOUS OVERCOMER SERIES

QUARTER 2 LESSON 2

WHO IS GOD? WHO AM I? (continued)

THEME OF THE WEEK: We worship One God, but that One God is made up of three Persons or Parts: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That One God in Three Persons is called the Trinity. Each one of us also has three parts: our body, our soul and our spirit.

MEMORY VERSE: “For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word [Jesus], and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one” (1 John 5:7) (NKJV).

Each of you is one person in three parts, right? What are these three parts called? (**Answer: spirit, soul, body.**) Remember, your human spirit is the part of you that is born again and that is listening to the Holy Spirit, Who lives inside you; your soul is made up of your mind, your will, and emotions or feelings; your body is, of course, your body.

Hebrews 4:12 tells us that only God's Word can really separate the soul from the spirit. Get your soul into agreement with your spirit by learning and obeying God's Word—the Bible.

We can probably call where your spirit and soul come together your heart. Your heart, listening to your born again spirit, will make right choices. Your heart, listening to only your soul but ignoring your spirit, will make wrong choices. Remember, your born again human spirit gets its instructions from the Holy Spirit, and passes that information along to your soul using the heart as a bridge. The Bible says, “Keep your heart with all diligence, For out of it spring the issues of life.” (Proverbs 4:23 NKJV). We can probably call where your soul and body come together, your flesh, because the flesh can at times be evil, whereas your body, by itself can't get you into trouble. Your flesh can get you into big trouble if you let it get in charge (Galatians 5:16-21).

Remember what we learned last week? Your spirit is the part of you that is born again. Your soul is your mind, your will, and your emotions or feelings. Say this with me several times, “I am a spirit; I have a soul, and I live in a body.” Your body will do whatever your mind tells it to do and your mind should be learning the Word of God and taking orders from your born again human spirit, and your born again human spirit needs to be fed the Word of God and kept clean from sin so that it can listen to the Holy Spirit Who lives within you.

Next week we will briefly review what we've learned about the three parts of man, but most of our time will be spent talking about the three parts of God—God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit. What can each one of you do this week to keep your born again human spirit in charge over your soul and your body?

What did you learn today?

VICTORIOUS OVERCOMER SERIES

QUARTER 2 LESSON 3

WHO IS GOD? WHO AM I? (continued)

THEME OF THE WEEK: We worship One God, but that One God is made up of three Persons or Parts: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That One God in Three Persons is called the Trinity. Each one of us also has three parts: our body, our soul and our spirit.

MEMORY VERSE: “For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word [Jesus], and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one” (1 John 5:7) (NKJV).

Who remembers the names of the three parts of man? (**Answer: spirit, soul, body. Briefly review each part.**)

This week we are going to talk about the three parts of God.

God is One God in Three Parts. God's parts are called Persons. That's why One God in Three Persons is also called the Trinity because *trinity* means three together. The Trinity, or God, is made up of God the Father, God the Son—Jesus, and God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is also called the Holy Ghost.

God the Father, God the Son—Jesus Christ, and God the Holy Spirit are all equally God. One part of the Trinity isn't more God than any other part of the Trinity. All the parts of the Trinity work together. God the Father is in Heaven; God the Son, Jesus Christ, is in Heaven; God the Holy Spirit is everywhere. He works in the earth today. He even lives inside you if you've asked Jesus Christ to be your Savior and Lord.

Before Jesus, the Son of God, was born as a human baby 2000 years ago, He had lived in Heaven with Father God for eternity. He wasn't called Jesus yet. He was called the Word of God (John 1:1). Even though He didn't have a flesh and blood body until He was born as Jesus the Christ or Messiah (John 1:14), He would appear in the likeness or form of a human from time to time in the Old Testament

(Genesis 18:1-33; Joshua 5:13-15; Daniel 3:25). Remember, the Old Testament was written before Jesus was born.

The reason the Word of God had to become the man Jesus is that the Bible says only the shedding of blood can pay for sin (Hebrews 9:22). Before the Word of God became Jesus, He didn't have human blood. Because only a sinless sacrifice was acceptable to Father God, only Jesus could pay the price for our sins—every other human is born with a sin nature (1 Corinthians 15:21-22; Hebrews 7:23-28; Romans 3:23; Psalm 51:5). Even though men and women both have sin (Romans 3:23), apparently sin seems to be passed down to babies through their fathers (Exodus 20:5; Exodus 34:7; Numbers 14:18; Strong's Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary: #1 awb: father). If a baby could be born without a human father, but with a human mother, that baby could be sinless. That is why Jesus had no human, earthly father. The Holy Spirit planted the Word of God, Jesus, into the womb of a godly but ordinary young, unmarried woman named Mary. Jesus' Father is God, His mother was human. That's why people say that Jesus is 100% God and 100% human or man.

Trinity means One God in Three Persons. Father God is in Heaven and Jesus is with Him (Hebrews 10:12); the Holy Spirit is everywhere (Psalm 139:7-12). He's even in you if you are a Christian.

What did you learn this week that you didn't know before? **(Share time—keep the answers brief unless time is not an issue.)**

VICTORIOUS OVERCOMER SERIES

QUARTER 2 LESSON 4

WHO IS GOD? WHO AM I? (continued)

THEME OF THE WEEK: We worship One God, but that One God is made up of three Persons or Parts: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That One God in Three Persons is called the Trinity. Each one of us also has three parts: our body, our soul and our spirit.

MEMORY VERSE: “For there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word [Jesus], and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one” (1 John 5:7) (NKJV).

Over the last several weeks we have learned that we are three-part beings—we are spirits; we have souls, and we live in bodies (1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 4:12).

God is One God in Three Parts—God the Father, God the Son—Jesus, and God the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is also known as the Holy Ghost. All the Parts of God are equally God. One Part is not more God than another Part, although the different Parts of God do have different roles or jobs in our lives.

Jesus, the Son of God, also known as God in the Flesh or God With Us, is the Part or Person of God Who came down to earth to die for our sins. Only a sinless sacrifice, with sinless blood, could pay for our sins. Christ became this sacrifice (Hebrews 4:15; 9:25-28). God the Father, by the power of the Holy Spirit, raised Christ from the dead after three days (1 Corinthians 15:4; Romans 8:11). Christ is now in heaven (Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20).

Christ continues to do things for us today. Four big things Christ does for us is to be our High Priest (Hebrews 2:14-18; Hebrews 9:11-15, 24-26, 28; 2 Corinthians 5:21); to be like a lawyer for us in heaven (1 John 1:9-10; 2:1-2); to pray for us (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 4:14-16); and to be our leader (Psalm 23:1-3; John 10:14; 1 Peter 2:25 & 5:4).

To explain how Christ is our High Priest, we must first understand a little Bible history. Although in Old Israel, priests had the daily jobs of offering sacrifices for the sins of the people, once a year they offered a special sacrifice for the sins of all the people of Israel at the same time. On this special day, the Day of Atonement, innocent animals were killed to pay for the sins of the people. Alone, the High Priest carried the animals' blood into the Holy of Holies, a special room where only he could go, and then he would sprinkle the blood on the Mercy Seat where God's presence was (Leviticus 16:1-34).

After Jesus rose from the dead, He almost immediately visited heaven to sprinkle His own Blood on Heaven's Mercy Seat. Jesus, our High Priest, sprinkled His Blood so that our sins could be paid for—if we accept His forgiveness by asking Christ to be our Lord (Hebrews 2:14-17; Hebrews 9:11-12, 24-26, 28; 2 Corinthians 5:21).

Jesus is like a lawyer (advocate) for us. That means He speaks up in our defense in heaven (1 John 1:9-10; 2:1-2).

Jesus prays for us in heaven (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 4:14-16).

Jesus is our leader in the same way that shepherds lead sheep. He is called the Great Shepherd and the Good Shepherd (Psalm 23; John 10:14; 1 Peter 2:25 and 5:4; Hebrews 13:20).

When Jesus went back to heaven, He sent His Holy Spirit to earth to live in and cover Christians with God's presence (John 20:22; Acts 1:5; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:38-39; Romans 8:11). The Holy Spirit is God in us. He does so many things for us that we don't have time to talk about right now. He brings people to Christ (Revelation 22:17). The Holy Spirit in us, brings into our lives love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, and similar wonderful fruit (Galatians 5:22-23; John 14:26; Romans 8:14; Galatians 5:18; Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:3-13).

The Holy Spirit in you is a Person with feelings. He can be made sad (Ephesians 4:30). Bring the Holy Spirit joy and not sadness by living for God.

If Jesus is God in the flesh and if the Holy Spirit or Holy Ghost is God in us, then Father God is God—just plain God. Father God has sent Two of His Three Parts to bless us and to help us live our lives. It is easier to talk about what Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit do because those Two Parts or Persons of God have

special jobs that they do in our lives. But remember, that doesn't mean Father God cares for us any less than Jesus or the Holy Spirit care for us because Father God sent both Jesus and the Holy Spirit to us (John 3:16; John 14:26). Father God sent Two Parts of Himself when He sent Christ and the Holy Spirit to bless our lives. Remember God is One God in Three Persons. An earthly king will send his only son—the future king—to do a job only if it is a job that is personally very important to the king.

Jesus Christ is our big Brother (Romans 8:29). Father God is His Father and ours (Matthew 6:9; Romans 8:15; Matthew 10:32). Your prayers are to be prayed to Father God, in the Name of Jesus (John 16:23).

Father God is in heaven (Romans 8:34) and Jesus is in heaven (Romans 8:34). The Holy Spirit is everywhere (Psalm 139:7-12), but especially we need to understand that the Holy Spirit lives in people when they have become born again by asking Jesus to be Savior and Lord of their lives (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:16).

What have you learned from today's lesson?

VICTORIOUS OVERCOMER SERIES

QUARTER 2 LESSON 5

WATER BAPTISM

THEME OF THE WEEK: The Lord commands us in the Bible to be baptized in water.

MEMORY VERSE: “He who believes and is baptized will be saved;” (Mark 16:16) (NKJV). “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19) (NKJV).

One of the first things a person did in New Testament Bible times was to be water baptized after praying to receive the Lord. In fact, just as soon as a person asked Jesus Christ to be his Savior and Lord, he and the person who led him to the Lord were looking for water deep enough to be water baptized in (Acts 8:26-39; Acts 9:17-18; Acts 10:34-48; Acts 16:30-33). If you have asked Jesus to be your Savior and Lord, but haven't been water baptized, then the Bible tells us that you need to be. There are a few things you must understand, however, before you are baptized.

#1 – The reason we need to be water baptized is that Jesus said we need to be (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16). Even Jesus Himself was baptized in water (Matthew 3:13-17). Every Christian needs to be water baptized in front of other people. By doing that you are saying you belong to Jesus. It pleases God, when we say publicly, that we belong to His family (Matthew 10:32-33; 2 Timothy 2:12).

#2 – Water baptism is only for people who have asked Jesus to be their Savior and Lord. Never in the Bible do we see people being baptized in water until after they have been born again by asking Jesus to be their Savior and Lord. Jesus' Blood is what really washes away our sins. The water washing us, when we are baptized, only shows what Jesus' Blood has already done. If babies and very little children are too young to know how or why they need to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord, then they are too young to be water baptized (Acts 8:36-38). Baptism is an outward sign of an inward work. Without the inward work, a person will only get wet when he is baptized in water.

#3 – The word baptize comes from the Greek word *baptizo* which means to cover completely. That is why we are completely covered (immersed) in water and not just sprinkled. Immersion was the only way people in the Bible were baptized.

#4 – When you are baptized in water, you are identifying with Christ. What this means is this: it is as though you and Jesus are one person. When you go under the water, you are saying that you are dying just as Jesus died on the Cross for you. You are leaving your old, sinful self—the way you were before you were saved—under the water. You are burying your old man under that water. When you come up out of the water, you are saying that you are rising from the dead just as Jesus rose from the dead (Colossians 2:12-13). The Bible says, in 2 Corinthians 5:17, you are a new creation when you are born again. It's the new creation who comes up out of the water when you are baptized. Some people are concerned about how long they will be completely under water. Your head will be under water probably less than a second—but what an important second!

To be baptized in water is a wonderful, exciting time in a new Christians' life. If you haven't been baptized yet, talk to your pastor about doing that as soon as possible.

What have you learned today?

VICTORIOUS OVERCOMER SERIES

QUARTER 2 LESSON 6

GOD'S CHURCH: WHAT IS CHURCH?

THEME OF THE WEEK: The Church is God's idea.

MEMORY VERSE: “Christ is the head of the church; and He is the Savior of the [Church] body” (Ephesians 5:23b) (NKJV).

When we say the word “Church,” what do you think we mean? Actually, when the Bible speaks of the word Church, it may either be talking about all Christians everywhere in the world, or it may be speaking of a local group of Christians who get together in a place to worship and study the Bible. Even though we may call the building the church, it is actually the group of Christians meeting there who are the Church. The Bible says you, you personally, are the “temple of the Holy Ghost” (1 Corinthians 6:19) if you are born again (meaning you've asked Jesus to be your Savior and Lord). When you and other people—other temples—get together to worship God, you have created a church meeting.

The Bible refers to the Church as the Body of Christ. Christ is the Head and the Church is the Body. You and I are parts of the Body (1 Corinthians 12:12-27). Every part of your physical body is important. Your hand doesn't consider breaking off from your elbow. Your knee wouldn't just tell the rest of your body that it (the knee) wasn't wanted or needed at a church meeting, and that it was going to sit home alone or maybe go to the movies with a few other knees. Just as every member of your physical body is needed, every member of the Body of Christ is needed too. The local churches grow and get healthy as their members get involved in them.

God designed His Church to do the following things:

- #1 – to glorify Him (Ephesians 3:21);
- #2 – to spiritually build up (edify) its members (Ephesians 4:11-12);
- #3 – to help its members to get and to stay spiritually clean (Ephesians 5:25-27; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8);
- #4 -- to evangelize the world (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-20);

#5 – to keep the world around us from getting completely rotten (Matthew 5:13).

Another way the Church is described in the Bible is as the building of Christ. He is called the Chief Cornerstone (Psalms 118:22; 1 Peter 2:6-8), the Foundation (1 Corinthians 3:11), and the Builder (Matthew 16:18). A cornerstone is a stone forming a part of a corner in a wall—the place where the building begins. The foundation is the whole underneath supporting part of a building. It is what holds the building up. If a foundation is weak, a building could fall down! A builder, of course, is the person who builds the building. Christ is the Chief (first and most important) Cornerstone. He is the Foundation and He is the Builder. Guess what you are? You are a stone (1 Peter 2:5)—a living stone that is a part of what Christ is using to build His Church.

Still another description for the Church is to call her the Bride of Christ. Christ is the Groom—the Husband-to-be—and the Church—all the Christians who have ever and will ever live—is His Bride (Ephesians 5:23-32; John 14:1-3; Revelation 19:7).

Next week we will learn more about God's Church. If you obey God's command in Hebrews 10:25, you will be here to be a part of that lesson.

VICTORIOUS OVERCOMER SERIES

QUARTER 2 LESSON 7

GOD'S CHURCH: CHURCH ATTENDANCE

THEME OF THE WEEK: The Church is God's idea.

MEMORY VERSE: “[L]et us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together,”
(Hebrews 10:24-25a) (NKJV).

Remember, the theme for this week is “The Church is God's idea.” He is the One Who designed it. The best place to go to find out how God wants a local church government to be set up, how He wants a church service to be run, what He wants His people to be taught, and how He expects the church leadership and the people to act in the church and away from the church.

These things can be learned by reading the New Testament. Specifically, you can learn this by reading the part of the New Testament starting from the beginning of the Book of Acts and reading from there through the end of the third chapter of Revelation. This is only a small part of your Bible, but it is the part that tells us most of what we need to know about God's church.

No one can ever fool you about what the Bible says if you know the Bible for yourself. There is so much the Bible says about God's Church that we would have to take many weeks to teach you. We don't have the time to do that but we will cover a few things you need to understand about God's Church.

#1 – God expects you to be faithful to go to church. Hebrews 10:25 says “[F]orsake not the assembling of yourselves together.” In other words, He is saying “Don't stop getting together for church.”

#2 – God expects us to get together for church at least once a week. This is called following God's example of the Sabbath principle. God created the world in six days and rested the seventh and then tells us to do the same (Genesis 1:1, 2:3 and others). God's idea of rest and ours may be two different ideas, but I'm sure you get

the point. Refresh your spirit and soul by getting to church on Sundays (Exodus 20:8), and your body will feel better than if you slept in. We need to have fellowship with God and other Christians regularly, and most people do this on Sundays.

#3 – Our faith is built up when we hear God's Word preached in church. Romans 10:17 says, “So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

#4 – Matthew 6:33 says, “[s]eek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” In other words, God promises that as you put Him and His stuff first, He will take care of you and your stuff. He will see to it that you have everything you need.

#5 – God put pastors in the churches because Christians need pastors. Pastors are shepherds and you are a sheep. You need a pastor to help feed you and take care of you. Who ever heard of a sheep wandering around with no shepherd? Christ is called the Great Shepherd, and He has people who are under Him to help Him do this work. These are His under-shepherds or pastors. Pastors don't just teach you God's Word; they shepherd you—that is they help provide guidance for your life (Ephesians 4:11-14).

Sheep don't just move from one shepherd and field to another and another and another. Find a good church that follows God's Word and stay there. Get involved and learn how to be a blessing. When sheep live away from other sheep (Christians) and shepherds (pastors), it is a strong possibility that they will end up falling away from God. If they love God, they will obey God. Jesus says in John 15:9-10 that if we love Him we will keep His commandments. Watching Christian television, going to Christian events such as music concerts or anything else is not a substitute for getting yourself to church. Get to church if you value the worth of your own soul!

What have you learned about church this week?

VICTORIOUS OVERCOMER SERIES

QUARTER 2 LESSON 8

GOD'S CHURCH: ASCENSION GIFTS

THEME OF THE WEEK: The Church is God's idea: Ascension Gifts.

MEMORY VERSES: “Obey your leaders, and submit *to them*; for they keep watch over your souls, as those who will give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with grief, for this would be unprofitable for you” (Hebrews 13:17) (NAS).
“WHEN HE [Christ] ASCENDED ON HIGH,...AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN [mankind—people]” (Ephesians 4:8) (NAS).

Keep in mind our theme Scripture as we take more time to look at God's beautiful plans for His church. A church service is set up in such a way that you can be blessed. If your church has a church bulletin you should read it to find out what activities your church is involved in. Your church may have a book about its purpose and vision, and it probably has a statement of faith. Read and carefully study to find out what your church is involved in and what the leadership is excited about. Find out how you can help. If you do this, you will be amazed at how excited you will become about your church.

God's Church has some people who are called by God to work for Him full time. You can find these workers in Ephesians 4:11. There the Bible mentions apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Much can be said about all of these offices, but we will keep it simple today.

An apostle is basically someone who starts new churches and later watches over those churches. A prophet speaks out what God shows him. It may be that God shows the prophet something hidden in someone's heart, or it may concern the future or something like that. A prophet is not a fortune teller. Fortune telling is ungodly and demonic. Fortune telling is just the devil's copycat of God's prophetic work. Evangelists tell unsaved people how to get saved (though we all need to do that); but the evangelist does this full time. Pastors are the leaders in local

churches—they are shepherds of you sheep. Teachers teach. That's pretty simple isn't it?

The Bible says that the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher are sent to us to help us grow up as Christians (Ephesians 4:8-17). Some people call this the five-fold ministry, and some call it the four-fold ministry because some people believe that the pastor and teacher are the same person.

These offices or jobs in the Body of Christ are given by God as gifts. Gifts to whom? Why to you, of course! God loves you so much that He sent these gifts—these people to bless your lives. These people are God's gift packages sent to you by Heavenly Express. Show God you're grateful by not ignoring God's gift-people but by using them and treating them well.

Also in a church, you may have elders, bishops, deacons and deaconesses. The words elder and pastor come from the same Greek word for shepherd. Sheep are blessed to have elders to help their pastor care for them. The word bishop means overseer. Pastors are blessed to have people help them oversee God's sheep. The words pastor, elder, and bishop are very close in meaning, so different churches have different ideas about exactly how to separate these meanings, but you as a sheep are blessed to have these people looking out for your souls. The word deacon means servant. Deacons are servants to the Body of Christ. A deaconess is a woman deacon. All of these jobs or offices we have talked about are positions that are to be respected and held in honor.

A church board is a group of several members within the same local church who occasionally get together to make some church decisions in regard to legal matters and to comply with the law. Although the Bible doesn't mention church boards, most churches in the United States have them because American law requires a legal corporation to have a board of officers. The best church boards are made up of church members who are chosen because they are mature, godly leaders in their local churches.

People don't just decide they want to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors or teachers. God decides that for them (Ephesians 4:8-11), although any of us can decide to disobey if we want to. God also gives other spiritual gifts to us, as He chooses. We will learn more about those later.

But according to the Bible, some kinds of people are not more special to Him than others. To fill church jobs in the Body of Christ, God uses all kinds of

people—men and women of every nationality and color. The Bible says in Galatians 3:26-29 (NAS), “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.” You can be and do anything that God says you can. Don't limit yourself or allow other people to limit what God wants to do in and through you because God needs you in His service.

What have you learned this week?

VICTORIOUS OVERCOMER SERIES

QUARTER 2 LESSON 9

GOD'S CHURCH: MOTIVATIONAL GIFTS

THEME OF THE WEEK: The Church is God's idea: Motivational Gifts.

MEMORY VERSES: “WHEN HE [Christ] ASCENDED ON HIGH,... HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN [mankind - people]” Ephesians 4:8 (NAS).
“And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, *let each exercise them accordingly...*” Romans 12:6 (NAS).

Last week we talked about the ascension gifts. These are called the ascension gifts because Jesus gave these gifts as or after He was ascended or rose to go back to heaven. The ascension gifts are also called the 5-fold or the 4-fold ministry gifts of the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher. An apostle starts new churches and later continues to watch over them. A prophet speaks out what God shows him or her, whether it is something involving God's plan for the future or the hidden thoughts of people's hearts. An evangelist spends much time telling people how to receive Jesus as Lord. Pastors lead local churches. Teachers teach.

Not every Christian is an ascension gift person, right? Is every person in the Body of Christ either an apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor or teacher? No, of course not! But every Christian does have gifts from God. This week we're going to talk about God's motivational gifts. A motive is what causes a person to act a certain way or to do a certain thing. A motivational gift is what causes a person to want to act in a certain way or to do a certain useful thing. A motivational gift can be so much a part of someone that it can seem like a part of a person's personality. It is what makes someone “tick.” It is what makes him or her feel happy and useful when the gift is used.

Any Christian may have a little of each gift, but one or maybe two gifts will be stronger than all the others in each person. Respect gifts in others. Respect your own gift and use it, especially to build up the Kingdom of God inside and outside your church. This is what your gift is for.

Here is a list of the seven motivational gifts from Romans 12:3-8:

- #1 is prophecy
- #2 is ministry or serving
- #3 is teaching
- #4 is exhortation
- #5 is giving
- #6 is ruling or administrating
- #7 is mercy

(Teacher, you may wish to examine prophecy in a *Vine's Expository Dictionary*.)

Prophecy means to speak out God's point of view on things. A server enjoys serving. A teacher teaches. An exhorter speaks words which will encourage people to do godly things. A giver lives to give to God's work. A ruler or administrator is a leader. A mercy motivated person just loves to shower God's mercy and kindness on people.

Of course every church needs these gifts. All of us need to respect the gifts of others. When people don't understand this, they may act as though everyone who doesn't have the same gifts they have isn't spiritual, or they may feel jealous of other people's gifts. God needs all of us. Let your church help you develop your gift or gifts.

Young Christians and new Christians probably don't need to concern themselves too much by trying to figure out their gifting. The main thing is to know what the different gifts are, to continue to grow up in the Lord, and to stay faithful in your local church. As time goes by, your gifts will become obvious to you and to others.

(Teacher, as time allows, at this point, go over the definitions of these gifts a couple of times.)

What did you learn from today's lesson?

VICTORIOUS OVERCOMER SERIES

QUARTER 2 LESSON 10

GOD'S CHURCH: MANIFESTATION GIFTS

THEME OF THE WEEK: The Church is God's idea: Manifestation Gifts.

MEMORY VERSES: “Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit....But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit *of all*” 1 Corinthians 12:4&7 (NKJV).

For the last couple of weeks we have been talking about the gifts God has given to His church. He gave us the full-time workers: the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher. The apostle starts churches; the prophet speaks the words of God; the evangelist gets people saved; the pastor leads a church, and the teacher teaches. These are called the ascension gifts because Christ gave these when He ascended or went back to heaven.

Then we talked about motivational gifts. Every Christian has at least one of the motivational gifts. A motivational gift is what motivates or gets us excited when we exercise this gift. The seven motivational gifts are these: prophecy, which is speaking God's words; exhortation, which is encouraging others; teaching; serving; giving; ruling—which means leading; and mercy.

This week we will talk about the manifestation gifts of 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. A manifestation is something we can see or hear or sense or know. We see or hear manifestation gifts in church services where God is free to manifest or show these gifts. God can choose to manifest or show these gifts at other times besides church services too. These gifts are meant to bless people, and so God may manifest one or more of these gifts anytime His people allow these blessings to flow through them to bless others or themselves.

Let's read 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. **(Read these verses aloud.)** These verses tell us God gives these gifts by the power of His Holy Spirit, as He wills or chooses, for the good of the whole body or church. The word *manifestation* is used in verse seven. Remember our simple definition of *manifest* means to show, so with a manifestation gift we will see or hear or sense or know something. The Bible lists

nine manifestation gifts. The gifts are the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healings, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, diverse (different) kinds of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues.

Let's find out what each of these are for. Gift #1, Word of Wisdom: This gift is manifested or shows itself when the Holy Spirit tells someone the answer to a problem or tells someone how something will happen in the future and the person who is operating in this gift will say what God is telling or showing them.

Gift #2, Word of Knowledge: This gift is manifested or shows itself when the Holy Spirit causes a person to "know" something. The Word of Wisdom and the Word of Knowledge often work together. For instance, maybe the pastor or some other godly person tells you about a problem you know you have, but he or she has no way of knowing about it, unless God shows that person. That is the Word of Knowledge. Then that person tells you God's answer to your problem or how it will all turn out in the future. That is the Word of Wisdom.

Gift #3, Gift of Faith: All Christians have faith (Romans 12:3), but sometimes people need extra faith to receive from God. This is the Gift of Faith.

Gift #4, Gifts of Healings: God heals His sick people when they ask and believe. He uses different supernatural ways to heal. One of those ways is Gifts of Healings.

Gift #5, Gifts of Working of Miracles: Isn't it exciting that God still uses His people to work or do miracles?

Gift #6, Gift of Prophecy: When someone speaks out some words God has given him or her to speak (in church this is usually during or after praise and worship or some other time that is open for this gift) this is called prophecy. This is not planned or written out but comes from God through a person, is usually quite short, and is meant to encourage the church body or a person. This gift of prophecy is not the same thing as the motivational gift of prophecy nor is it the same thing as the ascension gift of prophet. These gifts are different from each other. Because someone prophesies does not make that person a prophet. Although many Christians can learn to let God use them to prophesy words of blessing to a church, far fewer people are actually prophets or prophetesses (female prophets).

Gift #7, Discerning of Spirits: This manifestation gift allows people to see or just know what kind of spirits are at work around him or her: devils, angels or the Holy Spirit.

Gifts #8 and #9, are the Gifts of Divers or Diverse (different) Kinds of Tongues and the Gift of Interpretation of Tongues. If you go to a Spirit-filled church you will certainly, at times, hear people speak in unknown or heavenly languages. These are not earthly languages. No one will know what a person who is speaking in an unknown tongue is saying (not even the speaker) unless God gives the interpretation through that same person or someone else. These two gifts work together in a church service. Again, they are called the Gift of Tongues and the Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues.

The manifestation gift of tongues is not for every Christian, all the time (God allows people to move in these gifts as He wills), but the personal gift of tongues, also known as your prayer language, is for every Christian and can be used any time you want to. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 14:50, “I would that ye all spoke with tongues,” and in 14:18 he said “I thank my God, I speak in tongues more than ye all.” They all spoke in tongues for their personal, private prayer language which you will also often hear in church during prayer times and praise and worship times. In later lessons you will learn how you can receive your personal prayer language.

The devil hates the nine manifestation gifts because they are powerful weapons that we can use to overcome evil strongholds. These gifts can be used outside of church services, wherever they are needed, as well as in church services. In church services, they seem to manifest or show up the most during the praise and worship time and during the altar and prayer time.

(Teacher, if you have the time, briefly review the manifestation gift definitions. Review and quiz as you go to get this new information from short term to long term memory. Always take every opportunity you can to review. Make it fun, but by all means, do it.)

What have you learned today?

VICTORIOUS OVERCOMER SERIES

QUARTER 2 LESSON 11

GOD'S CHURCH: PRAISE AND WORSHIP

THEME OF THE WEEK: The Church is God's idea: Praise and Worship.

MEMORY VERSE: "Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!" Psalm 150:6 (NKJV).

This week we will learn about ways the Bible says we can praise and worship God. But before we do that, let's quickly review the gifts God has given to His church.

We learned about three kinds of gifts. The first kind we learned about are the people gifts. They are called the ascension gifts because Jesus gave these when He ascended or rose back to heaven. The five ascension gifts are the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher (Ephesians 4:11). (Ask for a brief definition of each of these.)

Every Christian has one or maybe two of the seven motivational gifts, the second of the gifts we learned about. Motivational gifts become a part of who we are. The seven motivational gifts are prophecy, serving, teaching, exhortation, giving, ruling or leading, and mercy (Romans 12:6-8). (Again, ask for a brief definition of each.)

The third kind of gift, the nine manifestation gifts of the Holy Spirit are these: word of wisdom, word of knowledge, gift of faith, gifts of healings, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, different kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:7-10). **(Once again, ask for a brief definition of each term.)** The manifestation gifts are manifested or shown by God as they are needed by His Church Body.

All of the gifts we've talked about are given by God to bless His Church. God has blessed us with so many wonderful things, and we bless Him back when we praise and worship Him. The Bible tells us how God wants to be praised and worshiped. The Book of Psalms commands us in quite a few places that it is up to

us to praise God. As we praise and worship Him, He is blessed, and we are blessed by Him when we do it. Now we are going to talk about ways the Bible says we can praise and worship God at church, at home, and anywhere where we are free to worship our Lord.

(Teacher, slowly work down through the list, having your group repeat each one with you. Have them tell what they think each item means. You or they can give examples and act out each item on the list – this is fun and they will remember this lesson much better if you take the time to do this. If you have time, you may want to follow this lesson up with a fast praise song and a slow worship song, asking your group to try to incorporate as many different Scriptural ways of worshiping God as they can think of. You could even promise some little prizes for the better participators.)

- Singing: Approximately 300 Scriptures including Psalm 149:1.
- Singing in the Spirit: 1 Corinthians 14:15
- Rejoice (Hebrew – to brighten up): Psalm 149:2.
- Make a Joyful Noise: Psalm 81:1
- Bless the Lord: Psalm 103:20
- Magnify the Lord: Psalm 34:3
- Cry Out With a Loud Voice: Revelation 7:10
- Mouth Filled With Laughter: Psalm 126:2
- Lift Up Hands: Psalm 63:4; 119:48; 134:2; 141:2; 1 Timothy 2:8
- Clapping: Psalm 47:1; 98:8; Isaiah 55:12
- Playing Musical Instruments: Many references including Psalm 33:2; 57:8; 144:9; Psalm 150
- Dancing: Psalm 30:11; 149:3; 150:4; 2 Samuel 6:14
- Walking and Leaping: Acts 3:8
- Standing: Psalm 134:1; 135:2
- Bowing and Kneeling: Psalm 95:6; Ephesians 3:14
- Being Still: Psalm 46:10
- Shouting to God with the Voice of Triumph: Psalm 47:1; 2 Samuel 6:15; Revelation 7:10

(This list is not intended to be all inclusive. When led by the Spirit, these are considered to be “decent and in order.”)

What did you learn today?

VICTORIOUS OVERCOMER SERIES

QUARTER 2 LESSON 12

GOD'S CHURCH: PRAISE AND WORSHIP

THEME OF THE WEEK: The Church is God's idea: Praise and Worship (continued).

MEMORY VERSE: "Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!" Psalm 150:6 (NKJV).

In the last few weeks we have been talking about God's Church. Of course, church meetings, such as the one you are in right now, are an important part of God's plan for His Church Body. Back when the New Testament part of the Bible was written, church meetings were held in people's homes. Christian people, doing things God's way, make a church meeting, not the building. A very unimportant and ordinary looking building may be home to the most awesome church services in town, whereas the largest and most magnificent church building in town may not even be considered a church to God. We must learn to see things as God sees them.

Most church services include praise and worship, a spoken Bible message or a Bible study, prayer, and, sometimes, communion. This week we will talk a little more about praise and worship; next week we will finish up our "God's Church" lessons by looking at what the Bible says about Communion.

The Bible tells us that every Christian's body is a temple for worshipping God, but once upon a time, before Jesus died on the Cross, when people wanted to worship God, they had to go to God's temple in Jerusalem to worship Him there. Unless you just happened to be a priest, you wouldn't be even be allowed to enter the two best rooms of the temple, the holy place and the most holy place.

Since Christ died on the Cross making every Christian both a temple and a priest (1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Peter 2:4-5,9; Revelation 1:6; 5:10; 20:6) to God, we have all been invited to walk through the gate of worshipping God by singing songs of thankfulness or even just saying thank you and feeling thankful to God (Psalm

100:4). After entering the gate of thanksgiving, you can walk right through the yard or courts of praise by praising Him (Psalm 100:4). Praise songs tend to be fast, lively and joyful, and are meant to get our whole selves excited and involved. Worship songs, which tend to be slow and thoughtful, especially involve our spirits and minds and can bring us right into the hidden rooms of the temple of worship, which are where the holy and the most holy rooms are found. In the Jerusalem temple, God's presence lived in the holiest room, called the most holy place. When we worship God, we can spiritually move into a place where we can still find God's presence.

Of course, it is possible for you to not even get inside the gate of thanksgiving while everyone else around you is bowing down before God in the most holy place. Only you can make the trip for yourself. To receive the most from your praise and worship time, follow your church leaders, praise and worship leaders, and other people who really seem to be praising and worshipping. Do what they do. Do what the words you're singing about are telling you to do. If you are singing that you will clap or dance or bow down, then make sure you really are clapping or dancing or bowing down. Otherwise, you are not meaning what you are saying to God. Think about and mean what you're singing to God – the Bible says there is power in our words to make things happen (Proverbs 13:2; 18:20-21). When you praise and worship God, you are getting the devil off your stuff because the Bible says God inhabits or lives in the praises of His people (Psalm 22:3). This is one reason why the devil tries to get people to not worship God. But remember, the devil is not in charge of your life unless you let him be. One way to keep yourself and God in charge is by worshipping God.

Do you remember the manifestation gifts of the Spirit—word of wisdom, word of knowledge, gift of faith, gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, divers kinds of tongues and the interpretation of tongues (1 Corinthians 12:7-10)? You may notice that these manifestation gifts can seem to easily manifest or show up during times of praise and worship. Why do you think this happens? **(Answers may vary.)**

Remember, Psalm 150:6 (NKJV) “Let everything that has breath praise the LORD. Praise the LORD!”

What have you learned this week that will make a difference in your life?

VICTORIOUS OVERCOMER SERIES

QUARTER 2 LESSON 13

GOD'S CHURCH: COMMUNION

THEME OF THE WEEK: Christ said to take communion in remembrance of Him.

MEMORY VERSE: “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me” Luke 22:19b (NKJV).

A very special time in a church service time is the communion time. Does everyone here know what communion is? **(Wait for comments and answer accordingly.)** Communion is also called the Lord's Supper because it was started by Christ Himself at the Last Supper—a Passover meal He enjoyed with His disciples the night before He was crucified on the Cross.

Let's read the story of the Last Supper. **(Read Luke 22:14-20 as a group.)**

Christ said the wine represents or reminds us of His Body. When you drink the wine or grape juice in church at communion time, remind yourself that Jesus has paid for your salvation and washed away your sins. When you eat the bread, remind yourself that Christ has paid for your healing—spirit, soul, and body.

Hebrews 9:22 teaches us that without the shedding of Christ's Blood our sins couldn't be paid for. We'd all be in big trouble if Jesus hadn't paid for our sins because Romans 3:23 tells us that everyone has sinned, and Romans 6:23 tells us that the punishment for that sin is death! Thank you, Jesus, that you paid for what we couldn't pay for ourselves!

Christ, remember, ate a Passover meal with His disciples at the Last Supper. One reason He did this was to show them that He is the Passover Lamb Who was dying to take away their sins. The bread eaten at Passover is a special bread called matzah, which is flat, striped, and pierced. That bread reminds us of Christ because just as the bread is flat because it is baked without leaven or yeast, which represents sin, Christ is sinless. Just as the bread is striped, Christ was striped with bloody stripes when He was whipped. And just as the bread is pierced, Christ was

pierced with nails and a Roman spear. 1 Peter 2:24b says, “by whose [Jesus] stripes ye were healed.” Christ’s stripes paid for your healing; so when you need healing, ask for it, and believe you receive it when you pray (Mark 11:24).

Some people have been told that the communion bread and wine become the actual Body and Blood of Christ when they are prayed over, but the Bible doesn’t say this. We must go by what the Bible says. The bread and wine or grape juice are to remind us of what Christ has done; they do not become Christ.

Let’s read 1 Corinthians 11:23-30 together. **(Read as a group.)** We’ve already talked about some of this, but there are a couple of important things to notice here. The first point is that the Apostle Paul doesn’t mention how often we are to take communion. Apparently then, God has left it up to His people as to when to take communion. How they take communion is the second point. How we take communion is important according to these Scriptures. Paul says to take communion in a worthy manner. What does that mean? #1 – Be serious, respectful and thoughtful about what you’re doing when you take communion. #2 – Repent of your sins before you take communion; forgive everyone you need to forgive – every time. Verse 30 shows us that people can even get sick and worse when they don’t follow #1 and #2 that we just learned about. But getting to take communion is a special gift to us from God. You will want to take communion every opportunity you have.

There is no Bible age limit for taking communion, but communion is only for people who have prayed to receive Jesus. You can pray to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord right now if you want to.

What have you learned today?