

*Discovering  
Spiritual  
Maturity*

C.L.A.S.S. 201

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New Memorial Church**

## WELCOME TO DISCOVERING SPIRITUAL MATURITY #201

We're glad you signed up! This class is the second of New Memorial's four basic classes. Since these classes build on each other, you must first attend Discovering Church Membership #101 before taking this class.

### THE PURPOSE OF THIS CLASS: *Spiritual Maturity*

"... that you may **become mature** Christians and may fulfill God's will for you."  
Col. 4:12b (Ph)

"We are not meant to remain as children ... but to grow up in every way into Christ..." Eph. 4:14-15  
(Ph)

### THE FOCUS OF THIS CLASS:

We will focus on the **Four Basic Habits** every Christian needs to develop in order to grow to spiritual maturity. This class will ...

- Equip you with the **skills** you need to begin these habits
- Explain the **tools** you need to continue these habits.

### WHAT IS "SPIRITUAL MATURITY"?

"...In the unity of common faith, and knowledge of the Son of God, we arrive at real maturity - the measure of development which is meant by 'the fullness of Christ.'" Eph 4:13(Ph)

**Spiritual Maturity is Being Like Christ**

"For from the very beginning God decided that those who came to him ... **should become like his Son....**"  
Rom.8:29(LB)

## FACTS ABOUT SPIRITUAL MATURITY

### 1. IT'S NOT AUTOMATIC

"You have been Christians for a long time now, and you ought to be teaching others, but instead ... you need someone to teach you ... When a person is still living on milk, it shows he isn't very far along in the Christian life ... He's still a baby Christian!" Heb. 5:12-13 (LB)

### 2. IT IS A PROCESS

"**Learn** to be mature." Prov. 8:5 (GN)

"**Continue to grow** in the grace and knowledge of our savior Jesus Christ." 2 Peter 3:18 (GN)

### 3. IT TAKES DISCIPLINE

*"Take **the time and the trouble** to keep yourself spiritually fit." 1Tim. 4:7b (Ph)*

*"**Discipline** yourself for the purpose of godliness."(NASB)*

## UNDERSTANDING DISCIPLESHIP

### 1. Mature believers are called DISCIPLES

### 2. I cannot be a disciple without being DISCIPLINED

### 3. The more disciplined I become THE MORE GOD CAN USE ME

### 4. The mark of a disciple is CROSS BEARING

(Jesus) *"Anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple." Luke 14:27*

### 5. How often am I to do this? DAILY

(Jesus) *"If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross **daily**, and follow me."*  
Luke 9:23

### 6. What is involved in "cross bearing"?

WHATEVER IT TAKES to give Christ first place in my life!

## FOUR HABITS OF A DISCIPLE

### HOW CAN I BECOME A DISCIPLE? Develop DISCIPLE HABITS

*"... You have **put off the old self** with its **HABITS**, and have put on the new self... which God is continually renewing in his own image, to bring you to a full knowledge of himself." Col. 3:9-10*

### 1. TIME WITH GOD'S WORD

*"If you **continue in my Word**, then you are my disciples indeed. And you will know the truth and the truth will set you free."*  
John 8:31-32

### 2. PRAYER

*"If you remain in me, and my words remain in you, then you will **ask for anything you wish**, and you shall have it ... in this way you become my disciples."*  
John 15:7-8 (GN)

### 3. TITHING

"None of you can be my disciple unless **he gives up all of his possessions.**"  
(JB)

Luke 14:33

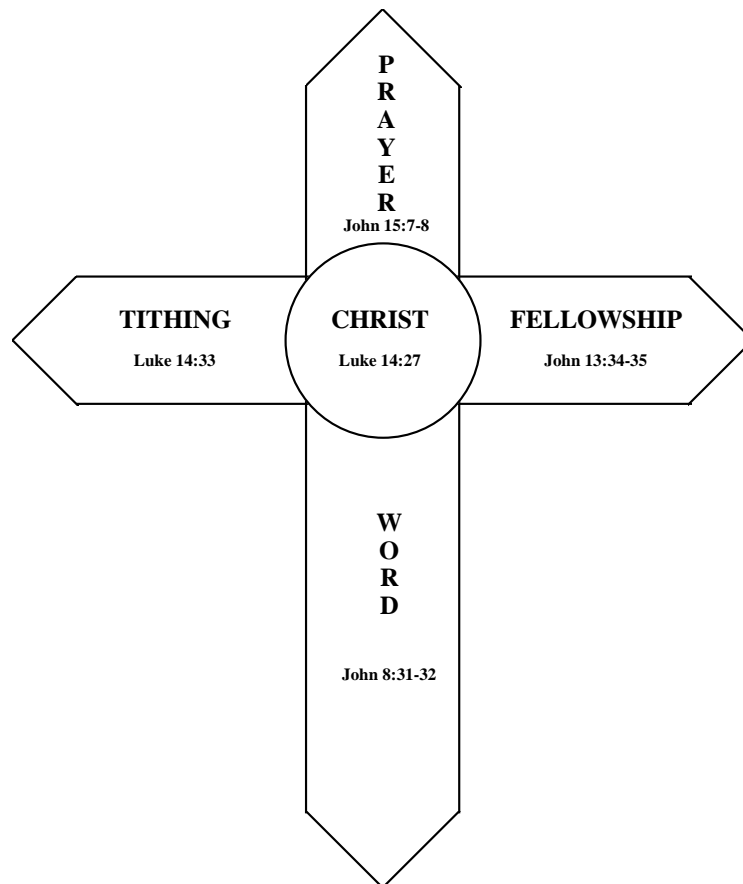
"The purpose of tithing is to teach you to always **put God first** in your lives."  
(LB)

Deut. 14:23

### 4. FELLOWSHIP

"Love each other just as much as I love you. Your **strong love for each other** will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

John 13:34-35 (LB)



## **DEFINITIONS OF "HABIT": (Webster's II Dictionary)**

"A continual, often unconscious inclination to do a certain activity, acquired through frequent repetition."

“An established disposition of the character.”

"Sow a thought, reap an act.

Sow an act, reap a habit.

Sow a habit, reap a character.

Sow a character, reap a destiny."

"A customary practice"

## **THE GOAL OF THIS CLASS**

**That I will COMMIT to the habits necessary for spiritual maturity.**

*"In the past you voluntarily gave your bodies to the service of vice and ... the purposes of evil. So now give yourselves to the service of righteousness - for the purpose of becoming truly good."*

Rom.6:19 (Ph)

# ***HOW TO GET A “GRASP” ON YOUR BIBLE***

*"The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us do what is right. It is God's way of making us well prepared at every point, fully equipped to do good to everyone."*

**2 Tim 3:16-17 (LB)**

# I. HOW TO HEAR GOD'S WORD

*"Faith comes from **hearing** the Word of God."* Rom. 10:17

## Ways to Hear God's Word

- The Bible on tape
- Church services & bible studies
- Sermons on demand (Church App, Facebook, YouTube, etc.)
- Radio/TV teachers

PROBLEM: We forget 95% of what we hear after 72 hours.

## HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR HEARING

### 1. Be ready and eager to hear God.

(Jesus) *"He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"* Luke 8:8

*"How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!"* Psalm 119:103

### 2. Deal with attitudes that prevent hearing God (Luke 8:4-15)

*"Consider carefully how you listen ..."* Luke 8:18

- **A Closed Mind:** Is fear, pride or bitterness preventing me from hearing God?
- **A Superficial Mind:** Am I really serious about wanting to hear God speak?
- **A Preoccupied Mind:** Am I too busy and concerned with other things to concentrate on what God has to say?

### 3. Confess any sin in your life.

*"... **Get rid of** all moral filth and humbly accept the Word..."*  
James 1:21

### 4. Take notes on what you hear.

*"We must pay more **careful attention** to what we've heard, so that we do not drift away!"* Heb. 2:1

## Keep a Spiritual Notebook

### 5. Act on what you hear!

*"Do not merely listen to the Word, and so deceive yourselves. **Do what it says!**"* James 1:22

*"Whoever ... does not simply listen and then forget, **but puts it into practice** - that person will be blessed in what he does."*

James 1:25 (GN)

## II. HOW TO READ GOD'S WORD

*"Happy is the one who **reads** this book ... and obeys what is written in it!"* Rev. 1:3 (GN)

How often should I read God's Word? DAILY

*"(The Scriptures) shall be his constant companion. **He must read from it everyday of his life** so that he will learn to respect the Lord his God by obeying all of his commands."* Deut. 17:19 (LB)

### SUGGESTIONS

Read it systematically.

Bible without notes.

Read it in different translations.

For reading: Message, Good News, Living Bible, Phillips

Read it aloud and then quietly to yourself.

Underline or color code key verses.

Choose a reading plan and stick with it.



**A BIBLE READING PLAN  
THROUGH THE NEW TESTAMENT IN 30 DAYS**

1. Matthew 1-9
2. Matthew 10-15
3. Matthew 16-22
4. Matthew 23-28
5. Mark 1-8
6. Mark 9-16
7. Luke 1-6
8. Luke 7-11
9. Luke 12-18
10. Luke 19-24
11. John 1-7
12. John 8-13
13. John 14-22
14. Acts 1-7
15. Acts 8-14
16. Acts 15-21
17. Acts 22-28
18. Romans 1-8
19. Romans 9-16
20. 1 Corinthians 1-9
21. 1 Corinthians 10-16
22. 2 Corinthians 1-13
23. Galatians - Ephesians
24. Philippians - 2 Thessalonians
25. 1 Timothy - Philemon
26. Hebrews
27. James - 2 Peter
28. 1 John - 3 John
29. Revelation 1-11
30. Revelation 12-22

### III. HOW TO STUDY GOD'S WORD

"... they accepted the message eagerly and *studied the Scriptures* everyday ..." Acts 17:11 (Ph)

"Be a good workman ... **Know what His Word** says and means." 2 Tim. 2:15

The difference between reading and studying the Bible is that you TAKE NOTES when you study.

The secret of effective Bible study is knowing how to ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

#### SUGGESTED RESOURCES FOR BIBLE STUDY

##### "Dynamic Bible Study Methods" By Rick Warren (Victor Books)

12 different methods are explained in simple step-by-step instructions. (Tapes are also available)

##### Study Bibles:

- The Best Personal Study Bible:  
"The Life Application Bible" (Tyndale)
- The Best Topical Study Bible:  
"Thompson Chain Reference Bible - NIV (Kirkbride)
- The Best Background Study Bible:  
"The NIV Study Bible" (Zondervan)
- The Best Doctrine Study Bible:  
"The Disciples Study Bible" (Holman)

##### Bible Handbooks:

- "Richard's Complete Handbook" (Word)
- "Haley's Bible Handbook" (Zondervan)
- "Eerdman's Bible Handbook" (Eerdmans)

##### Other Important Study Tools:

**As many different translations as you can afford**  
(These can be purchased in parallel editions)

**A complete concordance to match your translation**

**A Bible on computer program such as "Logos Bible Software" or "PC Study Bible"**

- "The New Bible Dictionary" (Eerdmans)
- "The Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible" (Baker)
- "The New Bible Commentary" (Eerdmans)
- "The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands" (Moody)

#### IV. HOW TO MEMORIZE GOD'S WORD

*"Guard my words as your most precious possession. Write them down, and also keep them deep within your heart." Pr. 7:2-3 (LB)*

#### BENEFITS OF MEMORIZING SCRIPTURE

##### 1. It helps me resist temptation.

*"I have hidden your Word in my heart that I might not sin against you." Ps. 119:11*

##### 2. It helps me make wise decisions.

*"Your Word is a lamp to guide me and a light for my path. Ps. 119:105*

##### 3. It strengthens me when I'm under stress.

*"... Your promises to me are my hope. They give me strength in all my troubles; how they refresh and revive me!" Ps. 119:49 (LB)*

##### 4. It comforts me when I'm sad.

*"Your words are what sustain me ... They bring joy to my sorrowing heart and delight me." Jer. 15:16 (LB)*

##### 5. It helps me witness to unbelievers.

*"Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." 1 Peter 3:15*

#### WHEN TO MEMORIZE A VERSE

- During your Quiet Time
- While Exercising
- While waiting (spare moments)
- At bedtime (Ps 63:6)

## HOW TO MEMORIZE A VERSE

1. Pick a verse that speaks to you.
2. Say the reference **before and after** the verse.
3. Read the verse aloud many times. Record it!
4. Break the verse into natural phrases.
5. Emphasize key words when quoting the verse.
6. Write down the verse and erase a word one at a time.
7. Write out the verse on a flash card.
8. Carry some cards with you at all times for review.
9. Display your verses in prominent places.
10. Always memorize the verse word perfect.
11. Put the verse to music. Write a song!
12. Get a partner so you can check each other.

**Suggested beginning rate: 2 new verses a week.**

THREE KEYS TO MEMORIZING: REVIEW, REVIEW, REVIEW.

We remember what is IMPORTANT TO US.

“Your teachings are worth more to me than thousands of pieces of gold and silver.” Psa 119:72 (NCV)

## SCRIPTURE MEMORY COURSE

The following verses suggest a "balance" in Scripture Memory. The verses selected are key verses in understanding the foundations of the Christian Life and Christian Growth. Do not feel tied-down to this suggested list. This is only a tool to lead you in an understanding of the importance of memorizing "key" verses.

### *Live the New Life:*

Christ the Center	II Cor. 5:17; Gal. 2:20
Obedience to Christ	Rom. 12:1; John 14:21
The Word	II Tim. 3:16; Josh. 1:8
Prayer	John 15:7; Phil. 4:6-7
Fellowship	Matt. 18:20; Heb. 10:24
Witnessing	Matt. 4:19; Rom. 1:16

***Proclaim Christ:***

All Have Sinned	Rom. 3:23; Isa. 53:6
Sin's Penalty	Rom. 6:23; Heb. 9:27
Christ Paid the Penalty	Rom. 5:8; I Peter 3:18
Salvation Not by Works	Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5
Must Receive Christ	John 1:12; Rev. 3:20
Assurance of Salvation	I John 5:13; John 5:24

***Rely on God's Resources:***

His Spirit	I Cor. 3:16; I Cor. 2:12
His Strength	Isa. 41:10; Phil. 4:13
His Faithfulness	Lam. 3:22; Num. 23:19
His Peace	Isa. 26:3; I Peter 5:7
His Provision	Rom. 8:32; Phil 4:19
His Help in Temptation	Heb. 2:18; Ps. 119:9, 11

***Be Christ's Disciple:***

Put Christ First	Matt. 6:33; Luke 9:23
Separate from the World	I Jn. 2:15-16; Rom. 12:2
Be Steadfast	I Cor. 15:58; Heb. 12:3
Serve Others	Mark 10:45; II Cor. 4:5
Give Generously	Prv. 3:9-10; II Cor. 9:6-7
Develop World Vision	Acts 1:8; Matt. 28:19-20

***Grow in Christ likeness:***

Love	John 13:34-35; I Jn. 3:18
Humility	Phil. 2:3-4; I Peter 5:5-6
Purity	Eph. 5:3; I Peter 2:11
Honesty	Lev. 19:11; Acts 24:16
Faith	Heb. 11:6; Rom. 4:20-21
Good Works	Gal. 6:9-10; Matt. 5:16

## V. HOW TO MEDITATE ON GOD'S WORD

*"(Those) who are always **meditating** on His Laws ... are like trees along a river bank bearing fruit ... they never wither and whatever they do prospers."* Ps. 1:2-3 (LB)

Meditation is FOCUSED THINKING about a Bible verse in order to discover how I can apply its truth to my own life.

### WHY MEDITATE ON SCRIPTURE?

#### 1. It is the key to becoming like Christ.

*"... Your life is shaped by your thoughts."* Pr. 4:23 (GN)

*"... Be transformed by the **renewing** of your mind."* Rom. 12:2

*"As we ... **contemplate** the Lord's glory, we are being transformed into His likeness ..."* 1 Cor. 3:18

#### 2. It is the key to answered prayer.

*"If you live your life in Me, and my words live in your hearts, **you can ask for whatever you like**, and it will come true for you."* John 15:7 (Ph)

#### 3. It is the key to successful living.

*"... Meditate on (the Word) day and night, so you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful."* Joshua 1:8

### SIX WAYS TO MEDITATE ON A VERSE

1. **Picture it!** Visualize the scene in your mind.
2. **Pronounce it!** Say the verse aloud, each time emphasizing a different word.
3. **Paraphrase it!** Rewrite the verse in your own words.
4. **Personalize it!** Replace the pronouns or people in the verse with your own name.
5. **Pray it!** Turn the verse into a prayer and say it back to God.
6. **Probe it!** Ask the following nine questions:

### S.P.A.C.E.P.E.T.S. Questions

Is there any ...

**SIN TO CONFESS?**

**PROMISE TO CLAIM?**

**ATTITUDE TO CHANGE?**

**COMMAND TO KEEP?**

**EXAMPLE TO FOLLOW?**

**PRAYER TO PRAY?**

**ERROR TO AVOID?**

**TRUTH TO BELIEVE?**

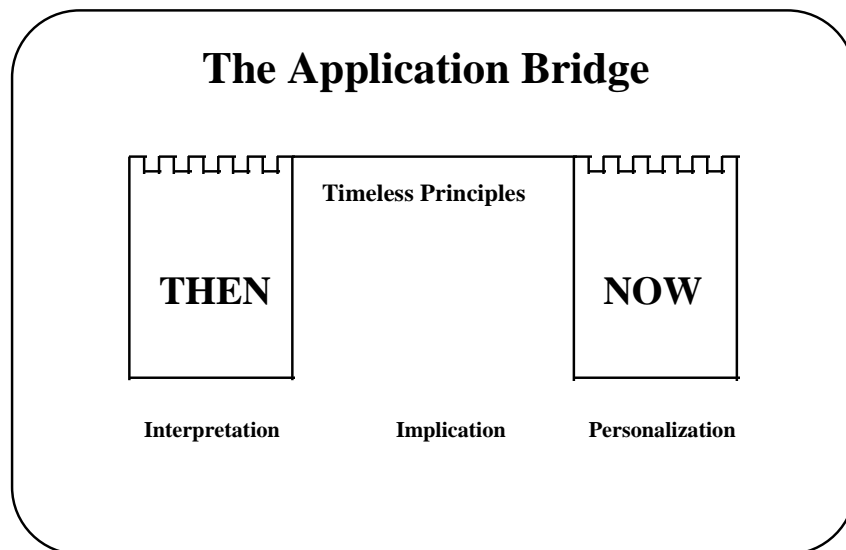
**SOMETHING TO THANK GOD FOR?**

## **VI. HOW TO APPLY GOD'S WORD**

*"Do not fool yourselves by just listening to the Word. Instead, put it into practice."*  
James 1:22

*"... Whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven."*  
Matt. 5:19

## **HOW TO APPLY SCRIPTURE**



**1st ask: What did it mean to the original hearers?**

**2nd ask: What is the underlying timeless principle?**

**3rd ask: Where or how could I practice that principle?**

Write out a sentence that describes a project or action you will take to apply the truth.

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#### **4 Marks of A Good Application Project**

1. It's **PERSONAL**
2. It's **PRACTICAL**
3. It's **POSSIBLE**
4. It's **PROVABLE**

*"Now that you know these things - **do them!** That is the path of blessing!" John 13:17 (LB).*