

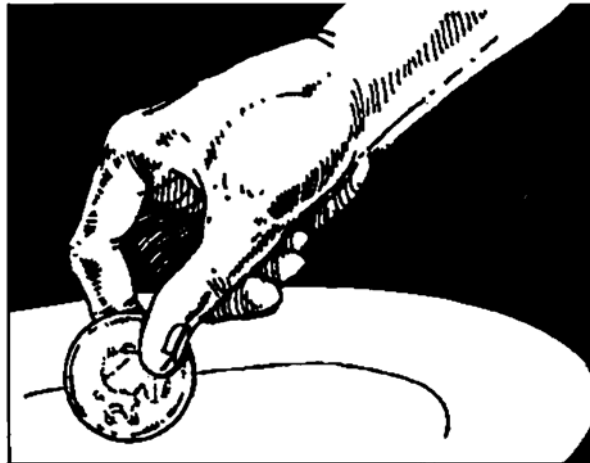
Lesson
5

New Life New Activities

When we were children, we did the things that children do. We played games and explored our surroundings. We liked to run, jump, and play. Our responsibilities were few, because our parents cared for us.

But life changed when we became adults. We began to take care of ourselves. We formed our own families and began to provide for them. What we did in our spare time also changed. As our interests and skills developed, so did our activities.

A similar kind of change is taking place in your life right now. Your spiritual life is unfolding. As you “grow up” in Christ, new interests replace old ones. There are also new responsibilities—ones that can bring you new kinds of rewards and satisfactions. In this lesson we will look at these special changes and activities. You will discover that other people also share your new interests!



In this lesson you will study . . .

New Interests
New Activities
New Testimony
New Partnership

This lesson will help you to . . .

- Discover new activities that match the new interests you have.
- Join with others who have the same new interests that you have.
- Share your faith in Christ with your neighbors and friends.
- Accept responsibilities that will bring you new kinds of rewards.

NEW INTERESTS

Objective 1. *Identify the new interests you have.*

How Do You Spend Your Time?

Of course you have to spend a certain number of hours each day working, eating, and sleeping; but how do you spend the rest of your time? What people do in their free time depends on what they and their families are most interested in. Some work all the time, and others play. Some go to church and take part in its work; others “don’t have time for that.” You probably don’t have enough time to do everything that you would like to do, but somehow you manage to find time for the things that interest you most.



For You To Do

- 1 What people do in their free time is usually determined by
 - a) how much time they have.
 - b) their main interests.
 - c) the opinions of others.

When Your Interests Change

You don’t play the same games that you liked when you were a little child, because you are busy doing something that interests you more now. When your interests change, so do your activities.

Your old friends may be surprised that you are no longer interested in “having a good time” with them in things that would harm your health or hurt your soul. They don’t understand that you have entered a life of deeper enjoyment, full of worthwhile, satisfying activities.

Should you go back to the things that you know can’t satisfy? Ask the man who is eating spoiled scraps from a garbage heap and then is invited to eat at a rich friend’s table every day. Would he go back to the garbage dump?



For You To Do

- 2 Describe a new interest that you have since you accepted Jesus as your Savior.

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- 3 Describe something difficult that you do now that you didn’t do before you accepted Jesus.

.....

A Different Purpose

As a child of God, you have new interests. These will lead you into group activities and personal responsibilities. You will still do many of the things that you used to do—working, eating, sleeping, and taking care of home duties—but your real life will center around your new interests.

Above all, when you love a person, you want to be with him and please him. Now that you love God, you will want to spend time with Him and please Him in all you do.



For You To Do

- 4 The different purpose you have as a child of God is to
- a) try to make more money.
 - b) enjoy yourself and the good things of life.
 - c) spend time with your heavenly Father.

We are intensely interested in our Father's kingdom and what He is doing on earth. He is at work now, bringing men and women to himself through the preaching of the good news about Jesus. He is building His church, and He has called us to work with Him. What a privilege!



For You To Do

- 5 We have a part in what God is doing in the world today by
- a) explaining the way of salvation to others.
 - b) ruling over those who are not Christians.
 - c) doing many religious rituals and ceremonies.

NEW ACTIVITIES

Objective 2. *Discover activities that are in harmony with the new interests you have.*

Your new interests in God's kingdom will keep you busy and happy. Here are some activities that will give new purpose and meaning to your life.

Church Attendance

God's plan is for each Christian to become a member of a local church community. In keeping with this plan, Christians who live near each other meet together regularly to worship God, encourage each other, study the Bible, and share their faith with people who need to know about Jesus Christ. This is how they help each other do the work that God has given them to do.

These meetings, or church services, may be held in someone's home or in a building dedicated to God for this purpose. You will want to attend these services as often as you can and take your friends with you to hear the gospel. You will enjoy the fellowship with your brothers and sisters in Christ and, most of all, the presence of the Lord as you meet with Him in these services.

As soon as possible, you will want to become a member of a church that serves God and preaches the gospel. Take part in its program, and enjoy its advantages and blessings. These lessons will help you become a good member.



For You To Do

- 6 The paragraphs you have just read describe four activities that Christians do when they meet together. In the following list, one of these activities is missing. Write it in the space provided.
- a) Listening to messages from the Bible
 - b) Praising God and thanking Him
 - c) Witnessing about their faith
 - d)

What would happen if someday the pastor, or another Christian, should unintentionally offend you by something he says? When one child hurts another’s feelings in a family, the children don’t usually leave home over it. But when this happens in church, some Christians say: “He has offended me. I’m not going back to church anymore. I’ll just worship the Lord here at home.” Be careful! That is a favorite trick that the devil uses to weaken a Christian and separate him or her from the Lord.

Remember that your Father expects His children to meet with Him in His house. The building may be humble, and you may not agree with the way everything is done; but you need to meet with your brothers and sisters in Christ at your Father’s table to receive the food that you need for your soul.

Hebrews 10:25. Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are doing. Instead, let us encourage one another.



For You To Do

- 7 If the pastor says something that offends you, you should
- a) quit going to church or find another church.
 - b) tell others that he is not a good pastor.
 - c) forgive him and keep attending the services.

8 A person who says, “I don’t need to meet with other Christians,” should be reminded of the instructions the Bible gives in

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Bible Reading

We have already mentioned the importance of reading the Bible every day. Can you get the other members of your family to join with you daily for Bible reading and prayer? We call this a family altar, or family devotions. Having family devotions each day will be a real blessing to your home. The truth from God’s Word that you share will guide you and strengthen you for the day. When you meet, you can take time to pray together for the needs of each person in your family.



For You To Do

9 Perhaps you want to begin having family devotions. Circle the letter before each phrase that describes what you will do.

- a Meet at home each day.
- b Share needs and ask God for help.
- c Include only the older children.
- d Meet at the church once a week.
- e Encourage each person to pray.
- f Read from the Bible.
- g Thank God for His blessings.

Prayer: When to Pray

Prayer is one of the most important things that a Christian can do. When you pray and God answers, you are working together with God. So take time to pray.

- When you awake in the morning, begin the day with God and you will receive physical, moral, and spiritual strength for the problems of the day.
- Thank God for your food before eating.



- Have family devotions either in the morning or at night.
- Take advantage of the times of prayer during church services and when you arrive before the service begins. God says, “My house shall be called the house of prayer.”
- Lift your hearts to God at any time, thanking Him for His blessings or asking for His help. You don’t always have to speak words when you talk to your Father this way; He knows your thoughts.
- Before you go to bed at night, thank God for His care during the day. Ask His forgiveness for anything wrong that you have done, and entrust yourself to His care for the night.



For You To Do

10 Use the list you have just read as a guide for prayer. Put a mark beside each of the suggested times for prayer that you want to add to what you are now doing.

Prayer: How to Pray

You may be saying to yourself, “But I don’t know how to pray.” It isn’t hard. Just talk to God like you would to a friend. The Holy Spirit will help you.

Think about all that God has done for you, and thank Him for His blessings. Ask Him for your needs and those of your loved ones. Pray for the salvation of your friends and relatives. Pray for your pastor, your church, your brothers and sisters in Christ, and for God’s work all over the world. Pray for new converts and their problems. Pray for your country. Just begin to pray, and you will soon learn how.

Jesus gave us a model that you may memorize and use in your prayers.

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done in earth,
 as *it is* in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts,
 as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil:
For thine is the kingdom,
 and the power, and the glory, for ever.
Amen.

—Matthew 6:9-13, KJV



For You To Do

11 Memorize the Lord’s Prayer.

NEW TESTIMONY

Objective 3. *Choose to tell others about your faith in Jesus Christ.*

Witnessing

This means to tell others what God has done for you. You can do this at home, on the street, in church services, or even by letter. Just as others spoke to you about Christ, you can speak to your friends and relatives. Pray for them to accept the Lord and not go to hell.

The Bible stresses the need of declaring publicly our faith in Christ, to let others know He is our Savior. Christ said, “You may be witnesses for me.” If you need courage, ask God for it, and He will give it to you. Thousands of people have been afraid to testify just as you may be now, but they have conquered their fear and found a great blessing and new strength in witnessing for Christ. The Lord Jesus said:

Matthew 10:32. “If anyone declares publicly that he belongs to me, I will do the same for him before my Father in heaven.”

Mark 8:38. “If a person is ashamed of me and of my teaching in this godless and wicked day, then the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”



For You To Do

12 Following is a list of people you probably see often. Pray for them and ask God to help you share with them what Jesus has done for you.

- a** Your family and your relatives
- b** People with whom you work
- c** Your friends
- d** Your neighbors
- e** Merchants in your community

Singing to the Lord

The ability to sing and make music is one of God’s wonderful gifts to people. At home or at church, your songs will help, encourage, and bless you and others. It doesn’t matter if your voice isn’t very good for singing; what does matter is that you praise God from your heart.

Colossians 3:16. Sing psalms, hymns, and sacred songs; sing to God with thanksgiving in your hearts.

13 For a person to sing, the most important thing is for him or her to

- a) have a pleasing voice.
- b) be able to sing in front of others.
- c) sing from the heart to glorify God.

NEW PARTNERSHIP

Objective 4. *Identify ways you can be a partner with God.*

Preaching the Gospel

This is a very important activity of the church. Some are called to give their full time to this work. God gives them the responsibility of being pastors, evangelists, and missionaries.

Giving

Our Father is generous to everyone. As His children we must learn to act the way He does. This is the most important reason why we give. Giving to others is one way of showing that we belong to Him. The money we give in church offerings helps many people. Some goes to brothers and sisters who need clothing. Some goes to support the pastor so he can give all of his time to his duties as a minister. Some goes to pay practical expenses of the church such as lights, water, and maintenance.

Our money can also be used to buy Bibles, hymnbooks, and Christian literature. It can be used to pay for evangelistic radio and television programs. God has given His children the important work of telling others about salvation. By giving our money, we have a part in doing this important work.

The Bible describes a pattern of giving one-tenth (called the “tithes”) to the work of God. Many Christians follow this as a guide. They recognize that all they have comes from God, including the

strength to earn money. In turn, they give back to God one day's wages out of every ten. What they earn on that tenth day goes to support the church as it preaches the gospel. On that day, they are "preaching the gospel."

Christians who give generously discover the joy of becoming partners with God. At the same time, they find that their own needs are met. You can make these wonderful discoveries for yourself!

Jesus said these words:

Luke 6:38. "Give to others, and God will give to you. . . . You will receive a generous helping . . . all that you can hold."

Your giving brings three kinds of blessings:

- Spiritual blessing. You become the kind of person God plans for you to become—generous to others.
- Satisfaction. You are glad to be a dependable member of God's family, carrying your share of the load.
- Security. God has promised to meet all your needs. As you obey Him, you can depend on Him to take care of you. Thousands of Christians can tell you from experience that God has never failed them.

Malachi 3:10. "Bring the full amount of your tithes to the Temple, . . . Put me to the test and you will see that I will open the windows of heaven and pour out on you in abundance all kinds of good things."

2 Corinthians 9:7. God loves the one who gives gladly.



For You To Do

14 Following are four statements about giving. Which one gives the most important reason *why* Christians should give?

- a) God is generous and gives good things to everyone.
- b) Those who give will have their own needs met.
- c) The tithe is one-tenth of God's earnings.
- d) The Old Testament mentions tithing several times.

Helping in Any Way You Can

Whatever work you do for the Lord will help you grow spiritually, from sweeping the chapel to holding a neighborhood service for a Sunday school in your home. Ask your pastor what you can do for the Lord.

Taking Part in Church Organization

There are several organizations in the church. Sunday school is for everyone. There you can be a faithful member of one of the classes and study God's Word systematically. Don't miss this opportunity. The men, women, young people, and children all have their own organizations. In their meetings they worship the Lord and carry out different projects for Him. Join one of these groups. You will receive a warm welcome and will enjoy its activities. These groups try to reach, teach, and help those who need it. Although one person can do very little, God working through the united forces of His children will carry His cause forward in this world.



For You To Do

15 Here are some ways people take part in the church. Circle the letter before any you think you would like to do. Offer your services to the pastor or the leaders.

- a** Collecting or counting the offerings
- b** Caring for young children during worship services
- c** Visiting the sick and praying for them
- d** Helping older people come to the services
- e** Talking with those who have questions about what Christians believe
- f** Taking care of the church building and grounds
- g** Giving practical help to members who are in need

Too Many Activities?

Don't worry if you can't spend as much time in these activities as some people can. The Lord understands all about it, and He will help you do what you can.

You will enjoy these activities of your new life. It will be satisfying to know that you are helping others to escape eternal punishment and find eternal life. And for everything that you do for the Lord now, He will richly reward you in the world to come.

Now that you have completed the first unit, you are ready to answer the questions in your *Student Report for Unit One*. Review the previous lessons, then follow the instructions in your student report. Send your answer sheet to the address given on the copyright page of your study guide.



Check Your Answers

- 7** c) forgive him and keep attending services.
- 1** b) their main interests.
- 8** Hebrews 10:25.
- 4** c) spend time with your heavenly Father.
- 9** Phrases **a**, **b**, **e**, **f**, and **g** describe what you should do when you have family devotions.
- 5** a) explaining the way of salvation to others.
- 13** c) sing from the heart to glorify God.
- 6** d) An answer such as "encouraging each other" would be correct.
- 14** a) God is generous and gives good things to everyone.