



CHRISTIANITY ELEMENTARY COURSE

Spanish - Russian - Portuguese - Brazilian - **English**

ELEMENTARY COURSE FOR NEW CONVERTS

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ELEMENTARY COURSE FOR NEW CONVERTS

If you recognize that:

1 - The world does not offer solutions to your doubts and to your problems.

2 - You haven't yet found the joy that you've always dreamt of.

3 - You are tired of searching for something to believe in.

4 - Circumstances just don't get better, they seem to get worse.

Well, it is time for you to find what you are looking for.

We offer you the solution, and the solution is JESUS.

Search for Him in His Word: the Bible.

Learn to live like a child of God, like more than a Conqueror.

(You've read it correctly: more than a conqueror).

Learn the real meaning of the word: Faith.

Before you start this course, make a decision. Analyse yourself and answer the following questions:

- Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

- Do you believe that He died on the Cross of Calvary and that His blood cleansed our sins?

- Do you want to follow the teachings of Jesus Christ?

- Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the only solution?

If you have answered "YES" to all of the above questions, then you are ready to start your journey with Jesus.

REGULATIONS FOR THE ELEMENTARY COURSE

This course can be purchased at any local Maná church by anyone who has accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour.

The minimum age requirement for this Elementary Course is 12.

The Elementary Course consists of four lessons, with the following titles:

1) Three things you need to know

2) Three things you need to believe in

3) Three things you need to have

4) Three things you need to do

Each book deals with a certain topic and at the end of it there is a test. The tests will be marked and upon completion of the Elementary Course you will receive a Diploma.

1 -THREE THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

I - THE BIBLE

There are 3 things a Christian should know:

- 1 - The Bible
- 2 - God
- 3 - Man

The Bible, which is the Word of God, is where you will find out how to live a true Christian life.

Your spiritual life goes hand in hand with your determination to put the Word of God into practise in your life.

THE BIBLE:

- The Old Testament (written before the birth of Christ).
- The New Testament (written by Jesus' disciples and by other men of God during the first century after Christ).

The Old Testament consists of 39 books, from *Genesis* to *Malachi*.

The New Testament consists of 27 books, starting with the Gospel of *Matthew*, and ending with *Revelations*.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

a) *Genesis*: The first book of the Bible and of the Old Testament. It tells us about the creation of the world and of man; about the spiritual down fall of mankind caused by sin; about the flood that destroyed all of humanity except for Noah and his family, and it begins telling us the History of Israel.

b) Books from *Exodus* to *Esther*: tell us about the History of Israel until approximately 400 years B.C.

c) *Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes,* and *Song of Songs*: are books, written in these literary styles: poetry, hymns, sermons and drama.

d) Books from *Isaiah* to *Malachi* are prophetic and predict future events.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

a) *Matthew, Mark, Luke,* and *John*: These are referred to as the Gospel and they are the first 4 books of the New Testament. The word Gospel means: Good News.

What is the theme that runs through the books of the Gospel? It is all about the life of Jesus, since His Birth, about His ancestors and about His childhood.

A major part of the books of the Gospel is dedicated to Jesus' teachings during the 3 years of His ministry.

It talks about the miracles He performed; how He was persecuted, taken prisoner and nailed to the Cross. It tells us about His death, His resurrection and His Ascension. It also tells us about the extraordinary promise of the Second Coming of Jesus.

b) Acts of the Apostles: this book talks about the evangelistic work of Jesus' followers. It narrates the birth and growth of the Church of Jesus in the First Century.

The main character until Chapter 12 is Apostle Peter. The end of Chapter 12 tells us about how Paul was chosen to preach to the Gentiles (people who didn't belong to the Jewish race).

c) From Romans to Jude there are 21 epistles. These were written to the various Churches, and to the Jewish Christians throughout the World.

Authors: Paul, Peter, John and others.
Theme: doctrinal truths and the daily practice of Christian life. These provide us with a clear explanation about Christianity.

d) Revelations: This book talks about the things which are still to happen. It predicts Judgement Day and describes it as a transition between the modern world we live in today and a new Kingdom that God has created.

HOW DID THE BIBLE COME INTO EXISTENCE?

It was written by 36 people during a period of approximately 1600 years. The Bible was not written by man alone, for it is written in:

2 Tim. 3:16 - "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God..."

Here we see that it was written by men who were inspired by the Spirit of God. The real Author of the Bible is God.

One thing a Christian should always guard in his heart, is that the Bible is the only true Word of God, revealed to man.

The perfect will of God for us is written in it.

Only the Bible contains the right moral, ethical and social teachings for our lives. Every Christian should be guided by the Word of God, for it gives us victory in all our battles, comfort in all our suffering, answers to all our questions and the strength to overcome all adverse circumstances.

But beware! If your're seeking fame, fortune and power in the Bible, forget about it!

The Bible teaches you something more sublime; it teaches you how to seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness first, and that only then will all these other things be given to you.

The main focus of the Bible is: Jesus.

In the Old Testament we find the historical prophecy of His coming to this earth in human form.

In the New Testament we read the report of His life and the promise of His Second Coming.

Jesus - the Word of God

Jesus - the only begotten Son of God

Jesus - God - Man

II - GOD

Does God really exist? Look around you ... the colours, the forms, the succession of day and night, the stars and planets, and now look at yourself... Have you noticed that all these things are genuinely original?

None of this was copied or imitated. Only a highly intelligent superior Being could have created all of these things.

This Being is GOD!

Psalm 19:1 - "The heavens declare the glory of God; And the firmament shows His handiwork."

THE NATURE OF GOD

a) God is a spirit: He is not limited by space or time;
He is:

Omnipotent - He is ALL powerful.

Eternal - He existed in the days of our forefathers, He is with us now, and He will be with our descendants.

b) He is a person - Our God has feelings, He's knowledgeable and has his own free will. He understands our feelings, He knows our thoughts and He wants us to be faithful to Him.

c) He is the one and only true God - There are no other gods.
"There is only one God."

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD

a) Omnipresent - He is everywhere

Jeremiah 23:24 "Can anyone hide himself in secret places, So I shall not see him?" says the LORD; "Do I not fill heaven and earth?" says the LORD."

b) Omniscient - He knows everything,

Proverbs 15:3 “The eyes of the LORD are in every place,
Keeping watch on the evil and the good.”

God even knows the tiniest things we try to hide in the most secret places of our heart.

c) Omnipotent - He is ALL powerful

Mathew 19:26 “... with God all things are possible.”

d) Eternal - He is not limited by time

Psalms 90:2 “Before the mountains were brought forth,
Or ever You had formed the earth and the world,
Even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.”

e) Constant - We often change, because of our circumstances but God never changes.

Malachi 3:6 “For I am the LORD, I do not change ... “

This is what the Lord says about Himself.

f) Holy - There is no sin, wickedness, corruption or lie in God. God does not partake of those things, and cannot have any involvement with them.

Proverbs 15:9 “The way of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, but He loves him who follows righteousness.”

g) Just - God is impartial. His judgements are fair.

Psalms 119:137 - “Righteous are You, O LORD, and upright are Your judgments.”

h) Love - This is God’s most important attribute.

I John 4:8 “... for God is love.”

THE LOVE OF GOD

It is hard for man to understand the magnitude of God's love. He is love, and He wants the best for us.

The love of God is pure, and without any selfishness.

We haven't done anything to deserve this love. God even loves sinners.

The love of God is so profound that:

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

THE TRINITY OF GOD

There is only One God! So why talk about the trinity of God?

God reveals himself to us, in the Bible as three people:

- God the Father - the Creator
- God the Son - the Word of God - God who became man
- God the Holy Ghost - the power of God.

Please refer to the following scriptures in the Bible;

- *Matthew 3:16, 17,*
- *Matthew 28:19,*
- *II Corinthians 13:13*

It is not correct to say that there are three gods, but there are three distinct people who together make up one single God.

III - MAN

Where does man come from? To find the answer, we will consult the Bible, which has the answer for everything; let's get the answer from God.

Society is of the opinion that mankind evolved biologically. It was Charles Darwin who introduced this theory of evolution.

What does the Bible say?

Man was created by God Himself, in His image and likeness.

It was not by chance that God created man. God created man for a specific purpose. (*Genesis 1:26, 27; Isaiah 43:7*)

After creating man, God exalted him above all creatures and allowed him to dominate: (*Genesis 1:26*).

When God created man, He gave him a free will, freedom of choice. Let's read *Genesis 3:1, 24*.

What was the first thing that man chose? Sin.

Man chose to disobey God. He used his freedom of choice unwisely and he sinned. What was the result of sin? Death.

God is holy and therefore He cannot be in agreement with sin. He has to condemn it.

From the very beginning, after the first man sinned, all other men were born with a sinful nature.

See *Romans 5:12*

Consequently, what is man's destiny? *Romans 6:23* - "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

2 - THREE THINGS YOU NEED TO BELIEVE IN

I - BELIEVE IN SIN

In the previous lesson we studied about man, how he was created, how God was pleased with His creation and how man eventually disobeyed God and sinned. The consequence of this sin was death!

Now let's talk about sin.

Without understanding sin, it's impossible to understand about salvation, or about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Sin isn't only stealing, cheating, killing, etc.

In this lesson we want to talk about the sin which originates from our inner most being, the spiritual part of each human being, and what makes man commit sins which are visible to everyone. Let's study about what causes sin.

Why does man sin? What is sin all about?
Let's define the word "sin".

1 - It's a natural incapacity (imperfection) in man which hinders him from achieving the perfection which had been established by God during the creation of man.

Open your Bible in *Romans 3:23*, and write the verse down in the space provided:

Do you understand what you have written? All have sinned and because of that they are without the glory of God.

What is the glory of God?

It is the manifest perfection of God.

Do you remember that man was created in the image and likeness of God? However, when man sinned initially, he lost this perfection.

All that is opposite or contrary to the Word of God is a sin.

2 - Disobeying the laws that God established is considered a sin. Man is unable to achieve the standard by which God intended us to live in, because he is constantly transgressing God's law.

God established rules of conduct and spiritual principles which we need to obey in order to live happy, successful lives.

Usually, if someone feels unhappy, it is a sign that they are not obeying these spiritual laws.

Is that not true?

3 - Read *Matthew 5:27, 28*

Did you understand it? All of your bad intentions, actions and thoughts are sinful.

4 - When you have the opportunity to do what is good, but you choose to do what is bad, that is considered to be a sin. The Gospel clearly encourages us to choose to do what is good all the time.

Note that, it isn't enough just to avoid what is bad.

James 4:17 *“Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins.”*

So, what is sin? It is:

- the incapacity to achieve the standard by which God intended us to live in.
- disobeying the spiritual laws established by God
- bad thoughts and actions
- choosing not to do what is good when we know we ought to.

Every person is a sinner.

Read the following verse and complete the text below:

James 2:10

“For whosoever _____ law and yet stumble _____ one _____, he is _____ of all.”

So, who is not a sinner? See the answer in **Romans 3:10**

“As it is written: “There is _____ no, _____.”

This means that man, regardless of his race, skin colour, social ranking or qualifications is a sinner.

We have all sinned before God. The result of sin, as we have learnt, is death.

If God is love, how can He allow such a thing?

Is there still hope for us? What can we do about this?

II - BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST

Read carefully...

Romans 6:23 *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

Apparently, God did give us the solution. Yes, a free gift from God.

There is no doubt that God is love. We're unable to understand the magnitude of His love for us. Man sinned, but God provided the solution to set him free from eternal death.

God provided the way to eternal life, even though man chose sin, which resulted in eternal death. Let's study the solution God provided.

Open the Bible and read **John 3:16**. Read it again and try to understand the magnitude of God's love for us.

What did He give to us sinners?

Jesus Christ, His only son.

What for?

John 3:16 *“... that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”*

Who is Jesus Christ? He is the Son of God, He is God!

John 1:3 *“All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”*

Revelation 1:17,18 “... I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore.”

Hebrews 13:8 “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”

Jesus is God!

Titus 2:13 “Looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Colossians 2:9 “For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; “

Jesus said of himself:

John 10:30 “ I and My Father are one.”

The ministry of Jesus Christ:

Jesus Christ was born approximately 2000 years ago, in a city called Bethlehem. He was born of Mary, a virgin chosen by God, to generate a divine seed.

In all the scriptures there is very little about Jesus' childhood. We know that he worked as a carpenter until the age of 30, together with Joseph, his earthly father.

For the next three years Jesus travelled through all of Palestine, teaching the Gospel of salvation. His teaching was new, powerful and full of authority.

He performed miracles, transformed water into wine, gave sight to the blind, healed the lepers and the paralysed and raised the dead; He comforted the afflicted;

He ate together with sinners, helped the weak, encouraged the depressed, gave hope to the desperate and forgave the sinners.

Open your Bible and read the next Biblical passages carefully. Each scripture describes a miracle performed by Jesus.

*Matthew 8:1-4; Matthew 8:23-27; Mathew 9:1-8;
Mark 5:35-43; Mark 10:46-52; Luke 13:10-17;
Luke 15:3-7; John 8:1-11; John 9:1-7; John 11:1-45*

The value of the crucifixion

After three years of teaching, healing and blessing the public, Jesus was taken prisoner, judged and crucified. Why?

Let's recall how death came to fall upon humanity. It was the result of sin. We have studied that God is holy and does not coexist with sin.

Therefore, we came to the conclusion that the sin of man had to be judged and punished.

What is the consequence of this? Eternal death!

Eternal death means the eternal separation between God and man. But did God create man in His own image and likeness to be separated from Him for eternity?

Never, there had to be a way, to reconcile God and man again! The crucifixion of Jesus was the price. He had to die so that our sin could be forgiven. He had to pay the price for all sin with His life.

Why Jesus? He is God, and was born a man from a divine seed provided by God. Jesus was the only man born without any sin! Only He could be crucified and pay the price for our sin.

He was the only solution.

The crucifixion of Jesus was the only sacrifice and way to reconcile man with God.

1 Peter 3:18 “For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, ...”

He manifested Himself to the world.

Hebrews 9:26 “... to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.”

The victory of his resurrection

The death of Jesus was not His end. After three days He rose from the dead.

Let's read a few scriptures about the resurrection of Jesus:

Mark 16:1-6; Luke 24:1-7; John 20:1-10; John 20:24-29.

After His resurrection, Jesus remained for 40 days with His disciples.

After which He ascended to Heaven and was seated with honour, at the right hand of the Father. In other words, He returned to His former glory with the Father.

Acts 1:9-11; Luke 24:51

Today, Jesus is with the Father, observing us and interceding for us.

1 Timothy 2:5 “ For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus. ”

Jesus Christ - God and man

Jesus is God, therefore all the characteristics that we studied about God, can also be found in Jesus.

- He is Omniscient
- Omnipresent
- Omnipotent
- He is always with us

- Immutable (unchangeable)
- Holy
- Just
- Eternal
- Love

Jesus is the only way to Salvation.

He himself says:

John 14:6 “*I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*”

III - BELIEVE IN ETERNAL LIFE

Someone may ask: what must I do to have eternal life?

This question has been asked from generation to generation throughout the centuries. God has an answer to it and we should only believe in His answer.

Acts 16:31 - "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."

To believe in Jesus means: not only believing that He exists, but above all, accepting Him as your Saviour and developing a relationship with Him.

Passionately desiring salvation and eternal life implies:

1 - Repentance of evil deeds that result in eternal death:

- a) Recognizing that you are a sinner.
- b) Confessing your sins to God.
- c) Asking forgiveness and believing you have obtained it, not because you deserve it, but because Jesus Christ died on the cross for you.

2 - Acceptance of Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour is your decision to make. Nobody else can make it for you.

God will not force you to accept Salvation. Remember, God gave you the opportunity to make choices in life.

You must choose! God wants to save everybody; all you have to do is to decide that you need Salvation.

Read **Revelation 3:20**

*“Behold, I stand at the door and knock.” If _____
hears My voice and _____, I _____
and dine with him, and _____”.*

Many people think that we are all children of God.

This is not true!

We are all God’s creation, but only those who accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour can become God’s children.

Read **John 1:12**

3 - Believing in God’s promises is being sure that they belong to us. It means trusting the Word of God in the following areas:

- a) Our relationship with God. **(1 John 3:1)**
- b) The belief that God forgives our sins. **(1 John 1:9)**
- c) The belief that we are saved. **(1 John 5:12-13)**
- d) The belief that we have eternal life **(1 John 2:25)**

Before I conclude this chapter I would like to remind you of the following:

Eternal life is a free gift from God.

You haven’t done anything to deserve it!

3- THREE THINGS YOU NEED TO HAVE

Before we start this lesson, we need to revise the previous two lessons.

Which three things do you need to know about?

The Bible, God and man

Which three things should you believe in?

Sin, Jesus Christ and Eternal Life

Now we will discuss the **“Three things you need to have.”**

Please understand that “knowing” and “believing” refer to the theoretical and intangible part of Christianity, which has to do with our inner man.

However, the part related to “having” is practical and visible.

Open your Bible in:

***1 Corinthians 13:13** - “And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.”*

Everyone who is born again has been forgiven of their sins and has received eternal life from God.

Now there are three things you need to have in your spiritual life: Faith, Hope and Love.

I - FAITH

1) What is faith?

Hebrews 11:1,3,6 - "Now faith is the _____ of things _____, the _____ of things not seen. By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the _____, so that the things which _____ were not _____ of things which are visible. But without _____ it is _____ to please Him, for he who _____ to God must believe that He is, and that He is a _____ of those who _____ Him."

For us, children of God, faith involves:

- Knowing the Word of God
- Accepting it to be true.
- Taking hold of God's promises for our lives.

In order to understand God's Word we do not need logic, nor great intelligence, but what we do need is faith.

2) How does faith come about?

We cannot obtain faith, just because we want it or make a considerable effort to get it. Faith is a gift from God for those who believe in Jesus and who have previously received Him. The only faith that is real and prevailing is the one that is given to us by God.

John 3:27 - "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven."

3) How can you receive this gift of Faith?

You can receive this gift by reading the Bible (the Word of God) every day. You must then meditate on the scriptures you read and finally practise the Biblical truths in them.

Open your Bible in:

Romans 10:17 - “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

What do we believe in?

a) We believe that the Bible is the Word of God.

That the Bible is God’s Word. Complete, unfailing, divinely inspired and unique. We believe in all the truths that are written in the Bible.

2 Timothy 3:16 - “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”

b) We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the eternal God.

John 10:30 - “I and My Father are one.”

c) We believe that Jesus Christ took upon Himself all of our sins and consequently died on the Cross. We believe that on the third day he rose from the dead and ascended to Heaven and that He shall return in Glory to judge the World. (**Acts 13:26, 29**).

d) We believe in the redemption of our sins through Jesus Christ and that we can only be saved by confessing His name. (**I Peter 1:18**).

e) We believe that when Jesus returns, we will be resurrected just like He was.

(**I Thessalonians 4:13, 18**)

We place our faith in the Word of God day after day.

We use our faith to govern our lives, the decisions we make and our actions. In the beginning of this chapter we read what was written in:

Hebrews 11:6 - “But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”

II - HOPE

The word “hope” means the following:

- 1- The expectation that God will fulfil His promises.
- 2 - Having confidence in the grace and mercy of God and in His purpose for our lives.
- 3 - Believing in and holding on with confidence to the blessings of God which belong to us, even during the difficult moments of our lives.

This hope is an expression of our faith.

In the world nobody understands our hope; they don't believe, nor do they have any faith.

Christian hope is different, because it is based on faith.

What do we place our hope in?

1- In the will of God

God has a purpose for each one of us and His plan for our lives has to be fulfilled, because it is absolute, it is good and it completes us.

What is the will of God? It is what God has planned, desired and determined to happen in our lives.

Note: all that comes from God is good.

2 - In the justice of God

God does not agree with any type of sin, illegality or partiality. That is why our hope is in God's integrity, and in His fair and impartial judgement.

3 - In the Love of God

If our hope was only based on God's will for us and in His justice, then our relationship with Him could not be compared to a father and son relationship.

We could accept His decisive will for our lives and His justice, as being fair and impartial, but we could never experience intimate fellowship with Him.

But God loved us so much that..... (*John 3:16*)

We have seen that God does not only have love, but He is love. His love is pure. He loves everyone in exactly the same way. He does not have any favourites. His love is continuous.

The result of our hope

If we understand and acquire this hope, we will be able to develop three essential characteristics in our lives.

- Patience
- Humility
- Certainty

1 - If we patiently wait for the will of God to be done in our lives, giving it time to materialize, He will give us the ability to remain steadfast. We need patience to be able to live a successful life. The most important virtue is patience.

2 - When we wait upon God's fair judgement, we become humble, in the most profound expression of the word. Humility means recognizing and submitting to the authority of God.

3 - When we wait upon the love of God, we receive the confirmation of His endless love for us; the forgiveness of our sins, a stable life and a peaceful spirit. As a result, no one will be able to take away the sense of safety and certainty that we feel.

III - LOVE

Faith and Hope are made complete through Love.

1 Corinthians 13 - is referred to as the Chapter of Love.

Open your bibles and read this chapter very carefully. The first three verses clearly explain what our spiritual life would be like if there was no love.

If I:

- spoke in the tongues of men and of angels,
- had the gift of prophecy and could fathom all mysteries and all knowledge,
- had a faith that could move mountains,
- Gave all I possessed to the poor and surrendered my body to the flames,

Wouldn't you like to have all these wonderful gifts operating in your Christian life?

These gifts are noble for a Christian to have.

But ... what is it all worth, if you don't have love.

Let's continue;

a) It's possible to do all those things mentioned in the first three verses of chapter 13, without being motivated by love.

Our sense of responsibility would be enough to compel us to act in such a manner. For example: faith which moves mountains could be a cold and loveless faith.

b) What happens if I have no love?

...I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal;

...I am nothing;

...I gain nothing;

God is Love.

Jesus Christ is the most profound expression of God's love.

Christianity implies walking in love.

Our lives must be controlled by love. We should live a life that is a true manifestation of God's love.

If you have no love, your faith and hope will not have any value, nor will it bear any good fruit.

Love is the most important virtue and it completes all other aspects in life that are true.

Therefore, what is love?

Read versus 4 and 8.

Underline these scriptures in your Bible, meditate on them and believe that: love never fails.

THE PRACTICAL SIDE OF LOVE

a) Love endeavours to understand others.

The best way to overcome any barriers or difficulties amongst people is to make an effort to understand their situation.

There are no two identical people. Everybody is different. We have different personalities, different ways of thinking, different attitudes, habits that are different and we are also physically different. If we do not make an effort to try to understand each other, then this world will remain in constant chaos and conflict.

You, as a child of God, have the responsibility to be understanding towards others. This is the first characteristic that love entails. However, we must understand that to be able to do this, we need patience.

b) Love creates an attitude of forgiveness in you.

The love of Christ is based on forgiveness.

God forgave us, so now it's our duty to forgive one another.

How could someone say that they love, if they cannot forgive?

How could someone forgive, if they do not have love?

In order to forgive, you need to have a humble heart.

This type of forgiveness is not the same as when a policeman turns a blind eye to a traffic violation.

When a child of God forgives, they do so with a sincere and humble heart, knowing that they are also sinners.

When you forgive without humility, this will inevitably result in a spirit of pride.

c) Love will make you want to help others.

(John 13:1-11)

Why did Jesus wash his disciples' feet?

To show us an example of how we should serve one another.

(John 13:12-17)

Just talking about love is not enough; we must act upon this love by serving one another.

When we serve one another, we should not do it in order to get something in return, but rather with good intentions and a pure heart.

We must continue serving, whether we are thanked for it or not - whether we receive any form of recognition for it or not.

We should not be after a reward.
What was Jesus' reward?

Let's go over this again: The love we need to have consists of:

- 1 - Understanding one another,
- 2 - Immediately forgiving all the trespasses committed against you and doing this with a humble heart.
- 3 - Serving your neighbour with the love of Jesus.
When I refer to "neighbour", I am not only referring to your family and friends - that would be very easy.
We need the love of Christ.

Who is your "neighbour"?

Read **Luke 6:27-28** and fill the gaps in the text below:

"But I say to you who hear: Love your _____, do good to those who _____ you, _____ those who _____ you, and pray for those who _____."

Who spoke these words?

Jesus Christ your Lord!

1 Corinthians 13:13 "And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

4 - THREE THINGS THAT YOU NEED TO DO

I - STUDY THE BIBLE

a) Read the Bible daily

The Bible is food for your spirit. Feed you spirit daily with the Word of God. If you do not feed your body it will become weak. It's the same with your spirit. If you neglect your spirit, it will weaken and affect your faith, hope and love.

When is the best time to read the Bible? The best time is in the morning; when your mind is fresh.

I recommend that you read a chapter per day.

b) Read the Bible systematically.

Start with the New Testament and in this order:

- 1) The Gospel of **Mark**
- 2) The Gospel of **John**
- 3) **Acts** of the Apostles
- 4) **Romans**
- 5) **I Corinthians**
- 6) **Galatians**
- 7) The Gospel of **Luke** and **II Corinthians**

- 8) *Ephesians, Philipians, Titus*
- 9) *Colossians* and *1 John*
- 10) The Gospel of *Matthew* and *James*
- 11) *1* and *2 Thessalonians*
- 12) *1* and *2 Timothy*
- 13) *1* and *2 Peter*
- 14) *Hebrews*
- 15) *Jude, Philemon* and *2 and 3 John*
- 16) *Revelations*

After reading the New Testament in this sequence, you can start making your own reading plan. However, if you read a chapter per day, you will take 9 months to finish reading the New Testament.

c) Read the Bible with patience

In the Bible you will find certain passages which you may not be accustomed to. This might lead to a sudden loss of interest. Let me give you an example, in the first chapter of the Gospel of Matthew you will find a list of names (genealogy) to read. This is but one of the things that may throw you off.

Another thing is that sometimes, because you don't understand certain parts in a chapter, it will keep you from grasping its full meaning. Remember:

1 - This is normal, and not because you lack understanding.

2 - There is a continuous trail of thought in the Bible and you'll find that as you read ahead you'll start understanding things that you hadn't before.

d) Read the Bible with a spirit of prayer

The Bible is not a magazine, or a romantic novel.

It is a book which contains the power to transform your life. It's only by reading the Bible that you will come to develop a relationship with Jesus Christ. If you do not know Jesus you will not be able to follow Him.

By reading the Bible you feed your spirit, therefore read each verse with an attitude of prayer. Start off with a simple prayer, asking God for understanding and wisdom to help you practice what you are about to read. God will always answer this request. When you have finished reading the chapter, go back and meditate on the scriptures. This means, reading the scriptures slowly and letting the Word of God penetrate into your spirit and soul.

e) Read the Bible repeatedly

There are certain truths and meanings in the Bible that you won't understand straight away. This could be indicative of the circumstances you are going through at the time.

Often, a certain scripture that you read, might not make sense to you at that precise moment or it may be difficult for you to put into practice straight away, but if you read that same scripture later on, in another situation, you might get a revelation from it that transforms your life.

Example: If you are experiencing a calm and peaceful period in your life and you read the following scripture:

Romans 12:14 - "Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse."

You may say to yourself,

"I could never do this "

"This is not for me... "

But then your circumstances change, and you have to deal with someone who dislikes you and who is spreading lies about you ... etc.

This time when you read the scripture it will jump out at you, and because you are a zealous Christian and you want to obey the Lord, you will not only understand what is written, but you will apply it in your life by dealing with this person and situation differently.

Practical suggestions:

1 - Always have a pencil or a marker at hand. Mark the verses that touch you the most. You can also mark the ones that you don't understand, so that you can ask the leader of your Bible Study Group to explain them to you at a later date.

2 - It is also advisable to use a notepad to take notes of all the ideas and concepts you are learning.

3 - Never start off by reading the Old Testament. I suggest you only start reading it after you've become familiar with leading a Christian life and only when you have someone who is more experienced to help you.

Open your Bible in *Hebrews 4:12*.

Read it, until it sinks in.

We refer to a scripture in the following manner:

The name of the book - **Hebrews**

The chapter - **4**

The verse - **12**

II - PRAY

The Bible is the Word of God.

How do you communicate what you have read in the Bible? How do you speak the Word of God? Through prayer.

Praying is a way of speaking to God. You shouldn't repeat meaningless words to God, but you should speak the words that you have learnt and read in the Bible.

In order to grow spiritually, you need to pray!

Prayer is your source of spiritual strength and well being.

Prayer is our spiritual respiration.

Practical rules about prayer

1 - Pray every day

2 - Pray with expectation, with faith in your heart.

Everybody can pray, but it is only a child of God who can pray with faith. (Remember what we've learnt about faith)

This is the only type of prayer that touches God.

Mark 11:24 - "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours."

You must believe that God will answer your prayers and that you will receive what you've asked for.

3 - Pray with an open heart

When you pray, open your heart to Jesus Christ, so that He can come in and make known to you and through you, His awesome power. Allow the will of God to be done in your life.

4 - Pray with patience

Praying is a spiritual exercise.

Being an exercise, the more you pray the easier it gets.

For example, it's not easy to pray every day but if you keep at it, it gets easier.

God will answer your prayers according to His timetable and His will, not according to yours. So be patient.

5 - Pray and give thanks - with a joyful, trusting and thankful heart.

Philippians 4:6 - " Be _____ for nothing, but in everything by _____ and _____, with thanksgiving, let your _____ be made _____ to God."

Pray according to what God promises in His Word. Pray with trust, confidence and gratefulness. As you draw near to God and open your heart to Him with burning faith, you will undoubtedly receive the answer to your prayers.

The main elements of prayer

There is no fixed formula on how to pray.

However, we can say that prayer consists mainly out of:

- 1 - Praising - We praise God and Jesus as our Lord and Teacher.
- 2 - Confessing our sins, our weaknesses, our shortcomings, our failures and our imperfections.
- 3 - Requesting - we ask God for Him to forgive our sins, to give us strength, health, provision and guidance every day.
- 4 - Interceding - we pray for our family and friends, for our daily workload, for the society in which we live, for our country, for it's authorities, for it's government, for the church we belong to and for it's church members.
- 5 - Giving Thanks - We thank God for His love for us, for having given His only Son to die on the cross for us, for answering our prayers and for everything that Christ represents in our lives.

III - WITNESS

Acts 1:8 - "...and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

What does witnessing mean? It is, when someone talks about something that they know to be the truth.

Therefore, in order to witness about something or someone, you first need to have experienced it.

Acts 1:8 calls on us to witness about Jesus, our Lord.

It's a glorious privilege to have been given this task.

When we love someone, it's difficult not to talk about them.

We talk about them to everyone! We talk about the way they behave and about their actions. We emphasize how precious they are to us etc.

Just like parents talking about their beloved children.

We should witness about Jesus with this same passion, because we love Him with all of our heart. We should tell people how Jesus died on the cross to save us, and about everything that Jesus has done and is doing in our lives.

Jesus asks us:

Mark 16:15 - *“ To go into the whole world, and to preach the good news to all creation”.*

What does it mean: to go to “go into the whole world”?

What is preaching the gospel?

Who is “all creation”?

It means to witness about Jesus to your neighbour, to your colleagues at work or to your school mates. To a person who might feel depressed, without hope, unworthy and without a purpose in life or to a person who seems to have everything but who feels an empty void in his/her life.

Jesus gave us this commandment:

Luke 9:60 - "... go and proclaim the kingdom of God."

I would like to congratulate you on completing the "Elementary Course" for new converts. Please await your diploma.

I advise you to carry on, motivated by the desire to know more about God and to become a faithful disciple who continuously follows his master, Jesus Christ.

The next step you should take in order to enhance your spiritual growth is to enrol in the "Complementary Course".

TEST SECTION

READ THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY

Answer the questions in each test, after having studied each lesson.

Do not consult your notes in order to answer these questions. The main reason for this test is for you to analyse how much you have learnt and to find out what you need to study more about.

Keep this booklet in a safe place, so that you can consult it whenever you need to. Once you have successfully completed this 4 lesson course successfully, you will be given a diploma.

**ELEMENTARY COURSE
TEST 1**

Grade: _____ No.: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal code: _____

Country: _____

Church: _____

Age: _____

Qualifications / Work experience: _____

Date of Salvation: _____

Why did you decide to take this course? _____

**Read carefully and mark the correct answer with an X.
Please respond to the questions in legible handwriting.**

1- The Bible is:

- a) A book.....
- b) A collection of books.....
- c) The Book.....
- d) A collection of books, divided in 2 parts, The Old and The New Testament

2- Which historical fact divides the Old Testament from The New Testament?

- a) The departure of the Israelites from Egypt.....
- b) The death of Moses.....
- c) The arrival in the Promised Land.....
- d) The birth of Jesus.....



3- Name the first and the last book of the Bible

4- Which attribute of God impresses you the most?

Why?

5- Is it correct to say that there are 3 gods? Explain the Trinity of God in your own words.

6- Which is the most profound expression of God's love?(*John 3:16*)

7- God gave man the freedom to choose. Explain the meaning of this in a different way.

8- What was the very first choice that man made?

9- What was the result of that choice?

10- Explain why man is born with a sinful nature, as a result of Adam and Eve's actions?

ELEMENTARY COURSE TEST 2

Grade: _____ No.: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal code: _____

Country: _____

Church: _____

Age: _____

Qualifications / Work experience: _____

Date of Salvation: _____

Why did you decide to take this course? _____

**READ THE QUESTIONS CAREFULLY AND ANSWER
THEM IN LEGIBLE HANDWRITING.**

1- What does the word "sin" mean?

2- Where does sin reside in man?



3- What are the wages of sin?

4- By dying on the cross, what did Jesus conquer for us?

5- Who is the only mediator between God and man?

6- What steps must man take, to change from being a “creation of God” into being a “child of God”?

7- Complete:

“As it is written: “There is _____, not _____”

8- Complete:

“... But the _____, of God is _____ in Christ Jesus our Lord _____.”

9- What was your favourite miracle performed by Jesus?

10- What steps does man have to take in order to be saved?

ELEMENTARY COURSE TEST 3

Grade: _____ No.: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal code: _____

Country: _____

Church: _____

Age: _____

Qualifications / Work experience: _____

Date of Salvation: _____

Why did you decide to take this course? _____

READ THESE QUESTIONS CAREFULLY AND ANSWER IN LEGIBLE HANDWRITING.

1- What three things do you need to have in your spiritual life?

2- What do you need to have in order to please God?



3- Apart from intelligence, what more do we need to have in order to understand the Word of God?

4- Faith is not the result of our efforts. Therefore, how do we get faith?

5- List two things, which are important for us to believe in.

6- What are the results of hope?

7- List 3 characteristics of hope

1- We hope in the _____ of God.

2- We hope in the _____ of God.

3- We hope in the _____ of God.

8- Which gift binds hope and faith together?

9- When we meditate on the power of God's love, we become certain of something. What is that?

10- What are the practical aspects of Love?

ELEMENTARY COURSE TEST 4

Grade: _____ No.: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Postal code: _____

Country: _____

Church: _____

Age: _____

Qualifications / Work experience: _____

Date of Salvation: _____

Why did you decide to take this course?

**READ THE QUESTIONS CAREFULLY AND ANSWER
THEM IN LEGIBLE HANDWRITING.**

1- What is considered to be “food” for your spirit?

2- How many times per month should we read the Bible?



3- Which part of the Bible should you start off by reading?

4- What is the best way of learning more about Jesus?

5- What should you do before you read the Bible?

6- What is prayer?

7- Which are the most important conditions for prayer?

8- List the 5 fundamental elements of prayer.

9- Why should we always pray in the name of Jesus?

10 - What mission does Jesus give us in Mark 16:15?
