

# ***EVIDENCE OF THE REBIRTH***

## ***LEADER'S GUIDE***

***A STUDY TO HELP THE CHURCH MEMBER KNOW  
WHETHER HE IS SAVED OR NOT***

***MARTIN PURYEAR***

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**EVIDENCE OF THE REBIRTH****LEADER'S GUIDE****ORIENTATION**

[Have everyone turn to pages **4-5**, "A Snapshot of the Course."]

This "Snapshot of the Course" is intended to *orient* us to the direction this study will take.

Let's begin with the "Objective" of this course, found on the title page, page 1. This is what we hope to achieve from this study. *Evidence of the Rebirth* is

A STUDY TO HELP THE CHURCH MEMBER KNOW WHETHER HE IS SAVED OR NOT

On pages **6-7**, this course begins with an assurance. These pages are meant to convince the reader that it *is* possible for one to know whether he is saved or not, revealed by certain proofs.

But before we get into the evidence of salvation, pages **8-18** explain what causes some church members to think they are saved when they are not. We will first discover that there are two kinds of faith, not just one. And from these two kinds of faith, two kinds of fruit are produced. Next, we will consider the "False Assurances of the Rebirth," presenting five specific professions and actions, "The Externals of Christianity," that many rely upon as proof of their salvation ... but are not.

We then will consider ten reliable proofs of salvation (pages **19-46**), followed by a challenge to examine *ourselves* based upon these proofs (pages **47-49**). We will conclude with a presentation of the Gospel (pages **50-51**).

On pages **52-55**, Appendix A discusses both the possibility and the appropriateness to evaluate the fruits of others (under certain conditions and regulated by certain motives).

Finally, on pages **56 and following**, you are given a list of questions we will discuss as a group.

? Does anyone have any comments, questions, or clarifications about where we are going and how we plan to get there?

**SEMINAR FORMAT**

You may want to use the following seminar format with each "Title / Subtitle."

**IT IS POSSIBLE TO KNOW WHETHER YOU ARE SAVED OR NOT**

[Have someone read this section: pages 6-7.]

- ? What do you think this course is trying to accomplish? *[To assure one that he is (or is not) prepared for Christ's evaluation before it is too late.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? What do *you* hope to gain from this course?

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

**TWO KINDS OF FAITH**

**THE FAITH THAT DOES NOT SAVE**

[Have someone read this section: page 8.]

[Have someone read footnote 1, page 8.]

- ? How is it that a man can perform good deeds, yet still have "no works"? *[If good deeds are generated by the will and strength of man, they will be "void of spiritual vitality" and "empowered by his flesh" (that is, they will be **sin-tainted** since the nature of man is sinful). The only works acceptable to a perfect God are His own perfect works. Sinful man has "no perfect works" (which plays a part in why man cannot save himself.)]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## **TWO KINDS OF FAITH**

### **THE FAITH THAT *DOES* SAVE**

[Have someone read this section: pages **8-9**.]

[Have someone read footnote **2**, page **9**.]

Salvation, from start to finish, is a work of God. Its plan, the conviction of sin, the repentance that leads to life, saving faith ... it all originates with God and is given by God to the sinner. As a result, "no man may boast before God."

[Have someone read 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 1:29-31.]

*... NO MAN MAY BOAST BEFORE GOD. BUT BY HIS DOING YOU ARE IN CHRIST JESUS, WHO BECAME TO US WISDOM FROM GOD, AND RIGHTEOUSNESS AND SANCTIFICATION, AND REDEMPTION, SO THAT, JUST AS IT IS WRITTEN, "LET HIM WHO BOASTS, BOAST IN THE LORD." (1<sup>ST</sup> CORINTHIANS 1:29-31)*

This would also include the "works" that radiate from a living faith. These, too, are God-generated. Each of these living works that come from a living faith is supernatural in nature. To be sure, the works of James 2:18 are miracles.

[Have someone read James 2:18.]

*SOMEONE MAY WELL SAY, "YOU HAVE FAITH AND I HAVE WORKS; SHOW ME YOUR FAITH WITHOUT THE WORKS, AND I WILL SHOW YOU MY FAITH BY MY WORKS." (JAMES 2:18)*

? What must the believer do to participate with God in His works? [*Abide in His fellowship through His Word and prayer. He must trust God to provide him with the motivation and power he needs to obey God. And then he must obey God.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## **TWO KINDS OF FAITH**

**THE QUALITY OF A TREE DETERMINES THE QUALITY OF ITS FRUIT**

**THE QUALITY OF THE FRUIT REVEALS THE QUALITY OF THE TREE**

[Have two read these two sections: pages 9-10.]

[Have someone read footnote 3, page 10.]

[Have someone read 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 13:5.]

*TEST YOURSELVES TO SEE IF YOU ARE IN THE FAITH. EXAMINE YOURSELVES! OR DO YOU NOT RECOGNIZE THIS ABOUT YOURSELVES, THAT JESUS CHRIST IS IN YOU – UNLESS INDEED YOU FAIL THE TEST?  
(2<sup>ND</sup> CORINTHIANS 13:5)*

In this verse the Apostle Paul exhorts those within the church to “test” themselves to determine “if (they) are in the faith.” Yet, there are those who *back away* from such an evaluation. They do not want to examine the quality of their faith, whether it is “real” or not.

? What do you think would cause someone to respond in this way? *[For one to face the possibility that he may not be saved could so horrify him that he would rather avoid that prospect rather than face it. (What he might discover scares him.)]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? What do you think is at stake with such an evaluation? *[One's eternal destiny. There will come a time when it is too late to consider the quality of one's faith.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?”

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

### **FALSE ASSURANCES OF THE REBIRTH**

[Have a few read this section: pages **11-12**.]

[Have someone read footnotes **4** and **5**, page **11**.]

- ? Can you think of anything worse than someone who has been a church member for many years coming to realize one day that he is lost? [*Yes, not realizing that he is lost until the day he dies (i.e., when there is no time left to do anything about it).*]

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

### **THE EXTERNALS OF CHRISTIANITY**

#### **PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH**

[Have someone read this section: page **13**.]

It is possible for a lost person to learn to speak the language of a Christian.

- ? Why do you think so many individuals (as well as their parents and grandparents) cling to their public professions of faith in Christ as Lord to be the *proof* of their salvation?

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## **THE EXTERNALS OF CHRISTIANITY**

### **ACTIVE IN CHRISTIAN MINISTRY**

[Have someone read this section: page 14.]

- ? How is it possible for a person to be active in his church without making the connection between his sins and the death of Christ? *[Perhaps because his sins were never made the issue before he could **join** the church (a responsibility of church leadership). It is possible for one to be an eager and involved participant in church activities without personalizing his own **need** for the work of Christ.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## **THE EXTERNALS OF CHRISTIANITY**

### **BELIEF IN GOD**

[Have someone read this section: pages 14-15.]

We are told that it is *belief in the Gospel* that saves.

[Have someone read Ephesians 1:13.]

*IN HIM, YOU ALSO, AFTER LISTENING TO THE MESSAGE OF TRUTH, THE GOSPEL OF YOUR SALVATION — HAVING ALSO BELIEVED, YOU WERE SEALED IN HIM WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE. (EPHESIANS 1:13)*

- ? What is the difference between “belief in the Gospel” and “belief in God”? *[To believe the Gospel is to depend upon the Death of the risen Christ Jesus to serve as the Payment for one's sins. This goes far beyond simply believing in the existence of God. One can believe in God's existence and still reject the Cross of Christ.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

### ***THE EXTERNALS OF CHRISTIANITY***

#### **CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

[Have someone read this section: pages **15-16**.]

? What can parents (grandparents) do to guide their children (grandchildren) toward trusting Christ for salvation without turning them into mere religious – but lost – church members? [*Parents (Grandparents) should not only explain to their children what **does** save them but also what does **not** save them. They need to understand the difference between saving faith and religious professions and activities that may be good and proper but that cannot save.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

### ***THE EXTERNALS OF CHRISTIANITY***

#### **OBSERVING CHRISTIAN RITUALS**

[Have someone read this section: pages **16-17**.]

As important as it is, one's baptism does not prove that he is saved.

- ? Have you ever known someone (perhaps yourself) that was baptized, then years later, was truly saved? If so, what did he do that he had not done before? What new understanding turned this religious – but lost – person into a saved person?

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

### SUMMARY

[Have someone read this section: pages **17-18**.]

### BUT BEFORE WE GO ANY FARTHER

[Have someone read this section: page **18**.]

It was stated in this section, "'Good fruit' is the *evidence* of salvation, not the *cause* of salvation."

- ? What is the difference between "the evidence of salvation" and "the cause of salvation"? [*"the cause of salvation" is how one gets saved while "the evidence" of salvation are the proofs one has **after** he gets saved.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

A person does not *become* a Christian by acting like one. Yet, this is precisely the belief of one who is merely religious but lost.

- ? Why does an unregenerate mind have so much trouble distinguishing between being religious and being spiritually alive? [*Because of a lack of faith. One who has not trusted in Christ's death as payment for his sins may try to imitate the behavior of those who **are** born of God's Spirit. But that kind of lifestyle is counterfeit, one that is "religious without life." And it **will** not – it **cannot** – be seen as such until the purpose of the Cross is understood and received. Then, and only then, will the reborn one*]

*understand what it means to be spiritually alive ... and how spiritually dead he had been.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## **EVIDENCE OF THE REBIRTH**

### **THE 1<sup>ST</sup> EVIDENCE**

#### **HE HOLDS THE *LIVING* WORD OF GOD, JESUS CHRIST, IN HIGH ESTEEM**

##### **He Exalts the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ**

[Have someone read this section: page 19.]

To *not* exalt Jesus Christ is to make Him less than He is: to "belittle" Him, to "ridicule," to "mock," to "pour scorn on," to "criticize," to "laugh at," to "vilify" ... even to ignore Him. It is any response toward the Son of God – in attitude, word or deed – that refuses to acknowledge His true value.

? Obviously, to verbally blaspheme the Name of Jesus Christ is to devalue His Person. But how else can one reject the worth of the Son of God? [*He disregards the commandments of Christ / He persecutes the Body (the Church) of Christ Jesus (to ridicule them is to ridicule Him)*]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## **HE HOLDS THE *LIVING* WORD OF GOD, JESUS CHRIST, IN HIGH ESTEEM**

### **He Believes that Jesus Is a Flesh-and-Blood Human Being**

[Have someone read this section: pages **19-20**.]

To not believe in the humanity of Jesus Christ is to reject His virgin birth, His ability to die on the cross, His bodily resurrection, and His future authority over all creation as King of kings and Lord of lords (Genesis 1:26, 28; Psalm 8:3-8). None of these would / will be possible apart from having a human body.

? Is it possible for someone to *reject* the humanity of Jesus, and still be saved? If so, why? If not, why not? [*No. One cannot be saved apart from belief that the Crucifixion of Christ Jesus was payment for his sins. There is no other way by which man can be saved. "Without shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness" (Hebrews 9:22). To shed physical blood, one must have a physical body.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## **HE HOLDS THE *LIVING* WORD OF GOD, JESUS CHRIST, IN HIGH ESTEEM**

### **He Believes that Jesus Is God**

[Have someone read this section: pages **20-21**.]

? Can you think of any verses in which Jesus Himself *claims* to be God?

[Have someone read each verse mentioned *plus* Matthew 26:63-65; Mark 14:61-63; John 8:24, 8:58, 10:30-33, 20:27-29.]

[Have someone read Romans 1:3-4.]

... CONCERNING HIS SON, WHO WAS BORN OF A DESCENDANT OF DAVID ACCORDING TO THE FLESH, WHO WAS DECLARED THE SON OF GOD WITH POWER BY THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD, ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS, JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD. (ROMANS 1:3-4)

- ? According to Romans 1:3-4, what event in the life of Jesus confirmed His claim to be God? *[His resurrection]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? What are some ways one *outwardly proves* his belief that Jesus is God? *[He expresses confidence that Jesus will keep every one of His promises / He expresses confidence that Jesus has the power to answer any prayer (that conforms to His will) / He expresses confidence that Jesus alone is able to save him from his sins / He obeys the commandments of the One he calls "Lord."]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## HE HOLDS THE *LIVING WORD OF GOD*, JESUS CHRIST, IN HIGH ESTEEM

### He Believes that Jesus Is the LORD'S Messiah

[Have someone read this section: pages **21-22**.]

- ? Can you think of any verses in which Jesus Himself claims to be the LORD's promised Messiah?

[Have someone read each verse mentioned *plus* Matthew 16:15-17, 26:63-65; Mark 14:61-63.]

- ? What are some ways one *outwardly proves* his belief that Jesus is the promised Messiah?

*[He will be strongly encouraged about the future as he contemplates the return of the King of kings and Lord of lords, before Whom every knee will bow to pay homage to Yahweh's Messiah, including the leadership of all the nations of the world (Psalm 2).*

*Furthermore, he will voluntarily acknowledge Jesus' right to rule **his** life as King of kings and Lord of lords.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## **THE 2<sup>ND</sup> EVIDENCE**

### **HE HOLDS THE WRITTEN WORD OF GOD IN HIGH ESTEEM**

#### **He Views the Bible as Trustworthy and Authoritative**

[Have a few read this section: pages **23-24**.]

[Have someone read footnote **6**, page **24**.]

? How do you know whether one views the Bible as "trustworthy and authoritative"? *[He will treat the **source** of Scripture as originating from Someone other than mere man (the Bible has a Divine **origin**, penned by human agents). He will not "pick and choose" which portions of the New Testament he will submit his life to and which he believes he can ignore since they do not "mesh" with the prevailing thought of his culture.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

### THE 3<sup>RD</sup> EVIDENCE

#### HE IS ABLE TO UNDERSTAND SPIRITUAL TRUTHS

[Have a few read this section: pages 25-26.]

[Have someone read footnote 7, page 25.]

A common experience among believers is that each time they read a passage of Scripture, they often “see things they have never seen before.” They increasingly understand more.

? Why is that? *[It is a matter of stewardship. The more **time** one spends in **the Word of righteousness**, the more of God's will he knows. And the more he **trusts** God to empower him to **practice** what he knows, the greater his capacity to receive (understand) even more Truth. As His children prove themselves faithful to obey the Truth they know, the Father entrusts them with more Truth.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?”

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

### THE 4<sup>TH</sup> EVIDENCE

#### HE IS ABLE TO DETECT ERROR IN SOMEONE'S TEACHING

[Have someone read this section: page 27.]

[Have someone read Ephesians 5:25.]

*HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES, JUST AS CHRIST ALSO LOVED THE CHURCH AND GAVE HIMSELF UP FOR HER.  
(EPHESIANS 5:25)*

? Do you agree that husbands should love their wives? If so, *why* do you agree? If not, why do you *not* agree?

[Summarize their answers.]

[Have someone read the next three verses, Ephesians 5:22-24.]

*WIVES, BE SUBJECT TO YOUR OWN HUSBANDS, AS TO THE LORD. FOR THE HUSBAND IS THE HEAD OF THE WIFE, AS CHRIST ALSO IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH, HE HIMSELF BEING THE SAVIOR OF THE BODY. BUT AS THE CHURCH IS SUBJECT TO CHRIST, SO ALSO THE WIVES OUGHT TO BE TO THEIR HUSBANDS IN EVERYTHING.*  
(EPHESIANS 5:22-24)

? Do you agree that wives should be subject to their husbands? If so, *why* do you agree? If not, why do you *not* agree?

[Summarize their answers.]

[Have someone read 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 6:9-10.]

*OR DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT THE **UNRIGHTEOUS** WILL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD? DO NOT BE DECEIVED; NEITHER FORNICATORS, NOR IDOLATERS, NOR ADULTERERS, NOR EFFEMINATE, NOR HOMOSEXUALS, NOR THIEVES, NOR THE COVETOUS, NOR DRUNKARDS, NOR REVILERS, NOR SWINDLERS, WILL INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.* (1<sup>ST</sup> CORINTHIANS 6:9-10)

This passage, of course, refers to those who refuse to repent of their sins and turn to Christ Jesus for salvation.

? Do you agree that every practice listed is “unrighteous”? If so, *why* do you agree? If not, why do you *not* agree?

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?”

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

### **THE 5<sup>TH</sup> EVIDENCE**

#### **HE STRIVES (THOUGH IMPERFECTLY) TO OBEY THE WILL OF GOD**

[Have a few read this section: pages 28-29.]

[Have someone read footnotes 8 and 9, page 28.]

It was stated that one of the pieces of evidence of the rebirth is a longing to be holy.

- ? In what ways would this longing for holiness show up in one's prayer life? [*Sincere requests to be conformed to the image of Christ would characterize one's prayer life. Requests for sin to be purged from one's life would also dominate one's prayer life. A willingness to endure the discipline of the Father might even be voiced in one's prayers.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

Let's say that a new believer asks you to mentor him / her.

- ? What would you teach / show him that would cultivate within his life a close fellowship with his Savior? That is, what does he need to know to *live* by faith and obedience? [*To spend time each day with his heavenly Father through His Word and prayer. To ask for God's help to understand the Truth he reads. To ask God to show him how to obey that Truth. To pray for God's power to obey His Word. To spend time with a few others who have this same pursuit.*]

[*For a resource to do this, visit [www.stewardoftruth.com/products/7/The-Pleasure-of-My](http://www.stewardoftruth.com/products/7/The-Pleasure-of-My)*]

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## **THE 6<sup>TH</sup> EVIDENCE**

### **HE STRUGGLES WITH HIS PERSONAL SINS (OF WHICH HE IS AWARE)**

[Have a few read this section: page **30-31**.]

When one who is born of the Holy Spirit sins against God, his soul *should* be troubled. It is a sign of spiritual health to be *bothered* by one's own sins. But to go through life *defeated* by one's sins is a different matter.

- ? Can you think of any promise(s) in the Bible that, *if believed*, will turn a spirit of defeat (over one's sins) into confidence and gratitude and joy? [1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9]

[Have each verse read that is mentioned. If not mentioned, have someone read 1<sup>st</sup> John 1:9.]

*IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, HE IS FAITHFUL AND RIGHTEOUS TO FORGIVE US OUR SINS AND TO CLEANSE US FROM ALL UNRIGHTEOUSNESS. (1<sup>ST</sup> JOHN 1:9)*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## **THE 7<sup>TH</sup> EVIDENCE**

### **HIS LIFE WILL GRADUALLY BE TRANSFORMED INTO CHRISTLIKENESS**

In this next section, there will be several miracles mentioned. As we read along, I would like to ask you to place some kind of mark besides each miracle mentioned. In doing so, we shall see that the believer's transformation "from glory to glory," could only be the results of the supernatural works of God. (It would be impossible for these changes to be mimicked by the feeble efforts of man.) This ever-increasing glory is, therefore, another evidence of the rebirth.

[Have a few read this section: pages **32-33**.]

- ? As the believer is transformed into Christlikeness, what works are taking place that only God can perform?

[List their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

### **THE 8<sup>TH</sup> EVIDENCE**

#### **HE SEEKS WHAT IS BEST FOR HIS SIBLINGS IN CHRIST**

[Have a few read this section: pages **34-35**.]

[Have someone read footnote **10**, page **34**.]

It was stated: "If he (a professing believer) seeks to meet the *practical* needs of his spiritual siblings, the love of God is present in his heart. But the one who ignores the needs of God's children has something less than God's love in his heart."

? Is there ever a time when the love of God is best expressed by *not* meeting the needs of another? [*When that person can meet his own needs but is unwilling to do so.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

[Have each verse read that is mentioned. If not mentioned, have someone read 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 3:10-15 and Proverbs 16:26.]

*FOR EVEN WHEN WE WERE WITH YOU, WE USED TO GIVE YOU THIS ORDER: IF ANYONE IS NOT WILLING TO WORK, THEN HE IS NOT TO EAT, EITHER. FOR WE HEAR THAT SOME AMONG YOU ARE LEADING AN UNDISCIPLINED LIFE, DOING NO WORK AT ALL, BUT ACTING LIKE BUSYBODIES. NOW SUCH PERSONS WE COMMAND AND EXHORT IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST TO WORK IN QUIET FASHION AND EAT THEIR OWN BREAD. BUT AS FOR YOU, BRETHREN, DO NOT GROW WEARY OF DOING GOOD. IF ANYONE DOES NOT OBEY OUR INSTRUCTION IN THIS LETTER, TAKE SPECIAL NOTE OF THAT PERSON AND DO NOT ASSOCIATE WITH HIM, SO THAT HE WILL BE PUT TO SHAME. YET DO NOT REGARD HIM AS AN ENEMY BUT ADMONISH HIM AS A BROTHER. (2<sup>ND</sup> THESSALONIANS 3:10-15)*

*A WORKER'S APPETITE WORKS FOR HIM, FOR HIS HUNGER URGES HIM ON. (PROVERBS 16:26)*

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## **THE 9<sup>TH</sup> EVIDENCE**

### **HE EXPERIENCES SUFFERING FOR THE SAKE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**

#### **The World *Persecutes* the Righteous to *Destroy* Their Witness**

[Have a few read this section: pages **36-38**.]

The First Amendment to the United States Constitution begins with these words: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or *prohibiting the free exercise thereof* ...." This amendment is meant to protect one's right to believe and live according to his personal religious convictions.

? Do you believe that the laws of *any* government can protect those citizens who are truly born again from being persecuted by citizens who are unrighteous? If so, why? And if not, why not?

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

### **HE EXPERIENCES SUFFERING FOR THE SAKE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**

#### **The Father *Disciplines* His Children to *Cultivate* Their Righteousness**

[Have a few read this section: pages **38-40**.]

The motive behind the Father's discipline is love; and one of His purposes is to promote the righteousness and eternal glory of His sons and daughters.

? How would knowing this – the Father's motive and purpose for discipline – strengthen the believer during a painful trial? *[It would help him "make sense" of what otherwise "makes no sense" ... that there is a reason for what is happening ... and that reason is good, designed by the sovereign hand of his loving Father.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

### **THE 10<sup>TH</sup> EVIDENCE**

#### **HIS FAITH PERSEVERES DURING TRIALS**

**It *Is* Possible for True Believers to Compromise Their *Moral Values***

**It *Is Not* Possible for True Believers to Forsake *The Faith***

[Have a few read these two sections, one after the other: pages **41-45**.]

? What enables a reborn Christ-follower to remain steadfast in faith during adversity? From where does this spiritual "grit" come? [*Perseverance in the faith is not a man-made ability. It is a Holy Spirit-generated strength and is possible because the Holy Spirit lives in every believer.*]

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

### **SUMMARY**

[Have someone read this section: page **46**.]

[Have someone read footnote **11**, page **46**.]

- ? Would anyone like to comment on this summary, especially the paragraph beginning with the words, "These qualities all share something in common"? Anything especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you? Or anything *confusing* to you or that you *disagree* with?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

- ? Would anyone like to comment on anything from footnote 11? Anything especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you? Or anything *confusing* to you or that you *disagree* with?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

### **THE RESULTS OF OUR EXAMINATION**

### **ASSURED OF YOUR OWN SALVATION**

### **CONCERN FOR A LOVED ONE**

[Have a few read from the top of page **47** down to "Concern for Yourself," page **48**.]

When we show loving concern for those who claim to be believers (but who display no evidence in their lives that they are), we should be ready for certain responses that are less than appreciative. Some may be offended that "you think yourself better than they" or "you think yourself more religious than they." Some may be offended that you should not be "judging them." Even the most loving words of concern will not always be received well.

With these possible responses in mind, you may be inclined to stay silent.

- ? (A) If you remain silent, what do **you** stand to gain (both now and throughout eternity)?

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? (B) If you remain silent, what do **you** stand to lose (both now and throughout eternity)?

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Based upon your answers above, which is the wiser course of action, (A) or (B)?

? (C) If you remain silent, what does **he** stand to gain (both now and throughout eternity)?

[Summarize their answers.]

? (D) If you remain silent, what does **he** stand to lose (both now and throughout eternity)?

[Summarize their answers.]

? Based upon your answers above, which is the wiser course of action, (C) or (D)?

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

### **THE RESULTS OF OUR EXAMINATION**

#### **CONCERN FOR YOURSELF**

#### **THE PRICELESS NEWS OF GOD'S GRACE THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST**

[Have a few read these two sections: pages **48-51**.]

? Any comments about this presentation?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## APPENDIX A

### WHY IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE "KNOW THEM"

[Have someone read this section: page 52.]

Under "The 3<sup>rd</sup> Evidence" (pages 25-26), we learned that one who is born of the Spirit of God can understand spiritual truths. Furthermore, under "The 4<sup>th</sup> Evidence" (page 27), we learned that the one born of God can detect error in someone's teaching." Both abilities allow the believer to *discern* what is true and what is not. Or perhaps more accurately, it allows him to discern what is true and what is *almost* true (but not quite).

Hebrews 5:12-14 provides us with three elements necessary for one to grow in discernment: <sup>(1)</sup> an extended time "in Christ," <sup>(2)</sup> a mind that is saturated with the Scriptures, and <sup>(3)</sup> a life that is committed to obedience of the truth he knows. One who is spiritually discerning is one who has *practiced ... God's Truth ... over an extended time.*

*FOR THOUGH BY THIS **TIME**, YOU OUGHT TO BE TEACHERS, YOU HAVE NEED AGAIN FOR SOMEONE TO TEACH YOU THE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPLES OF THE ORACLES OF GOD, AND YOU HAVE COME TO NEED MILK AND NOT SOLID FOOD. FOR EVERYONE WHO PARTAKES ONLY OF MILK IS NOT ACCUSTOMED TO **THE WORD OF RIGHTEOUSNESS**, FOR HE IS AN INFANT. BUT SOLID FOOD IS FOR THE MATURE, WHO BECAUSE OF **PRACTICE** HAVE THEIR SENSES TRAINED TO DISCERN GOOD AND EVIL. (HEBREWS 5:12-14)*

[Have someone read Hebrews 5:12-14.]

? Why is discernment a necessary ability to have and use when evaluating the spiritual condition of another person? *[The difference between "good fruit" and "bad fruit" is a difference between a life lived "in the spirit" and one lived "in the flesh." These are spiritual traits requiring a spiritual mind to distinguish between the two.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## **APPENDIX A**

### **WHY IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE "KNOW THEM"**

#### **BEFORE ENTERING ANY BINDING AGREEMENTS**

[Have a few read this section: pages **53-54**.]

[Have someone read footnote **12**, page **53**.]

"Countless arguments, anxieties, heartaches, and losses have resulted from such spiritually mixed arrangements *because of the opposing values held by each side.*"

? What issues are likely to surface between a *husband and wife* that could easily result in a lifetime of tension and regrets because one follows Christian values, and the other follows the values of the world? *[The moral and ethical values each wants for their children. The use of their finances. The friends with whom they choose to associate. What they choose to do on Sunday. The movies they watch. Their children's schools. And many, many others.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? What issues are likely to surface between two *business partners* that could easily result in long-term tension and regret because one follows Christian values, and the other follows the values of the world? *[The moral and ethical values each practice in the business world. The values they want their employees to practice. The demands they place on their employees. How they invest their profits. Etc.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? What problems will a local church face if one or more *church leaders* reject sound doctrine? *[Spiritual impotence within the Body as others begin to follow his / their false teaching. Divisions within the Body. Strife between those who follow God's Truth and those who follow the teachings of demons. Etc.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]

## **APPENDIX A**

### **WHY IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE "KNOW THEM"**

#### **THROUGHOUT THE DIFFERENT PHASES OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE <sup>(1) – (4)</sup>**

[Have a few read this section: pages **54-55**.]

- ? What will be the results if a local church knows that unrepentant sin is taking place within its Body but refuses to follow Biblical guidelines in carrying out discipline? *[The church will be guilty of compromising the holiness of God. The church will become increasingly weakened, thereby compromising its testimony of Christ within the community. Those who are lost in the community will suffer from that loss of the church's witness. Those in leadership will suffer loss of reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ. The erring brother(s) will suffer loss of reward at the Judgment Seat of Christ. Etc.]*

[Summarize their answers.]

- ? Was there any information from this section that was especially *interesting* or *helpful* or *new* to you?

[Give them time to think and answer.]

- ? Was there anything that was *confusing* to you or that you *disagreed* with?"

[Be sure to discuss each issue that is brought up.]