

Biblical Counseling Foundation (BCF)

LIVING VICTORIOUSLY IN THE BATTLES OF LIFE

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Biblical Counseling Foundation
42550 Aegean Street
Indio, CA 92203-9617, USA

760.347.4608 telephone
760.775.5751 fax
orders@bcfministries.org e-mail for orders
admin@bcfministries.org e-mail for other
877.933.9333 (in USA) telephone for orders only
www.bcfministries.org webpage for orders and information

Sample

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Sample

Living Victoriously in the Battles of Life is a life-application Bible study about how Christians can be victorious in the daily battles and struggles of life. The study can be used in conjunction with or in follow-up to other Bible studies that focus on Christian growth and discipleship. Its purpose is to help equip believers to face, deal with, and endure the tests and temptations of life, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Although this study is designed for use by even new believers, all believers will benefit from it.

Tests and temptations do not go away once we become a believer. In fact, problems may even intensify. God, in His love, continues to use trials to help us grow and mature spiritually – to take in the “solid food” of His Word (*Hebrews 5:14*). God provides great hope and instruction for us in His Word about living victoriously even when life is difficult. The spiritual fruit of this study will come by both learning these principles and by putting them into practice.

This study can be used in several ways:

- In your own personal devotions and Bible study;
- To help a friend by going through the biblical principles together; or
- As a small group Bible study or Sunday school class.

There is a great contrast between man’s way and God’s way of dealing with problems. God says in *Isaiah 55:8-9* that His ways are much higher than our ways. *Verse 11* describes the power of God’s Word to accomplish His purposes. We will see in this study that the difference between the world’s view and God’s truth is dramatic, and God has provided some tremendous resources for us to be overwhelming conquerors over our problems, even when there appears to be little hope.

The study covers the following topics:

- Lesson 1: Getting started in your faith;
- Lesson 2: What does the Bible say about tests, temptations, and problems?;
- Lesson 3: The downward spiral of defeat;
- Lesson 4: Biblical hope;
- Lesson 5: Biblical change: dealing with problems God’s way; and
- Lesson 6: Biblical practice: your daily walk with Christ.

God has much more practical guidance in His Word about facing, dealing with, and enduring the trials of life than many Christians realize. This study will help you learn and apply these principles and prepare you to help others. As you go through this study, you will see that there are questions, Bible passages to look up, and spaces for you to fill in the answers. If you are not sure of some of the answers, you can look up the answers for most questions in the back of this booklet. Just refer to the corresponding lesson number and question number. If you are going through this study as a group, your group leader may be able to help you as well. You can do part of a lesson each day until you’re done.

If you are going through the study on your own, you can go at your own pace. The lessons are designed so that you can go through them in a week with no more than about 15 minutes per day.

INTRODUCTION

WHY THIS STUDY?

Some lessons are a little longer than others. But you can do more or less, depending on the time you have. This is meant to get you started in a life-long practice of studying the Word of God on a regular basis. May the Lord bless you as you learn and apply His Word.

Sample

GETTING STARTED IN YOUR FAITH

This short-course is about Christians living victoriously in the daily battles and struggles of life. It is also about how to come alongside others and help them through those challenging times. This training shows believers how to become firmly grounded in their faith and to demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit (*Galatians 5:22, 23*) in even the most difficult of circumstances. This is supernatural living, and it would not be possible without the resources that the Lord has provided to us as believers. This course will help you learn what those resources are, how to apply them in overcoming the daily problems of life, and how to encourage others to do the same.

Jesus was very specific with His disciples about the challenges of life. He didn't tell the disciples that their problems would go away if they followed Him. Instead, He warned them that difficult times would come, and He prepared them for the battles they would face as His followers. He told them what they would face, showed them how to deal victoriously with those trials, and was Himself the ultimate demonstration of victorious living.

But before beginning our study of the battles of life and how to live victoriously in them, we need to make sure we are all starting on a solid foundation. You may be very familiar with these fundamentals of the Christian life, but it is always good to go back through them again. This foundation is critical for all believers, both young and old in the Lord.

Becoming a believer in Jesus Christ is the greatest and most life-changing decision a person can make. If you have made that decision, you have been born into God's family. Just as in a physical family, a new member of God's spiritual family should expect to grow. This lesson is about several important areas of your Christian life: reading the Bible (God's communication to us), assurance of your salvation, the Holy Spirit, prayer (our communication with God), fellowship with other believers, and committing God's Word to memory.

A. The Bible

God has revealed Himself to you through the Bible, and reading the Bible is one of the main ways you can get to know Him. You will be amazed at how practical the Bible is for your life today, even though it was written several thousand years ago.

Even if you are not familiar with the Bible, with a little direction you can find your way around easily. Each of the books of the Bible is divided into "chapters" and "verses." You can locate a book of the Bible by going to the table of contents near the front to find the page where each book starts. Frequently, There are two lists of books in the table of contents, one for the Old Testament and one for the New Testament. So when we refer to *John 3:16*, for example, that just means the Gospel according to John (in the New Testament), Chapter 3, Verse 16. So let's get started.

Read *John 20:30-31*. What was God's purpose for you in directing John to write down the events in his Gospel?

1.

GETTING STARTED IN YOUR FAITH

The Gospel of John and the other three Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke) all contain historical facts about the Lord Jesus, His teaching and commands, and His ministry on earth. These were recorded so that our faith in Christ might be increased and so that we might follow Him. In fact, the entire Bible is written to build us up and give us direction for living.

Read *II Timothy 3:16-17*. What does the first part of *verse 16* say about God's Word?

2.

The whole Bible is "inspired" or "God-breathed." What we are reading in the Bible is God's Word, not merely man's sayings or philosophies. God used men to write the words down for us to read today. Also in *verse 16*, what four things are the Scriptures profitable for?

3.

In other words, the Bible is a practical guide to help us in our daily lives as Christians.

God's Word teaches us how to show love to God and others. As a mirror shows what is lacking, God's Word also reproves us when we fail to demonstrate love. As we are corrected, the Bible shows us what to do in place of our failure. Finally, the Bible trains us as we make and fulfill specific plans for right living.

And what is the end result, in *verse 17*?

4.

We are to be prepared for the opportunities God gives us to show our love for Him and others. This whole study focuses on how to draw from the Scriptures hope and practical guidance for the daily battles we face as believers. Lesson 6 has specific information about how to get to know God through study and application of His Word.

B. Assurance of your salvation

Your salvation is based on the promises of God. Read *John 5:24*. What does your eternal life depend on?

5.

It is wonderful to know that eternal life with Christ does not depend on how good we have been or how we feel. Our feelings may come and go, but our salvation is based on the promise of God that the penalty for our sin has been paid through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross. Then He rose from the dead to demonstrate God's power over death. What does *Romans 6:23* say about eternal life?

6.

Eternal life is a free gift. There is no way that we deserve this intimate relationship with Christ, nor can we earn it. Also, He promises in *Hebrews 13:5* that He will never desert us nor forsake us. We should spend the rest of our lives thanking God for His mercy and grace by living in the

GETTING STARTED IN YOUR FAITH

way He guides us to live. This is reinforced in *Ephesians 2:8-9*. How does this passage say we are saved?

7.

In *verse 10*, you can see that God has even prepared good works for you to do, but your deeds do not earn salvation.

Why don't you pause right now and thank Him for providing you with the gift of eternal life. If you are unsure of your salvation, or have not yet accepted that gift, consider reviewing some additional passages such as *Romans 3:23*, *Romans 5:8*, *Romans 10:9-10*, and *Romans 10:13*.

God says in *Romans 10:9* that when you believe in Jesus, you confess Him as your Lord (which also means "Master"). This is a public declaration that Jesus is now Lord of your life. You are to submit to Him as your Master or Head. You are placing yourself under His management. We do not accept Jesus as Savior one day and determine whether we will accept Him as Lord later on. Both of these are part of the same decision we make to invite Jesus Christ into our lives as our Master.

At this point, begin memorizing *Ephesians 2:8-9*. You will receive information on the importance of Scripture memory in Section F. of this lesson.

C. The Holy Spirit

Shortly before He died on the cross, Jesus told His followers that He would be going away but that God would also leave them with a Helper, the Holy Spirit. Read *John 14:26* and *John 16:13*. What do these verses say the Holy Spirit will help you with?

8.

The Holy Spirit will teach you and help you with the understanding of the Word of God. What else does the Holy Spirit do according to *Romans 5:5*?

9.

The Holy Spirit dwells within you, if you are a believer in Christ. God poured out His love on you when you were saved, and from then on you have a new power to love others, in a way you never could before.

D. Prayer

Prayer is simply talking with God. We can pray out loud or silently, by ourselves or with others. We tend to think about prayer mainly when we think we need God's help in some way. But prayer is also a matter of praising and thanking God, and sometimes confessing our sin so that we can be restored to fellowship with Him. What does God say in *Psalms 116:1-2*?

10.

GETTING STARTED IN YOUR FAITH

When we talk to God, we know that He is listening. But there is something that can get in the way of our communication with God. What is that according to *Psalms 66:18*?

11.

We need to go to God in prayer without harboring (cherishing or holding on to) sin in our heart. When we as believers commit sin, this grieves the Holy Spirit, but it does not alter our family relationship with God. We are still called His children. But it does affect our fellowship (unhindered communication or communion) with Him. What does God say in *1 John 1:9* that we need to do to restore our fellowship with God?

12.

Confess means to agree with God that you have not followed His commands as you should have. You are also saying that your intent is not to sin in that way again. In that same verse, what is God's promise if you confess your sins?

13.

You can be completely confident in His faithfulness to forgive you.

E. Fellowship with other believers

The church is called the "body of Christ," and individual believers, including you, are members of that body. Read *1 Corinthians 12:25-27*. What does *verse 26* say you do as a member of the body of Christ?

14.

Not only do we rejoice and sometimes suffer together, but God says that you are to care for other members of the body. Being in the body of Christ is like an extended family. It is a great privilege, but also carries with it some responsibilities. Read *Hebrews 10:24-25*. What are some of the things God says you should be doing with others in the body of Christ?

15.

Believers need to gather together on a regular basis to stimulate one another to action, both inside and outside the church. God instructs you to get involved in a local body of believers, if you have not already done so. It is important for you, and it is important for them as well.

GETTING STARTED IN YOUR FAITH

F. Scripture memory

God says in *Romans 12:2* that we are not to be 16.

to the world but to be 17.

by the renewing of our mind.

We need to cooperate with God, doing His will, and as He transforms us we will experience His good and perfect will. We don't normally carry a Bible with us every minute of the day, but we can take God's Word with us in our mind. The Holy Spirit can then use our recollection of the Scriptures we know to help us with moment-by-moment choices and decisions. An important habit to begin as a Christian is to start memorizing portions of Scripture that can help us through the day. It takes effort to establish this habit, but it can have tremendous benefits in your life.

Read *Psalms 119:9, 11*. What benefits are there to treasuring God's Word in your heart and obeying it completely?

18.

It is important for you to have a specific plan for memorizing God's Word, starting with verses that apply directly to your life in your current situation. For example, if you are tempted to worry, memorize *Matthew 6:25* and some of the verses that follow. Or if you are dealing with anger, consider memorizing *James 1:19-20*.

A lot of people are concerned that they are not good at memorizing and don't have enough time for it. Yes, it does require repetition, and it will take some time. But think about all the times and places in which you can make wise use of your time by memorizing at the same time you are doing other things that do not require much detailed thinking – while washing dishes or standing in line at the bank, for example. All you need is to have some verses written down on cards and keep them with you or put them in the right place. So take advantage of these moments during the day. List some possible times during the day that might be possibilities for you to memorize Scripture.

19.

This *Living Victoriously* Bible study provides a verse or verses for you to memorize as you study each lesson. Before each lesson, whether you are studying by yourself or with a group, recite the verse to someone else, so that he or she can help you get it right, word for word.

G. What was the most significant truth you learned in completing this lesson?

20.

GETTING STARTED IN YOUR FAITH

H. For the next lesson:

1. If you have not already recited *Ephesians 2:8-9*, be sure to ask someone to check you as you recite the passage.
2. Begin memorizing *1 Peter 4:12* and prepare to recite this passage for the next lesson.
3. Study all of Lesson 2 and answer the questions. Do a little bit of the lesson each day.
4. Check your answers in the back of the booklet.

Lesson 2 teaches that our problems do not go away once we become a Christian. However, we have new resources that we did not have before, enabling us to live victoriously in every situation. As you start Lesson 2, think of it as part of developing the habit of daily devotions.