



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

Welcome back to DRIVE!

Tonight: Part One of Discovering Spiritual Maturity.

In this episode, we will discuss:

- ▶ How we can define spiritual maturity.
- ▶ What sort of habits we can develop to mature in Christ.
- ▶ The value of spending time in God’s Word.
- ▶ Some ways to “get a grasp” on the Bible.

We trust the DVD content, and the information provided in this workbook will help you as you continue to grow deeper in your relationship with God, by influencing others for Christ.



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Often, when we think of people who are “mature” in Christ, we think of “professional Christians”, like pastors, or teachers, or evangelists. But the Apostle Paul writes that Jesus Himself gave the church people like pastors and teachers and evangelists as well as prophets and apostles not to **BE** the “grown-ups” in the family of God, but to teach us all to grow up in Christ. Paul writes:

“This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. Then we will no longer be immature like children.” (Ephesians 4:13-14a, NLT)

QUESTION: How would YOU define “spiritual maturity?”

Though there are certainly MANY “right” answers to that question, for the purpose of this study, we’re going to offer this definition:

Spiritual Maturity is _____.

“For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son...” (Romans 8:29, NLT)

Without reliable standards, *spiritual* maturity is a moving target. Everyone has some idea of what they think becoming spiritually mature looks like. The great thing about the Bible is that it presents a clear and compelling standard: Christ-likeness.

FACTS ABOUT SPIRITUAL MATURITY:

It’s not _____.

“You have been believers so long now that you ought to be teaching others. Instead, you need someone to teach you ... You are like babies who need milk and cannot eat solid food ... someone who lives on milk is still an infant and doesn’t know how to do what is right. Solid food is for those who are mature...” (from Hebrews 5:12-13, NLT)



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

Spiritual maturity is a _____.

***“Are you immature? Learn to be mature.”
(Proverbs 8:5, GNB)***

Growing to maturity isn't something that happens in a vacuum, and it doesn't happen overnight. It's a process, and growing to maturity is about learning behaviors. Learning what is right and what is wrong. And it's a process that never ends.

***“Continue to grow in the grace and knowledge of our savior Jesus Christ.”
(2 Peter 3:18, GNB)***

Spiritual maturity requires _____.

“Take the time and trouble to keep yourself spiritually fit” (1 Timothy 4:7b, Phillips)

“Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” (NASB)

The Bible talks about the transition we make when we choose to follow Christ. Paul says that we have ***“put off the old self, with its HABITS, and have put on the new self”***. And Paul reinforces that “putting on the new self” is a continual process – and not something we do once and we're done.

It follows then, that we're going to effectively “put on the new self”, it's going to require that we develop some new habits. Or, in the case of someone who has practiced healthy habits for spiritual growth, recognize that we need to continue those habits, and thereby continue to grow in Christ-likeness.

Webster's Dictionary:

What is a Habit? *“A continual, often unconscious inclination to do a certain activity, acquired through frequent repetition”.*

“An established disposition of the character”.

QUESTION: What is a HABIT? What makes a habit good or bad? Have you ever had a habit that helped you grow? How about a habit that prevented you from growing?



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

We've all had experience with habits, both good and bad. The Bible talks about that when Paul writes:

"In the past you voluntarily gave your bodies to the service of vice and ... the purposes of evil. So now give yourselves to the service of righteousness – for the purpose of becoming truly good." (Romans 6:19)

PERSONAL PLEDGE FOR THIS SMALL GROUP SERIES:

I will _____ to the habits necessary for spiritual maturity.

Developing the Habit of _____.

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

"The whole Bible was given to us by inspiration from God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives; it straightens us out and helps us do what is right. It is God's way of making us well prepared at every point, fully equipped to do good to everyone." 2 Tim 3:16-17



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

Six ways to get a GRASP on your Bible:

Meditate – Memorize – Study – Read – Hear – and Apply!



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

The Bible says in Romans 10:17

“Faith comes from hearing the Word of God.”

You can HEAR God’s Word in church, watching videos, listening to podcasts, on radio and television, internet, and all kinds of other ways.

PROBLEM:

We forget _____% of what we hear after 72 hours.

So what steps can we take to improve our hearing?

How To Improve Your Hearing

1. Be ready and eager to hear God.

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

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

2. Deal with attitudes that prevent hearing God

(Jesus) “Consider carefully how you listen ...” Luke 8:18

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

3. Confess any sin in your life.

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

4. Take notes on what you hear.

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



How To Read God's Word

How often should I read God's Word? _____.

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

SUGGESTIONS:

- ✓ Read it systematically.
- ✓ Read it in different translations.
- ✓ For reading: New Living Translation, New International Version, J.B. Phillips translation
- ✓ Read it aloud quietly to yourself.
- ✓ Underline or color code key verses.
- ✓ Choose a reading plan and stick with it.

If I read approximately _____ minutes a day, I can read through the Bible once a year.

On the page that follows in your workbook, we have provided a simple **BIBLE READING PLAN** to help you read **through THE NEW TESTAMENT IN just 30 DAYS!**



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

A BIBLE READING PLAN THROUGH THE NEW TESTAMENT IN 30 DAYS

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

The next 5 pages contain great information on LIFECHURCH.TV's free on-line Bible Study platform called YouVersion. Take advantage of this incredible resource!



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

YouVersion.com – Resources/Reading Plans

Want to make the Bible a part of your daily life? Reading plans can help you out. You pick the plan (YouVersion has 150+ to choose from) and each day a special selection will be ready and waiting for you.

God’s Word brings power, healing, direction, and freedom. Most people who have a great relationship with God read the Bible consistently. Spending time in Scripture each day gives you the opportunity to hear from Him in a unique way.

Following a reading plan helps you stay on track with your Bible reading goals. Pick one (or several) and then fine tune it to match your schedule.

Lots of Choices

150+ different reading plans, so you can pick your favorite or follow several.

Progress at your own pace

Adjust the plan timeframe to fit your schedule and easily keep track of where you are.

Support system

Share your goal with a friend for added accountability and opt in for reminder emails.

Your info, in sync

Online and mobile YouVersion accounts now synchronize, including your reading plan and progress.

Default Reading Plans

Take your pick of 150+ different reading plans, with options like reading the Bible in a year, or chronologically, or in 90 days, or reading the New Testament in 30 days, and more. You can choose and start as many reading plans as you’d like.



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

On the following four pages, we provide a look at just a FEW of the over 150 Bible Reading Plans available ABSOLUTELY FREE at YouVersion.com. Get started today!

The One Year® Bible » 1 Year

Experience the insights and joy gained from reading the entire Bible. You can do it in as little as 15 minutes a day with The One Year® Bible, the world's most popular annual reading Bible. Daily readings from the Old Testament, New Testament, Psalms, and Proverbs will guide you through God's Word in one year.

Life Application Study Bible® Devotion » 1 Year

Learn to apply God's Word more fully in your life with the Life Application Study Bible® Devotion. Each day you will receive a brief devotional featuring a Scripture verse and note taken from the Life Application Study Bible® designed to help you apply the Bible to your life.

Robert Roberts » 1 Year

Robert Roberts developed this reading plan to facilitate his daily systematic reading of the Scriptures. A form of this plan was later published as The Bible Companion and is still used around the world today. This reading plan was created by Robert Roberts over 100 years ago.

Life Journal Reading Plan » 1 Year

The Life Journal Reading plan was developed by Wayne Cordeiro and is designed to help you read through the Old Testament once and the New Testament twice each year. For journals and related resources, visit lifejournal.cc.

Canonical » 1 Year

The Blue Letter Bible "Canonical" plan goes straight through the Bible — from Genesis to Revelation. You will be supplied with reading for each day of the week as a steady guide toward finishing the entire Bible in one calendar year.

Chronological » 1 Year



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

The Blue Letter Bible “Chronological” plan is compiled according to recent historical research, taking into account the order in which the recorded events actually occurred. This is a fantastic plan to follow if you wish to add historical context to your reading of the Bible. If the schedule provided is followed, the entire Bible will be read in one calendar year.

Historical » 1 Year

Have you ever wondered what it would have been like to read the Old Testament in ancient Israel? Or, the New Testament as the books were written? In this plan, the order of the Old Testament readings is very similar to Israel’s Hebrew Bible, progressing from Law to Prophets to Writings. The New Testament ordering is based upon research regarding the order in which the books were authored. Although this research is not conclusive, it may offer helpful insights to your Bible reading.

Old Testament and New Testament » 1 Year

It is important to understand the fullness of God’s message to the churches, and a great way of doing this is reading the Old and New Testaments simultaneously. This plan, which can be completed in one calendar year, does just that. Readings from both Testaments are included from the beginning and although each reading does not contain both Testaments, the two are read effectively.

Blended » 1 Year

This plan is designed to add variety to your reading of the Bible. The Blended plan divides the Bible so that the reader will read books in a non-traditional sequence. For example, while one is reading the book of Isaiah, he is also reading the book of Mark.

New Thru 30 » 30 Days

The New Thru 30 reading plan from Elevation Church takes you through the entire New Testament in 30 days. This plan will stretch your mind, heart, and will to continue with an intense pace of Bible reading over the course of 30

Project 345 » 1 Year

Project 3:45 is a simple, effective way to read the entire New Testament in one year. The plan involves reading one chapter per day five days a week and uses the weekends to catch up if you missed any days. The plan was named for the average of the three minutes and forty five seconds that it takes to read one New Testament chapter



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

(obviously this time will vary due to individual reading rates, chapter lengths, and etc., but you get the point). It's never too late, start today!

Project 345 Plus » 1 Year

Project 3:45+ is an extended version of the New Testament reading plan, Project 3:45. The "Plus" adds a Psalm or Proverb per day (including weekends) and selected readings from the Old Testament five days per week. The beauty of a Bible reading plan is that all the guesswork is removed and there is always a place to start and a sense of direction. For those that really want to add more to their devotional reading time Project 3:45+ offers great options.

Bible in 90 Days » 90 Days

How long does it take to read through the entire Bible? Would you guess just 90 days? The Bible in 90 Days is a Bible reading plan created by Ted Cooper in 2002, designed to walk you through the Bible over the course of just three months. That works out to 12 pages of reading each day—a commitment, but certainly manageable, and one that's well worth making.

First Steps Reading Plan » 1 Year

The Life Journal First Steps Reading plan was developed by Wayne Cordeiro. This plan takes a only a portion of the reading from the Life Journal Plan and offers a decreased amount of reading without losing the flow. This plan is perfect for youth and new believers. For journals and related resources, visit lifejournal.cc.

Psalms & Proverbs » 372 Days

The Psalms & Proverbs plan was compiled by the folks at YouVersion.com to help you read through the book of Psalms twice and Proverbs 12 times. This

The Gospels » 30 Days

This plan, compiled and presented by the folks at YouVersion.com, will help you read through all four Gospels in thirty days. Get firm grasp of Jesus' life and ministry in a short span of time.

New Testament Epistles and Acts » 85 Days

Reading through the Pauline, Pastoral, and General Epistles has never been easier. This plan, compiled and presented by the folks at YouVersion, will help you easily read



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

through every letter in the New Testament. And we tossed in a dash of Acts for good measure.

Prof. Horner's Bible Reading System » 8 Months

Prof. Horner's Bible Reading System is meant to be an intense foray into every part of the Bible. This system will have you reading ten chapters each day if followed properly. The intent is to read quickly through each chapter, being careful not to "skim" or "dig-deep" into any single section. Good luck!

One-2-One » 25 Days

One-2-One was written as a simple tool to aid in personal follow-up and discipleship. It's a guide. It cannot make a disciple, but it can help you make one. Most importantly, it helps a new disciple get the right start.

Outreach New Testament » 1 Year

Each daily reading will guide readers through the New Testament as they encounter Jesus and the gospel. A great resource for those who are newcomers to the Bible.

M'Cheyne One Year Reading Plan » 1 Year

This plan is based on the M'Cheyne reading system, featuring four different readings for use in both family and personal devotions. Each day has two passages from the Old Testament, one from the New Testament, and one from either the Psalms or the Gospels. In one year, you read the Old Testament once and the New Testament and Psalms twice.

The Essential 100 » 100 days

The Essential 100 Challenge (E100) helps you get an overview of the Bible... without getting bogged down. The Plan guides you through 50 Old Testament passages and 50 New Testament passages — The Essential 100 — so you can see the big picture of God's Word, and form a daily Bible reading habit in the process. E100 is an achievable way to have a "through the Bible" experience; it's the Bible reading plan people love to complete.



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

How To Study God's Word

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

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

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

The secret of effective Bible study is knowing how to _____.

3 important questions to ask about the passage of Scripture your reading that will help you:

- 1. What did it mean to the original hearers?**
- 2. What is the underlying and timeless principle?**
- 3 How is that principle relevant for MY life?**

Something that will help you answer those questions is to take advantage of the abundant resources available to you to help you STUDY the Bible. Remember: this is a discipline you're developing. You don't have to do it ALL in a DAY...but you do have to do a part EVERY day!

SUGGESTED RESOURCES FOR BIBLE STUDY:

Study Bibles:

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



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

Bible Handbooks:

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

Websites:

- www.biblegateway.com
- www.youversion.com
- www.biblios.com

Other Important Study Tools:

- Bible Software (Logos, Quick Verse, etc)
- As many different translations as you can afford
- (These can be purchased in parallel editions)
- A complete concordance to match your translation
- The New Bible Dictionary (Eerdmans)
- The Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible (Baker)
- The New Bible Commentary (Eerdmans)
- The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands (Moody)

How To Memorize God's Word

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

BENEFITS OF MEMORIZING SCRIPTURE

1. It helps me resist temptation.

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

2. It helps me make wise decisions.

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

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

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

4. It comforts me when I'm sad.



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

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

5. It helps me witness to unbelievers.

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

WHEN SHOULD YOU MEMORIZE A VERSE?

- ✓ During your Quiet Time (more on that next week)
- ✓ While Exercising
- ✓ While you're waiting (spare moments)
- ✓ When you GET UP
- ✓ When you LIE DOWN (Ps 63:6)

HOW TO MEMORIZE A VERSE:

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

Suggested beginning rate: Two (2) verses a week.

"Your teachings are worth more to me than thousands of pieces of gold..." Ps. 119:72

We remember what is _____.

On the next page, we have provided a Scripture Memory Course. Use it, or get one of your own. But DAILY, develop the habit of MEMORIZING SCRIPTURE.



SESSION TWO – Second Gear

SCRIPTURE MEMORY COURSE

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

Live the New Life:

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

Proclaim Christ:

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

Rely on God's Resources:

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

Be Christ's Disciple:

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

Grow in Christ likeness:

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



How To Meditate on God's Word

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

WHY MEDITATE ON SCRIPTURE?

1. **BECAUSE** It is the KEY to becoming like Christ. And Christ-Likeness is what we are after.

" ... Your life is shaped by your thoughts." Pr. 4:23

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

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

2. **MEDITATION** is the key to answered prayer.

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

3. It is the key to successful living.

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

HERE ARE FIVE WAYS YOU CAN MEDITATE ON A VERSE

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

Remember this about **MEDITATION**:

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



How To Apply God's Word

"Do not fool yourselves by just listening to the Word. Instead, put it into practice."

James 1:22

" ... Whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

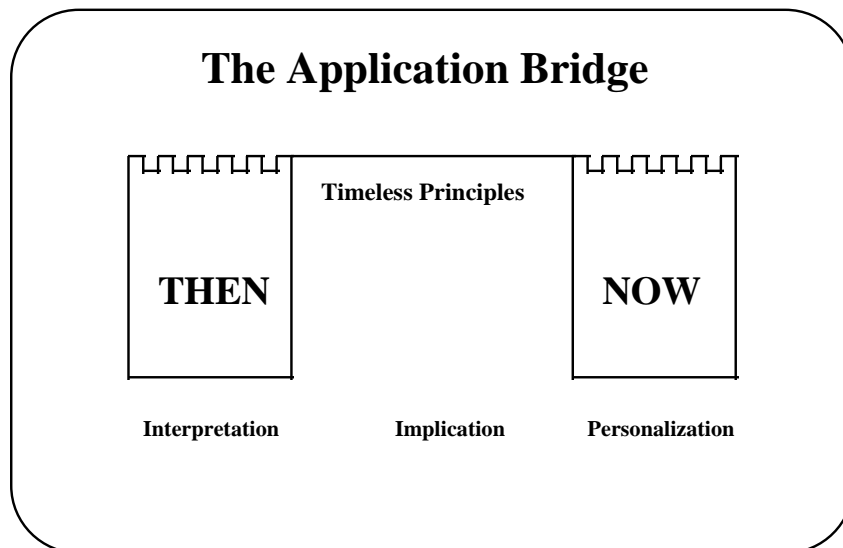
Matt. 5:19

Going back to the 3 questions we asked about Bible STUDY:

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

2nd ask: What is the underlying timeless principle?

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



INTERPRETATION: What did the Verse we just read it mean to the original hearers?

IMPLICATION of the verse we just read: What is the underlying timeless principle?

PERSONALIZATION: Where or how could I practice that principle in my life?

That's APPLICATION!

Remember this: The Bible is more than just a roadmap showing how to get from point A to point B. It's a living travel companion teaching us what to do along the way! Jesus said,

"Now that you know these things – do them! That is the path of blessing!"