

Built Up in the Faith

*366 Daily Devotions
for New Christians*

“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving.”

Colossians 2:6-7

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This devotional book has been written as a tool to help introduce new Christians to the Bible and its teachings. It has 366 daily devotional lessons, enough to last for one year. In that year you will be guided through the entire historical story of the Bible, meeting all of the key Bible characters and visiting all the key Bible stories. Along the way you will be taught the most important Bible truths – the ones that are the foundation of the Christian faith. You will also be given practical Biblical advice for how to live in a manner that is pleasing to God! By the time you finish you will have read at least one verse from all 66 books of the Bible.

So, how do I use this book? First, set aside a specific time each day to spend alone with God. The daily lessons in this book have been written so you won't need to set aside a large amount of time, unless you want to. Then, pray, asking for God to help you understand what you read. Beginning with "Day 1", write in the date. Since you supply the date, you can begin at any time. Notice the title, and read the text verse. Each devotion has a short lesson. I recommend reading it before looking up the scripture passage. Many times it will provide helpful information about the scripture to be read. Many lessons refer back to previous lessons. This is done to reinforce the truths being taught. Next, find the scripture passage in your Bible and read it. Most of them are quite short. They have been selected to complement each day's lesson. Finally, read the question at the bottom and spend some time "pondering" the answer. The questions have been designed to cause you to think further about the lesson, draw a logical conclusion, or make a personal application. Some of the questions are drawn from the lesson in this book, and some are written to draw your attention to the scripture passage you have read. Meditate on the lesson and the question during the day. No answers are given to the questions because most of them need to come from within yourself.

The book is divided into twelve Units. Each unit will take about one month to complete, except the first one, which is longer. At the end of each unit is a review page. The Unit Review's are very simple. My intent is to simply cause you to stop and reflect on what you have learned over the previous month.

Don't become discouraged if you miss a day. Pick up where you left off and try again. If you stay consistent for all 366 lessons you will have formed a daily habit of spending time in God's Word! If you add this to what you learn in church you will be surprised how much you have learned about God's Word in a year's time.

May God help you and bless you!

Donald Root

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
HOW TO USE THIS BOOK (<i>Bible History / Bible Truths</i>)	3
TABLE OF CONTENTS	4
Unit One: Lessons 1 to 39	
<i>Adam & Eve, Cain & Abel, Noah / Creation, Faith, The Bible, God, Sin, The Plan of Salvation</i>	5
Unit Two: Lessons 40 to 60	46
<i>Job, Abraham, Isaac / Assurance of Salvation, Living by Faith</i>	
BOOKS OF THE BIBLE	69
Unit Three: Lessons 61 to 88	70
<i>Esau & Jacob, Israel / The Bible, Repentance, The Attributes of God</i>	
BOOKS OF THE BIBLE BY GROUP	100
Unit Four: Lessons 89 to 121	101
<i>Joseph, Captivity in Egypt, Moses / God the Father, God the Son</i>	
Unit Five: Lessons 122 to 155	136
<i>The Exodus, The Wilderness Wandering / God the Spirit, The Law</i>	
Unit Six: Lessons 156 to 183	172
<i>Joshua & Caleb, The Judges, Ruth / Sin, Angels, Satan</i>	
Unit Seven: Lessons 184 to 213	202
<i>Samuel, Saul, David / Hell, Government, Heaven</i>	
Unit Eight: Lessons 214 to 244	234
<i>David, Solomon / Home, Principles from Proverbs</i>	
SUMMARY OF THE STORY OF THE BIBLE	267
Unit Nine: Lessons 245 to 274	268
<i>Judah & Israel, The Kings, The Prophets / The Judgments, Rewards</i>	
THE KINGS OF ISRAEL	300
Unit Ten: Lessons 275 to 305	301
<i>The Captivity, Daniel, Ezra & Nehemiah / Future Things</i>	
Unit Eleven: Lessons 306 to 336	334
<i>The Life of Christ / Christian Living, Prayer</i>	
SOME OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES FULFILLED BY JESUS CHRIST	367
Unit Twelve: Lessons 337 to 366	368
<i>The Acts of the Apostles, The Epistles / Discernment, The Local Church, Christian Living</i>	
WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?	400
SUBJECT INDEX	401

Unit One

Lessons 1 to 39

Bible History

Adam & Eve

Cain & Abel

Noah

Bible Truths

Creation

Faith

The Bible

God

Sin

The Plan of Salvation

Day 1 **Date:** _____

In the Beginning

“In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” (Genesis 1:1)

What better place to begin than at the beginning! This is the very first verse in the Bible. It is found in the book of *Genesis*, the “book of beginnings”. It records the beginning of heaven and earth (our text verse), of plant, animal, and human life, and of all human institutions and relationships.

But notice that God was already present “*in the beginning*”. Everything that exists had a beginning, a moment of creation, except the Creator Himself! Also notice that this verse does not defend the pre-existence of God, it simply and eloquently states it as FACT!

Scripture to read: Genesis 1:1-25

Question to ponder: *According to verses 3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, and 24, did God use any existing materials to create the things He made?*

Day 2 **Date:** _____

Understood by Faith

“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” (Hebrews 11:3)

The eleventh chapter of the book of Hebrews is commonly called “the faith chapter”. In the first verse we are given a definition of faith: “*the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*”. In other words, believing (having hope and confidence) in something for which the evidence is not available to be seen.

Our text verse explains that creation must be believed “*through faith*”, because we were not there to witness the actual event. Notice that the things we see in creation were spoken (“*by the Word of God*”) into existence by God.

Scripture to read: Genesis 2:1-6

Question to ponder: *Can any of the false explanations for the beginning of the world and man (“big bang”, Darwinism, etc.) be believed in any way other than by faith?*

Day 3 **Date:** _____

By the Word of God

*“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”
(Romans 10:17)*

Faith must have an object; it must be focused upon something or someone. In a letter written to believers of the church at Rome (the book of the Bible entitled “*Romans*”), the author, the apostle Paul, explained that the Christian faith must first be heard to be believed. The message that our faith is based upon is found in the Word of God, the Bible.

We believe (through faith) that God created the world, because He tells us so in the Bible. We believe in His Son, Jesus Christ, because the message of salvation is given to us in the Bible.

Scripture to read: Romans 10:13-17

Question to ponder: *How important is it to know that our faith is based upon a reliable source?*

Day 4 **Date:** _____

Inspired by God

“All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (II Timothy 3:16)

It is important to understand that the Bible, the Word of God, is a supernatural book. This verse, taken from a letter by Paul to a young preacher by the name of Timothy, explains that the Bible (*scripture*) is inspired by God. It literally means “God-breathed”, that each and every word of scripture came to us directly from God Himself! This is called verbal inspiration. God said exactly what He wanted to say, using exactly the words He wanted to use. The Bible does not just contain the word of God; it IS the Word of God!

Notice that since it is the inspired Word of God, it is profitable to teach us what is right (*doctrine*) and what is wrong (*reproof*), to teach us how to get it right (*correction*) and how to keep it right (*instruction in righteousness*)!

Scripture to read: II Timothy 3:10-17

Question to ponder: *According to verse 15, what is the chief benefit we receive from the scriptures?*

Day 5 **Date:** _____

The Authority of the Word of God

“But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.”
(Matthew 4:4)

The Lord Jesus was being tempted by the devil shortly after beginning his public ministry. After the first of three specific attempts by the devil to get him to sin, Jesus answered with the words of our text verse.

Since the Bible is the inspired (“God-breathed”) Word of God (the Creator), it is our absolute and final authority for faith (what we believe) and practice (how we live). God has given us this book, the Bible, to inform us of all that we need to know. The Bible is totally sufficient to meet our every need. If it is in the Bible, we need to heed it and obey it. If it is not in the Bible, we need to measure it against the Bible to see if it is true.

Scripture to read: Psalms 19:7-11

Question to ponder: *If the Lord Jesus Christ believed God’s Word to be more necessary than bread (daily food), how necessary is it for us?*

Day 6 **Date:** _____

God

*“Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.”
(Isaiah 6:3b)*

Isaiah was a prophet of God who was given a remarkable privilege at the beginning of his ministry. Through a vision, he was allowed to see into the throne room of God in Heaven. He saw a glimpse of the glory of God. The seraphims spoken of are angels which inhabit Heaven and praise God for His holiness.

At the very core of God’s essence is His holiness. It refers to His sinless perfection. To be holy means to be “set apart”, to be in a different category. God is so holy as to be truly unique. There is no being anywhere like God. When Isaiah saw God as He really is, his immediate response was “*Woe is me! for I am undone...*”

Scripture to read: Isaiah 6:1-5

Question to ponder: *Why do you suppose that Isaiah’s vision of God caused him to notice his own sin?*

Day 7 **Date:** _____

Man

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.” (Genesis 1:27)

On the sixth and final day of creation, God created mankind in his own image. That means that we are a reflection of what God is like in many ways, without actually being gods ourselves. There are things we can learn about God by examining the way we are made, just like there are things you can learn about yourself by examining the image in the mirror. Notice that the water, land, sea, vegetation, celestial bodies, and animal life are not said to be in God's image. Among created beings, only mankind is a moral being (able to tell right from wrong) made in God's image.

Verses 26 and 27 of *Genesis*, chapter one, record a summary statement of the creation of man. Verses 28 to 31 record God's blessing and instructions to man. Chapter two, verses 7 to 25, records a more detailed account of the events of day six. Adam was created first, named the animals, then was presented with his wife, Eve.

Scripture to read: Genesis 1:26-31; 2:7-25

Question to ponder: *What greater responsibilities does man have because he is in God's image?*

Day 8 **Date:** _____

Why Am I Here?

*“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.”
(Revelation 4:11)*

The apostle John was another man (see Lesson 6) who was privileged to see a vision of the throne room of God. His vision is recorded in the last book of the Bible, Revelation. In his vision, twenty four elders worship God and are quoted by our text verse. These elders represent believers who have trusted in Jesus Christ as Savior.

In their words of praise they answer the age-old question asked by man, “Why am I here”? We have been created for God’s pleasure and that we should, by our lives, give glory, honor, and power to God!

Scripture to read: Revelation 4:1-11

Question to ponder: *Am I living my life for God’s glory, or for mine? For God’s pleasure, or for mine?*

Day 9 **Date:** _____

Creation's Message

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.” (Psalms 19:1)

The book of *Psalms* is an inspired (“God-breathed”) book of songs: the hymn and praise book of Israel. It is located in the center of the Bible.

The nineteenth psalm begins with praise to God for His creation. It declares that creation itself has a message about the glory of God. Beginning in the seventh verse, the psalm switches to praise to God for the Word of God. It declares the perfection of scripture and its effectiveness in our lives. The psalm closes with a prayer, asking God for assistance in living a life that is pleasing to Him.

Scripture to read: Psalms 19:1-14

Question to ponder: *Are the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, acceptable to God?*

Day 10 **Date:** _____

The Fall of Man

“And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.” (Genesis 3:6)

God had given to Adam and Eve the fruit of every tree in the Garden of Eden to eat (*Genesis 2:16*). But, He had prohibited them from eating of the fruit of one tree only – the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. By this, their obedience to His word would be tested.

Satan, the devil, disguised as a serpent, caught Eve alone and deceived her into disobeying God. Adam followed by knowingly joining Eve in her sin. Thus, sin (disobedience to God) was introduced into the new world. The consequences would be far reaching. Notice the manner in which both Adam and Eve acted when confronted by God.

Scripture to read: Genesis 3:1-13

Question to ponder: *In what ways did Adam and Eve respond differently to God after their sin than they had before?*

Day 11 Date: _____

The Woman's Seed

“And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”
(Genesis 3:15)

God pronounced judgment upon the serpent (Satan) for leading Adam and Eve into sin. In our text verse we see mention of two seeds: the seed of the serpent and of the woman. God foretells that the seed of the serpent would one day bruise the heel of the seed of the woman, but the seed of the woman would one day bruise the head of the seed of the serpent.

Only one person in history has been born of the seed of the woman (without the seed of the man) – Jesus Christ! To bruise the heel is a painful injury, but not fatal. Satan inflicted a temporary bruise to Christ when He was crucified. To bruise the head refers to a fatal injury. Jesus Christ inflicted a permanent, victorious, bruise to Satan when He rose again from the dead three days later! Here in the third chapter of the Bible we find the first reference to God's plan of salvation for mankind!

Scripture to read: Genesis 3:14-24

Question to ponder: *What comfort do you think that this promise gave to Adam and Eve?*

Day 12 **Date:** _____

All Have Sinned!

“As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one” (Romans 3:10)

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23)

These verses, along with the entire scripture reading for today, clearly state that every person ever born has sinned. We are “not righteous” (that is, “right before God”) as a condition of birth and we add to that by committing sin by choice. We are no different than our original parents, Adam and Eve. They, upon sinning, received a sin nature (a natural bent, or attraction, toward sinning) and passed it on to their children – and on to us - through birth.

This is the first fact one must know, and acknowledge, in order to find a personal remedy for sin.

Scripture to read: Romans 3:10-23

Question to ponder: *Am I willing to admit that I am a sinner?*

Day 13 Date: _____

The Ten Commandments (1-4)

“Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” (Exodus 20:3)

In the Garden of Eden sin was defined by the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. After Eden, man’s conscience guided him in the understanding of sin. Of course, God gave verbal guidelines as He communicated with various men in those days. About 2,500 years after Eden, God gave to a man named Moses two tables of stone with ten commandments written on them. Here we find the foundation of moral living before God. But, more to the point, here we find the “*knowledge of sin*” that proves us all “*guilty before God*” (*Romans 3:19-20* from yesterday’s scripture reading). These first four commandments address our relationship to God.

1. “*Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*”
2. “*Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.*”
3. “*Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain.*”
4. “*Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.*”

Scripture to read: Exodus 20:1-17

Question to ponder: *Have I kept these first four commandments perfectly?*

Day 14 **Date:** _____

The Ten Commandments (5-10)

“Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment”

(Matthew 5:21-22a)

The Lord Jesus Christ, in his “Sermon on the Mount”, interpreted several of the Ten Commandments in a much more stringent manner than previously taught. As if it isn’t hard enough to keep them by our actions, He explained that even our motives are taken into account by God! Truly, by this standard, we are all guilty before God! The last six commandments address our relationships with other people.

5. *“Honour thy father and thy mother.”*
6. *“Thou shalt not kill.”*
7. *“Thou shalt not commit adultery.”*
8. *“Thou shalt not steal.”*
9. *“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”*
10. *“Thou shalt not covet.”*

Scripture to read: Matthew 5:17-30

Question to ponder: *Have I kept these six commandments perfectly?*

Day 15 Date: _____

Guilty of All

“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.”
(James 2:10)

The problem with attempting to keep the Law (of which the Ten Commandments are the foundation) is that it only takes one offence to become a “law-breaker”. It (the Law) is an absolute standard. You may “*keep the whole law*”, and then slip one time (“*offend in one point*”), and you have become as guilty as if you had continuously broken all the commandments.

James, the writer of this letter, gives an example of breaking the law by showing favoritism to a rich man while despising another man who is poor. He goes on to explain that the Law has one Author. Therefore, any single transgression (breaking) of the Law is against God and renders the offender guilty of all (“a transgressor”) before God.

Scripture to read: James 2:1-13

Question to ponder: *In light of this teaching, is there any person, anywhere, who could possibly stand guiltless before God?*

Day 16 Date: _____

The Deceitful Heart

“The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

(Jeremiah 17:9)

Jeremiah was a prophet of God who lived about 600 years before the birth of Jesus Christ. In the book of the Bible called by his name, he writes of the complete wickedness (depravity) of man. The heart (mind) of man is so wicked that a man even deceives himself into thinking thoughts opposed to God. The deceitful and wicked thoughts of the heart produce actions of sinful rebellion against God (see Lesson 12, scripture reading: *Romans 3:10-23*).

Jeremiah asks the question, “*who can know it?*” The answers come immediately from God himself: “*I the LORD search the heart...*”

Scripture to read: Jeremiah 17:5-14

Question to ponder: *If God knows even the thoughts of my heart, how could I possibly conceal any sin from Him?*

Day 17 **Date:** _____

The First Murder

“And he <God> said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground.” (Genesis 4:10)

God had warned Adam concerning the forbidden fruit, *“in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2:17)*. Adam (and Eve) did not die physically right away, but did experience spiritual death – separation from fellowship with God – immediately. Because of their sin, they had to be expelled from the Garden of Eden.

It would get worse! Eve bore two sons, Cain and Abel. One day each brought an offering to God. Apparently God had given instructions concerning what was acceptable to Him. Abel’s offering, which included the shedding of an animal’s blood, was accepted. When Cain saw that his own offering wasn’t, he responded by killing his brother. Adam and Eve had hoped their salvation would come through these boys. Instead, they saw the awful consequence of death, just as God had warned!

Scripture to read: Genesis 3:23 – 4:15

Question to ponder: *How do I respond when I learn that I have fallen short of God’s expectations?*

Day 18 **Date:** _____

Death by Sin

“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned” (Romans 5:12)

The sin of Adam and Eve not only caused sin to gain an entrance into the world, but also death. Had they not sinned, the world would know nothing of death.

Because of their sin, we, their offspring, are born with a sin nature. That sin nature condemns us to death as well. In *James 1:15*, the Bible tells us “*sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death*”. The sin nature also causes us to sin, thereby confirming the verdict of death by our actions. All men have sinned. Therefore all men are condemned to die!

Scripture to read: Romans 5:12-19

Question to ponder: *In how many different ways do I see evidence of death in the world around me on a regular basis?*

Day 19 Date: _____

The Process of Sin

“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” (James 1:14-15)

Sin does not come upon us from without. The Bible clearly states in our text verses that the sins we commit find their source within us. Our own lust (attraction to evil) causes us to respond to the lure of evil and to move toward it. Our own lust conceives the sin and “gives birth” to it. Notice that the temptation (invitation to sin) is powerless to influence us except for the lust within us.

Also notice that the sin which at first appears so attractive to us ultimately “gives birth” to death.

Scripture to read: James 1:13-21

Question to ponder: *In what ways do we ignore the real nature of sin when we are in the middle of “the process”?*

Day 20 **Date:** _____

The Wages of Sin

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:23)

When we work for an employer we are entitled to receive wages in compensation for our labor. They are earned and are due to us. Any person off the street could not walk into the office of our employer and demand a paycheck. They would be denied because they had not labored, and therefore had not earned a paycheck.

We have earned an eternal paycheck for our labors in this life. Because of our sin, that paycheck is death. It is earned, and therefore due to us.

Notice, on the other hand, that eternal life is a gift. It cannot be earned through any labors of man.

Scripture to read: Romans 7:7-14

Question to ponder: *In light of this verse, would you want to stand before God and ask Him to just give you what you deserve?*

Day 21 **Date:** _____

Noah and the Flood

“And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.” (Genesis 6:17)

After Cain and Abel, God gave Adam and Eve a third son, named Seth. Seth’s family line is traced in the fifth chapter of Genesis. Mankind did not learn from the sin in the Garden, or from the tragedy of Cain’s murder of Abel. Genesis 6:5 records that *“the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.”* Finally, after over 1,500 years, God pronounced a horrible judgment upon His creation. He would destroy man, and much of created animal life, from off the face of the earth.

But, in the midst of all this evil, God had reserved one man, a descendent of Seth, to Himself through whom He would work to preserve human life on earth and ultimately bring salvation to all mankind. *“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD” (Genesis 6:8).*

Scripture to read: Genesis 6:5-22

Question to ponder: *Is God afraid to execute judgment upon sin?*