

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 1: Course Introduction

Overview

To focus on problems teenagers encounter most and discuss practical solutions based on Bible teachings.

Goals

- Help students identify and avoid common teenager pitfalls
- Help students develop an appreciation for the relevancy of the Bible in today's world
- Encourage students to discuss important spiritual matters with their parents

Lessons

- Organized into major sections with multiple lessons in each
- Each Lesson
 - General Bible principles covered first
 - Several applicable problem areas highlighted for discussion
 - Roughly one week per lesson

Notebook

- Get a loose leaf notebook to organize and retain the material passed out in class.

Class Participation

- This material is gathered and presented for your benefit – take advantage of it!
- Come prepared to discuss the lesson's topic.
- I reserve the right to send rowdy students back to their parents.

Messages to Parents

- Some of the topics are sensitive in nature, especially those dealing with sexuality.
 - It is this course's intention to deal with such matters plainly (as the Bible does) in a manner appropriate to the ages and maturity levels of the students.
 - If you have concerns, please feel free to discuss them with the class teacher.
- Many of the questions in the lessons require the student to interact with their parents. We view this as an ongoing opportunity to encourage good communication between parent and child.
- The lessons are intended to be somewhat challenging for the student.
 - Often the students will be asked to research and find relevant scriptures for a particular question. As a result, they may need your help with using helpful Bible study aids.
- The lessons are also intended to be very practical in nature.
 - Many questions require the practical application of various general Bible principles. Your help may be needed to enable your child to see the connection between the two in day-to-day life.

Course Outline

	Introduction
1	Course Introduction
2	General Bible Principles
	Dangers to the Body
3	Smoking
4	Drinking
5	Drugs
6	Tattoos/Piercings
7	Suicide
	Sexual Temptations
8	Sexuality - General Principles
9	Dancing
10	Pornography
11	Homosexuality
12	Clothing/Swimming
13	STDs, Pregnancy, & Abortion
	Review #1
	Dating and Marriage
14	Dating and Marriage
15	Picking a friend/date
16	Affection
17	Celibacy
	Encouragements to Evil
18	Encouragements to Evil
19	Peer Pressure
20	TV/Movies
21	Bullying
22	Popular Music
23	Gambling
24	Personal Electronics
	Review #2
	Relationships with Others
25	Relationships with Others
26	Parents
27	Brothers and Sisters
28	Lying/Cheating/Stealing
29	Situation Ethics
30	Profanity, Cussing

31	Anger, Road Rage
32	Tolerance/Diversity
33	Friends and Enemies
34	Civil Government
35	War
36	Gossip
37	Pride, Humility
	Review #3
	Spiritual Relationships
38	Spiritual Relationships
39	Becoming a Christian
40	Baptism
41	Spiritual Growth
42	Worship, Part 1
43	Worship, Part 2
44	Work of the Church
45	Organization of the Church
46	Elders and Preachers
47	Brethren
48	Common Church Issues
49	Personal Evangelism
50	Common Religious Issues, Part 1
51	Common Religious Issues, Part 2
52	Religious Holidays
	Review #4
	Work Relationships
53	Jobs, Careers
54	Employee-employer relationships
55	College
56	Stewardship
	Other Topics
57	The Future
	Conclusion
58	Summary and Review #5

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 2: General Bible Principles

A. The Bible teaches us many specific things we should and should not do. Use 1 Cor. 6:9-10; Gal. 5:19-24; Col. 3:5-17; and Rev. 21:8 to list several examples. If you don't understand the meaning of a word, write it down, look up its definition, and tell us what it means.

B. The world has changed a lot since the writing of the Bible about 2000 years ago. Many questionable activities are not specifically mentioned in the Bible (for example, smoking, school proms). Talk to your parents and list several other examples.

1. Tattoos → #1, #4?, #6 (underage)
2. Sexual magazines, on-line pornography → #2, #3
3. Self-harm (cuttings, and other self-damaging activities) → #1
4. Dancing in general → #2, #3, #4
5. Bars, Nightclubs → #2, #3, #4, #6 (underage)
6. Asking about other people's religions → #2?,
7. Smoking → #1, #2, #3, #4?, #6 (underage)
8. Marijuana, illegal/hard drugs → #1, #3, #6
9. TV shows, theater, movies → #2, #6 (R & X-rated movies)
10. Gambling → #2, #3, #6 (underage)
11. Video games → #2, #7
12. Working on Sunday → #2?, #3?, #4?
13. Gluttony → #1, #3

C. However, the Bible is still useful for guiding our lives because of the general principles it presents. The following principles will be encountered frequently in this course. Study the scriptures given and be prepared to discuss what the principles mean.

1. Physically harmful activities (1 Cor. 6:19-20; Rom. 12:1; Eph 5:28-29)
2. Activities that encourage evil (Phil. 4:8; 1 Cor. 15:33; Eph. 5:11)
3. Avoiding lust or evil desires (1 John 2:16; 2 Pet. 2:10; James 1:14-15)
4. Setting a good example for others (1 Thess. 5:22; Matt. 5:16)
5. Doing what violates your conscience and makes you feel guilty (Rom. 14:13-23)
6. Violations of civil law (Rom. 13:1-7)
7. Wasting time (Eph. 5:16; Col. 4:5)

D. True wisdom comes by learning how to apply general Bible principles to specific situations we encounter every day. True courage comes when sticking to what the Bible says despite what others may want us to do or what we may like to do.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 3: Smoking

Smoking has fallen somewhat into disfavor in recent years with rising public concerns over second hand smoke and bans on smoking in restaurants, on airplanes, and various workplaces. Yet today, millions of Americans use tobacco on a regular basis (smoking, chewing). Of these, many start in their teenage years.

A. Despite warnings on cigarette packages and public service announcements, many people continue to smoke. Talk to your parents, friends at school, school counselor, and/or neighborhood friends in order to list reasons below why people smoke.

B. Do some research to determine what kinds of harmful effects smoking has on the body. Summarize these effects below. What about “smokeless” chewing tobacco?

C. Based on Lesson 2, are there any scriptures that specifically address smoking (hint: think in terms of ingesting nicotine as a drug and the Greek word “pharmakia”)?

D. Review the general Bible principles from Lesson 2. List below the ones that are applicable to the use of tobacco products. Explain your choices.

E. What would you say to someone who tried to defend smoking with the following arguments:

1. Many people who smoke live long lives.
2. I like it. It calms my nerves.
3. It makes me look “cool”.
4. It is not as bad as getting drunk or doing drugs.
5. I only do it privately.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 4: Drinking

Countless millions of people in the US consume alcoholic beverages in one form or another. Many begin in their teenage years, even though the minimum age for them to buy alcohol is 18 to 21 in most states. Drinking gets special attention around major holidays and celebrations. This lesson will examine the relationship Christians (especially teenagers) should have toward alcohol.

A. Why do people drink?

B. Talk to your parents about: 1) what categories of alcoholic beverages there are, 2) how much alcohol each typically contains (%), and 3) how little can be consumed before they start to affect the mind/body.

C. What are the effects of drinking on a person's mental abilities/judgment and body immediately (within minutes to hours), the next day, and over the long-term?

D. What does the Bible say about getting drunk (Gal. 5:21; Eph. 5:18; Prov. 23) and being sober-minded (1 Thess. 5:6-8, 1 Tim. 3:2, 11; Titus 1:8; Titus 2:2,4, 6; 1 Peter 4:7, 5:8)?

E. What do the following terms in the KJV mean and how do they apply to our topic? "riot" (Rom. 13:13), "banqueting" (1 Pet. 4:3), and "surfeiting" (Luke 21:34).

F. What general Bible principles from Lesson 2 would apply to drinking?

G. Did Jesus drink alcoholic wine (Matt. 11:19) and create it for others to enjoy (John 2:1-11)?

H. To justify drinking alcohol in moderation, some claim people in Bible times lacked the ability to store grape juice without it fermenting and the Bible frequently mentions "wine" favorably (Genesis 14:18-19; Psalm 104:15; Proverbs 31:6-7; Isaiah 55:1). How would you respond?

I. What about the use of alcohol as a medicine (1 Tim. 5: 23)?

J. What would you say to a friend who tried to defend drinking with the following arguments?

1. My parents let me drink.
2. I only drink "socially" and never get drunk.
3. It helps me to unwind and relax.
4. It is not as bad as smoking or doing drugs.
5. I only drink at home.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 5: Drugs

Mankind has been able to use a wide variety of natural and artificial substances to benefit himself. When suffering from sickness and disease, we can resort to a variety of over-the-counter and prescriptions drugs in addition to natural herbs. However, many people take drugs for non-medical reasons. This lesson focuses on the Christian's attitude toward drug use and abuse.

A. Although a number of drugs have been made illegal by the government, many people still use them. Talk to your parents and write down a list of such drugs and why the government would make them illegal.

B. What scripture is violated if a Christian breaks the law to use illegal drugs?

C. Although some drugs are legal, many people use them in an abusive way. Talk to your parents and write down a list of such drugs and why people abuse them.

D. What harmful effects do the various drugs above have on the body? What scriptures are violated based on these effects?

E. What harmful effects do the various drugs above have on the mind? What scriptures are violated based on these effects?

F. What other general principles from Lesson 2 apply to the use of illegal drugs and/or the abuse of legal drugs?

G. The use of marijuana is now legal in Colorado if you have a doctor's prescription (a.k.a. "medical marijuana"). Since it is both legal and used for medical reasons, it must be OK, yes? Talk to your parents about this timely subject and come prepared to justify your answer.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 6: Tattoos and Piercings

In recent years, the popularity of tattoos and body piercings has grown dramatically. It is not uncommon these days to encounter men and women with multiple tattoos and/or body piercings with the practice starting in teenagers. Historically, both practices have existed for thousands of years (Lev. 19:28).

A. Although it is located in the Law of Moses, what principles can we see in the context of Leviticus 19:28?

B. Talk to your parents regarding the different kinds of tattoos that are available and list some of them below.

C. Which tattoos “make a statement” that is inconsistent with what kind of statement a Christian should be making?

D. Where tattoos are placed on the body can also be a problem. Why?

E. Why do some people get tattoos and/or body piercings? Is there anything wrong with some of these reasons?

F. What kind of statement does having multiple body piercings make (e.g., eyebrows, lip, tongue)?

G. What health risks are associated with body piercings?

H. Can tattoos and body piercings be easily removed or reversed?

I. What other general principles from Lesson 2 would apply to this subject?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 7: Suicide

Compared to smoking, drinking, and abusing drugs, few teenagers yield to the temptation to take their own lives. Yet many suffer from depression, guilt, and shame what can lead to suicidal thoughts and self-destructive actions. This lesson examines what the Bible has to say about this important topic.

A. Talk to your parents and/or research the internet to find out 1) how many teenagers annually commit or attempt to commit suicide and 2) what are the reasons they do that.

B. What effects can a failed suicide attempt have on the person? What effects does a successful suicide attempt have on the survivors?

C. How do the following scriptures relate to this subject? 1 Cor. 6:19-20; Rom. 12:1; Eph 5:28-29; James 2:11

D. Summarize the following accounts of suicide or attempted suicide and see if you can tell if their actions were approved.

1. King Saul 1 Sam. 31:1-6
2. Judas Iscariot Matt. 27:1-10
3. The Philippian jailor Acts 16:22-34

E. Many people kill themselves because of depression resulting from failure at school or work, financial loss, or the loss of a loved one. Contrast this attitude with the following scriptures:

1. Matt. 6:25-34
2. Phil. 4:4-13
3. 1 Tim. 6:6-10
4. Heb. 13:5-6

F. Excessive guilt and shame drives some to suicide (e.g., Judas). Yet the Bible gives practical advice on how to avoid these feelings. How do the general principles of Lesson 2 relate to this?

G. Explain how to get rid of guilt you have (Acts 2:36-41; Acts 8:14-24; I Cor. 6:9-11; 1 John 1:5 thru 2:6).

H. Do all suicides result in the person being lost eternally? Be prepared to discuss John 15:13; mental impairment, and death bed repentance.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 8: Sexuality – General principles

It is natural for men and women to sexually desire each other. This is the way God has made us. However, such natural desires often lead to a wide variety of improper attitudes, feelings, and behaviors. This is especially true in our modern society that emphasizes physical beauty, being popular & fashionable, and being “sexy” or “hot”. This lesson overviews what the Bible has to say about this important topic.

A. What are the various messages regarding sexuality being spread by today’s media (e.g., TV, movies, pop music, fashion industry, advertising)?

B. Define the following terms from the Bible (KJV):

1. Lasciviousness (Gal. 5:16-19)
2. Lust (Gen. 3:6; 1 John 2:15-17; James 1:14-15)
3. Fornication (Matt. 15:19)
4. Adultery (Matt. 5:27-28)

C. What restrictions has God placed on our sexuality according to Heb. 13:4 and 1 Cor. 7:1-2?

D. Talk to your parents and come prepared to discuss the potential problems with having sex either before marriage or with someone other than your spouse. Include what happened in 2 Samuel 11.

E. Both the Bible and practical reality show the importance in controlling our sexual desires when unmarried. Talk to your parents and come prepared to discuss the kinds of situations and activities that:

1. Increase our level of sexual desire.
2. Increase our level of self-control.

F. There are also many things we can do to tempt others in this area. List some examples and what we should do differently.

G. What general principles from Lesson 2 would apply to our sexuality?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 9: Dancing

A significant number of Americans dance in a wide variety of forms. One of the currently popular TV shows is “Dancing with the Stars”. Dancing is not only practiced in night clubs and bars, but in the theater, in sporting events (cheerleading), at weddings, and in public. Many public schools include it in their after-school activities (e.g., homecoming, prom). In this lesson, we’ll examine this practice in light of Bible principles.

A. Dancing is mentioned about two dozen times in the Bible. Examine the following samples and see if you can identify those that are associated with questionable or sinful activities. Exodus 15:20; Exodus 32:19; Judges 11:34; 1 Sam. 30:16-17; 2 Sam. 6:14; Job 21:7-14; Matt. 14:6; Luke 15:25.

B. What common traits do the bad examples above share?

C. How could dancing encourage you to have sinful thoughts and desires? How could your dancing encourage sinful thoughts in others?

D. Dancing today takes many forms. Talk to your parents about the following types of dance. Try to identify those that are more associated with questionable or sinful activities and why:

1. Ballet, ballroom, tango
2. Square, folk, Irish, line dancing
3. Belly, hip-hop, modern, rave.

E. Other than sexual temptations, talk to your parents about what other sinful activities commonly occur in places that promote dancing and list them below.

F. Under which of the following circumstances would dancing be OK:

1. School-sponsored and chaperoned
2. Jazzercise© exercising
3. Men only or women only
4. Husband and wife in public
5. Husband and wife in private

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 10: Pornography

According to one website, worldwide pornography revenues in 2006 approached \$100 billion. The same website indicated the pornography or “porn” industry in America generated close to \$13 billion (much of it in the form of video rentals and Internet sales). An estimated 4.2 million websites (12% of the total) contain pornography with an estimated 90% of children ages 8-16 having viewed pornography online. “Softer” or more subtle forms of pornography can be easily found on TV, in newspaper ads, and PG-rated movies. Let’s see that the Bible has to say about this topic.

A. What is the dictionary definition of “pornography”? Talk to your parents and list several examples of both harder and softer types.

B. How would Matt. 5:27-28 relate to this topic? What other passages from Lesson 8 relate to this topic and why?

C. Talk to your parents and be prepared to discuss what differences there are in how this subject relates to the following (think in terms of temptations for being a source and/or consumer).

1. Males

2. Females

D. In what ways can pornography become an addiction?

E. Since pornography in various forms is all around us, how can we reduce or avoid its temptation?

F. Is it wrong to make, distribute, or sell pornography? If yes, what scriptures indicate that?

G. What other passages from Lesson 2 relate to this topic and why?

H. How would you respond to someone who said the following?

1. “There is nothing wrong with porn since that term is not found in the Bible.”

2. “I only look at porn in the privacy of my home.”

3. “I don’t understand what the big deal is. Sex is natural. No one is getting hurt.”

4. “I’m just admiring someone’s natural, God-given beauty.”

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 11: Homosexuality

Since the 1980's, homosexuality has "come out of the closet" and become very common. What was once viewed as unmentionable has become a source of "gay pride" and a matter of civil rights. Some religious groups accept practicing homosexuals into their membership and in some cases allow them into leadership positions. Let's see that the Bible has to say about this "alternative lifestyle".

A. Define homosexual, lesbian, bi-sexual, and sodomy.

B. How is homosexuality portrayed positively in today's culture?

C. How do each of the following scriptures apply to this topic:

1. Gen. 2:18-24
2. Gen. 18:16-19:29
3. Lev. 18:1-5, 22, 24-30; Lev. 20:13, 22-23
4. Matt. 19:5
5. Rom. 1:18-32
6. 1 Cor. 6:9-11
7. 1 Cor. 7:1-5
8. Hebrews 13:4
9. Jude 7

D. How would you respond to the following claims?

1. "Sexual orientation is genetically based. Homosexuals are born that way."
2. "Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed only because of what is said in Ezekiel 16:46-49."
3. "Jonathan and David were homosexuals with God's approval per 1 Sam. 20:41; 2 Sam. 1:26."
4. "Homosexuals have the same rights as heterosexuals to loving, committed relationships recognized by the state (e.g., civil unions, gay marriage, adoption rights)."
5. "You are being a homophobe or using hate speech when you speak against homosexuality."
6. "AIDS is God's way of punishing homosexuals." or "God hates homosexuals."

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 12: Clothing

Shorts, tube tops, swimwear – summer is here! As is sometimes said, “Up goes the temperature, off come the clothes.” In this lesson we will look at what the Bible says Christians should wear.

- A. Define “modesty” or “modest” (1 Tim. 2:9).

- B. Define “naked” (Gen. 2:25; Gen. 3:7, 10, 21).

- C. What does the term “garment” (NAS) in Gen. 3:21 suggest?

- D. What do the commands to the priests under the Law of Moses in Exodus 20:26 and 28:42 suggest?

- E. Can clothing that is sufficiently long still be immodest? If yes, how?

- F. Other than being a source of sexual temptation, how can your clothing potentially influence others?

- G. Under what circumstances can clothing be sexually modest, but still not be appropriate because it is too flashy (1 Tim. 2:9; 1 Pet. 3:3) or too casual (Matt. 22:11-13)?

- H. Is doing in the following OK? If not, why not and what, if anything, can be changed to make it OK?
 1. Wearing shorts in gym class.

 2. Watching professional athletes compete in gymnastics, swimming, ice-skating, or equivalent.

 3. Going to a public swimming pool

 4. Going to the beach.

 5. Wearing shorts at home with only family present.

- I. How would you respond to the following statements?
 1. “This is only an issue for women. Men don’t need to be concerned about what they wear.”

 2. “I can wear whatever I like to Wednesday night services so long as it is sexually modest.”

 3. “Modesty is simply cultural. Wearing little or no clothing would be OK if the current culture accepted it (for example, jungle tribes who only wear loincloths).”

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 13: STDs, Pregnancy, and Abortion

Sinful behavior very often has negatives consequences in this life, even if a person repents. This is true when people not married to each other have sex. In this lesson, we will examine three consequences of this behavior – sexually transmitted diseases (STD), unwanted pregnancies, and abortion. Remember BibleQuestions.org has material under “A” for “Abortion”.

A. Talk to your parents and come prepared to discuss the following:

1. What are three common STDs?
2. How common are STDs?
3. Can you tell if a person is infected by looking at them? Can an infected person not know it?
4. Can all STDs be easily cured?

B. Talk to your parents and come prepared to discuss the following:

1. Can a female get pregnant by only having sex once?
2. What potential problems can a woman have if she gets pregnant outside of marriage?
3. What potential problems can a man have if he gets a woman pregnant outside of marriage?

C. Talk to your parents and come prepared to discuss the following:

1. What abortion methods are commonly used to terminate a pregnancy?
2. How common are abortions?
3. What are some of the potential side effects of an abortion?

D. How do the following scriptures relate to the practice of abortion?

1. Gen. 25:22; Luke 1:41
2. Exodus 21: 22-25
3. Gen. 9: 6; Prov. 6: 16-17; Rev. 21:8

E. The term “safe sex” or “protected sex” refers to using condoms to prevent STDs and pregnancy. Is this approach 100% effective?

F. What scriptures from Lessons 2 and 8 would apply to the behaviors that lead to STDs, pregnancy, and temptations to get an abortion?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Review #1

This lesson will be a review, mainly of lessons 2 through 13. Please come prepared to discuss the following. If you need a copy of any lessons, feel free to let me know and I'll email them to you.

"Foundational" passages mentioned in questions #1 and #2 would be useful for addressing a number of different topics. A wise Christian would do well to know of such passages, memorizing them would be even better, knowing how to apply them better still, and having the courage/conviction to actually apply them would be best!

A. Select six passages that are foundational to things a Christian should not do, especially related to "Dangers to the Body" and "Sexual Temptations". Summarize each briefly in your own words and tell why you selected it.

B. Do the same (select six passages) for things a Christian should do.

C. Come up with five questions on lessons 2 through 13 to ask your class mates.

D. Of the 12 topics we have covered so far, which three do you think are the most challenging for people in your age group? Why?

E. Bring any topics you would suggest we cover in a future class.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 14: Dating and Marriage

Part of growing up is dating. Going on an initial date, finding a special friend, and “going steady” are all a natural part of becoming adults. However, dating has its dangers and its victims. In this lesson, we will study the Bible for its wisdom and guidance on this topic.

- A. What kinds of terms are used today for “dating”? What kind of different meanings do they have?
- B. Dating can be a time of wholesome fun, companionship, and a way of getting to know others. Based on our previous lessons, what are some enjoyable yet safe ways groups or couples can have fun?
- C. Dating also has a serious side. Being close to the opposite sex and common dating practices today may lead to a variety of temptations and sins. Give scriptures from previous lessons which guide us on:
1. Who not to go with
 2. Where not to go on dates
- D. Dating is also serious because it leads to the selection of a spouse. What does the Bible say about :
1. How long marriage is to last (Matt. 19:3-9; Rom. 7:1-3)?
 2. The influence our mates can have on us (1 Cor. 7:16; 1 Cor. 15:33)?
- E. What kinds of problems could be avoided if people followed the Bible’s advice on dating and marriage?
- F. Conflicts frequently arise between parents and children on this subject.
1. Why would parents make rules on when someone could start dating, how late they can stay out, where they can go, and who they can go with?
 2. What should your attitude be towards your parents and their rules (Eph. 6:1-4; Prov. 6:20-35)?
 3. Comment on any wisdom associated with the practice of Genesis 24:1-4 (parental selection of a spouse)
- G. Discuss what the common expression “falling in love” means and what it implies regarding “free choice”.
- H. Comment on the claim some people make that God has preordained a specific, ideal spouse for each person.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 15: Picking a Date

In the last lesson, we looked at how the Bible guides dating practices and some of the serious aspects of dating. In this lesson, we will focus on the features that the Bible considers desirable in a potential date.

A. What does the Bible teach about emphasizing the following traits commonly thought to be desirable?

1. Physical attractiveness (1 Sam. 16:6-7; Prov. 31:30; 1 Peter 3:3-4)
2. Wealth (Matt. 6:19-34; 1 Tim. 6:6-10; Heb. 13:5-6)
3. Popularity (John 7:7; John 15:18; James 4:4)

B. What does the Bible suggest we look for in a potential spouse?

1. Husband/father (Eph. 5:24-28; Eph. 6:4; 1 Tim. 5:8)
2. Wife/mother (Prov. 31:10-31; Eph. 5:22; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 3:3-6)

C. What can you tend to tell about a person by observing their parents and/or siblings?

D. Practically speaking, what features would be desirable in someone you will spend the rest of your life with?

E. Talk to your parents and come prepared to comment on the following situations:

1. Christians dating non-Christians
2. Christians dating atheists, Jehovah's Witnesses, devout Muslims, and members of other religious groups with strong convictions
3. Interracial dating
4. The proper age to start dating
5. Age differences (dating something significantly older/younger)
6. Internet dating

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 16: Affection

Holding hands, hugging, and kissing are natural ways of showing affection for someone. However, the wise teenager will listen to the guiding principles and practical advice of the Bible when sharing affection with someone they are going out with.

A. How would the following scriptures apply to our subject (note especially the emphasis on “flee” KJV)?

1. 2 Tim. 2:22

2. 1 Cor. 6:18

B. Based on the following, why should the care about the thoughts and desires we might encourage in someone we are going out with?

1. Matt. 5:27-28

2. Matt. 18:6-7; Mark 9:42

3. Rev. 2:14

C. How do the following scriptures relate to our subject: Acts 24:16; 1 Tim. 1:5, 19; 1 Tim. 4:2?

D. The scriptures warn about being enticed, seduced, or beguiled to do wrong (Ex. 22:16; Num. 25:1, 18; Prov. 1:8-10; James 1:14; Rev. 2:20). Talk to your parents and come prepared to discuss what a person can say or do to entice you to do wrong when it comes to showing affection.

E. Talk to your parents and come prepared to discuss what your response would be to the following statements (bonus if you can provide an appropriate scripture).

1. “Why don’t you want to go out with me?”

2. “Don’t you want to kiss me?” (perhaps said by someone on a first date or by someone you don’t really like)

3. “Hey, let’s hang out at my house. My parents are gone.”

4. “I know it’s late, but let’s go riding in my car.”

5. “Let’s go to the movies and sit in the back row.”

6. “If you really love me, why don’t you show me more?”

7. “Hey, I can control myself. I can stop any time I want.”

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 17: Celibacy

In today's society, the general expectation is that everyone will date, fall in love, and eventually get married. Those who can't find a suitable date/marriage partner or who choose not to look can be viewed by some people as being unusual. Let's see what the Bible says about this subject.

A. What kinds of influences in our society encourage people to date, sometimes even at a young age?

B. Define "celibacy".

C. In what ways are celibate people looked down on or made fun of in our society?

D. What can we learn from the following scriptures:

1. Gen. 2:18
2. Prov. 31:10
3. 1 Cor. 7:1-2
4. 1 Tim. 4:1-3
5. Heb. 13:4

E. What can we learn from the following scriptures:

1. Matt. 19:10-12
2. 1 Cor. 7:8-9
3. 1 Cor. 7:25-40

F. What can we learn from the following scriptures:

1. Matt. 5:31-32; 19:9

G. Often we emphasize avoiding negative things you should not do that arouse sexual temptations (e.g., clothing, mixed swimming, dancing, pornography). Talk to your parents about some positive things that you can do if you are celibate.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 18: Encouragement to Evil

In previous sections, we have discussed the Biblical and practical reasons why teenagers should avoid activities that harm the body and that arouse sexual temptations. In the next section, we will examine the forces that help shape a teenager's life. We will give special emphasis to those forces that encourage teenagers to do things they shouldn't do.

- A. Talk to your parents and come prepare to discuss the following:
1. List the people and things around you that have an influence on the way you think and act.
 2. Which of these do you think have the most influence?
 3. Which of these do you think have the most influence for good?
 4. Which of these do you think have the most influence for evil?
- B. Do you have any control over the influences listed above? If so, how do you increase the influences for good and decrease the influences for evil?
- C. What are the practical implications of the following verses?
1. Phil. 4:8-9
 2. 1 Cor. 15:33
- D. Contrast the phrases "But I couldn't help it", "The devil made me do it", and "I couldn't control myself" with the following.
1. 1 Cor. 9:24-27
 2. 1 Cor. 10:11-13
 3. 2 Peter 1:5-11
- E. What can you do if the following people in positions of authority are also influences for evil?
1. Parents (Eph. 6:1-3)
 2. Teachers (Rom. 13:1)
 3. Employers (Eph. 6:5-8; 1 Peter 2:18-20)
 4. Government (Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-17)

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 19: Peer Pressure

People we associate with can exert considerable influence on our attitudes and behavior. Being sociable creatures, we like to fit in and be liked by people. Unfortunately, the desires of the crowd often run contrary to the desires of God expressed through the Bible.

- A. Define “peer” and list different types of peers.

- B. What are some evil things that our peers can want us to do (1 Pet. 4:1-5)?

- C. In what ways can they exert pressure on us?

- D. How can we resist this pressure (Psm. 1:1; 37:1; 56:4; Matt. 5:10-12; 2 Tim. 3:12)?

- E. Moral courage is the ability to do what is right regardless of that others may think or say, including saying “No!” to the evil influences of others. In the following passages, described what happened, whether the person was courageous, and what we can learn from their example.
 1. Eve and Adam (Gen. 3:1-7)
 2. Noah (Gen. 6:5-8)
 3. Reuben (Gen. 37:18-22)
 4. Aaron (Ex. 32:1-6; 21-24)
 5. Joshua (Josh. 24:14-15)
 6. Solomon (1 Kings 11:1-8)
 7. Daniel (Dan. 1:1-16)
 8. Daniel’s friends (Dan. 3:1-30)
 9. Jesus (Matt. 4:11)
 10. King Herod (Mark 6: 21-29)
 11. Peter (Luke 22:54-62)
 12. Peter & John (Acts 4:13-22)
 13. Paul (2 Cor. 11:23-27)

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 20: TV, Movies

According to one website, the average child watches television about 28 hours per week. In many homes, the TV has become an electronic babysitter to entertain the kids. Although attendance at theaters may be declining, cable TV and video/DVD rentals are bringing more movies into the home.

A. Talk to your parents and try to set aside one to two hours in the evening to carefully watch TV together. Discuss with your parents and write down everything you see or hear that is either sinful or encourages evil. If your parents do not want you to watch TV, see the teacher for an alternate assignment.

B. While you are doing (A), write down everything you see or hear that would encourage good.

C. Using the Internet, see if you can find some statistics regarding TV viewing and its negative influence on younger people.

D. What can you do to make TV more of an influence for good?

E. Read the movie section of the newspaper, pick 4 different brands of movie theaters in the area, and count the number of movies that fall into the following rating categories.

G _____ PG _____ PG-13 _____ R _____ Other _____

F. Discuss with your parents and/or use the Internet to answer the following questions:

1. What do these different movie rating codes mean?
2. What kind of content determines the different ratings?
3. Who assigns these movie ratings?
4. Which categories should a faithful Christian consider viewing and why?

G. How much sinful behavior should you enjoy watching?

H. What better things could you do with your time instead of watching TV or movies?

I. Review the scriptures and Bible principles from Lesson 2 and Lesson 18. List at least 3 scriptures that are applicable to TV/movie viewing and explain your choice.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 21: Bullying

A more aggressive form of peer pressure, bullying can take many forms. But fundamentally it seeks to use force or coercion to affect others. Let's see what the Bible has to say about this behavior.

- A. What kinds of bullying have you heard about, witnessed, or experienced?

- B. How common do you think bullying is? Who typically are targets for bullying? Would faithful Christians tend to be targets and if so, why?

- C. Do some research to see how bullying can adversely affect the targeted person? You may use the Internet, interview a school official/counselor, or talk with your parents.

- D. Agree or disagree, bullying is only found in school or among school-age children.

- E. A bully can easily tempt you to violate Romans 12:17. How would passages like Romans 12:13-21 and Matt. 5:43-45 apply to this topic?

- F. How would Rom. 13:1-7 apply to our topic? What kind of policies does your school have in place to discourage bullying? How effective would you say they are?

- G. What about witnessing someone being bullied? How might Matt. 5:9 apply to this topic?

- H. Agree or disagree, for the Christian, being bullied is always a form of religious persecution.

- I. What about self-defense? How might Luke 22:36 and 1 Tim. 5:8 apply to this topic?

- J. From the previous lesson on Peer Pressure, which of the examples in question E. would you classify as bullying? What can we learn from these examples?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 22: Popular Music

In 1877, the phonograph was invented by Thomas Edison in Menlo Park, New Jersey. With technological advances since then, music has become a constant presence in our world. AM/FM radio, audio CDs, iPods, mp3 players, satellite radio, and similar devices give us near-instant access to all kinds of music from all kinds of musical groups. But is everything flowing out of the radio, iTunes store, and concert hall suitable for faithful Christians according to the scriptures? Let's see.

- A. Define "popular music". What tends to make it popular? Can you find a verse that warns about things that are "popular"?

- B. Talk to your parents and try to set aside one hour in the evening to carefully listen to a popular music radio station together. Discuss with your parents and write down everything you hear that is either sinful or encourages evil. If your parents do not want you to listen to such a station, see the teacher for an alternate assignment.

- C. How could listening to such things have a negative influence on us?

- D. From Lesson 18, Lesson 2, or any other lesson, select six verses that would apply to this lesson.

- E. Agree or disagree: If music has a good beat, but we can't understand the lyrics, it is OK to listen to it.

- F. Many singers and musical groups are very popular today.
 1. Name six of them that are very popular with people in your age group.
 2. Talk to your parents and/or do some Internet research to learn a little about some of them and their lifestyle?
 3. Comment on the use of the term "idol" as in "American Idol".
 4. Often they serve as role models. In what ways do they encourage evil?

- G. Is all music bad? What kinds of music would be suitable for Christians?

- H. Should Christians listen to religious instrumental music outside of the worship assembly?

- I. Should Christians listen to a religious a capella (non-instrumental) music just for entertainment?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 23: Gambling

Recent years have seen an explosion in legalized gambling. Once constrained to the state of Nevada, gambling has gone “main stream” via a host of state-sponsored games, casinos in selected areas, and Internet gambling in the privacy of your own home. Let’s see what the Bible has to say about this subject and its potential influence for evil.

- A. Define “gambling”. What tends to make it popular?
- B. Which of the following are forms of gambling: playing cards for money, slot machines, Lotto, PowerBall, betting on sports events, playing bingo for money? Can you name others?
- C. Check the Internet for information on the subject of compulsive gambling and gambling addiction. What Bible verses would be applicable to this?
- D. How would the following scriptures apply to this subject: Luke 12:15; Rom 1:29-32; Col. 3:5; Eph 5:3?
- E. How would the following scriptures apply to this subject: Matt. 7:12; Matt. 22:39; Eph. 4:28?
- F. The Bible talks about getting money by working (Gen. 3:19; Eph. 4:28), by buying & selling (Matt. 25:9; James 4:13-15), and by charity (Eph. 4:28). Would gambling legitimately fall under any of these?
- G. In what other ways could gambling be an influence for evil (think in terms of where it is done, what else goes on there, or sins it could lead to)?
- H. Would the following activities be considered gambling: charity raffles, investing in the stock market, playing cards for fun, flipping a coin to decide what to do.
- I. How would you answer the following arguments in favor of gambling:
1. “The state has legalized it.”
 2. “Some proceeds, especially from state or charity sponsored gambling, goes to a good cause.”
 3. “I’m just purchasing some entertainment with my money.”
 4. “The Bible doesn’t use the term ‘gambling’”.
 5. “The Apostles gambled with God’s approval according to Acts 1:26.”

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 24: Personal Electronics

Personal computers, video gaming systems, the Internet, and cell phones have become deeply embedded into the American way of life. Our ability to rapidly communicate, access a wealth of knowledge, and experience new things has exploded. Unfortunately, this technology too often also is a great influence for evil to those who would live faithfully for God.

- A. Review the list of course topics from Lesson 1.
 - 1. Which of these sinful behaviors are encouraged by personal electronics and why?
 - 2. Which of these tend to be more prevalent/tempting and why?
- B. Personal electronics can also dull our sense of right and wrong. Talk to your parents about how this can occur and list some of the areas we need to be especially careful of.
- C. Review the scriptures and Bible principles from Lesson 2, 8, 18, and 20. List at least 6 scriptures that are applicable to this lesson and explain your choice.
- D. The Entertainment Software Rating Board (ESRB) provides age-based ratings for the content of video games. Discuss with your parents and/or use the Internet to answer the following questions.
 - 1. What do these different rating codes mean?
 - 2. What kind of content determines the different ratings?
 - 3. Which ratings should a faithful Christian consider viewing and why?
- E. Talk with your parents and discuss the dangers of the following:
 - 1. Surfing the Internet (e.g., Google searches, YouTube, popup ads)
 - 2. Social networking websites (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, MySpace)
 - 3. Cell phones, texting
 - 4. Email
- F. How would you answer the following statements?
 - 1. "It is just harmless entertainment. No one gets hurt."
 - 2. "I'm strong. What I see and do on-line doesn't really have a bad influence me."
- G. What can you do to make personal electronics less of an influence for evil?
- H. What can you do to make personal electronics more of an influence for good?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Review #2

This lesson will be a review, mainly of lessons 14 through 24. Please come prepared to discuss the following. If you need a copy of any lessons, feel free to let me know and I'll email them to you.

As we discussed in the previous class, "foundational" passages mentioned in questions #1 and #2 would be useful for addressing a number of different topics. A wise Christian would do well to know of such passages, memorizing them would be even better, knowing how to apply them better still, and having the courage/conviction to actually apply them would be best!

- A. Select six passages that are foundational to things a Christian should not do, especially related to "Dating and Marriage" and "Encouragements to Evil". Summarize each briefly in your own words and tell why you selected it.

- B. Do the same (select six passages) for things a Christian should do.

- C. Come up with five questions on lessons 14 through 24 to ask your class mates.

- D. Of the 24 topics we have covered so far, which three do you think are the most challenging for people in your age group? Why?

- E. Bring any topics you would suggest we cover in a future class.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 25: Relationships with Others

So far, we have studied what God has said through the Bible for identifying and overcoming many challenges teenagers face from day to day. These include dangers to the body, sexual temptations, dating & marriage, and encouragements to evil. In this next section, we will examine how the Bible can guide us to have better relationships with those we come in contact with at home, during school, and in the world.

A. Many people we deal with are in positions of authority over us. Consider the following scriptures as you answer the following: Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 6:1-3; Eph. 6:5-9; Heb. 13:17; 1 Peter 2:13-3:6.

1. List at least five examples of people in positions of authority.
2. What should be our attitude toward them?
3. Why?
4. If the person in authority wants you to do something against God's will, what should your attitude be according to Acts 4:18-29; Acts 5:27-29; and 1 Tim. 5:1-2?

B. The Bible also teaches we have responsibilities to others regardless of whether they have authority over us. Comment on the meaning of the following verses and what can happen if they are not followed.

1. Matt. 5:14-16
2. Rom. 12:9-21
3. Rom. 13:8-10
4. Rom. 14: 13-23

C. Some Bible verses may be short, but they are packed full of practical application when you study them.

1. List at least six ways you can be mistreated.
2. List at least six ways you like to be treated.
3. How would Luke 6:31 apply to these lists?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 26: Relationships with Parents

“Eat your veggies”, “Stop picking on your sister”, “No, you can’t go out until you finish your homework”, “Turn down that noisy music”. Living with parents and maintaining the proper attitude can be quite a challenge. This lesson examines what the Bible has to say about the parent-teenager relationship. Some of the questions below deal with the personal relationship you have with your parents. For class, you only need to share what you feel comfortable sharing.

- A. What responsibilities do your parents have to you according to Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21; 1 Tim. 5:8; Titus 2:4; and Heb. 12:7-11?

- B. Talk with your parents and ask them which of these responsibilities is the most challenging for them.

- C. What responsibilities do you have to your parents according to Prov. 6:20-23; Eph. 6:1-3; and Col. 3:20?

- D. Which of these responsibilities is the most challenging for you?

- E. Many teenagers develop very strong attitudes of resentment toward their parents.
 1. How do teenagers often express these attitudes (Deut. 21:18-21; Luke 15:11-32; Matt. 21:28-30)?

 2. What kinds of sinful behavior do these attitudes often lead to?

 3. What can be done to reduce these attitudes?

- F. What do you have to be thankful for in your relationship with your parents?

- G. How free do you feel about talking with your parents about your problems in general or problems in your relationship with them? What can you do to improve your ability to communicate with them?

- H. If you were able to change one thing about the relationship with your parents:
 1. What would it be? Why?

 2. What good things might happen as a result?

 3. What bad things might happen as a result?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 27: Brothers and Sisters

“Mom, make Jimmy give me my toy!”, “Mom, make Jimmy leave me alone!”, “Mom, why don’t you let me borrow the car like Jim does?” Few situations demand the close and continual contact that having brothers and sisters does. Such closeness can encourage many problems between siblings as we shall see in this lesson.

- A. What kinds of problems do siblings tend to have with each other?

- B. Ask your parents which sibling problems tend to be the most challenging for them.

- C. Envy and jealousy can tear a family apart.
 - 1. What scriptures can you find related to jealousy?

 - 2. What situations tend to encourage jealousy?

 - 3. Should parents treat all siblings the same?

 - 4. What can you do to discourage jealousy it?

- D. According to Lesson 25, what scriptures describe some responsibilities siblings have to each other?
 - 1. Older toward younger

 - 2. Younger toward older

 - 3. In general

- E. No matter what the reason, siblings tend to bicker, quarrel, and/or argue. What can you do to discourage this?

- F. The Bible portrays men and women in the local congregation as “brothers” and “sisters”. Apply the following scriptures to relationships among physical brothers and sisters: Rom. 12:10; 2 Peter 1:7.

- G. What can we learn from the following examples of Bible siblings?
 - 1. Cain and Abel Gen. 4:1-8; 1 John 3:12

 - 2. Jacob and Esau Gen. 27

 - 3. Joseph and his brothers Gen. 37

 - 4. Mary and Martha Luke 10:38-42

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 28: Lying, Cheating, and Stealing

We live in a culture when personal honesty seems to be valued less and less. We often hear about people lying to the news media, cheating the government, and stealing from others. Not only are some of these people in highly influential positions in government and entertainment, but many of them never get caught or punished. Let's see what the Bible has to say about personal honesty in our relationships with others.

A. Define and give examples of:

1. Lying
2. Cheating
3. Stealing

B. What does the Bible say about these actions (Rom. 13:9; Eph. 4:25, 28; Rev. 22:14-15)?

C. In what situations are teenagers tempted to lie, cheat, or steal (Luke 22:54-62; 1 John 2:4)?

D. Explain whether the following are types of lying, cheating, or stealing.

1. Borrowing your brother's or sister's things without telling them
2. Committing a "foul" in a school sport if the referee doesn't see it
3. Taking supplies home from school or work for personal use
4. Keeping something you find in a public place
5. Exaggerations ("I always...", "you never...", "I could eat a horse")
6. Gambling

E. Comment on what should be done in the following situations.

1. One of your school friends wants to copy your homework.
2. Your friend says, "I bet you a quarter that ..."
3. The store clerk has mistakenly charged you too little.
4. After seeing a close friend do something wrong, the teacher asks you if you know who did it.
5. After promising to do something, something else comes up that you want to do instead.
6. Your friend asks you a question and you know the truth will hurt their feelings.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 29: Situation Ethics

There is a growing influence in our society that says what is right and wrong are determined based on the particulars of a given situation - there is no absolute standard of right and wrong. In this lesson, we will see what the Bible says about this subject and how it applies to our everyday conduct.

A. Research and define the following terms in your own words.

1. Situation ethics
2. Mental reservation
3. Rationalization
4. Humanism

B. Joseph Fletcher is credited with founding the theory of situational ethics in the 1960s. What can you find out about his other beliefs, religious background, and association with questionable groups?

C. How would the following scriptures apply to the subject of situation ethics?

1. Deut. 12:8; Judges 17:6
2. Prov. 3:5-7; Prov. 14:12; Prov. 16:1-3
3. Isa. 55:8-9; Isa. 65:2; Jer. 10:23
4. 2 Tim. 3:3; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

D. How would you respond to the statement, "James 2:25 approves of lying in some situations."?

E. How would you respond to someone who suggested the following?

1. What should a poor woman who can't care for another child do if she becomes pregnant? Wouldn't an abortion be justified in that situation?

2. Wouldn't it be better to kill a deformed infant, handicapped person, or elderly person to prevent them from suffering unnecessarily?

3. Practicing safe sex is better than getting a social disease or getting pregnant.

4. Divorce is OK for physical, emotional, and/or financial abuse.

5. My clothes are a little tight/revealing, but they are not nearly as bad as what others wear.

F. List two other examples where people try to justify sin?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 30: Profanity

“Rough language”, “dirty talk”, “four-letter words”, “swearing”. What used to be considered shameful speech has become commonplace throughout our modern culture. This lesson examines how God views the use of such language in our communications with each other.

A. Define “profanity”.

B. What do the following scriptures say about how we should and shouldn’t talk?

1. Prov. 15:4
2. Matt. 12:34-37
3. Eph. 4:29 thru 5:5
4. Col. 3:8
5. Titus 2:7-8
6. James 3:7-10
7. 1 Peter 3:10
8. Compare Ex. 20:7 with Matt. 22:37

C. Profanity often falls into one of the following categories. Talk to your parents about why these terms are profanity. Are there any legitimate uses of these terms?

1. Religious terms like God, Jesus, Hell, damnation, and such.
2. Activities related to “going to the bathroom”
3. Sexual body parts and functions

D. Define “euphemisms” as it relates to profanity. Talk to your parents about what kinds of words fall into this category. Should Christians use these “softer” forms of profanity? Why?

E. Agree or disagree – “Profanity not only consists of spoken words, but also written words, gestures, and pictures”.

F. Why do some people use profanity? What scriptures would apply to their attitudes and/or beliefs?

G. What can you do if the group you are with uses profanity?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 31: Anger

This topic has many euphemisms, including “getting ticked off”, “having a cow”, and “getting hot under the collar”. While some of these sound funny, anger is deadly serious business from God’s perspective as we will see in this lesson.

A. Using a good concordance or on-line Bible:

1. List all the verses in the New Testament that contain the word “anger” or “angry”.
2. List all the verses in the New Testament that contain the word “wrath”.
3. In the verses you found, list the words that are somewhat synonymous with anger. You may augment your list with any other synonyms you can think of.
4. Use these synonyms to find additional verses in the New Testament related to anger.
5. Given all these verses, pick three to five that you think are the most relevant to our study.

B. Using a good Bible dictionary, describe how the synonyms you found in A.3. may differ from anger.

C. Describe the sins that anger often leads to using the verses you found above. List any others that you can think of.

D. What examples do we have in the Bible (OT and NT) of people getting angry and describe what happened as a result?

E. Do the verses you found support the claim that “It is always a sin to get angry.”?

F. Describe some situations where we are tempted to get angry and lose our temper.

G. What practical things can we do to avoid sinful anger? To cool off if we are getting angry?

H. What practical things can we do to avoid tempting others to get sinfully angry?

I. Should we try to develop a sense of righteous anger?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 32: Tolerance of Diversity

In recent years, there has been a growing push for “tolerance” and respecting “diversity”. On the surface, the effort to reduce prejudice and hatred for those who are different from us sounds good. However, there is more to this push than some may realize, especially when viewed from a Biblical perspective.

A. Based on what you have heard at school and/or your own research:

1. What is “tolerance”?
2. What is “diversity”?
3. What are the typical goals of those who lobby for tolerance of diversity?
4. Which groups are often mentioned that people need to tolerate more?

B. Agree or disagree: “Making fun of, being mean to, bullying, or persecuting other people because they are different is wrong.”

C. What should be a Christian’s attitude toward others based on Deut. 1:17; Matt. 5:43-48; Matt. 7:12; Luke 10:25-37; Rom. 2:11; Gal. 3:28; Gal. 5:20-22; James 2:1-9? How would these scriptures apply in the following situations?

1. Different race, nationality, ethnicity, culture.
2. Different social, educational, or economic class.
3. Physical and/or mental disabilities.
4. Different religion (including denominations, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism).
5. Different sexual orientation.

D. What scriptures would you use to respond to the following assertion: “We need to respect people of all religious faiths. Therefore, you should not say anything against another person’s religion.”

E. What scriptures would you use to respond to the following accusation: “You are prejudiced against women and being a sexist when you do not allow women to have equal roles in church.”

F. What scriptures would you use to respond to the following accusation: “You are being discriminatory and practicing hate speech against lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender people if you say that homosexuality is wrong.”

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 33: Friends and Enemies

While we have no control over who our parents and siblings are, we have a great deal of freedom in picking our friends. Unfortunately in a world where there are friends, there usually are enemies, too. As we continue discussing topics related to our relationships with others, let's see what the scriptures have to say about friendship.

- A. Agree or disagree: "Who our friends are says a lot about the kind of person we are."

- B. What scriptures should guide us when choosing our friends? If you need help, see lessons 19 and 25.

- C. What scriptures apply to how we should treat those of another race, nationality, social/economic class, or any other significant difference (see lesson 32)? Are there any dangers in becoming close friends with such a person?

- D. Close friendships can be a source of temptation for the faithful Christian. List at least five ways our friends could tempt us with an associated scripture. If you need help, see lessons 2-6, 8-9, 12, 16, and 19.

- E. List at least four responsibilities in being someone's close friend. If you need help, do a keyword search on "friends".

- F. Many good friendships are destroyed by rash, angry words. What scriptures would be relevant to controlling our temper and tongue (see lesson 31)?

- G. What scriptures should guide our attitude and actions with those who don't like us? If you need help, do a keyword search on "enemy".

- H. Sometimes, our enemies may threaten us with harm. What scriptures should guide our response (see lesson 21)?

- I. Comment on how Galatians 4:16 would apply to this topic.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 34: Civil Government

Down through time, Christians have found themselves living under a wide variety of civil governments (e.g., monarchy, dictatorship, representative). While some governments have been favorable to Christianity, others have been neutral or outright hostile. In this lesson, we will examine the relationships between Christians and civil government.

A. List at least five scriptures that are related to this topic. If you need help, use keywords like “king”, “kings”, “rulers”, “governors”, “authorities”, and/or “powers”. See also lesson 25.

B. According to these scriptures, what are the responsibilities of civil government?

C. According to these scriptures, what are the responsibilities of Christians toward civil government? Ask your parents which of these responsibilities people are more often tempted to not do.

D. What scripture governs a Christian if civil government requires something in conflict with God?

E. Agree or disagree, “Christians must not pay taxes to a government that spends their money on evil things like abortion-on-demand.”

F. Citizens of a country often are given certain legal rights by their government.

1. In the United States, what are some of these rights?
2. Are there scriptures that show God approves of Christians exercising their civil rights?
3. Can a right granted by the government be wrong for a Christian to exercise?

G. Agree or disagree, “According to the First Amendment, Christians have no right imposing their religious values on others as a matter of law.”

H. Agree or disagree, “According to the First Amendment, Christians can say whatever they want to about the government, the president, and/or elected officials.”

I. What should a Christian’s perspective be on the following subjects?

1. Capital punishment
2. Voting
3. Being patriotic, saluting the flag, reciting the ‘Pledge of Allegiance’

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 35: War

The history of man is full of violent conflict between tribes and nations. This country is no exception. In a Christian's relationship with civil government, what does the Bible say about a Christian fighting and killing for his country?

- A. What should a Christian's attitude be toward all men (Matt. 7:12; Matt. 28:19-20; Rom. 12:17-21)?

- B. Does your country have the scriptural right to wage war in self-defense and/or against evil doers (Rom. 13:3-4)? Does this imply your country can be an "evil doer" also?

- C. Is it always sinful to be a soldier (Luke 3:14; Acts 10)?

- D. Talk to your parents about the aspects of military life that could hinder faithful Christian living.

- E. If a Christian believes that killing for his country is wrong, what should he do if the country demands you serve in the military (Matt. 22:21; Acts 5:28-29)?

- F. Talk to your parents to see what other arguments and/or scriptures are used with it comes to the "War Question".

- G. Based on the discussion above, if your country is under attack, would you tend to say:
 - 1. God requires a Christian to serve in the military.
 - 2. God encourages a Christian to serve in the military.
 - 3. God doesn't care one way or the other.
 - 4. God discourages a Christian from serving in the military.
 - 5. God requires a Christian not to serve in the military.

- H. Using the same range of possibilities as question (G), what would you tend to say to military service as a career choice?

- I. Using the same range of possibilities as question (G), what would you tend to say to military service when the country wants to do evil to other countries (e.g., Nazi Germany)?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 36: Gossip

“Open mouth, insert foot.” Too often our tongues get us into trouble with others (James 3:1-12).

Previous lessons have addressed problems with lying, profanity, and anger. In this lesson, we will focus on what the Bible has to say about gossip.

A. What relevant scriptures contain the words “gossip”, “gossips”, “talebearer”, “busybodies”, “meddler”, “slander”, “slandering”, and “whisperer”. Feel free to look for scriptures with equivalent synonyms. Review Lessons 25-33 to list additional scriptures that would apply to this topic.

B. Define the following terms:

1. Gossip

2. Slander

C. How common is gossip? How does the media promote gossip?

D. Why do people like to gossip? What do the scriptures say about these motivations?

E. In addition to being sinful, what are some of the negative consequences of gossiping (James 3:5a)?

F. What difference is there between gossip and the following?

1. “Tattling” (to a parent or teacher)

2. Warning others of someone’s behavior/reputation

G. Agree/disagree: “It isn’t gossip if it is true.”

H. What would you do if a friend says “I’ll tell you a secret, but you have to promise not to tell anyone.”

I. What should you do if the group you are with starts to gossip?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Review #3

It is time for another review; this time covering lessons 25 through 36. Please come prepared to discuss the following. If you need a copy of any lesson, feel free to let me know and I'll email them to you.

A. Select six passages that provide positive instructions (things a Christian should do) to have a good relationship with others. Summarize each briefly in your own words and tell why you selected it.

B. Do the same (select six passages) for things a Christian should not do since they harm our relationship with others.

C. Come up with five questions on lessons 25 through 36 to ask your class mates.

D. Of the relationship topics we have covered, which three do you think are the most challenging for people in your age group? Why?

E. Bring any topics you would suggest we cover in a future class.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 37: Pride/Humility

An inflated sense of self-worth or pride very often gets people in trouble with others. The scriptures have much to say about both pride and humility as we will see in this lesson.

- A. Using a good Bible dictionary, define the following terms “self-esteem”, “pride”, “humility”, “meekness” (depending on your translation, you may not find all of these terms).

- B. List at least 6 scriptures that talk about this subject.

- C. What do the scriptures have to say about having too much pride, haughtiness, or arrogance?

- D. Why do some people have too much pride? How is such reflected in their relationships with others?

- E. What do the scriptures have to say about having too little pride, self-respect, or self-confidence?

- F. Why do some people have too little pride? How is such reflected in their relationships with others?

- G. Agree or disagree, “It is sinful to have pride in one’s family, friends, school, church, or country.”

- H. What will a Biblically humble person do in the following situations?
 1. Gets a relatively high (or the highest) grade on a homework assignment, test, or class in school.
 2. Defeats another in a sporting event or contest.
 3. Is defeated by another in a sporting event or contest.
 4. Is in a group making a decision of no great consequence.
 5. Is in a group making a decision involving questionable or sinful activity.
 6. Sins against another person.
 7. Is sinned against by another person.
 8. Is discussing spiritual matters with one’s parent, more mature Christians, or the elders.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 38: Spiritual Relationships

This lesson marks the beginning of the next major section in our class. This section focuses on the Bible-based relationships we should have with God, fellow Christians, and non-Christians we know. This first lesson introduces some general principles regarding these relationships.

- A. List four scriptures that describe who God is and His nature.

- B. List four scriptures that describe what God has done for humanity in general and Christians in particular.

- C. According to the following scriptures, what terms are used to describe a Christian's relationship with God (Matt. 12:46-50; Matt. 23:9; Luke 17:10; 2 Cor. 11:2; Gal. 3:26; 2 Tim. 2:3-4)? What should a Christian's attitude be toward God based on these terms?

- D. List four scriptures that describe what responsibilities a Christian has toward God.

- E. List four scriptures that describe what responsibilities a Christian has toward fellow-Christians.

- F. List four scriptures that describe what responsibilities a Christian has toward non-Christians.

- G. List four negative consequences if we choose not to become a Christian and obey God. Provide scripture for at least two of these.

- H. List four scriptures that describe some positive consequences if we choose to become a Christian and obey God.

- I. List four negative consequences if we choose to become a Christian and obey God. Provide scripture for at least two of these.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 39: Becoming a Christian

There is much confusion in the religious world about what it takes to be saved. This lesson examines some of these false claims along with the true process associated with starting a relationship with God.

- A. According to the scriptures, what is “sin”? What are the consequences of sin? Can people do anything by themselves alone to obtain forgiveness for sin?

- B. Define “original sin”, “total inherited depravity”, and “age of accountability”. What scriptures would refute the claim that infants are born lost (a claim of those who practice infant “baptism”).

- C. According to the scriptures, what has God done to enable people to be forgiven of sin?

- D. What scriptures would refute the claim that God is all-forgiving and everyone is going to be saved regardless of what they do (a claim associated with Unitarian-Universalists)?

- E. What scriptures would refute the claim that God will choose individuals whom He wants to save (a claim associated with Calvinism and Predestination)?

- F. What scriptures would refute the claim that you can be saved by simply believing in Jesus as your Personal Savior (a claim associated with “Faith Only”)?

- G. What scriptures would refute the claim that you can be saved by saying the “Sinner’s Prayer”?

- H. What scriptures would answer the question: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30)

- I. What do the scriptures say about those who are ignorant of God’s word?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 40: Baptism

In our previous lesson, we noted there is much confusion in the religious world about what is needed to be saved. This seems to be especially true when it comes to the subject of baptism.

A. What scriptures would you use to refute the claim that “baptism” is a work of merit that has nothing to do with becoming or being a faithful Christian?

B. Use a good reference to answer the following questions about the scriptural mode of baptism (sprinkling, pouring, immersion).

1. What are the Greek words that are typically translated “baptism”, “baptized”, or “baptizer”?
2. Is “baptism” a translation or a transliteration? What is the difference?
3. What is the definition of those Greek words?
4. What scriptures would you use to further establish the scriptural mode of baptism?

C. Use scripture to answer the following questions about the scriptural element of baptism.

1. What kinds of baptism are mentioned in the New Testament (hint: Matt. 3 mentions three, but there are more)?
2. How many kinds of baptism are involved in preserving “the unity of the Spirit” per Eph. 4?
3. How would you refute the claim that Holy Spirit baptism is necessary for salvation?
4. How would you establish what kind of baptism is commanded in the New Testament?

D. According to 1 Cor. 1:10-17, is it important who performs the baptism?

E. Use scripture to answer the following questions about the scriptural recipients of baptism.

1. Should infants or young children be baptized?
2. Before a person is baptized, what else must they do?

F. Use scripture to answer the following questions about the scriptural purpose of baptism.

1. Should a person be baptized just to please their parents?
2. Should a person be baptized to show their dedication to God and that they have been saved?
3. Should an unsaved person be baptized for the forgiveness of sin and to become saved?
4. Should a saved person be baptized for the forgiveness of sin?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 41: Spiritual Growth

In previous lessons, we emphasized the steps necessary to become saved and a Christian. But as we'll study in this lesson, that is just the beginning of one's spiritual journey.

A. Study 1 Pet. 2:2; 1 Cor. 3:1-4; Heb. 5:11-6:8.

1. What terms are used to describe a "new" Christian?
2. When is it "ok" to be an "infant" Christian?
2. When is it not ok to be an infant Christian?
3. What distinguishes an infant Christian from a mature one?
4. What prevents a Christian from "growing up"?
5. According to these passages, how does one "grow up"?

B. Study Eph. 4:11-16; 2 Pet. 3:14-18.

1. What synonyms can you find in these verses for "growing up"?
2. What roles do other Christians play in this process?
3. What are some of the evidences of "grown up" Christians?

C. According to Phil. 4:8-9 and 1 Thess. 3:12-4:12, what things need to be "practiced" in order to grow?

D. From 2 Pet. 1:5-11, write down eight things we are to have in increasing amounts and define each one.

E. Look back over the previous lessons in this course to answer the following questions.

1. Which areas do many people face the most challenges in "growing up" spiritually?
2. Which areas do you face the most challenges in "growing up" spiritually?
3. Practically speaking, what can be done about these areas?

F. Use scriptures to answer the following questions.

1. Can you ever finish growing as a Christian?
2. What can happen if we do not grow spiritually?
3. What scriptures would you use to refute the claim of "Once saved, always saved" (i.e., we don't need to worry about growing spiritually)?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 42: Worship, Part 1

A significant part of a Christian's relationship with God involves "worship". Yet in the religious world today, there is significant misunderstanding about this important topic.

- A. Write down the New Testament scriptures that contain the term "worship".
- B. Based on the scriptures above, is a person "worshipping" God when he/she ...
1. is gathered together with fellow-Christians for a "worship service"?
 2. is praying or singing praises to God at home?
 3. is discussing the Bible with a non-Christian, is properly disciplining their child, is being a faithful employee, or is paying taxes?
- C. Under the Law of Moses, the Sabbath was especially associated with worshipping and honoring God (Ex. 20:8-11; Deut. 5:12-15). For each of the following questions, justify your answer with scripture.
1. Are Christians to observe the Sabbath as a religious holy day today?
 2. On what day of the week are Christians expected to publically worship God? Are they required to do no work on that day (as the Jews were on the Sabbath)?
 3. Are Christians permitted to publically worship God on any other day of the week?
- C. List the scriptures that describe what acts of worship God wants when Christians gather together on the Lord's Day? (We'll expand on this topic in the next lesson).
- D. What benefits do assembled Christians receive during worship services?
- E. What responsibilities do teenagers have during public worship?
- F. Under what circumstances can a Christian be doing these acts of public worship and still not be worshipping God?
- G. Why might some teenagers find worship services boring? What can they do to make worship services more meaningful?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 43: Worship, Part 2

In our last lesson, we discussed a number of aspects involving worship. In this lesson, we will focus on the main acts of public worship expected by God. Christians need to be able to identify the differences between that and what is commonly encountered in today's religious world.

- A. What scriptures discuss the "Lord's Supper"?
 - 1. What is its purpose? When is it to be done?
 - 2. What elements are to be eaten?
 - 3. How can an individual or a congregation do the above and still be wrong?
- B. What scriptures discuss giving into the local treasury?
 - 1. What is its purpose? When is it to be done?
 - 2. How much is to be given? Are Christians to "tithe"?
 - 3. How can an individual or a congregation do the above and still be wrong?
- C. What scriptures discuss public singing?
 - 1. What is its purpose? When is it to be done?
 - 2. What is to be sung? What about playing musical instruments along with the singing?
 - 3. How can an individual or a congregation do the above and still be wrong?
- D. What scriptures discuss public prayer?
 - 1. What is its purpose? When is it to be done?
 - 2. What is to be prayed?
 - 3. How can an individual or a congregation do the above and still be wrong?
- E. What scriptures discuss public preaching/teaching?
 - 1. What is its purpose? When is it to be done?
 - 2. What is to be preached/taught?
 - 3. How can an individual or a congregation do the above and still be wrong?
- F. What scriptures discuss the following acts of public worship?
 - 1. Burning candles or incense? Bowing in front of a statue or image of Jesus (or Mary)?
 - 2. Dancing, clapping, shouting out, speaking in "tongues"?
 - 2. Announcing upcoming social events (like birthday parties, baby showers, weddings)?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 44: Work of the Local Church

Part of our spiritual relationship with God is joining with fellow Christians in a local congregation to do the work God wants groups of Christians to do. In this lesson, we will see that this work is and is not.

A. Consider the following scriptures to answer the questions below about evangelism (Acts 11:22-24; Philippians 4:15-17, 2:25; 2 Corinthians 11:8-9; 1 Thessalonians 1:7, 8).

1. What is “evangelism”?
2. What is the responsibility of a local congregation to do this?
3. How can this be done scripturally?
4. Are individuals still responsible for doing this as they have ability & opportunity (Heb. 5:12)?

B. Consider the following scriptures to answer the questions below about edification (Eph. 4:11-16; Col. 3:16; Heb. 10:23-25).

1. What is “edification”?
2. What is the responsibility of a local congregation to do this?
3. How can this be done scripturally?
4. Are individuals still responsible for doing this? How?

C. Consider the following scriptures to answer the questions below about benevolence (Acts 2:41-46; 4:32-35; 11:27-30; Romans 15:25-27; 1 Corinthians 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8 & 9; 1 Tim 5:3-16).

1. What is “benevolence”?
2. What is the responsibility of a local congregation to do this?
3. How can this be done scripturally?
4. Are individuals still responsible for doing this (Luke 10:30-37; Galatians 6:10; James 1:27)?

D. What do the scriptures say about a local congregation doing the following works?

1. Pooling resources with other congregations to work together (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2).
2. Giving money to human institutions to do evangelism, edification, and/or benevolence?
3. Providing social programs like sports teams, church meals, and education seminars.
4. Providing benevolence to the public like food banks, soup kitchens, and homeless shelters.
5. Operating a secular business, like day care, schools/colleges, hospitals, and nursing homes.

E. Ask your parents what other abuses they have seen regarding the work of the local congregation.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 45: Organization of the Local Church

The Bible provides guidance on how God wants local congregations to be organized. See “C” for “Church Government”, “A” for “Autonomy”, and “S” for “Sponsoring Church” at www.biblequestions.org for help if needed.

- A. According to Phil. 1:1, how is a local congregation to be organized?
- B. What scriptures would answer the following questions about a congregation’s “overseers”?
 - 1. Six terms are used to describe that role. What are they and what do they mean?
 - 2. What qualifications must overseers satisfy?
 - 3. What are their primary responsibilities?
- C. What scriptures would answer the following questions about a congregation’s “deacons”?
 - 1. What term(s) are used to describe that role and what do they mean?
 - 2. What qualifications must deacons satisfy?
 - 3. What are their responsibilities?
- D. What scriptures would answer the following questions about a congregation’s “saints”?
 - 1. What does that term mean?
 - 2. What qualifications must saints satisfy?
 - 3. What are their responsibilities?
- E. Within this organizational structure, how do preachers and teachers fit in (Eph. 4:11-16)?
 - 1. What qualifications must they satisfy?
 - 2. What are their responsibilities?
 - 3. If qualified overseers are not available, may the preacher oversee the congregation?
- F. Use the scriptures you found above to determine if the following situations are authorized.
 - 1. One person called a “pastor” in charge of a congregation
 - 2. Women serving as congregational leaders
 - 3. The elders of one congregation overseeing other congregations
 - 4. Congregations organized by region with an international hierarchy and a world headquarters
- G. Ask your parents what other abuses they have seen regarding the organization of local congregations.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 46: Elders and Preachers

In our previous lesson, we looked at the overall organization of the local congregation. In this lesson we will focus on spiritual relationships members have with elders and preachers. See “C” for “Church Government”, “E” for “Elders”, and “P” for “Preaching” at www.biblequestions.org for help if needed.

- A. Discuss with your parents some examples of bad relationships between members and elders.

- B. What scriptures address the following questions about the relationships of members and elders?
 - 1. Attitudes of elders toward members

 - 2. Responsibilities of elders toward members

 - 3. Attitudes of members toward elders

 - 4. Responsibilities of members toward elders

- C. Discuss with your parents some examples of bad relationships between members and preachers.

- D. What scriptures address the following questions about the relationships of members and preachers?
 - 1. Attitudes of preachers toward members

 - 2. Responsibilities of preachers toward members

 - 3. Attitudes of members toward preachers

 - 4. Responsibilities of members toward preachers

- E. How should you approach an elder or preacher if they have done something questionable or wrong?

- F. Discuss the following statements:
 - 1. “The elders must approve everything you do of a spiritual nature.”

 - 2. “An elder who commits any sin is immediately disqualified.”

 - 3. “Elders should be selected by the preacher.”

 - 4. “Since we pay for the preacher, he should preach on what we want him to preach on.”

 - 5. “You can tell a lot about a congregation by who preaches for them.”

 - 6. “A congregation is only as strong as its elders and preacher.”

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 47: Brethren

The scriptures have much to say about the spiritual relationship between members of a local congregation. Such relationships should be a source of great encouragement. Unfortunately, they can also be a source of great conflict, to the point of permanently alienating members and dividing congregations.

- A. Discuss with your parents some examples of bad relationships between members.

- B. What can we learn from the scriptures' use of the following terms? Include at least one scripture where each of these terms is used.
 1. Brethren, brother, sister

 2. Members of a body

 3. Living stones

- C. Different Greek terms are typically translated as "love".
 1. What does the Greek term "philadelphia" often translated as "brotherly love" mean?

 2. What does the Greek term "agapao" often translated as "charity" mean?

 3. What scriptures say which of these are members supposed to have toward each other?

- D. Explain the different phrases used in 1 Cor. 13:4-7.

- E. What scriptures address responsibilities members have toward each other?

- F. Sooner or later, you will have conflict between members in a congregation.
 1. How should you approach a fellow-member if they have done something questionable or wrong?

 2. How should you respond when approached by a fellow-member who thinks you have done something questionable or wrong?

 3. What are some signs a conflict is escalating? Hint: see Lesson 31 (Anger), Lesson 36 (Gossip), and Lesson 37 (Pride, Humility).

 4. What can be done to scripturally avoid a conflict or reduce one that has flared up?

 5. How can we maintain a forgiving spirit and avoid carrying a grudge after such conflicts?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 48: Common Church Issues

In our previous lesson, we discussed conflict among brethren. In this lesson, we expand on that topic to highlight a number of issues commonly encountered within churches of Christ that separate both individual brethren and congregations. You may find the material at www.biblequestions.org under the "Seeking a Church?" button especially helpful for this lesson.

- A. Talk with your parents to make a list of common issues that divide brethren.

- B. Why it is important to study these issues?

- C. What is the "Social Gospel"? What is wrong with it? How can you detect it among brethren?

- D. What is "worldliness"? What is wrong with it? How can you detect it among brethren (and ourselves)?

- E. What is "MDR" and what false doctrines are associated with it? How can you detect it among brethren?

- F. What is "Unity in Diversity"? What is wrong with it? How can you detect it among brethren?

- G. What is "General Benevolence"? What is wrong with it? How can you detect it among brethren?

- H. What is "Institutionalism"? What is wrong with it? How can you detect it among brethren?

- I. What is a "Sponsoring Church"? What is wrong with it? How can you detect it among brethren?

- J. What is "Open Fellowship"? What is wrong with it? How can you detect it among brethren?

- K. Discuss the following statements:
 - 1. "A congregation calling itself a "Church of Christ" is a good sign they are faithful Christians." (see en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Churches_of_Christ#Variations_within_Churches_of_Christ for statistics)
 - 2. "When looking for a local congregation, you can easily tell if one is faithful."
 - 3. "Faithful congregations tend to stay that way."

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 49: Personal Evangelism

Part of our relationship to God is expressed in leading others to Christ. Yet many Christians do not take this role seriously, resulting in stagnant or declining church membership. This lesson examines the Christian's role in reaching the lost.

- A. What is "personal evangelism" (sometimes also called "personal work")?
- B. What excuses are sometimes offered for avoiding personal work?
- C. What do the scriptures say about a Christian's responsibility toward the lost?
- D. What do the scriptures say about a Christian's attitude toward the lost?
- E. Who are the lost (be specific)?
- F. List at least five ways we can attempt to influence the lost for Christ?
- G. Are some times and places better when trying to reach the lost?
- H. Many people do not view themselves as lost. According to the scriptures, what reactions should we be prepared for in trying to reach the lost?
- I. How can we better prepare ourselves to reach the lost?
- J. What would you say if faced with the question of 1 Pet. 3:15?
- K. What are the three most important things to have when trying to reach lost?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 50: Common Religious Issues – Part 1

When doing personal work, you will encounter a wide variety of false religious beliefs. You should be somewhat familiar with them in order to better present the Truth.

A. “Atheism”, “Agnosticism”, “Secularism”, “Humanism”

1. How would you summarize each of these belief systems?
2. In what ways are these belief systems contrary to the Bible?
3. How would you approach a person who didn’t think there was a God?

B. “Hinduism”, “Buddhism”, “Taoism”, “Confucianism”

1. How would you summarize each of these belief systems?
2. In what ways are these belief systems contrary to the Bible?
3. How would you approach a person who believed in some “Higher Power”, but not the God of the Bible?

C. “Islam”, “Muslimism”, “Mohamedism”

1. How would you summarize this belief system?
2. In what ways is this belief system contrary to the Bible?
3. How would you approach a person who believed the God of the Bible is “Allah”?

D. “Judaism”

1. How would you summarize this belief system?
2. In what ways is this belief system contrary to the Bible?
3. How would you approach a person who believed the God of the Bible, but rejected Jesus as the Promised Messiah?

E. “Roman Catholicism”

1. How would you summarize this belief system?
2. In what ways is this belief system contrary to the Bible?
3. How would you approach a person who believed the God of the Bible & accepted Jesus as His Son, but looked to the Pope of Rome for spiritual guidance?

F. Talk to your parents about what other major religious belief systems you may encounter.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 51: Common Religious Issues – Part 2

In Part 1 of this topic, we did a brief survey of major world religions. In this lesson, we will look at a number of false religious beliefs common to many Protestant and non-denominational groups.

- A. “Total Inherited Depravity”, “Original Sin”, “Being Born with a Sin Nature”
 - 1. How would you summarize this collection of beliefs?
 - 2. In what ways are these beliefs contrary to the Bible?
 - 3. How would you approach a person who accepts these beliefs?

- B. “Individual Predestination”, “Unconditional Election”, “Limited Atonement”, “Irresistible Grace”
 - 1. How would you summarize this collection of beliefs?
 - 2. In what ways are these beliefs contrary to the Bible?
 - 3. How would you approach a person who accepts these beliefs?

- C. “Grace Only, Faith Only”, “Accept Jesus as your personal Savior.”, “Believe on Jesus and you will be saved.”, “Baptism is a work which has nothing to do with your salvation.”
 - 1. How would you summarize this collection of beliefs?
 - 2. In what ways are these beliefs contrary to the Bible?
 - 3. How would you approach a person who accepts these beliefs?

- D. “Once Saved, Always Saved”, “Jesus already paid the price for your sins – past, present, and future.”
 - 1. How would you summarize this collection of beliefs?
 - 2. In what ways are these beliefs contrary to the Bible?
 - 3. How would you approach a person who accepts these beliefs?

- E. What scriptures would you give if someone believed the following?
 - 1. “Join the church of your choice.”, “Once church is as good as another.”
 - 2. “Church attendance is optional.”, “You can be a good Christian on your own.”
 - 3. Holy Spirit baptism, modern day miracles, speaking in tongues, direct revelation from God
 - 4. Tithing, having priests, and obeying the Ten Commandments, including keeping the Sabbath
 - 5. Having women in leadership positions

- F. Talk to your parents about what other major religious beliefs you may encounter.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 52: Religious Holidays

Throughout the year, a number of days have special religious significance for many people. In this lesson, we will briefly examine these “holy days” in light of the scriptures.

- A. What is the difference between a “secular” holiday and a “religious” holiday?
- B. “Christmas”
 - 1. What is the meaning & origin of this holiday?
 - 2. Was this celebrated in the Bible? If so, how?
 - 3. Is it to be celebrated religiously today? Use scriptures to prove your answer.
- C. “Ash Wednesday”, “Lent”
 - 1. What are the meanings & origins of these holidays?
 - 2. Were these celebrated in the Bible? If so, how?
 - 3. Are they to be celebrated religiously today? Use scriptures to prove your answer.
- D. “Palm Sunday”, “Maudy Thursday”, “Good Friday”, “Easter”
 - 1. What are the meanings & origins of these holidays?
 - 2. Were these celebrated in the Bible? If so, how?
 - 3. Are they to be celebrated religiously today? Use scriptures to prove your answer.
- E. “St. Patrick’s Day”, “Valentine’s Day”,
 - 1. What are the meanings & origins of these holidays?
 - 2. Are they to be celebrated religiously today? Use scriptures to prove your answer.
- F. “All Saints Day”, “All Hallows Eve”, “Halloween”
 - 1. What are the meanings & origins of these holidays?
 - 2. Were these celebrated in the Bible? If so, how?
 - 3. Are they to be celebrated religiously today? Use scriptures to prove your answer.
- G. For each holiday discussed above,
 - 1. Can it be celebrated in a non-religious, secular way?
 - 2. If yes, are there aspects Christians should still avoid? Why?
- H. How do these holidays present an opportunity for personal evangelism?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Review #4

It is time for another review; this time covering lessons 37 through 52. Please come prepared to discuss the following. For those that ask for passages on a topic, be prepared to summarize each briefly in your own words and tell why you selected it. If you need a copy of any lesson, feel free to let me know and I'll email them to you.

- A. Select six passages that describe how a person becomes a Christian

- B. Select six passages that describe the role of water baptism.

- C. Select six passages that describe how a person grows and remains a faithful Christian.

- D. Select six passages related to publicly worshipping God.

- E. Select six passages related to the work & organization of the local congregation.

- F. Select six passages related to notable religious issues among churches of Christ and/or religious denominations.

- G. Come up with five questions on lessons 37 through 52 to ask your class mates.

- H. Of the spiritual relationship topics we have covered in this section, which three do you think are the most important for people in your age group? Why?

- I. Bring any topics you would suggest we cover in a future class.

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 53: Jobs and Careers

“What do you want to be when you grow up?” is a question frequently asked of young people. Few choices have the impact that choosing a career has. In this lesson we’ll see that the Bible has to say about both jobs and careers.

- A. What scriptures would address the attitude of being lazy and not wanting to work?

- B. Is receiving welfare, food stamps, and other forms of government assistance wrong?

- C. Discuss with your parents whether parents should give their children allowances and whether children should do chores to earn their allowances.

- D. Under what circumstances should children no longer be financially supported by their parents?

- E. There are many factors to consider when choosing a job. How should the following factors influence your decision, especially from a spiritual perspective?
 - 1. Work hours and/or days
 - 2. The amount of pay
 - 3. Where the work is performed

- F. Back in Lesson 2, we studied a number of general Bible principles. Give a couple of examples of jobs or careers that would fall into each of the following categories.
 - 1. Violate civil law
 - 2. Encourage sin
 - 3. Physically harmful
 - 4. Involves lustful

- G. Discuss with your parents the spiritual implications of the following career choices.
 - 1. Quitting school and going to work
 - 2. Going to vocational school
 - 3. Going to college
 - 4. Going into the military
 - 5. Becoming a preacher

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 54: Employee/Employer Relationships

On an average weekday, a worker spends half of his time (or more) on the job. Depending on the situation, the relationships in the workplace can be a source of temptation or trial for a faithful Christian as we will see in this lesson. Since some teenagers lack experience in the workplace, please discuss this lesson with your parents.

A. Regarding attitudes of employees toward employers:

1. What are some negative attitudes employees commonly have?
2. What scriptures describe the attitudes Christian employees should have?
3. Describe situations where having the right attitudes would be challenging.
4. When confronted with such situations, what should a faithful Christian do?

B. Regarding attitudes of employees toward each other:

1. What are some negative attitudes employees commonly have?
2. What scriptures describe the attitudes Christian employees should have?
3. Describe situations where having the right attitudes would be challenging.
4. When confronted with such situations, what should a faithful Christian do?

C. Regarding attitudes of employees toward customers:

1. What are some negative attitudes employees commonly have?
2. What scriptures describe the attitudes Christian employees should have?
3. Describe situations where having the right attitudes would be challenging.
4. When confronted with such situations, what should a faithful Christian do?

D. Regarding attitudes of employers toward employees:

1. What are some negative attitudes employers commonly have?
2. What scriptures describe the attitudes Christian employers should have?
3. Describe situations where having the right attitudes would be challenging.
4. When confronted with such situations, what should a faithful Christian do?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 55: College

“Are you going to go to college?” is another question frequently asked of teenagers. As introduced in Lesson 53 on “Jobs and Careers”, the subject of continuing one’s education past high school has a number of important aspects as we will further explore in this lesson.

A. Many parents emphasize the importance of going to college or a trade school after graduating from high school.

1. Can a person not have enough secular education? Why?
2. Can a person have too much secular education? Why?
3. How would 1 Tim. 5:8; Eccl. 12:11-14; and 1 Cor. 1:18-31 apply to these questions?

B. Where a person goes to get additional education is an important consideration.

1. What are the spiritual advantages of doing this locally (for example, at a community college)?
2. What are the spiritual challenges of going to school in another city, state, or country?

C. Often, a Christian is going to encounter a number of worldly influences going to school. In each case below, comment on what these influences could be and what a faithful Christian could do to overcome these influences.

1. College roommates
2. College professors
3. Social get-togethers, parties, proms

D. Some concerned parents believe the answer to spiritual problems typically encountered in college is to send their children to a “Christian” College (such as Florida College for non-institutional churches of Christ). Talk to your parents about the following.

1. What is typically “Christian” about a “Christian” College? Is it the professors, the students, the subjects, the rules, and/or the extracurricular activities?
2. What is “Institutionalism”? How can a “Christian” College contribute to this false doctrine?
3. What is “Unity in Diversity”? How can a “Christian” College contribute to this false doctrine?
4. How can a “Christian” College contribute to spreading false doctrine among churches?
5. What is a “seminary”? According to the Bible, who is responsible for training preachers?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 56: Stewardship

You don't hear the terms "steward" and "stewardship" very much these days. But the concept of being entrusted with something is as important today as ever in all aspects of our lives as faithful Christians.

A. Using a good Bible dictionary, define the term "steward" (or equivalent) in the following verses:

1. Gen. 43:19; Gen. 44:1-4
2. Matt. 20:8
3. Luke 12:41-48

B. What kinds of synonyms can you think of for the concept of "stewardship"?

C. In the following situations, describe some of the things that could be entrusted to you and how you would show you are being responsible or not with that trust.

1. In the family
2. In school
3. In the workplace

D. In the local congregation, comment on the following verses and the stewardship they require.

1. Titus 1:7; 1 Tim. 3:5
2. 1 Cor. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 2:2

E. Based on 1 Peter 4:7-11,

1. Are members of a local congregation to be good stewards?
2. What kinds of gifts do they have and how are they to be used?
3. What is the ultimate purpose of these gifts?

F. As individuals,

1. What kinds of blessings have we received from God?
2. How can we be wise stewards of these blessings?
3. List five of our previous lessons that are closely associated with this important principle.

G. Ultimately, is there anything we have or "own" that we can do with as we please?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 57: The Future

Many teenagers have a sense of “invincibility” that they will live forever. At the same time, there are a number of religious doctrines regarding the future that can mislead a person into a false sense of security or alarm. In this lesson, we’ll examine both.

- A. What scriptures discuss the shortness and uncertainty of life?

- B. What scriptures discuss the uncertainty of when the Lord will return?

- C. Given your answers above:
 - 1. Can a faithful Christian plan for the future in terms of an education/career, marriage, starting a business, getting a loan, and such things?

 - 2. Can a faithful Christian set aside money for the future in terms of a savings account, stock investments, or a retirement plan?

 - 3. Under what circumstances would it be wrong to do such things?

- D. Regarding being given a “second chance” of being saved:
 - 1. What scriptures would address whether or not people will get a “second chance” after they die?

 - 2. What scriptures would address whether or not people will get a “second chance” after Jesus returns?

- E. Many religious groups today teach a set of doctrines under the general title of “Premillennialism”.
 - 1. Briefly summarize what this is.

 - 2. What are “The Rapture”, “The Great Tribulation”, and the “Millennial Kingdom”?

 - 3. How do these doctrines contrast with the scriptures you listed for question “B”?

 - 4. How do these doctrines contrast with the scriptures you listed for question “D.2.”?

 - 5. Should a Christian be greatly concerned about the ongoing crisis in the Middle East, talks about a one world government, the potential for nuclear war, a looming global economic or energy crisis, and such?

- F. How would you summarize what a faithful Christian’s attitude should be regarding the future?

PRACTICAL CHRISTIANITY FOR TEENAGERS

Lesson 58: Summary & Review #5

This lesson brings us to a close of this study. We have tried to focus on the challenges teenagers encounter more often and have discussed practical solutions based on God's Word. Hopefully, you will continue to make application of these teachings to be better teenagers, neighbors, employees, citizens, spouses, parents, and (most importantly) faithful Christians. Here are some review questions for you to answer.

A. What do you think are the three greatest spiritual dangers facing teenagers today? Why?

B. Should a Christian date and marry a non-Christian? Why?

C. How can you encourage others (especially parents) to trust you?

D. How can you maintain a positive attitude in such a negative world?

E. List at least three examples of Christ's attitude or behavior we should follow?

F. What are the three hardest things to do as a faithful Christian? Why?

G. What do you think are the three most important pieces of advice the Bible gives?