

A LIFE of
VICTORY
SERIES

How to Win in Life

SIX BIBLE STUDY LESSONS
FOR GROUP DISCIPLESHIP



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FOR GROUP DISCIPLESHIP



EVERY NATION
P R O D U C T I O N S

HOW TO WIN IN LIFE

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How to Use this Material

In Victory, the primary venue for discipleship happens in a small group. It is called a Victory group. We strongly encourage everyone to be involved since these groups are specifically designed to help disciples grow spiritually.

A Victory group meeting has three sections: **Connect**, **Word**, and **Prayer**, and ideally lasts from forty to sixty minutes.

CONNECT (5-10 minutes)

Victory group meetings begin with a time to relate with one another. Depending on the people who comprise the group, this can be done through a variety of ways:

- Fun—such as an icebreaker activity
- Answered prayers—sharing of testimonies and updates
- Questions—such as those provided in the material, learning each other's personal stories, and sharing feedback from the weekly message

Effective Questions During the Connect Portion:

- Are deliberately friendly to first-timers
- Ask for opinion or experiences
- Require no Bible knowledge
- Have no right or wrong answer
- Are not controversial
- Are preferably connected to the meeting's topic

WORD (20-30 minutes)

Teach the truth and relevance of God's Word for life application. The Victory group meeting is not primarily a Bible study. Although teaching and explanation of Scripture is involved, the goal is to minister, not finish a material.

There is no need teach all the points in a material.

Within this section, we look at what the Bible says, its relevance to us today, and its application in our lives.

What: *What does the Bible say?*

Communicate and impart biblical truth clearly and concisely

¹⁶All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 TIMOTHY 3:16,17

Tips for Sharing the Word Effectively

- Let the Bible speak for itself.
- Use illustrations and tell stories to explain Bible verses.
- When entertaining clarifications, be watchful not to allow the discussion to go off-tangent.
- The primary goal is to minister to the needs of the people, not to finish a Bible lesson.
- Be led by the Spirit when using the material.

So What: *What is the relevance of the Word to my life?*

Give participants the opportunity to discuss how the Word impacts the way they live.

Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

ROMANS 12:2

Now What: *How do I apply the Word to my life?*

Our primary reason for sharing the Bible is so that people will know who God is and what He has done. In doing so, the participants will begin to discover who they are and what they should do.

If it is a promise, teach them to claim it. If it is a command or a principle, encourage them to put it to action by God's grace. If it is a truth, let them embrace it willingly and not under compulsion. Allow God's grace and love to win them by the way you teach God's Word.

Encourage specific, measurable action steps that are consistent with the life change that the Scripture is bringing about. We do not command people, but we spur them on toward love and good deeds.

Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves.

Do what it says. JAMES 1:22

Tips for Life-Changing Application

- You may choose one of the "So What" and "Now What" questions or you may add your own.
- An effective standby application question is: "What one action step are you going to take as a result of what you heard today?"
- Designate who will be the first to answer the question asked.
- Do not allow someone to argue or be critical of others.
- Remind everyone to apply the lesson to their own lives, not to someone else's.
- Ask God for wisdom to know when to balance or correct strange or unbiblical applications. Insensitive correction or criticism can kill the group, as can unchecked heresy.
- Remind everyone that transformation is God's work, not ours, and our obedience is a response to who He is and His love for us. It is God's grace that enables us to apply and obey His Word.

PRAY (15-20 minutes)

Prayer is the most important part of the Victory group meeting. Make sure you have plenty of time left so your prayer time is not rushed. This is not a "closing prayer," but a time for everyone in the group to take specific requests to God. This is where the action is. The goal is to create a venue where people will see God move on their behalf.

"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven." MATTHEW 18:19

Tips for Powerful Prayer

- Listen to the Holy Spirit carefully during the Connect and Word sections for things that may need prayer.
- Spend your time praying for one another, not sharing and discussing prayer requests.
- Keep your prayers simple, sincere, and short. Most non-believers have never heard an ordinary Christian just talk to God and will be touched by the sincerity and simplicity of the prayer.
- Pray, don't preach. Pray in simple and short sentences, not long "sermon prayers."
- Use conversational prayer, not complicated or profound, intercessory prayer.
- Expect God to answer your prayers.

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1

How to Break Bad Habits

CONNECT

- Tell us about one of your good habits. How did you develop it?
- Do you think you're a disciplined person? Why or why not?
- Who is the most disciplined person you know? Recall a specific instance explaining this.

Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard its spots? Neither can you do good who are accustomed to doing evil. JEREMIAH 13:23

WHAT

Habits are behavior patterns that have been acquired by repetition. Some habits are as harmless as putting on the right shoe before the left. Others are destructive, such as alcohol or drug addiction. Some habits seem almost impossible to break. Jeremiah speaks of a people who are unable to do good because they are in the habit of doing evil. Can such a person ever change? Is it possible to break bad habits? This lesson presents four tools that will help anyone break free from bad habits.

1

Discipline

¹⁰Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. ¹¹No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. HEBREWS 12:10,11

Bad habits are not formed overnight and they will not be broken overnight. Eliminating a bad habit takes discipline. Bad habits like oversleeping, overeating, TV and internet addiction, habitual tardiness must be replaced with a lifestyle of self-control and discipline.

What is
"discipline?" Why
does discipline
seem so painful?

What is the
final result of
discipline?

2 Faith

For everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith.

1 JOHN 5:4 (SEE ALSO HEBREWS 11:1.)

Everyone who is born-again can live in victory over bad habits. Faith is the key to victory.

What is "faith"?

What is "hope"?

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3 People

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. JAMES 5:16

We need human help to overcome our bad habits and weaknesses. We confess to God to receive forgiveness and to people when we need help breaking the habit. As we walk with people who love God, we confess our struggles, receive healing prayer, and keep our lives open for inspection and correction.

Recall a time
when you
walked in victory
over a bad habit
because of the
people in
your life?

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4

Persistence

For though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again, but the wicked are brought down by calamity.

PROVERBS 24:16

“If at first you don’t succeed, try and try again!” This phrase was drilled into most of us as little children. It is not in the Bible, but it is essential for breaking bad habits. If I attempt unsuccessfully to break a bad habit, should I accept that this is just how I will be forever?

What is persistence?

SO WHAT

- How do you think discipline helps break bad habits? How do you feel about discipline?
- Why is faith so important in the struggle to break bad habits? What happens if a person does not believe that the habit can be changed? Why is persistence important as well?
- What role do you think people around you play in breaking a bad habit? How do you feel about having someone believe in you and cheer you on?

NOW WHAT

- What is one habit you are currently trying to break? How can you begin walking in victory over this in the coming week?
- How can you develop discipline and persistence in your life every day?
- Who is your life open to? Who challenges you to grow more and be all God wants you to be? How can you continue to develop this relationship?

-
- Thank God for the people around you who are helping you grow in your faith. Speak a blessing over them.
 - Pray that God would give you the discipline, persistence, and faith to overcome your bad habits. Commit your plans to Him and ask for His grace and strength.
 - Pray that you would be more disciplined every day, and that you would choose to do what is right even when you don't want to or when you don't feel like it.

2

How to Tame Your Tongue

CONNECT

- Are you more of a talker or a listener? Why?
- Among your friends and family, who always encourages you? Recall a specific instance explaining this.
- Recall a time when you said something you regretted later on. How did you feel?

If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless.

JAMES 1:26 (SEE ALSO JAMES 3:3-8.)

WHAT

Getting the tongue under control is one of the most difficult and important tasks in the Christian life. An uncontrolled tongue has the power to ruin a life.

According to James, if our tongue is out of control, then our religion is worthless. In this lesson, we will look at five characteristics of an uncontrolled tongue and how to control it.

- **Gossip**

A gossip betrays a confidence; so avoid a man who talks too much. PROVERBS 20:19 (SEE ALSO PROVERBS 16:28.)

How can someone betray a confidence? What does it mean to talk too much? Do you talk too much?

- **Recklessness**

Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing. PROVERBS 12:18

Are your words reckless or wise? Do they usually hurt or heal? What kinds of words hurt? What kinds of words heal?

- **Deceit**

The tongue that brings healing is a tree of life, but a deceitful tongue crushes the spirit. PROVERBS 15:4

Why does deceitfulness crush the spirit? What is a crushed spirit? What is a “deceitful tongue”?

- **Lies**

¹⁶*There are six things the LORD hates, seven that are detestable to him: ¹⁷haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that shed innocent blood . . .* PROVERBS 6:16,17

(SEE ALSO PROVERBS 12:19.)

What is a “lying tongue”? Why does God hate lying tongues?

- **Flattery**

He who rebukes a man will in the end gain more favor than he who has a flattering tongue. PROVERBS 28:23

What is a “flattering tongue”? Why does a rebuke gain more favor than flattery?

He who guards his lips guards his life, but he who speaks rashly will come to ruin. PROVERBS 13:3

Guarding our lips results in guarding our lives. We need to refuse to speak rash words that tear people down. Here are five ways to get the tongue under control.

1 Realize you are accountable to God for your words.

"But I tell you that men will have to give account on the day of judgment for every careless word they have spoken." MATTHEW 12:36

What are "careless words"?
What does it mean to give an account?

2 Dedicate your tongue to God.

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer. PSALM 19:14

David realized that there was a connection between his words and his heart, so he prayed that God would be pleased with both.

How will God be pleased with our words?

3 Fill your heart with God's Word.

³⁴"How can you who are evil say anything good? For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks. ³⁵The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him." MATTHEW 12:34,35

What is the connection between our mouth and our heart?

4 Listen before you speak.

Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry. JAMES 1:19

How can a person be quick to hear and slow to speak?

5 Speak words of grace and life.

Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. COLOSSIANS 4:6

The tongue has the power of life and death, and those who love it will eat its fruit. PROVERBS 18:21

If our conversation is not full of grace, what is it full of?

SO WHAT

- How do you feel about one day giving an account to God for every careless word you have spoken? How do you think this truth should change how you speak and what you say every day?
- How do reckless, deceitful, and false words hurt others? How does gossip separate close friends? How do you think you should respond to gossip or the urge to gossip?
- Why do you think is it difficult to listen? How does the Bible challenge your perspective on speaking and listening?

NOW WHAT

- Which of the characteristics of an uncontrolled tongue do you see in your own life? What do you think you can do to tame your tongue this week?
 - Are there things you have recently said that you need to repent of? Are there people you need to apologize to for anything you've said lately? What can you do to make things right?
 - Have you dedicated your tongue to the Lord? Would you like to do that today?
-
- Ask God to help you tame your tongue. You may want to repent for things you have said and ask God for His forgiveness.
 - Dedicate your tongue and the words you speak to the Lord. Ask God to help you remember that you will have to give an account for your careless words. Pray that you would take this to heart and speak words of grace and life instead.
 - Pray that you would listen to people more, and that you would also fill your heart with His Word every day.

3

How to Win in Spiritual Warfare

CONNECT

- What's your favorite war movie? Why?
- Are you a competitive person?
Why or why not?
- How do you feel when you know someone
doesn't like you? Recall a specific instance
explaining this.

¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

EPHESIANS 6:10,11 (SEE ALSO 2 CORINTHIANS 10:3-5)

WHAT

The Christian life is a spiritual war that is fought against a spiritual enemy. This spiritual war is a reality we need to face. The battle has already been won because of what Jesus Christ did on the cross, but our enemy, the devil, is still trying to fight. In this lesson, we will examine our enemy, how he fights, and the weapons God has given us for victory.

1

The enemy is the tempter.

¹Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. . . . ³The tempter came to him and said, "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." MATTHEW 4:1,3

The first level of attack from Satan is temptation. Jesus was hit with temptation when He was all alone in the desert. No human would have known if He had fallen for Satan's trap.

Why does Satan tempt us to sin when we are alone?

2 The enemy is the accuser.

⁹The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him. . . . ¹⁰For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. REVELATION 12:9,10

If we don't fall for temptation, Satan will throw accusation at us. Why is accusation such a deadly spiritual tactic?

What happens if you accept Satan's accusations against your brother or sister?

3 The enemy is the deceiver.

But I am afraid that just as Eve was deceived by the serpent's cunning, your minds may somehow be led astray from your sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

2 CORINTHIANS 11:3

Satan's most subtle spiritual attack is deception. Deception leads our minds away from pure devotion to Christ. Deception takes Christ out of the center.

How could Eve have avoided falling for Satan's deception?

They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. REVELATION 12:11

Here are three weapons God has given us to walk in victory over the enemy.

- **The Blood of Christ**

According to Revelation 12:11, how did the believers overcome Satan?

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- **Your testimony**

What is a “testimony”? What is your testimony?

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- **Your commitment**

What does it mean to love Christ more than life itself?

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SO WHAT

- Why do you think the enemy attacks the way he does? How can you respond to his schemes? How do you think the enemy feels about you as a follower of Christ?
- What is the significance of the blood of the Lamb in overcoming Satan?
- How did the early church and martyrs overcome the enemy? How do you think can you overcome in this present generation?
- How can your testimony help you overcome the enemy?

NOW WHAT

- Do you love Christ more than life itself? Do you believe you can overcome the enemy? What can you do to overcome in every area of your life?
- In which area of your life do you find yourself constantly under attack by the enemy? What tactic is the enemy using? How can you respond to these attacks in the coming week?
- Have you entertained any accusations against God, yourself, your church, and loved ones? How can you reject and expose these accusations, and respond to such thoughts in ways that honor God?
- What is your testimony? Would you like to share it with everyone else? Who can you boldly share this to in the coming week?

-
- Thank God for His victory on the cross and for giving us all we need to walk in freedom. Ask God to make you spiritually sensitive to the enemy's weapons and tactics. Declare your commitment and love for Jesus Christ. Ask Him to help you know and walk in His victory!
 - Pray that when you will be tempted, God will provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.
 - Ask God to preserve the word of your testimony and that your life would be a great example to many.

4

How to Conquer Condemnation

CONNECT

- Did you ever like studying history? Why or why not?
- How do you respond when someone's upset with you? Why?
- Recall a time when you felt guilty because of something you did. What happened?

17“For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. 18Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.” JOHN 3:17,18

WHAT

Condemnation is a universal feeling of guilt, unworthiness, divine rejection, and spiritual insecurity. Feeling condemned is so common that many genuine Christians accept it as normal and often confuse it with conviction. (See chart for difference between conviction and condemnation.) In order to conquer condemnation, we must understand the following facts about condemnation.

CONVICTION	CONDEMNATION
Holy Spirit	Satan, self, people
Specific sin	General guilt, overall unworthiness
Run to God and repent.	Run from God and hide.
Get up and try again.	Give up.
You failed this test.	You are a total failure.
Deal with this and you can make it.	Because of this you will never make it.
God is still working on you.	God has rejected you.

1

Believers are not under condemnation.

1Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus . . . 4who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

ROMANS 8:1,4 (SEE ALSO JOHN 3:18.)

What does it mean to live according to the sinful nature? How does one live according to the Spirit?

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2 Unbelievers are already condemned.

“Whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God’s one and only Son.” JOHN 3:18 (SEE ALSO ROMANS 8:3.)

What does it mean to not believe?

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What does it mean to believe in the name of God’s one and only Son?

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3 Condemnation is not from God.

³³*Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies.* ³⁴*Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died . . . is at the right hand of God interceding for us.* ROMANS 8:33,34

Paul asked, “Who is he that condemns?”

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What is your answer to Paul’s question? Why?

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4 Jesus came to save, not condemn.

“For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.” JOHN 3:17

John made it clear that Jesus did not come into the world to condemn us, but to save us. If we are sure of our salvation, then we can throw off condemnation.

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How can a person be sure of his salvation?

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SO WHAT

- If there is no condemnation for those in Christ, why do so many Christians struggle with condemnation?
- What are some of the main differences between condemnation and conviction? How do these make you feel?
- If condemnation does not come from God, where does it come from? How do you think we can be free from it?

NOW WHAT

- Have you made a decision to serve Christ and live for Him? If not, would you like to do that today?
- Do you struggle with condemnation? What can you do to conquer condemnation this week?
- What did you learn from our discussion today and how can you apply it in your life this week?

-
- Thank God for what Jesus did on the cross, that He came to save us and not condemn us.
 - Pray that you would walk in God's peace every day, understanding that by His grace, He has forgiven you for your sins.
 - Pray for those you know who are not yet walking with God and have not experienced His saving grace. Believe God for their salvation.

5

How to Resist Temptation

CONNECT

- What's your favorite food? Why do you like it so much?
- Do you think you were difficult to discipline as a child? Why or why not?
- Who's one of the most humble people you know? Recall a specific instance explaining this.

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

1 CORINTHIANS 10:13

WHAT

Everyone gets tempted to sin; no one is exempt. However, this does not mean that we have to submit to every temptation that is thrown at us. God's Word promises that we will never encounter a temptation beyond what we can bear. For every temptation, there is a way out. This lesson will examine the way out.

1 Word Power vs. Will Power

⁹*How can a young man keep his way pure? By living according to your word. . . .* ¹¹*I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.* PSALM 119:9,11
(SEE ALSO MATTHEW 4:1-11.)

Many attempt to resist temptation only to find that the power of temptation is often stronger than their own will power. David found a power greater than temptation and greater than will power. According to David, how can we stay pure? How can we keep from sinning against God?

How did Jesus respond to temptation?

2

God's Grace vs. Religious Rules

¹¹For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. ¹²It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age. TITUS 2:11,12

(SEE ALSO COLOSSIANS 2:20-23.)

Religious rules based on human commands and teachings have no power to stop sin. What does God's grace enable us to say "no" to?

What kind of lifestyle does God's grace teach us to live?

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3

Humility vs. Pride

⁶But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." ⁷Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. JAMES 4:6,7

We have seen that grace gives us power to say "no" to sin, but how can we get more grace?

Who does God give grace to?

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4

Resist the devil.

Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. JAMES 4:7

After we have humbled ourselves and submitted to God, we must then resist the devil.

*What does
"resist" mean?
How do we resist
the devil?*

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SO WHAT

- How does your response to temptation differ from how the Bible tells you to respond? How can Jesus' response to temptation help you resist temptation?
- Why are religious rules and human commands powerless to stop sin? Why do you think some people depend on religious rules to help them?
- What does it mean to be humble before God? What does it mean to submit yourself to God?

NOW WHAT

- What areas of temptation are you still struggling with? How can you resist temptation this week?
- Do you consistently read and study God's Word? How can you treasure God's Word in your heart every day?
- How can you walk in grace and humility this week?

-
- Thank God for His grace that teaches you to say "no" to ungodliness and sin.
 - Pray that you would be able to resist temptation as you live according to the Word of God.
 - As you humble yourself before God, ask Him for more grace so you can be all He has called you to be.

6

How to be Sure You are Really Saved

CONNECT

- Tell us about one place or country you've always wanted to visit. Why do you want to see it?
- What's one of your fondest childhood memories?
- When was the last time you weren't sure if you should do something? How did you decide what to do?

I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. 1 JOHN 5:13

WHAT

John wrote his epistle so that the readers could be sure of their salvation. Have you ever had doubts about your salvation? Countless Christians live with uncertainty about their eternal destination because they cannot pinpoint the exact day they were saved, or their “spiritual birthday.” Birth is a nine-month long process that is celebrated on a certain day. Spiritual birth is also a process. Just because we are not sure which day the new birth happened does not mean we were not born-again. Many are unsure of their salvation because they are ignorant of Scripture. Following are four scriptural evidences of true conversion.

1 The Witness of the Holy Spirit

The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. ROMANS 8:16

When the Holy Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children, the result is the peace of God in our hearts.

Why is peace a sign of real saving faith?

2 Obedience

²³*Jesus replied, “If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴He who does not love me will not obey my teaching.”* JOHN 14:23,24

Many claim to love God, yet live a life of disobedience. The proof of real Christianity is obedience.

What is the relation between love and obedience? Why is disobedience a sign of lack of love?

3 Love

¹⁴We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. Anyone who does not love remains in death. ¹⁵Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him. 1 JOHN 3:14,15

What does "love" mean? What is the evidence that we love our brothers?

4 Spiritual Growth

Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation. 1 PETER 2:2

For newborn babies, growth is natural. Growth is an undeniable proof of life. Spiritual growth is proof of real Christianity.

What does it mean to "grow up in your salvation"?

SO WHAT

- Why do you think some are unsure about their salvation? What does God's Word say about this?
- Why is obedience to God so important?
- Why do you think spiritual growth is important? What causes spiritual growth?

NOW WHAT

- Have you received Jesus as your Lord and Savior? Do you believe you have been born-again and are going to heaven when you die? If not, would you like to invite Jesus into your life?
- Are you obeying Christ and loving Him? In what ways can you express your love and obedience to Him this week?
- What can you do to experience consistent spiritual growth every day?

-
- Thank God for His salvation and for the witness of the Holy Spirit in your life.
 - Pray that as you walk with God every day, love, obedience, and spiritual growth would be evident in your life.
 - Pray for those you know, friends, family, and others who have not experienced salvation yet. Believe God that they will surrender their lives to Christ one day.

²⁴What a wretched man I am!
Who will rescue me from this body
of death? ²⁵Thanks be to God—through
Jesus Christ our Lord!

ROMANS 7:24,25

How to Win in Life is a series
of six materials for group discipleship
designed to help disciples live victoriously
because of what Jesus did for us on the cross.

TOPICS INCLUDE:

- How to Break Bad Habits
- How to Tame Your Tongue
- How to Win in Spiritual Warfare
- How to Conquer Condemnation
- How to Resist Temptation
- How to be Sure You are Really Saved



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