

# Each One Teach One Discipleship Lessons

## Part Four:

### FAITH THAT BUILDS UP

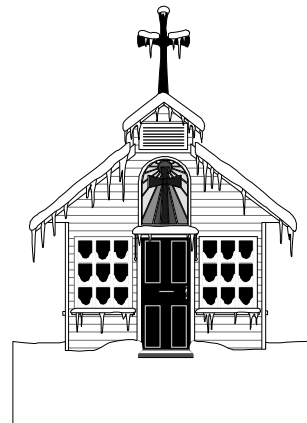
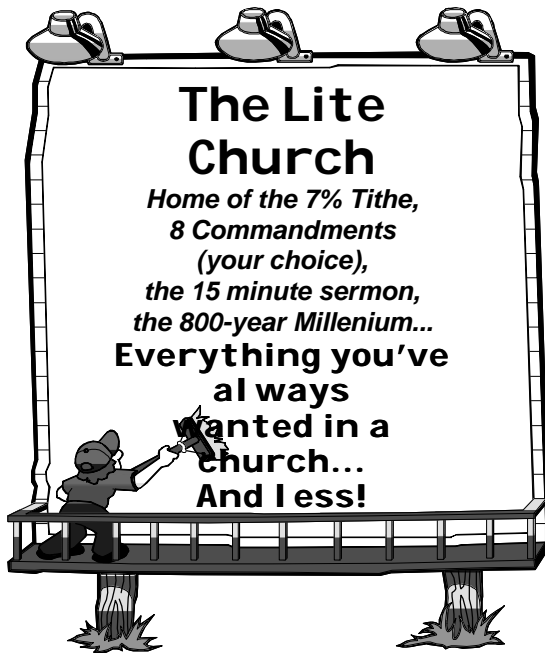
#### Participating in the Church of God

## LESSON FOURTEEN:

### FAMILY TIME

In our last lesson, we considered the fact that the Church of God is described in the New Testament as “a royal priesthood, a holy nation.” As a member of that “nation” you do not exist in isolation. It is part of your calling in Christ to **participate** in that nation.

Many new Christians are under the impression that they need only “set aside” two hours or so once a week to get together with others for a “church service,” and perhaps another two hours for a mid-week group Bible Study. They have seen that most people who call themselves Christians go to a special building twice a week to take care of these “religious obligations,” and then have the rest of the time in their life to pursue “secular activities” including work, recreation, family obligations and the like. They may even choose a “church” to go to based on how little “commitment” that institution seems to expect from them.



But the scriptures reveal that the healthy functioning of the Body of Christ can't be boxed into four hours in a week, and isolated in a building. Yet most people lead such physically busy lives before they become members of Christ's Spiritual Body that they may wonder how they will ever find time for the kind of **active** participation described in the scriptures.

Therefore, before we consider some of the details on exactly what **kind** of active participation God expects of you, you need to understand how you can find the extra time in your busy life.

If God really expects us to have time, then we may expect that the Bible addresses this issue somewhere, and gives us guidance in this part of the Christian life. For the Apostle Paul wrote to a young minister named Timothy and told him:

**[II Timothy 3:16-17]**

**All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for:**

**[1.] Teaching**

**[2.] Rebuking**

**[3.] Correcting and**

**[4.] Training in righteousness**

**so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.**

We certainly can't be "equipped" for every good work if we don't even have **time** for those good works!

So where can we go in the Scriptures for guidance in this matter of "finding time" for the service of God? Here is a portion of the scripture in Exodus that gives the fourth of the Ten Commandments:

**[Exodus 20:8-11]**

**"Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.**

But "WAIT!" some folks may protest. That is a passage from the Old Testament. Some folks think that the Old Testament is an out-dated, boring record of the ancient Israelites, who were given a meaningless collection of ritualistic Old Laws to follow. They think Jesus came to do away with everything that was written there, and replace it with a completely different way of doing things.

What does Paul mean in his admonition to Timothy about "all Scripture" being profitable? Was he including the Old Testament? Let's look at what Paul said to Timothy **immediately before** the passage quoted above about "all scripture" ...

**[II Timothy 2:14-15]**

**But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.**

When Timothy was an infant, the New Testament didn't exist yet! So the "Scriptures" Paul was referring to here, the scriptures "able to make you wise," are obviously the writings of the Old Testament!

Many Christians who read the sayings of Jesus are convinced He was always introducing a brand-new, "New Testament" way of doing things. Although there **are** many things "new" in the New Testament, it is not accurate to conclude that Jesus in His ministry "threw out" everything from the Old Testament.

It is true that there **are** rituals in the Old Testament. It is true that those rituals have been replaced by the reality of the sacrifice of Jesus. But that is only a small portion of what is in the Old Testament. Consider this saying of Jesus in His famous "Sermon on the Mount":

**[Matthew 5:44 ]**

**...I [Jesus] say to you**

**LOVE YOUR ENEMIES,**

**BLESS THEM THAT CURSE YOU,**

**DO GOOD TO THEM THAT HATE YOU...**

Was the principle of the saying above by Jesus **really** brand-new? Consider these passages from the Old Testament:

**Exodus 23:4**

**"If you come across your enemy's ox or donkey wandering off, be sure to take it back to him.**

**Exodus 23:5**

**If you see the donkey of someone who hates you fallen down under its load, do not leave it there; be sure you help him with it.**

In Matthew 5, Jesus was giving a general principle. These passages in Exodus say the same thing, but just give specific examples of **how** to show love to an enemy and do good to someone who hates you!

You will find that throughout the whole New Testament, Jesus and the New Testament writers frequently make statements of broad principles that should guide a Christian's way of life, and then quote examples from the Old Testament to show that such has been God's will for man from the beginning. In the *King James Version* of the Bible, the phrase "It is written" is specifically used 63 times in the New Testament to introduce an Old Testament quotation that supports what is being said. In another 28 places, the writers refer to "the scriptures," and then quote directly the Old Testament. And these are just the passages where the writer makes a point that he is quoting. There are numerous other places where quotations are made without any fan-fare, yet the writer clearly expects his readers to realize he is quoting the Old Testament to add credibility to his statements.

Here are just a few examples of obvious Old Testament references by New Testament writers:

New Testament:

*[Ephesians 4:26 ]*

*"In your \_\_\_\_\_ do not sin." Do not let the sun go down while you are still \_\_\_\_\_.*

Old Testament:

*[Psalms 4:4 ]*

*In your \_\_\_\_\_ do not sin; when you are on your beds, search your hearts and be silent.*

New Testament

*[Ephesians 6:1-3]*

*Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. " \_\_\_\_\_ your father and mother"--which is the first commandment with a promise-- "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy \_\_\_\_\_ on the earth."*

Old Testament:

[Deuteronomy 5:16]

"\_\_\_\_\_ your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, so that you may \_\_\_\_\_ and that it may go well with you in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

New Testament:

[I Peter 1:14-16]

As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance. But just he who called you is \_\_\_\_\_, so be \_\_\_\_\_ in all you do; for it is written: "Be \_\_\_\_\_, because I am \_\_\_\_\_."

Old Testament:

[Leviticus 11:44]

I am the LORD your God; consecrate yourselves and be \_\_\_\_\_, because I am \_\_\_\_\_...

But what did Jesus say about the Sabbath command in the New Testament? Could it be possible that it still had meaning for the people of God even when the rituals of the Old Testament, such as animal sacrifices, were no longer needed?

[Mark 2:27]

**Then he [Jesus] said to them, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."**

Notice that Jesus didn't say here that the Sabbath was made for "the Israelites," or "the Jews," or any special group of people. He said it was made for **man**.

From studying other scriptures about this topic of the Sabbath, you can discover that it was **not** something that was imposed as a burden to restrict people. It was given as a **gift to set people free** from the burdens of being workaholics! It was given to **set people free** from their daily, physical worries and to give them time to focus on the spiritual things of God, and on relationships with family and friends.

From the very fact that we have, in our century, invented the word "workaholic," one can tell we recognize that it isn't healthy ... mentally, physically and spiritually ... to refuse to take time from our own business. And yet it is also obvious that many folks will **not** take that time if left to their own decision on the matter. So God built into the scriptures, right in the very Ten Commandments themselves, an **order** to mankind to accept the gift of the Sabbath!

We will not take the time here to go into great detail about all the factors of "observing the Sabbath." You can study these things for yourself as you devote yourself to Bible Study. But if you will look in almost any Encyclopedia, you can find out for yourself that the Sabbath spoken of in the Bible—Old and New Testament alike—is reckoned in general as the period from sundown Friday evening until sundown Saturday evening.

Those who wish to "find the time" in their busy schedule for extensive Bible study, for developing relationships with others who are seeking to be growing disciples of Jesus, for rich and meaningful times of worship and praise in song and prayer with others, for bonding with family and friends—will find that the gift of the 24-hours of the Sabbath are the ideal time to focus on all these things.

Of course this doesn't mean that you limit your Bible Study, worship, fellowship, etc., to just this one time of the week! But you will find that as you immerse yourself in the day of the Sabbath and the delights and refreshment it can provide, you will crave more and more to also voluntarily set apart **other** times throughout the week to continually nurture those things begun on the Sabbath.

## **REVIEW:**

1. The **Sabbath** is a **gift** from God to mankind.
2. The **Sabbath** was **not** given to restrict us, but to **set us free**.
3. The **Sabbath** is one key to having **time** for the service of God and our brethren.
4. Jesus is **Lord of the Sabbath**.

## **MEMORY VERSES:**

### **LESSON 14 MEMORY VERSES**

#### **II Tim 3:16-17**

**All Scripture is God -breathed and is useful for:  
Teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness  
so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped  
for every good work.**

#### **Mark 2:27**

**The he [Jesus] said to them  
"The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.  
So the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath.**

### **LESSON THIRTEEN MEMORY VERSE:**

#### **I Peter 2:9-10**

But you [Christians] are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. Why do you think many people are happy to just commit two hours one day a week for "church"?
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2. **READ the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20:1-17.** Some folks who do not believe in observing the Sabbath say that the Ten Commandments were part of an “Old Testament” law, and are now “done away.” List any of the ten here that you think wouldn’t really apply in the Twentieth Century.

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3. Do you know any people who are “workaholics”? If so, describe one.

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4. Why do you think God even told men that they should let their animals have a Sabbath rest?

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5. Some folks who don’t work seven days a week nevertheless always have **worries** about their job or business on their mind every day... and every evening. How might observing a weekly Sabbath help them?

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6. Fill in the blanks:

“Jesus is \_\_\_\_\_ even of the Sabbath.”

“All \_\_\_\_\_ is God-breathed and useful for \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.”