

LESSON 5

AS AN INFANT

"Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation,"

(1 Peter 2:2)

LESSON 5. AS AN INFANT CONCEPT OF THE PICTURE

1. **Infant** Christians are spiritual infants.
 - (1) **Infant wearing diaper** incomplete self.
 - (2) **Infant sucking pacifier** Remaining old habits.

2. **Mother** God expects infant to grow.
 - (1) **Mother holding infant** God accepts you as you are.
 - (2) **Infant when matured** God sees potential.

3. **Baby bottle** Infant grows by drinking spiritual milk.
 - (1) **First bottle** Find what is written in the Bible.
 - (2) **Second bottle** Understand what it means.
 - (3) **Third bottle** Apply to your situation.

4. **5 doves** Prayer, or spiritual breathing, allows infant to grow.
 - (1) **First dove (thumb)** Calling
 - (2) **Second dove (index finger)** Praise
 - (3) **Third dove (middle finger)** Your needs
 - (4) **Fourth dove (ring finger)** ... Forgiveness of sins
 - (5) **Fifth dove (pinky)** Protection from evil

LESSON 5. AS AN INFANT

INTRODUCTION

How do people become Christians? You do not become a Christian just because you've been baptized, or by attending church services.

To become a Christian you must be reborn – which is to invite Jesus Christ into your heart. The certainty of the promises of the Word (the Bible) is the first step into new life, even if one does not feel reborn – it's like an infant being born even if he doesn't realize it. Also, there are people who have faith but do not know when they started to; do not be concerned – just because you don't know your birthday doesn't mean you haven't been born.

1. Christians are spiritual infants.

Christians are spiritual infants who have begun a new way of life. What God expects is for us to grow from infancy to adulthood.

(1) Incomplete Self.

It takes about 3 years before an infant gets out of diapers. Wearing a diaper is not abnormal. That is the way it is. But do we have very wrong ideas about the Christian life, and expect too much from people that have just been saved? Or maybe you feel you haven't changed too much since being saved, and doubt your salvation.

These types of misunderstandings come from not understanding that Christians are spiritual infants.

(2) Remaining old habits

It is difficult for us to get rid of old habits. You might move your furniture from one side of the room to the other, but for a moment expect it to be where it was before. It takes time to leave old habits behind and grow as a Christian.

2. God expects infants to grow.

God gives us all kinds of lessons in order for us to grow. It's just like the relationship between a parent and a child.

"And have you completely forgotten this word of encouragement that addresses you as a father addresses his son? It says, "My son, do not make light of the Lord's discipline, and do not lose heart when he rebukes you, because the Lord disciplines the one he loves, and he chastens everyone he accepts as his son." Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as his children. For what children are not disciplined by their father?"

(Hebrews 12:5-7)

- (1) God accepts you as you are.
- (2) God sees your potential.

It is important to remember these two things. Jesus invited Peter with these words:

"And he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked at him and said, 'You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas' (which, when translated, is Peter)."

(John 1:42)

Jesus said, "you are Simon son of John," because he knew who Peter actually was. But at the same time he saw the potential that resided inside of Peter and said, "you will be called Cephas (meaning rock)."

3. Infant grows by drinking spiritual milk.

Just as our bodies are made from what we take in from the outside, our inner selves (spirit) are made from spiritual milk. These are the three basic steps to reading the Bible. Biblical hermeneutics is in itself a science and an art, and therefore it cannot be completely covered within the limited space of this text, but it will be of great help just to know the basis of hermeneutics.

- (1) Find out what is written in the Bible.

The most important thing here is to read the Bible as you would read any other book. You don't have to feel uptight that you are reading some special text.

- (2) Understand what it means.

What you must do next is to understand. There are three obstacles between modern people and the Bible:

- Time
- Geography
- Culture

You can't truly understand the meaning of the Bible unless you overcome these obstacles. In order to have the correct interpretation it is important to remember these two things:

- What is the author's intention?
- How did people of the time understand it?

To help correctly interpret the Bible, develop the habit of studying from other references such as Biblical commentaries and sermons.

(3) Apply it to your situation (What does it mean to me?)

The purpose of Bible study is to find truths you haven't found, experience them, and to begin applying it to your actions.

4. Prayer, or spiritual breathing, allows infant to grow.

The Bible does not contain the words "spiritual breathing," but they are perfect for expressing the prayers of a Christian. People can live only on water for about 40 days, but without breathing, they will die within minutes.

Let's study how to pray from the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6:5-15:

(1) Calling

"Our Father in heaven"

Prayers begin with the words of calling. The target of the calling is "our Father in heaven." This calling is born out of perfect trust for God. Throughout history, many of those who opposed Christianity had issues with their own fathers.

(2) Praise

"Hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."

At this point, praise God by remembering His glory and character. Meditate on His eternal presence, omnipresence, and love. Also, remember past blessings.

Moreover, pray that His kingdom and will are realized on Earth, and that His plans move forward. This is also the point at which you pray for your church, your pastor and church leaders, and missionaries. You can also pray for those who are yet to be saved.

(3) Your needs

“Give us today our daily bread.”

One of the characteristics of Lord’s Prayer is that you pray for God’s Will, and then for your needs. At this stage pray for your physical needs, not limited to food but for various needs. You may also pray for financial, interpersonal, and physical difficulties.

Remember that worrying is a sin and pray that you’ll be given the power you need for the day.

(4) Forgiveness of sins

“And forgive us our debts,”

This prayer asks for forgiveness of sins. God awaits us to show ourselves in front of Him as the sinners that we are.

If you are to follow the structure of the Lord’s Prayer, you don’t need to confess your sins at the beginning of the prayer. It does not mean that forgiving the sins of others is a condition required for your sins to be forgiven.

(5) Protection from evil

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.”

This prayer asks for protection in the spiritual battle against evil. Christians are not placed in a calm place, isolated from the rest of the world. Christians will experience hardships in life, but will be victorious in the name of Jesus Christ. (John 16:33)