

ARE YOU HEADED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION?

"Let us . . ." – Discovering how to live out your faith

"So Let Us . . ." – a study from 6 New Testament epistles

Lesson 1	WHICH WAY IS THE BEST WAY?	Romans and II Corinthians
Lesson 2	WITH WHOM ARE YOU TRAVELING?	Galatians and I Thessalonians
Lesson 3	ARE YOU WILLING TO TAKE A RISK	Hebrews
Lesson 4	WHO NEEDS YOUR ENCOURAGEMENT?	Hebrews and I John

Hymns for Meditation and Worship

Promises and Prayers from Scripture for Guidance and Direction

Study Time Suggestions for This Series –

PREPARING YOURSELF – Find a quiet place where you can listen to the Lord Jesus without distractions or interruptions. Have your Bible and paper and pen, along with your study guide, ready. You may want to have more than one translation or paraphrase of the Bible for additional insight and clarity. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide your thoughts and to make His truth known to you as you read the Word of God.

READING – There will be several Scripture verses for you to ponder as you begin your study. Each of them begin with the words, "Let us . . .". They are the instructions that the writer is giving to the young believers as they seek to learn what it means to follow and obey Jesus. If you can, read each verse several times, using various translations if possible.

REFLECTING - Ask yourself the following questions as you read the context of these verses. Write down your thoughts, observations, and insights below each of them.

1. Why did the writer give these instructions?
2. What does He mean by them? Try to put the verses into your own words.
3. What will be the result of following these instructions? Are there benefits or rewards?
4. Is there any specific motivation that is given to encourage an individual to action?

RESPONDING – What do you think that the Holy Spirit is prompting you to consider personally? There are suggestions in each study guide to assist you. Don't miss out on the blessing and opportunity to not only respond personally, but to receive and give encouragement to others.

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Lesson 1 – Which Way is the Best Way?

Paul wrote to those who belong to Christ Jesus:

*"I want you to understand what really matters,
so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return.
May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation – the righteous character
produced in your life by Jesus Christ – for this will bring much glory and praise to God.*

Philippians 1: 10 – 11

Before you open up your Bible, spend some minutes in worship and praise.

Can you re-write the opening verse as your own prayer to The One who gave His life so that you could be forgiven and reconciled to God?

READ - Take time to read these verses in at least 2 translations and then write down the directions that are given.

Romans 13: 12

Romans 13: 13 – 14

Romans 14: 13

Romans 14: 19

Romans 15: 2

II Corinthians 7:1

REFLECT – As you ponder these passages of Scripture, consider why Paul is giving these specific instructions. How would following these directions to create Jesus' character in your heart and mind and bring glory to the Lord Jesus?

1. Read Romans 13: 8 – 14
2. Read Romans 14: 8 – 22
3. Read Romans 15: 1 – 6
4. Read II Corinthians 6: 14 – 7: 1

RESPOND –

1. As you look back at the "GPS" given in Romans and II Corinthians, how carefully are you following each of these directions? Is there any place where you might need to change your attitude, behavior or choices in order to avoid some hazardous experiences or useless detours? Would you say you are headed in the right direction? Why or why not? (Be careful that you do not use other people as your measuring stick.)
2. As you take time to quietly listen for the voice of the Lord, what do you hear Him saying to you? Focus on just 1 or 2 of these verses and let the Spirit of God direct your thoughts, asking Him to show you the path that would be best for you to take. How could you modify or change your route so that you are going in the best direction?
3. Just as it is helpful to have someone else with you to assist you in reading the map, so it is in our spiritual journey. Who can you encourage along the way? Who is a trusted friend that will talk with you about your strengths and your weaknesses and will pray for you? If no one comes to mind, ask God to show you someone and then you'll have to take some risks!

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Lesson 2 – WITH WHOM ARE YOU TRAVELING?

Paul wrote to his brothers in Christ:

"Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus comes again.

God will make this happen, for He who calls you is faithful." I Thessalonians 5: 23

Before you open up your Bible, spend some minutes in worship and praise.

What is prayer of your own heart as you read this verse? Talk with the Lord Jesus about your concerns and desires.

READ

Galatians 5: 25

Galatians 5: 26

Galatians 6: 9

Galatians 6: 10

I Thessalonians 5: 6

I Thessalonians 5:8

REFLECT – Looking for the "why". Write the reasons and any other insight God gives to you beneath the appropriate verses.
What motivation does he give to these believers and to us for following these directions?

1. Read Galatians 5: 19 – 26
2. Read Galatians 6: 7 – 10
3. Read I Thessalonians 5: 1 – 11

Bonus – Compare and contrast these verses with the ones which you read last week in Romans and II Corinthians.
What ideas are repeated and what are some additional directions?

RESPOND

1. As you look back at the "GPS" given in Galatians and I Thessalonians, how carefully are you following each of these directions?
Which ones might be particularly important for you to consider at this point in your spiritual journey? Have you veered off course in any way?
2. As you take time to listen to the still, soft voice of the Lord, what do you hear Him saying to you? What do you think He might be prompting you to consider more intentionally, paying attention to what would please Him and bring glory to His name?
3. Who is helping you to stay on the right road, to keep moving on, and to focus on your destination at this time in your life? Who are you encouraging and praying for and with so that they keep going in the best direction? What a blessing it is when God gives us "traveling companions".

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Lesson 3 – Are You Willing to Take a Risk?

*I pray that from His glorious, unlimited resources God will
empower you with inner strength through His Spirit.
Then Christ will make His home in your hearts as you trust in Him.
Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong.*

Ephesians 3: 16 - 17

Is this your prayer, too? Take some time to give thanks and to worship the Lord before you express the desires of your heart.

READ

Hebrews 4: 1

Hebrews 4: 11

Hebrews 4: 14

Hebrews 4: 16

Hebrews 10: 22

Hebrews 10: 23

Hebrews 10: 24

Hebrews 10: 25

Hebrews 10: 25

REFLECT – Look for the reasons and motivation that the author of Hebrews gives along with these instructions.
What other insights and encouragement is the Holy Spirit bringing to your mind as you study?

1. Hebrews 3: 16 - 4: 11
2. Hebrews 4: 12 - 16
3. Hebrews 10: 19 - 25

Bonus – What are some of the new directions from this week's study that can be added to your list?

RESPOND

1. As you reread each of these instructions written to the author's brothers and sisters in Christ, how do you measure up? Would you say that you are "traveling in the right direction" or do some adjustments or corrections need to be made?
2. God's often gently whispers our name and longs to show us new paths which He wants us to be willing to take – even when we cannot see around the corner or the light at the end of the tunnel. Are you willing to take His hand and follow Him? He is waiting for you to make the choice.
3. As you consider God's leading for you, why not ask a friend to pray with you and for you along this unknown journey. As you share, perhaps you can do the same thing for your friend. When you go together with Jesus as your leader, It's a great way to go.

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Lesson 4 – WHO NEEDS YOUR ENCOURAGEMENT?

*By His divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a Godly life.
We have received all of this by coming to know Him, the one who called us to Himself
by means of His marvelous glory and excellence. II Peter 1: 3*

Do you believe this verse? Is it really true for you? Check out the next verse - II Peter 1: 4 - in order to understand it better. How can these truths help you go in the right direction more consistently and joyfully? What is your prayer?

READ

Hebrews 12: 1

Hebrews 12: 1

Hebrews 12: 2

Hebrews 13: 13

Hebrews 13: 15 – 16

I John 3: 18

I John 4: 7

REFLECT – Look for the reasons and motivation that both Paul and John give for following their instructions. Write them down along with any other insights that the Holy Spirit brings to your mind.

1. Hebrews 12: 1 – 3 (Hebrews 11)
2. Hebrews 13: 11 – 16
3. I John 3: 16 – 24 and 4: 7 – 12

RESPOND

1. As you meditate on these passages of Scripture, consider why the authors wrote these specific directions to their readers. How would following each of them help them to live a Godly life and to experience all that God had prepared for them as His child? How do they help you?
2. Are there one or two of these verses that have particularly caused you to pause and to think about your own attitudes and actions? Where do you think God's Spirit would like to enable you to travel more directly or go more intentionally in the days ahead? What promises does He want you to believe so that you will reach your destination unhindered and expectantly?
3. Who needs your encouragement? Your kind words? Your smile? Your help? Your mercy? And most of all, your love? How does God want to make His presence known through what you do and what you say? Let's get going while there is time!

HYMNS for Meditation and Worship

HE LEADETH ME

He leadeth me! O blessed thought. O words with heavenly comfort fraught!
Whate'er I do, where'er I be, still 'tis God's hand that leadeth me.

Lord, I would clasp Thy hand in mine, Nor ever murmur nor repine,
Content, whatever lot I see, since 'tis Thy hand that leadeth me!

And when my task on earth is done, When, by Thy grace, the victory's won.
E'en death's cold wave I will not flee, since God thru' Jordan leadeth me.

Chorus: He leadeth me, He leadeth me, By His own hand He leadeth me.
His faithful follower I would be, For by His hand He leadeth me.

SAVIOR, LIKE A SHEPHERD LEAD US

Savior, like a shepherd lead us. Much we need Thy tender care.
In Thy pleasant pastures feed us. For our use Thy folds prepare.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, Thou hast bought us, Thine we are.

We are Thine; do thou befriend us. Be the Guardian of our way
Keep Thy flock, from sin defend us. Seek us when we go astray.
Blessed Jesus, blessed Jesus, hear, O hear us when we pray.

ALL THE WAY MY SAVIOR LEADS ME

All the way my Savior leads me. What have I to ask beside? Can I doubt His tender mercy, Who thru' life has been my guide?
Heavenly peace, divinest comfort, here by faith in Him to dwell. For I know whate'er befall me, Jesus doeth all things well.
All the way my Savior leads me. Cheers each winding path I tread. Gives me grace for every trial. Feeds me with the living bread.
Tho' my weary steps may falter and my soul athirst may be. Gushing from the Rock before me, lo! A spring of joy I see.

MAKE ME A BLESSING

Out in the highways and byways of life, many are weary and sad. Carry the sunshine where darkness is rife, making the sorrowing glad.

Tell the sweet story of Christ and His love. Tell of His power to forgive. Others will trust Him if only you prove true, every moment you live.

Give as 'twas given to you in your need. Love as the Master loved you. Be to the helpless a helper indeed. Unto your mission be true.

Chorus: Make me a blessing, make me a blessing. Out of my life may Jesus shine.
Make me a blessing, O Savior, I pray. Make me a blessing to someone to day.

I'LL GO WHERE YOU WANT ME TO GO, DEAR LORD

It may not be on the mountain's height or over the stormy sea. It may not be at the battle's front My Lord will have need of me.
But, if by a still small voice He calls to paths I do not know, I'll answer, dear Lord, with my hand in Thine. I'll go where You want me to go.

Perhaps today there are loving words which Jesus would have me speak. There may be now, in the paths of sin,
some wand'rer whom I should seek.

O Savior, if Thou wilt be my Guide, tho' dark and rugged the way, my voice shall echo the message sweet, I'll say what You want me to say.

Chorus: I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord. O'er mountain or plain or sea.
I'll say what you want me to say, dear Lord. I'll be what You want me to be.

MAY THE MIND OF CHRIST, MY SAVIOR

May the mind of Christ, my Savior, live in me from day to day, by His love and power controlling all I do and say.

May the Word of God dwell richly in my heart from hour to hour, so that all may see I triumph only through His power.

May the love of Jesus fill me as the waters fill the sea, Him exalting, self abasing, this is victory.

May I run the race before me strong and brave to face the foe, looking only unto Jesus as I onward go.

May His beauty rest upon me as I seek the lost to win. And may they forget the channel, seeing only Him.

PROMISES and PRAYERS for GUIDANCE and DIRECTION

- Joshua 1: 9 This is my command - be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is With you wherever you go.
- Psalms 5: 8 Lead me in the right path, O Lord, or my enemies will conquer me. Make your way plain for me to follow.
- Psalms 16: 11 You will show me the way of life, granting me the joy of your presence and the pleasures of living with You forever.
- Psalms 18: 33 God arms me with strength and makes my way perfect. He makes me as surefooted as a deer, enabling me to stand on mountain heights.
- Psalms 23: 1 – 4 The Lord is my shepherd. I have all that I need. He lets me rest in green meadows. He leads me beside peaceful streams. He renews my strength. He guides me along right paths bringing honor to His name. Even when I walk through the darkest valley, I will not be afraid for You are close beside me. Your rod and Your staff protect and comfort me.
- Psalms 25: 4 – 5 Show me the right path, O Lord. Point out the road for me to follow. Lead me by Your truth and teach me, for You are the God who saves me. All day long I put my hope in You.
- Psalms 27: 11 Teach me how to live, O Lord. Lead me along the right path, for my enemies are waiting for me.
- Psalms 37: 23 – 24 The Lord directs the steps of the Godly. He delights in every detail of their lives. Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the Lord holds them by the hand.
- Psalms 119: 105 Your Word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.
- Psalms 143: 10 Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God. May Your gracious Spirit lead me forward on a firm footing.
- Proverbs 16: 9 We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps.
- Isaiah 58: 11 The Lord will guide you continually, giving you water when you are dry and restoring your strength. You will be like a well-watered garden, like an ever-flowing spring.
- John 8: 12 Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, "I am the light of the world. If you follow Me, you won't have to walk in darkness because you will have the light that leads to life.
- John 10: 3b – 4 The Shepherd calls His own sheep by name and leads them out. After He has gathered His own flock, He walks ahead of the and they follow Him because they know His voice."
- Philippians 4: 13 For I can do everything through Christ, who gives me strength.
- Colossians 1:9 – 10 We ask God to give you complete knowledge of His will and to give you spiritual wisdom and understanding. Then the way you live will always honor and please the Lord and your lives will produce every kind of good fruit.
- I Thessalonians 5: 23 Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus comes again. God will make this happen, for He who calls you is faithful.

Your own verses and promises: