

# WONDERFUL NEWS – Part 5

ENGLISH BIBLE STUDY  
DISTRIBUTED BY THE EMMANUEL TRACT FELLOWSHIP

The Bible verses in these studies are taken from the Good News Bible

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## OUR WONDERFUL LIFE

### OUR NEIGHBOUR AND US

“Love your neighbour as you love yourself” (Matthew 22:39).

“But the teacher of the law wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, ‘who is my neighbour?’ Jesus answered, ‘there was once a man who was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho when robbers attacked him, stripped him, and beat him up, leaving him half dead. It so happened that a priest was going down that road but when he saw the man, he walked by, on the other side. In the same way a Levite also came along, went over and looked at the man, and then walked on by, on the other side. But a Samaritan who was travelling that way came upon the man, and when he saw him, his heart was filled with pity. He went over to him, poured oil and wine on his wounds and bandaged them; then he put the man on his own animal and took him to an Inn, where he took care of him. In your opinion, which one of these three acted like a neighbour towards the man attacked by the robbers?’ The teacher of the law answered, ‘The one who was kind to him’. Jesus replied, ‘You go, then, and do the same’” (Luke 10:29-34, 36-37).

This study has been prepared to help you understand the teachings of the Bible regarding you and your neighbour. God wants you to live with other people in peace and love, to be a light in a dark world of sin, and to be a good son or daughter in his great family.

#### WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR?

From the story told by Jesus we can see that our neighbour is not just the person who is living near us. It is our friend, our enemy, a stranger, members of our family, the people we work with or study with, members of our church, those who rule and govern our country. Our neighbour is anyone whom we may meet as we are walking on the path of life. So now, let us see how we can be a blessing to our neighbours as we walk in the wonderful life of Jesus Christ.

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## LESSON ONE

### FRIENDS, ENEMIES AND STRANGERS

#### Friends

“I am a friend of all who serve you, of all who obey your laws” (Psalm 119:63).

Choose your friends wisely. Make friends with those who want to walk on the same road as you. People know you by your friends. (See Psalm 1).

“People learn from one another, just as iron sharpens iron” (Proverbs 27:17).

You are an influence on your friends and they on you. Good friends will be a blessing to you. Evil friends will change you until you are like them.

“Friends always show their love. What are brothers for if not to share trouble?” (Proverbs 17:17).

A good friend is a faithful friend. Can your friends rely on you to keep your promises, to help them in their troubles? Have you told your friends about the Lord Jesus Christ? He is the greatest friend of all because He gave His life to save you and He never changes. (See Mark 5:19-20, John 15:13 and Hebrews 13:8).

Question: Who is our greatest friend?

Your Answer: .....

## ENEMIES

“But now I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may become the sons of your Father in heaven. For He makes His sun to shine on bad and good people alike, and gives rain to those who do good and to those who do evil” (Matthew 5:44-45).

God has given you a new, soft heart in the place of your old hard one. You have the Spirit of Jesus Christ within you. When the soldiers nailed Jesus to the cross He prayed, “Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing”. Ask God to fill your heart with love for your enemies. Pray for them that they may know the love and power of Jesus even as you have done.

“Do not let evil defeat you; instead, conquer evil with good” (Romans 12:21).

“If you do bad things to your enemies then you have become like them. Their evil has overcome you. Leave vengeance in the hand of God. Your weapons are love and mercy and kindness” (Romans 12:17-21).

“If any of you suffers, it must not be because he is a murderer or a thief or a criminal or meddles in other people’s affairs. However, if you suffer because you are a Christian, don’t be ashamed of it, but thank God that you bear Christ’s Name” (1 Peter 4:15-16).

Ask yourself these questions: Have I any enemies? Why does that man hate me? Why does that woman never speak to me? Perhaps the fault is yours! If so, put the matter right and make peace.

However, do not be surprised if people do not like you because you are walking in the way of Christ. Many people are like the owl, they work in the dark and hate the light. (See John 3:18-21).

“Put on all the armour that God gives you, so that you will be able to stand up against the devil’s evil tricks. For we are not fighting against human beings but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world, the rulers, authorities, and cosmic powers of this dark age” (Ephesians 6.11-12).

Always remember, your true enemies are Satan and his evil spirits. Jesus knew that the power behind the men who crucified him was Satan, the enemy of God and man. Overcome him with God’s weapon of truth, righteousness, faith, love and the word of God in prayer in the Holy Spirit. (See Luke 22.50-53 and Ephesians 6.10-18).

Question: Who is our true [real] enemy?

Your Answer: .....

## STRANGERS

“Do not ill-treat a foreigner. You know how it feels to be a foreigner, because you were foreigners in Egypt” (Exodus 23.9).

God reminded the people of Israel that they had once been strangers in Egypt. The Egyptians had distrusted and hated them so Israel had walked in fear and unhappiness. YOU ALSO WERE ONCE A STRANGER. You had no place in the kingdom of God, no name and no hope. But God had mercy on you, so you are now a member of His heavenly family. God was kind to you and He asks you to be kind to strangers also. (See Hebrews 13.2; Matthew 25.34-40).

“As a result, there is no longer any distinction between Gentiles and Jews, circumcised, and uncircumcised, barbarians, savages, slaves, and free men, but Christ is in all” (Colossians 3.11).

Question: Why should Christians be kind to strangers.  
Your Answer: .....

**A CHRISTIAN SEES PEOPLE WITH NEW EYES**

- 1. He sees all who are trusting in Christ as brothers or sisters. People of all languages, tribes and nations belong to the family of God if they are washed in the blood of the lamb. (see Revelation 5:9-10).
- 2. He sees all who do not know God's salvation as lost sheep who need a shepherd. "The cross of Jesus Christ gives us new eyes and a new heart towards the stranger" (Ephesians 2.17-18, 1 Peter 2.10).

**LESSON TWO**

**WORK**

"There was a chief tax collector there named Zacchaeus, who was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but he was a little man and could not see Jesus because of the crowd. So he ran ahead of the crowd and climbed a sycomore tree to see Jesus, who was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to that place, He looked up and said to Zacchaeus, 'Hurry down, Zacchaeus, because I must stay in your house today'. Zacchaeus hurried down and welcomed him with great joy. All the people who saw it started grumbling, 'This man has gone as a guest to the house of a sinner!' Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, 'Listen sir! I will give half my belongings to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone, I will pay him back four times as much' (Luke 19.2-6,8).

Zacchaeus worked for the Government as a tax collector. However, he used his position to force the people to pay more than just their taxes. He became rich through robbery. But when he received Jesus as his Saviour and Lord, God gave him a new heart. Zacchaeus confessed his sins, and repaid the stolen money four times over.

Now that Christ has come into your life, what kind of person are you at the place where you work or study. Can men see that you are living a new wonderful life of love and righteousness. Do they see Jesus?

Question: When you are at work or school, who should people see in you?  
Your Answer: .....

**TO WORK IS THE WILL OF GOD**

"We say this because we hear that there are some people among you who live lazy lives and who do nothing except meddle in other people's business. In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ we command these people and warn them to lead orderly lives and work to earn their living. But you, brothers, must not get tired of doing good" (2 Thessalonians 3:11-13).

Do you sleep while your family goes out to work? Are you like the tick that feeds off the cow? God has given you strength and wisdom and He commands you to work for your own food. God will not answer your prayers for food and clothing if you are not willing to work yourself.

Question: Will God answer the prayer of a lazy person and provide their food?  
Your Answer: .....

"But if anyone does not take care of his relatives, especially the members of his own family, he has denied the faith and is worse than unbeliever" (1 Timothy 5:8).

“Laziness is sin. A lazy Christian brings shame and not glory to God. You do not earn money just to make yourself happy. To love means to help others. When you work to provide the needs of your family you are showing the love of God” (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12).

“Lazy people should learn a lesson from the way ants live. They have no leader, chief, or ruler, but they store up their food during the summer, getting ready for winter” (Proverbs 6.6-8).

**WORK TO GLORIFY GOD**

“Slaves are to submit to their masters and please them in all things. They must not answer them back or steal from them. Instead, they must show that they are always good and faithful, so as to bring credit to the teaching about God our Saviour in all they do” (Titus 2:9-10).

In the time when Paul wrote his letters, most work was done by slaves. We are not slaves today, but we still have to work for other people. Let your light shine where you work, not just by your words but also by your actions. Can your employer see that you are a child of God? Can your employer trust you? Begin and finish your work at the right time. Do you work when no one is watching you? Do you take and use things that are not yours? Remember, actions speak louder than words! (See Matthew 5:14-16 and Genesis 39:2-6.)

Question: When a Christian is at work, what speaks louder than words?  Your Answer: .....
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**WORK FOR GOD**

“Slaves, obey your human masters in all things, not only when they are watching you because you want to gain their approval; but do it with a sincere heart because of your reverence for the lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as though you were working for the Lord and not for men” (Colossians 3:22-23).

What is your work? A mechanic, school teacher, herd boy, student or clerk? Or are you working at home? Whatever it is, give your work to God as a thanks offering. Tell God that He is your employer and, because He loves you and has forgiven your sins, you will serve Him through the work of your hands.

Question: To whom should we dedicate your work?  Your Answer: .....
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**LESSON THREE**

**AND MORE WORK**

**ARE PEOPLE WORKING FOR YOU?**

“Masters, be fair and just in the way you treat your slaves. Remember that you too have a master in heaven” (Colossians 4:1).

Do you treat your workers like people or animals? Give them a fair wage for the work they do. Be just when you judge their problems. Remember, the Lord Jesus will judge and reward you one day.

***Think About These Words Of The Prophet***

“No, the Lord has told us what is good. What he requires of us is this: to do what is just, to show constant love, and to live in humble fellowship with our God”. (See Micah 6:8, Jeremiah 22:13-17 and James 5:1-5).

Question: Who is the greatest 'employer' of all men?

Your Answer: .....

### **HAVE YOU A POSITION OF POWER AND RESPECT?**

The Lord gave this message to Zechariah: "Long ago I gave these commands to my people: You must see that justice is done, and just show kindness and mercy to one another. Do not oppress widows, orphans, foreigners who live among you, or anyone else in need. And do not plan ways of harming one another" (Zechariah 7:8-10).

Perhaps you are like Zacchaeus, you have a position of power in the government. Do not use this power for evil but for good. Do you try to add to your wages by taking bribes or making people pay more than the law requires? No man can be a follower of Christ and also a robber and oppressor of people. (See Amos 5:11-12 and Proverbs 22:16).

Question: If a Christian is working for the government should he use his position in order to help himself or other people?

Your Answer: .....

### **DO YOU OWN A STORE?**

"Do not cheat anyone by using measures of length, weight or quantity. Use honest scales honest weights, and honest measures. I am the Lord your God and I brought you out of Egypt" (Leviticus 19:35-36).

Do you rob people by charging too much for the things you sell? Do you deceive them when you weigh food or cut material? God wants His children to be honest and upright in business. Through your righteousness you will help other people, and God will prosper you too. (See Proverbs 11:1-5).

Question: Is God pleased with a Christian who charges too much on the things he sells?

Your Answer: .....

### **BEWARE OF GREED**

"Keep your lives from the love of money, and be satisfied with what you have. For God has said, 'I will never leave you; I will never abandon you'" (Hebrews 13:5).

Do not worship money. Do not become a slave of riches. These things will never give you lasting satisfaction or certain safety. Let God be your stronghold and put your riches in heaven.

Will a person gain anything if he wins the whole world but is himself lost or defeated? Matthew 6:33 says: "Be concerned above everything else with the kingdom of God and with what he requires of you, and he will provide you with all these other things".

"Always put God first in your work when God blesses you, return thanks to Him by giving him a tenth of your wages or your profits" (Proverbs 10:22 and 1 Samuel 2:30).

### **Your Work: Write out Luke 9:25.**

When Jesus called Matthew the tax collector to follow Him, Matthew asked all those who worked with him to a feast. He invited Jesus too. He was not ashamed to take Jesus to the place where he worked. Take Jesus with you to your work or to school. Show people by the way you live and work that you have found a new wonderful life in the Lord Jesus Christ. See Matthew 9:9-10; Luke 5:27-31.

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## LESSON FOUR

### THE CHURCH OF GOD

“To the church of God which is in Corinth, to all who are called to be God’s holy people, who belong to Him in union with Christ Jesus, together with all people everywhere who worship our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours” (1 Corinthians 1:2).

“Now that you have repented from your sin, and Jesus Christ is your Saviour and Lord, God has made you a member of His great family. You are part of the fellowship of God’s people who have been called out of sin and darkness, to walk in the light of God’s wonderful righteousness and life. This family is called by many names in the Bible, for example: ‘The church of God’, ‘The church of the living God’, (1 Timothy 3:15) or ‘The church of Christ’ (Romans 16:16) and sometimes just ‘The church’ (1 Corinthians 16:19).

Question: Who is the father of all who believe in Jesus?

Your Answer: .....

### JESUS CHRIST IS THE FOUNDATION

“For God has already placed Jesus Christ as the one and only foundation, and no other foundation can be laid” (1 Corinthians 3:11).

As you study the Bible, you will see that the church is like a HOUSE. Each believer is a living stone or brick, and God Himself lives inside! This wonderful house is not built upon church leaders or church laws: Every stone must be built upon the Lord Jesus Christ who is the Eternal rock. The church needs good leaders and wise laws, but its faith and hope must be always in Jesus who is the only Saviour of the world. (See Matthew 16:16-18; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:4-8; Colossians 2:6-7).

Question: Who must be a foundation of a Christian congregation?

Your Answer: .....

### JESUS CHRIST IS THE HEAD.

“He is the head of the body, the church; He is the source of the body’s life. He is the first born Son, who was raised from death, in order that he alone might have the first place in all things” (Colossians 1:18).

The Bible also shows us that the church is a LIVING BODY and Jesus is its head. If the church tries to live without the Head, it will die! JESUS MUST RULE IN THE AFFAIRS OF THE CHURCH. The church must always look to Him for Spiritual food and drink, for wisdom and power. (See Matthew 16:15-18, Ephesians 1:17-23 and Colossians 2:18-19).

Question: If the church is a living body, who is the head?

Your Answer: .....

### YOU ARE A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH

“We have many parts in the one body, and all these parts have different functions. In the same way, though we are many, we are all joined to each other as different parts of one body” (Romans 12:4-5).

You are a living member of the church, and there is work for you to do. But you can not choose your own work or position in the church - that is the responsibility of Jesus Christ, the Head. Neither can you work in your own strength or wisdom. The Head will give you the necessary gifts and power by the Holy Spirit. You must pray and study the Bible until Jesus shows you your work and gives you the power to do it. (See Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:7-16).

Question: Who shows the Christian the work he must do in the church?  
Your Answer: .....

**WHERE IS THE CHURCH?**

Jesus said, "For where two or three come together in my name, I am there with them" (Matthew 18:20).  
If the Church is the body of Christ and He is the Head, then wherever believers come together in His name, that is where the church is. It may be 'two or three', it may be five thousand! It may be called by many different names by people.

THE CHURCH IS WHEREVER GOD'S PEOPLE GATHER TOGETHER IN THE NAME OF HIS SON. (See Acts 2:44-46; Romans 16:3-5).

Question: In whose name should we come together to worship God?  
Your Answer: .....

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**LESSON FIVE**

**WHAT THE CHURCH DOES**

**THE CHURCH COMES TOGETHER**

"Many of them believed His message and were baptized, and about three thousand people were added to the group that day. They spent their time in learning from the apostles, taking part in the fellowship, and sharing in the fellowship meals and the prayers" (Acts 2:41-42).

What did the first church at Jerusalem do? We can see four things: teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer.

**Your Work: Write down two things done by the church at Jerusalem.**

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**THE APOSTLES' TEACHING**

When the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, he gave this advice, "I solemnly urge you to preach the message, to insist upon proclaiming it whether the time is right or not, to convince, reproach, and encourage, as you teach with all patience" (2 Timothy 4:2).

Every Christian needs to be taught the principles of God. You must know, understand and obey the teachings of God the Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. If the sheep do not know the Truth of God then it is easy for the false shepherds to lead them astray.  
**YOU MUST KNOW WHAT YOU BELIEVE.**

"Anyone who does not stay with the teachings of Christ, but goes beyond it, does not have God. Whoever stays with the teachings has both the Father and the Son" (2 John 1;9).

The Holy Spirit has come to teach us the things concerning the Son, who spoke only those things that come from the Father. Only listen to those preachers who lift up Jesus Christ, because He alone is the way, the truth and the life. You come to God through Jesus. You worship and pray through Jesus. You receive the Holy Spirit through Jesus. You live through Jesus. The church finds salvation, life and hope through God's only begotten Son. **HEAR HIM!** (See Ephesians 4:17-24; Colossians 2:6-9; 3:16; John 16:13-15).

Question: Who is the person that the apostles and preachers all teach about?  
Your Answer: .....

**FELLOWSHIP**

“Let us be concerned for one another, to help one another to show love and to do good. Let us not give up the habit of meeting together, as some are doing. Instead, let us encourage one another all the more, since you see that the Day of the Lord is coming nearer” (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Fellowship is sharing your burdens and your blessings in Christ with other Christians, in a spirit of love, holiness, humility and joy. There will be DISCOURAGEMENT in the world, but there must be ENCOURAGEMENT in the church. (See Galatians 6:2).

**Your Work: Complete this statement:**

Fellowship is sharing ..... and ..... in Christ with other Christians."

*The Blessing of the Holy Spirit*

“That is what I mean, my brothers. When you meet for worship, one person has a hymn, another a teaching, another a revelation from God, another a message in strange tongues, and still another the explanation of what is said. Everything must be of help to the church” (1 Corinthians 14:26).

Fellowship means sharing the blessings of God with each other. Fellowship means helping each other to be stronger in faith and love through Jesus. Fellowship means building each other up with God and in Jesus Christ. Whether you sing, pray, testify, speak by the Holy Spirit or preach, it is not to raise yourself up in the eyes of the church, but to help the other believers and bring them the blessings of Christ. (See Ephesians 4:11-13 and Jude 1:20-21).

*The Blessings of this World*

“So, then, as often as we have the chance, we should do good to every one, and especially to those who belong to our family in the faith” (Galatians 6:10).

You are now a member of God’s family. There are brothers and sisters in Christ with problems and needs. Help them. In Acts chapter 9 you can read about a woman called Tabitha, who spent all of her time doing good and helping the poor (see v.36). She made clothes and helped the poor. She shared her blessings with others in the church. That is fellowship.

Question: Is it good to close your eyes to the needs of other Christians?  
Your Answer: .....

**BREAKING OF BREAD**

“For I received from the Lord the teaching that I passed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed; took a piece of bread, gave thanks to God, broke it, and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you. Do this in memory of me’. In the same way, after the supper He took the cup and said, ‘This cup is God’s new covenant, sealed with my blood. Whenever you drink it, do so in memory of me’” (1 Corinthians 11:23-25).

The Breaking of Bread Service, (also called Holy Communion, the Lord’s Table or the Lord’s Supper) is the most important service of the church. The Lord Jesus has commanded Christians to eat and drink together to remember His death until He returns from heaven for His people.

**When you eat:** Remember that His body that was crucified for you. He carried your sins in His own body. He was punished by God in your place. (See 1Peter 2:24 and Isaiah 53:4-6).

**When you drink:** Remember that it was the shed blood of Jesus that redeemed you from sin and brought you God's forgiveness. God made a promise that He would forgive you your sins and He sealed that promise by the blood of His Son. (See Ephesians 1:7, Hebrews 13:20 and 1Peter 1:18, 19).

Question: What do Christians remember when they eat and drink at the Lord's Table?  
Your Answer: .....

**Examine yourself:** In 1 Corinthians 11:28 we read: "So then, everyone should examine himself first and then eat the bread and drink from the cup".

It is very easy to begin to trust yourself and not in Jesus. It is easy to leave the path of light and be lost in the ways of darkness. In this meeting, God gives every Christian an opportunity to examine his heart. Ask yourself these questions:

1. Am I trusting in myself or in Jesus for my salvation?
2. Is there any sin in my heart for which I have not asked forgiveness?
3. Am I disobeying God in anything?
4. Have I got anything against my brother or sister in Christ?

"But if we confess our sins to God, He will keep His promise and do what is right. He will forgive us our sins and purify us from all our wrongdoing" (1John 1:9).

Question: Before eating the bread and drinking the wine, what should a Christian do?  
Your Answer: .....

**PRAYER**

One day Jesus went into the Temple of God at Jerusalem. He found many people using God's house as a place to buy and sell and make money. Jesus drove them out saying, "It is written in the scriptures that God said, "My Temple will be called a house of prayer". But you are making it a hideout for thieves!" (Matthew 21:13).

Today God does not live in buildings made by men. He lives in the church, the living temple, the stones of which are men and women who trust in Jesus. God's church must be a house of prayer. When God's people pray they meet with God Himself. The church maybe full of laws, committees, choirs, programs, but the first thing that is needed is prayer.

**Prayer in Power:** Pray for those still in darkness. Pray for Christians that they may be blessed and used by God. Pray 'Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven'.

"When they finished praying, the place where they were meeting was shaken. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to proclaim God's message with boldness" (Acts 4:31, see also Matthew 18:19,20 and 9:36;38, 1Timothy 2:1-5).

Question: What is more important in the church than committees, choirs and programs?  
Your Answer: .....

**THE CHURCH GOES OUT.**

The Apostle Paul wrote to the church at Thessalonica: "For not only did the message about the Lord go out from you throughout Macedonia and Achaia, but the news about your faith in God has gone everywhere. There is nothing, then, that we need to say" (1 Thessalonians 1.8).

Every church of Jesus Christ, whether large or small, is a light in a dark world. Every member is a witness to the power and love of God. Christians come together to feed on the word of God and to drink of the Holy Spirit. They must then go out in faith and boldness to give the word of life to those who do not know God's mercy.

Do not wait for people to come to the service - you must go out to them. This is the command of Jesus to His church: "Go throughout the whole world and preach the gospel to all mankind" (Mark 16.15).

AND THEY DID IT! "The disciples went and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and proved that their preaching was true by the miracles that were performed" (Mark 16.20).

<p>Question: Does God want you to take his message to people outside the church?</p> <p>Your Answer: .....</p>
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