



# **Bible**

## **Discussion**

### **The Life of Wheel**

# **Making Bible Study Fun - The Imagination Method**

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#### **Making Bible Study Fun - The Imagination Method**

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## **Some information about the Bible**

When reading the Bible (the world's best-selling book), it is helpful to have some background information.

### **1. How it was completed**

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew, and the New Testament was written in Greek. The word "testament" means "covenant." The theme in both Testaments is Christ (the Savior). In the Old Testament, the emphasis is on waiting for Christ, and in the New Testament, the emphasis is on the arrival of Christ.

Different scholars say different things about exactly when they were written, but the Old Testament was probably completed around 400 B.C, and the New Testament was completed by the end of the first century. After various incidents, the Bible came to be in its present form—a compilation of 66 books (39 books in the Old Testament, and 27 in the New Testament).

### **2. Composition**

There are four types of literature in the Old Testament (the Law, history, poetry, and prophecy), and there are also four types in the New Testament (the Gospels, history, epistles, and prophecy).

We can identify about 40 authors, who were kings, farmers, poets, fishermen, politicians, scholars, warriors, doctors, and so on. This wide variety of people wrote at different times, yet there is one common theme in all their books, as though there was only one editor.

This "mystery" is explained in 2 Timothy 3:16-17: "All Scripture is *inspired* by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right" (NLT). Therefore, the Bible is called the "Word of God."

### **3. Approach**

Some people cannot believe the miracles in the Bible and therefore dismiss the Bible altogether. It is too bad that they get hung up on the topic of miracles. It would be more constructive to try to understand what we can from what the Bible is saying. As the Bible is not a science textbook, it would be better for us to have the attitude of, "What is it saying to me?" in order to grasp the meaning rather than dwell on details.

### **4. Chapters**

There were no chapter divisions in the Bible, at first. It was probably difficult to read; therefore, chapters and verses were added. Now we can reference a specific part of the Bible by saying, for example, "John chapter five, verse two." If one were to hear that, they would know that we are referring to John 5:2.

## The Life of Wheel

How can we live our lives trusting in Jesus? The key seems to be in **relationships**. We can start by asking, "How can we deepen our relationship with Christ?" I propose that there may be three foundations to our relationships: **our attitude towards God, our relation to God** and **our relation to people**. "The Wheel illustration" shows them more practically.



### Scripture Memory

We have six discussions in this series, and we encourage you to memorize one verse in each discussion. A good way to memorize Scripture is to use a title, the chapter, the verse, and words. This will help us to store God's word in our hearts and to remember the theme of each discussion. You may memorize the verse right above each discussion (underlined), or you may choose a verse that stands out to you in the discussion.

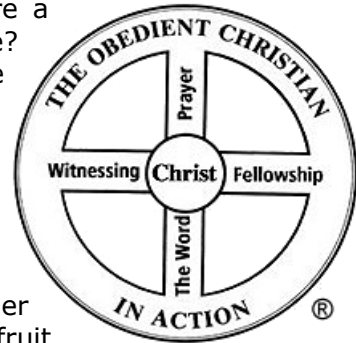
During each discussion, you can quiz each other on the verse you want to memorize. If you practice this, you may end up memorizing six verses by the end of the discussion series.

## I Christ the Center (John15:1-11)

### John15:5

The hub, the center of a wheel, is Christ. Without the hub, the wheel won't turn.

1. Jesus said, "I am the vine and you are the branches." Imagine this vine. What image comes to your mind? If you are a branch, what kind of branch would you be? Draw a picture (or an illustration) that describe the characteristics of both vine and branch, that came to your mind. Share the illustration and each characteristic.



2. It is very important to prune vine trees so that they will bear fruit. In this parable, the Father prunes the tree so that it will produce more fruit. What do you think it looks like for God to prune us? Have you had a "pruning" experience? How do you see the meaning of that personal experience in your life?
3. The vine nourishes the branches. How will Jesus nourish us?
4. Jesus repeatedly said, "Abide in me." Because it was so important for us. What do you think would prevent us from abiding in Jesus?
5. What do you think the key to abiding(continuing) in Jesus?
6. It is said that we will bear fruit if we keep abiding in Jesus. What kind of fruit would we bear?
7. From reading this passage, what do you think "Christ the Center" means?

**[Note]** The Greek word for pruning is *kathairo*, akin to *katharos* (pure). Therefore, the word "pruning" can be translated as "cleaning."

## II The Obedient Christian in Action (John14:15-24)

### John14:21

The rim of the Wheel is "the obedient Christian in action." Without the hub, the wheel doesn't work, nor does it work without the rim. When we hear the term "the obedient Christian," it sounds very passive. Let's find out what it means.

1. When you hear "the obedient Christian," what kind of person comes to mind? Some people might think "passive" or "inactive" when they hear the word "obedient." How would you describe obedience in your own words?
2. Why does Jesus give commands to us? What is His motive in giving commands to us?
3. When you keep His commands(or don't keep them), what do you imagine is He feeling(it might help you to think the relation between parents and child his feeling)? When you keep His commands, what is your motive to keep them?
4. No one may be able to say that I can keep His commands perfectly. The Father knows that well and sent us a Helper. He is also called the Spirit of truth (v.16). Many things are written about the Spirit (Holy Spirit), but how will the Spirit help us according to this passage(v.16~24)?
5. Have you experienced the help of the Spirit? If you have, please share it whether it seems to be a small thing or big thing.
6. What will happen to those who obey Jesus' commands? What will those who don't obey his commands not experience or understand? (v.21-24)
7. After reading this passage, what's something you learned about obeying God?

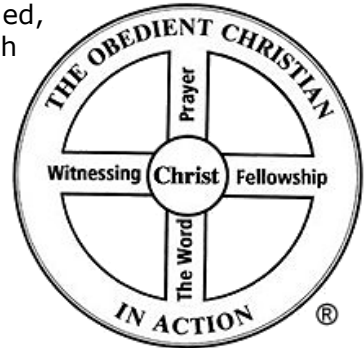


### III The Word (Exodus16:13-21)

### Matthew 4:4

A wheel has spokes. In Wheel Illustration, vertical spokes refer to our relationship with God and the horizontal spokes refer to our relationship with people. First, let's think about the vertical spokes.

1. Have you ever experienced being encouraged, comforted, or strengthened by talking with someone? Or have you experienced being helped by someone's words through a book? Share about such an experience you've had.
2. You may have heard the verse, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). What do you think it means?
3. The quote Jesus uses in Matthew 4:4 comes from Deuteronomy 8:3. In that passage, *manna* is mentioned. Read Exodus 16:13-21. What do you learn/observe about manna in this passage?
4. In John 6, we see that Jesus feeds a big crowd. But Jesus says, "I am the bread of life" (John 6:48-51). Then the Jews begin to argue among themselves (John 6:52). Jesus continues, "Every word I've spoken to you is a Spirit-word, and so it is life-making" (John 6:63 MSG). What do you think Jesus wanted to communicate here?
5. After you have experienced the Word of God—listened, read, studied, memorized, meditated, and discussed—what do you think makes it different from other written works? Did anything, in particular, stand out to you from His Word? Please share.
6. The Word of God is wonderful and complex, yet educational status seems to have nothing to do with understanding it. Was there any turning point for you in understanding the Word? What attitude do you think we should have when approaching God's Word?
7. How has interacting with—listening, reading, studying, memorizing, meditating, and discussing—God's Word influenced you? I believe that you have been taking in the Word of God. Is there any new way you want to try to engage with the Word?

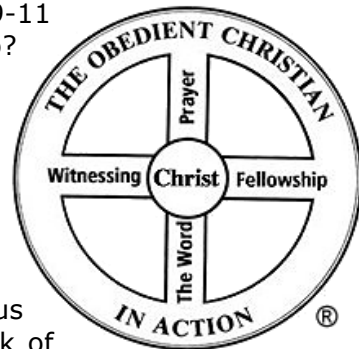


#### IV Prayer (Matthew 7:7-11, John 16:24-28)

**John 16:24**

Another vertical spoke is prayer. God will talk to us through His Word and we talk to God through prayer. Prayer is a privilege and it is essential in developing a relationship with God.

1. If you were to describe Matthew 7:7,8 and 9-11 using illustrations, how would you do so? Please describe either passage. Once you finish drawing, share it with others.
2. In those days, Jews were also praying to God—though they approached Him as a God that is more distant and awesome. The Japanese also pray to various gods. Jesus encourages us to ask of God as children ask of their father. How different is this way of praying from other ways of praying?
3. Why can we ask of God as children ask of their father? What made it possible to approach God in this way? (John 16:24-28)
4. When could you start approaching God as your Father? What change happened in you so that you could pray to God freely and intimately?
5. I think it is helpful to think of prayer in five parts: 1. **Adoration** (praise God for who He is), 2. **Thanksgiving** (thank God for what He has done for us), 3. **Confession** (express sins we committed against God), 4. **Intercession** (pray for others), and 5. **Desire** (pray for our desires). You can find these expressed through prayers in the Bible; reading them may help you understand how to pray yourself. Among these five parts, which do you most easily include in your prayers? Which part is not as present or lacking? Why do you think that is?
6. Did you learn anything new about prayer? What is something new you want to apply to your prayers?



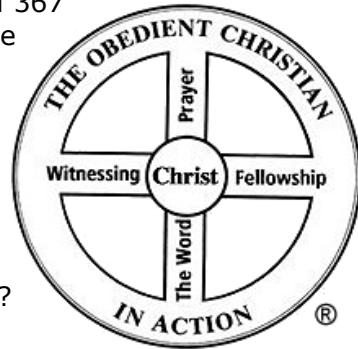


## V Fellowship (John 13:1-17)

### John 13:14

The horizontal spokes refer to our relationships with other people. We may think that we don't need to divide our human relationships into two categories, but the Bible often speaks differently of those who trust in Jesus and those who do not. We call our relationship with those who trust in Jesus "fellowship." The phrase "one another"—referring to fellow believers in Jesus—is used in 102 verses and 367 times in the New Testament. This shows the importance of fellowship.

1. It is written, "Jesus knowing that His hour had come...He loved them to the end." If you were in his position—knowingly approaching death—what would you do with people who are close to you (your children, brothers, sisters, parents, close friends)? What would you tell them?
2. Jesus got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. What do you imagine was going on in the disciples' minds then?
3. Jesus said to his disciples, "I have set you an example." Washing feet was a symbolic deed. What kind of example was Jesus trying to set for his disciples? (v. 15)
4. Do you think that washing one another's feet is easy or difficult? Why do you think so?
5. Jesus said, "Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." How do you think they will be blessed? (v. 16, 17)
6. What does it mean to you to wash one another's feet, now? In order to take the first step, what can you do?



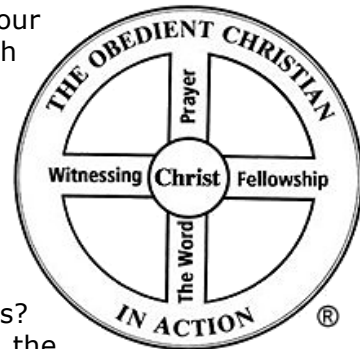
**[Note] Washing feet** was a slave's job in those days. People walked in sandal-like footwear and their feet easily got dirty. Usually, slaves would have washed their feet, but there were likely no slaves present at this moment. The disciples probably never thought that they would be in the position to wash someone else's feet, thinking that a slave's job would be beneath them.

## VI Witnessing (Mark 5:1-20)

### Mark 5:19

The other horizontal spoke represents “witnessing.” You rarely hear this word in your daily lives. When you start trusting in Jesus, you may have a desire to share about him and your life with him with your friends or family members who don’t know yet know him. This is what we would call “witnessing.”

1. What kind of things about yourself or your experience would you feel like to share with others? Have you shared such a thing recently? How was the listener's response?
2. In this passage in Mark, the man with an impure spirit was completely changed by Jesus. He had great joy, but the response of people in the area was different. What do you think is the reason for the different responses? What is the main concern of the people in the area?
3. The man who was freed from the evil spirit wanted to go with Jesus. But Jesus didn’t allow the man to go with Him. Why do you think Jesus made that decision? If you were that person, how would you have felt?
4. Jesus didn’t allow this man to follow him, but Jesus called Peter and his brother Andrew and James and his brother to follow him (Matthew 4:18-22). Why do you think Jesus dealt with them differently?
5. The man stayed in his area and told people what Jesus did for him. How big of an impact do you imagine was made in that area (cf. Mark 7:31-37)?
6. After coming to trust Jesus, what will start changing in yourself? Have you shared about how you came to trust Jesus and how you were changed with others? And have you heard other people sharing how their lives been changed since they trusted Jesus? If you have, have you found anything important when you share your experience with others? What do you think will help you when you share about your experience with Jesus?



#### [Note]

- **The Gerasenes:** It is not clear where it was. But we know that it was a region of Gentiles because pigs—which Jews recognized as unclean—were kept there.
- **Decapolis:** This word means ten (*deka*) cities (*polis*) in Greek. Each of the cities seemed to be autonomous. They were non-Jewish cities, but it seems some Jews still lived there, judging from the expression in Matthew 4:25.