

First Steps for Baby Christians

G. Edwin Lint

*A guide to the growth and development of persons who have recently accepted
Jesus as a personal savior*

© 2014, 2013, 2004, 1988, 1971 G. Edwin Lint, BS, ThB, MA
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Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! 2 Cor. 5:17

Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, 1 Peter 2:2

New International Version [NIV]

FIRST STEPS includes these basic areas of information:

- A. What happened to you when you became born again.**
- B. Some tips and pointers for your healthy growth and development.**
- C. Practical information about worshipping in an evangelical church.**
- D. General information about the evangelical lifestyle.**

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The author: G. Edwin Lint,

This Book Is Dedicated To ...

A pastor, church administrator, publisher, author, and the man who directed my physical and spiritual first steps-- my Dad,



Rev. J. Franklin Lint

1909 -- 1993

Preface

This is a major revision and rewrite of a booklet I first wrote in 1971 titled *First Steps: A Guide to the Growth and Development of Baby Christians*. It is specifically designed for persons who have recently come to know Jesus Christ as a personal Savior through the born-again experience. Evangelical doctrine, worship, lifestyles, and value systems will seem strange and different if you are such a new-born baby.

I trust that *First Steps* will prove to be just the right kind of baby food for you at this point in your spiritual growth and development.

**G. Edwin Lint
May 13, 2013
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania**

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Chapter 1: Babies Are Vulnerable

Just What Is A Baby Christian?

You are a baby Christian if you have recently accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. God is your Father, Jesus Christ is your elder brother, and the Christian church is your mother. You are a part of this family of God because you have accepted Jesus Christ as the Supreme Sacrifice for your sins. This act brings you back into the fellowship with God, your Father, for which the human race was created in the first place.

You are being called a "baby Christian" because the Bible uses the term "born again" when talking about the act of accepting Jesus Christ as a personal Savior. In the Gospel of John, the fourth book in the New Testament, there is a story about a Jewish leader who visited Jesus to find out how he might have eternal life. This story is recorded in the third chapter of John and Jesus told this man, whose name was Nicodemus, that he had to be "born again" in a spiritual way.

Therefore, it is perfectly natural to refer to you as a "baby Christian" if you have just been born again. This book has been written as a guide to your early growth and development as you move from being an infant in Christ to being a strong, mature Christian.

***FIRST STEPS* will include these basic areas of information:**

- 1. What happened to you when you became born again.**
- 2. Some tips and pointers for your healthy growth and development.**
- 3. Practical information about worshipping in an evangelical church.**
- 4. General information about the evangelical lifestyle.**

By the way, if you accepted Jesus Christ some time ago and are no longer a baby Christian in the strictest sense of the word, go ahead and read the book anyway. You will have learned many of the basic concepts but some of the background information may be interesting if not useful. Just excuse the baby talk.

Babies Are Vulnerable

You already know quite a bit about human babies and you can apply much of that knowledge to your existence as a spiritual baby. For example, you know that a human baby is helpless, fragile, and in need of protection from the environment. Doctors tell us that the first 24 hours of a human baby's life are especially risky. Then, with each passing day, the baby grows stronger. In the beginning, your parents did everything for you and protected you from injury and infection. Now, you are relatively independent from a physical standpoint. If you enjoy a normal spiritual infancy and childhood, you can look forward to that same goal of spiritual maturation.

In the famous Lord's Prayer, Jesus addresses God as "Our Father". The pronoun "our" joins you and Jesus together as having the same spiritual Father. This means that Jesus is your Big Brother. Since you're still a baby Christian, it's comforting to know that God is your Father and Jesus is your Big Brother. That's exactly the way Jesus described the relationship among God, Himself, and human beings. You're going to need your Big Brother as you face the three major sources of danger to all baby Christians. These dangers will be especially severe during your first days and weeks so you should study them carefully.

The Power of Satan

Don't underestimate the power of Satan and his demons. Satan is a supernatural being who can honestly claim some supernatural powers. He is able to cause trouble for Christians in many places at the same time through the help of his demons. Right now, he knows that you are a new-born Christian and that you are vulnerable.

Respect Satan's power and the fact that his primary objective is to damn the souls of all human beings to eternal punishment in hell forever. Since the beginning of the human race with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, Satan has been totally committed to separating us from fellowship with God by tempting us to disobey His laws. Since you are a new-born Christian, he is especially angry at you and wants you to doubt your faith and go back to the old way of living. He may have assigned one or more demons to make sure you are exposed to maximum opportunities to sin again. He knows that sin, a willful disobedience of God's laws, will separate you from God again. That's exactly what he wants.

That's the danger. Here's the solution. The Bible clearly teaches that the power of God, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit is always greater than the power of Satan. Therefore, you must ask your Big Brother, Jesus Christ, to stay by your side and give you the will power to resist the temptations Satan is using against you.

The Force of Habits

This is one of Satan's most powerful tools. He will use your memory to try to prove that your old life was much more enjoyable than what you have right now. This will be especially severe if you used addictive substances such as alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or illegal drugs. Evangelical Christians believe the use of these substances is sinful because they cancel out the will power. The addiction makes it impossible for the user to make appropriate decisions that have an effect on self and others.

Most addictions make two claims on you; one chemical and one psychological. With chemical addiction, your body comes to need the dangerous substance that you have been using over the years. When the supply of alcohol, nicotine, or drugs is shut off, your body may have symptoms of the physical illness known as withdrawal.

Fortunately, the new birth process provides healing for the chemical addiction and the baby Christian usually does not have to go through cold-turkey withdrawal. David Wilkerson, author of *The Cross and the Switchblade*, has ministered to the victims of big-city drug cultures for many years. Teen Challenge, the organization he founded, claims a success rate of over 80% for addicts who have been born again. The average rate for any other drug rehabilitation program in the world is less than 10%.

However, there is still the psychological addiction and this may be where Satan will hit you the hardest. He will try to bring back visions of how great it was to get high. The mechanical, manipulative aspects of smoking may be so ingrained you will feel lost without that activity. The after-work or after-dinner drink may be so much a part of your lifestyle that you reach for the bottle without thinking. The answer is always the same. Ask your Big Brother to give you the power to resist the temptation to give in to the demands of your psychological addiction. Remember that Jesus had the power to heal you from the chemical addiction and He can help you lick the psychological addiction as well.

One word of caution. Your own will must be involved in any struggle against Satan. Jesus can only help you to the extent that you are willing to help yourself. You became addicted in the first place by surrendering your decision-making ability to the chemistry of tobacco, alcohol, or drugs. Jesus healed you from that chemical addiction and gave you a clean, fresh will. But you have to use it and build it up. He will help you as you work to help yourself.

Some sinful practices are not chemically addicting but all are psychologically addicting. What you read, what you watch on television, where you go for fun: you may find that some of these activities aren't in line with the Christian value system and life style. Again, you must ask Big Brother for help. He will give you power to resist current temptations while you build new habit patterns and a whole new lifestyle. More about that later on.

The Influence of Associates

Satan will use the force of your old habits and the influence of your associates simultaneously. It's a one-two punch that has caused the premature death of many baby Christians. Human beings are naturally gregarious and have a need for companionship. However, your safest source of companionship as a baby Christian will be among other evangelical Christians at church-related functions.

This will be a major problem if your spouse or close friends are not interested in church people or church activities. It will be easy to say, "I'll go along just for the fun of it but I won't do anything wrong." Remember that you are still a baby Christian and your resistance to the infection of Satan's temptations is still very low. Later, when you are stronger in Christ, you may be able to fellowship with the old gang without so much risk to yourself. In fact, you may be able to share with them the wonderful experience you have had in accepting Jesus as your personal Savior.

Right now, though, be careful.

Chapter 2: Babies Must Eat

Send email

Human babies are born with a natural rooting and sucking reflex. "Rooting" means looking for something to eat. You can test this by touching the cheek of a newborn with your knuckle. He will turn his head and try to suck, seeking for food. She senses she has been separated from her mother and must seek food in her new environment.

Baby Christians are about the same. The emotional high you felt when you first accepted Christ wears off and you need to find a continuing source of spiritual nourishment. If you don't, you will starve to death. The two most accessible sources of this spiritual nourishment are prayer and Bible reading.

Prayer As a Source Of Spiritual Nourishment

You have some experience with prayer or you wouldn't be a baby Christian. You have already prayed the prayer of confession and repentance. So, you know prayer is nothing more complicated than talking. Talking to God, in this case. In the early stages of your spiritual growth and development, this talking to God will serve two primary functions.

First, prayer will release the power of God in your life to help you do what is right and resist what is wrong. Second, prayer will give you the same kind of emotional release you get when talking to any understanding person about your problems. However, talking to God is superior to talking to your best friend because He already knows all about you and you can't shock Him by what you say during prayer.

You may have some concerns about the quality of your prayer. Perhaps you've heard someone deliver a public prayer in a worship service with great oratorical fervor. Forget that. Maybe some day you will pray like that and maybe you never will. Different people have different abilities. But no one who is capable of a conscious thought is unable to pray. In fact, the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit will translate human stress into a prayer to God even when we are too upset to do more than groan.

In the beginning, your prayer conversations with God may center around requests for help. That's normal. The human baby's crying is usually a form of request for help. Feed me ... Hold me ... Change me. Your prayers will be about the same at first. Help me ... Guide me ... Strengthen me. That kind of praying will be the difference between spiritual life and death so indulge in it freely.

Later, as you become a little more spiritually mature, you will want to broaden the scope of your praying to include other kinds of communication with God. When you are having these personal talks with God, your praying should not be formal or structured in the sense of following an outline. However, you may want to make a mental note of including the following concepts in order to develop balance in your prayer life.

First, praise God for who and what He is. God is your creator and the chief executive officer of the entire universe. In addition, He has supreme authority over you and everything He has created. When you pray, praise Him for His greatness and accept His authority over all creation, including yourself.

Second, thank God for what He has done for you. Thank Him for the plan of salvation that permits you to escape the death penalty for your sins by accepting His Son, Jesus Christ, as your personal sin sacrifice. Praise Him for the material and physical blessings you enjoy. Each time you talk to God in prayer, you should

include an element of thanks. Don't save it up for that special Thursday in November.

Third, pray for other people who need God's help. You may want to start with your family circle and close friends. Then branch out to people with whom you worship, work, or attend school. Some of these people may need to accept Jesus just as you did. Others may know Him already but need help with some problem of a spiritual, physical, economic, or emotional nature. You may pray for organizations as well as individuals. Include your church, your country, warring countries of the world, and missionaries in your prayers.

Finally, pray for yourself. Although this kind of prayer will be most common while you are a new-born baby Christian, you will never grow out of the need to include yourself when you are talking to God. Admit your dependence on Him for guidance, strength, and spiritual nourishment. This kind of prayer is especially important when you are being tempted by Satan to do something that you know is wrong.

If you accepted Jesus Christ in a public worship service, you may associate prayer with the altar. It's true that the altar is an excellent place for prayer but prayer is by no means limited to the altar. The Bible encourages us to "pray without ceasing". This means we should keep our finger on the push-to-talk button all the time so we can talk to God whenever we feel the need.

Although prayer can be impromptu and on-the-spot, you should develop the habit of setting aside a specific time for daily prayer. This is a form of spiritual discipline that will require some effort on your part in the beginning. But, it will pay rich dividends later on. Satan would love to keep you in a spiritually-anemic condition so he can pounce on you with strong temptations when you are least able to defend yourself. A regular prayer schedule will keep you in strong spiritual shape, just as regular and balanced meals help keep you in good physical shape.

Bible Reading As a Source Of Spiritual Nourishment

Prayer is your means of communicating with God and the Bible is God's means of communicating with you. God inspired 40 different authors to write in three different languages over a period of 1500 years to give us the collection of writings that we now call the Bible. In addition, He kept His hand of providence on the early church fathers as they authorized these sacred writings as the official canon of Holy Scripture. Furthermore, God has kept His hand of guidance and direction on the copyists and translators who have worked so diligently over the centuries to make it possible for you to hold the word of God in your hands in this century. Therefore, you can read the Bible with full confidence that it contains the exact information that God wanted you to know for the time in which you live.

The Bible may not tell you everything you want to know about this life and what lies in the future. But, it will tell you everything you need to know. God's primary objective in giving us the Bible is to reveal Himself to us and to explain His plan of salvation for us. Always keep this in mind as you read and study your Bible.

We call the Bible a book but it's really a collection of books divided into two major sections, the Old Testament and the New Testament. In each case, the word "testament" means *contract* or *covenant*. In the Old Testament, the contract between God and the children of Israel was this: IF you live according to the laws that were handed down to you through Moses, THEN you will be My chosen people and I will take special care of you. Those laws emphasized worship of no other god but the one true God.

In the New Testament, the contract is this: IF you will accept Jesus Christ as your personal savior, THEN you will have eternal life.

The writings of the Old Testament still have inspirational and historical value but that contract is void. We are no longer saved by obedience to the laws of Moses, but through the blood of Jesus Christ. The contract of the New Testament has superseded the contract of the Old Testament. That's why the first is called "old" and the second is called "new".

Selecting a Version

You may have tried to read the Bible in the past and found it to be very hard reading. The best known translation among believers and non-believers alike is the Authorized King James Version. This version was authorized by King James of England in 1611 and is a literary masterpiece as well as the inspired word of God. However, its Elizabethan style makes it rather difficult to read, especially out loud. A number of the newer translations are as true to the original manuscripts as the King James but are far easier to read, silently or aloud. On the other hand, many evangelical Christians prefer the King James and believe it is more doctrinally correct than the newer versions. Over the years, millions of Christians have been taught from it, preached to from it, married from it. They have studied it, memorized it, been blessed and convicted by it, and they have come to love it dearly. The newer translations just don't seem like scripture to these mature Christians.

But you are a baby Christian you probably have relatively little spiritual investment in the King James. Therefore, you should consider one of the modern language versions. All major new versions are faithful to the original manuscripts and are completely safe for study and instruction. In fact, archaeological discoveries since 1611 provide additional material for translators to consider in preparing the modern language versions. Since the primary purpose of the Bible is to provide a means for God to communicate with humans, it makes sense to have it in the form that is most conducive to communication.

A favorite among the newer translations is the *New International Version* published by Zondervan in 1978. This version, known to Bible students as the NIV (pronounced N-I-V), is very easy to read. In addition, its translation is very accurate from a doctrinal viewpoint.

The *Living Bible* is a popular paraphrase published by Tyndale House and makes excellent reading for the baby Christian. Although this is not a scholarly translation like the NIV, it is proper nourishment for this stage of your spiritual growth and development. In fact, you may like it well enough to use it permanently.

If you're already familiar with the literary style of the King James, you may want to try the New King James published by Thomas Nelson. This version retains much of the flow and cadence of the traditional King James Bible but eliminates some of the more obscure and antiquated word meanings, word endings, and pronouns. For example, pronouns like thee, thine, and thou were not placed in the original King James to signify respect for God or the scriptures. Those pronouns were in common use in 1611 and it was natural for the King James translators to use them in their work. The New King James, along with all other modern language translations, uses conventional pronouns.

The antiquated pronouns of the King James have led Christians to believe that public prayer must include them. When you pray in public, or in private, feel free to use common, regular, everyday English. There is no special virtue in using

the outdated language of 1611 just because it appears in the King James translation of the Bible. For example, it is not necessary to say, "Our Father, we thank THEE today because THOU DOST give us so many good things." Just say, "Our Father, we thank YOU today because YOU give us so many good things."

Shopping For a Bible

When you're looking for a new Bible, there are several things to consider. First, you'll want to find a store that specializes in religious books, music, and supplies. If you don't know of such a store, look in the yellow pages under "

to consider when buying your Bible. A "complete" concordance is a book in its own right. It takes each word in the Bible and gives each place where that word appears in a verse. The concordance found in the back of a Bible covers major words only. This is still a big help when you are not familiar with the location of specific verses of scripture.

Shop around and look at several Bibles until you find the version, binding, print size, and paper that you feel will best meet your needs. religious goods" or "religious supplies". Such stores are known in evangelical jargon as "book stores". A book store will give you a better selection of versions, bindings, and print sizes than you will find at a secular book store in a mall.

Several of the newer versions have inexpensive paperback editions of the New Testament or other subdivisions of the Bible. This type of purchase will give you a chance to see if you like a version before making an investment in a quality, full-size Bible.

When you are ready to buy a complete Bible and know which version you want, the next decision is the binding. Of course the King James comes in the largest variety of binding styles and colors. However, the NIV and some of the other versions offer a wide selection, also. The basic choice in most versions is between the regular library style stiff binding or the flexible leather binding. If you decide you like the flexible style, you should consider one that is lined in leather. This will cost more than a paper lined flexible binding but will last much longer. Remember that you are buying a book that you will read daily, study carefully, and carry to church with you regularly. The Bible is not a book to be read once and put on the shelf. Make your purchase accordingly.

All editions of a given version have the same contents but not all Bibles are the same size. The size depends on the size of the print and the thickness of the paper. A pocket-sized Bible will have fine print and very thin paper. While such paper is designed to wear well, the pages are difficult to turn one at a time, especially when you are looking for a particular verse of scripture during a church service.

Another issue to consider when buying your Bible is the amount of reference material you would like to have included. Many editions have cross-referencing notations that connect a given scripture verse with related scriptures in other parts of the Bible. Explanations of obscure King James words or alternate translations of a word or phrase may be included. You may also find maps, comments on doctrine and theology, and a concordance.

The concordance may turn out to be the most useful reference item of all and you should put it on your "must" list of things This process may take several days or even a couple weeks. Of course, you won't want to go without reading a Bible while you are doing your comparison shopping. That would be like going without eating while you find a supermarket that gives the best food values.

Computer Bibles

The computer age has made a great impact on Bibles, as well as every other aspect of our lives. Computerized Bibles fall into three broad categories: hand-held, desktop, and on line.

Franklin makes a nice hand held computer Bible. You can quickly locate any verse, either by using the chapter and verse reference, or by entering a key word.

The Bible on a CD for your home computer is available for both Macintosh and Windows machines. With such a Bible, you can do sophisticated searches, export major portions of text to your word processor for use in preparing printed material, and send text to your printer.

On line Bibles are available on the Internet in a variety of versions. Use your favorite search engine to locate a specific URL.

What Should I Read First?

The starting point for your Bible reading is the next thing to be discussed. For most books, that is no problem. You start at the beginning and read to the end. However, the Bible teaches that baby Christians should start out on the "milk" of the word of God before trying to chew on the steak.

The first book you should read all the way through is the Gospel of Luke. Luke is the third book in the New Testament and contains the most complete account of the birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The other three Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and John) include much information about Jesus but Luke has a more complete chronological narrative.

After Luke, read the Acts of the Apostles. This book is also known as the Book of Acts or just Acts. The primary purpose of Acts is to outline the development of the Christian movement after Christ went up into heaven. The major character is the Apostle Paul and he did more to spread Christianity among the gentiles than any other human being of his day. The second chapter of Acts documents the revelation of the Holy Spirit as the third person of the Godhead, together with God the Father and God the Son. In fact, some Bible scholars state that this book should be named the Acts of the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit plays such a dominant role in what transpires.

Both Luke and Acts are credited to the pen of Luke, the Physician. Luke was a highly-educated Greek who possessed the analytical thinking process that is common to the profession of physician. For example, Luke contains more information about the virgin birth of Jesus Christ than Matthew. Mark and John don't mention it at all.

Read Luke and Acts as the first two books of your personal Bible study and you will have a history of the life of Christ and the work of the early Christian church.

Finding Bible Verses

Turn to the table of contents in the front of your Bible. You will find all 66 books listed with page numbers. When you first read your Bible, you can't hope to find specific verses quickly without using this table of contents. As you get more familiar with the books of the Bible and the order in which they appear, you will use the table of contents less and less.

As you look down over the books of the Bible in the table of contents, you will notice that several titles have two or more divisions. When a scripture reference is announced from the pulpit or in a Sunday school class, make sure you catch which book is being used and whether it is the second or third book in

the series. You may be especially confused by the Gospel of John and the Epistles (letters) of John. There are three epistles of John but only one Gospel of John.

Family Worship

Your personal devotions are important but you need to develop a program of family worship as well. This does not mean you set aside a corner of the living room as a shrine at which you bow and worship as a family. Family worship, or the family altar as it is also called, is as simple as reading the Bible and praying together as a group.

Our kids still tease our baby girl about her reading the Bible aloud in family worship when she was still learning to sound out words. Jessi was born in 1971, and is now the wife of the full-time Junior High pastor of Christ Church in Nashville. The passage she was reading aloud that day included the word *discipline*. She sounded it out and decided the word was pronounced DISK-kuh-pline. Of course, her siblings thought this was hilarious. Not very Christian of them, was it?

I said all that to say this: that one stumble didn't keep Jessi from becoming a strong Christian, a careful student of God's word, and a tenacious prayer warrior. And it all started in family worship.

The biggest problem in meeting as a family for worship is scheduling. As children grow older, they have different bedtimes, different activities, and much more complicated lives. Regardless, each member of the family should have an opportunity to participate. One person may read while others take turns praying, or any combination that fits the needs of your family. Make a special point of including the smaller children in the prayers. The sweetest sound in the world is the voice of a three year old lifted in simple prayer to a God that many PhDs claim they can't see or understand.

Chapter 3: Babies Must Learn

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You may be a skilled student who is used to reading, analyzing, and digesting written material. Or you may read and study very little. Most likely you are somewhere in between. Regardless, reading the Bible is like no other reading you've ever done before. Therefore, you need to follow a few basic rules in order for your Bible study to provide the nourishment you need to survive as a baby Christian.

Ask the Holy Spirit To Help You

The Holy Spirit is really the ghost of Jesus Christ who has come back to "haunt" us after His death and resurrection. When Jesus was talking to His disciples the night before He died, He very carefully explained that the Holy Spirit would come back to be with them after He was gone. This conversation is recorded in the 14th, 15th, 16th, and 17th chapters of the Gospel of John. Over and over Jesus emphasized that His Holy Spirit would open their minds so they could understand truth. This is a clear indication that the Bible cannot be comprehended if you do not actively seek the help of the Holy Spirit during study. Of course, you could read the words and have a superficial understanding of what they mean but you would miss the spiritual implications of what you are reading. A very simple prayer before starting to read your Bible could go something like this: "Dear Jesus, allow your Holy Spirit to open my mind to the real truth you have for me here in these pages."

Accept the Bible's Supreme Authority Over Your Life

Think About it this way. God is your manufacturer and the Bible is your operator's manual. So, when the Bible says something is wrong, it says so with the authority of the manufacturer. You must accept that there is a significant difference between being average and being normal. Being average is doing what most of the people are doing most of the time. Being normal is living according to your Manufacturer's instructions as recorded in His operator's manual, the Bible, regardless of what other people are doing. Therefore, a certain action or practice isn't wrong because the Bible says it's wrong. The Bible says it's wrong because it is wrong.

Learn the Plan of Salvation

The primary purpose of the Bible is to tell us about God's plan of salvation for escaping sin's death penalty. As a result, the Bible may not answer all your questions and you may find what appear to be gaps in the narrative. Or, you may think you see inconsistencies or discrepancies. Not true. When it comes to the plan of salvation, the Bible is clear and consistent from Genesis to Revelation. Here is a brief outline of the Biblical plan of salvation. Learn it and memorize the scripture references:

- A. In the beginning, God created the human race in His own image because He wanted persons with whom He could fellowship. Gen. 1:26-27.**
- B. God gave our first ancestors, Adam and Eve, a law that prohibited their eating fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The penalty for disobeying that law was death. Gen. 2:17.**
- C. Adam and Eve broke God's law. Gen. 3:6.**
- D. God had mercy and set up a temporary system of animal sacrifices so humans wouldn't have to die for their sins. Gen. 3:21; 4:4-5; 22:9-13; Ex. 12:13; Lev. 1:4. For hundreds of years, throughout the Old Testament era, humans used the animal sacrifice temporary plan of salvation to get forgiveness for their sins.**
- E. Then God sent His Divine Son, Jesus Christ, to die as the ultimate, supreme, sin sacrifice for the whole world. Luke 1:41; John 1:29.**
- F. Now there is no other way to escape the death penalty for sin except to actively and personally accept the sin sacrifice of the Lamb of God. John 14:6; Acts 4:12.**
- G. Now Jesus Christ is in heaven where He sits at the right hand of God with the lofty title of The Lamb. Rev. 5:6-14.**

Even though the Bible's primary purpose is to present God's plan of salvation to the human race, it is never wrong when it speaks about other issues. The Bible has never been in proven conflict with scientific or historic facts. Each scientific discovery and archaeological excavation is in perfect harmony with what the Bible has said for 3500 years.

Study the Context of All Quotations and Events

The context means such things as: Who said it? Why was it said? To whom was it said? What happened before and after? What were the customs and mores of the people at that time? Many strange doctrines come into being because Bible students ignore the context.

Look For a Doctrinal Pattern

Try to avoid making decisions about doctrine on the basis of a single incident. The accepted doctrines of the Bible are like a silver thread in a woven tapestry. They appear over and over again across the breadth of recorded scripture. In addition, you should make a distinction between what is reported as a historic fact and what is presented as instruction for those who read. For example, the Apostle Paul was bitten by a poisonous snake but didn't die instantly as the natives thought he would. That is a historic fact but it is not a commandment to handle snakes in worship.

Learn the Chronology Of The Bible

Here is a simplified sequence of events with approximate dates based on Frank Klassen's *BIBLE CHRONOLOGY*, Regal, Nashville, 1975.

Dates in this section are BC: before Christ.

Genesis

3975 Adam and Eve are created and placed in the Garden of Eden.

2439 God destroys the human race by flood, except Noah and his family.

1892 Abraham enters the Promised Land as the leader of God's chosen people. God selects this one special family so they can preserve the knowledge of the one, true God until it is time for Jesus Christ to be born as the sin sacrifice for the whole world. (After Pentecost, everyone will have equal access to God through Jesus Christ.)

1807 Jacob is born, the father of the 12 tribal leaders of the Children of Israel. (Jacob's name was changed to Israel.) Later, they are known as the Israelites in the Old Testament and Jews (for Judea or Judah) in the New Testament.

1667 Jacob and his entire family migrate to Egypt because of a famine in Canaan. Although sold into slavery earlier by his jealous brothers, Joseph turns up as Egypt's Secretary of Agriculture. They all stay there over 200 years.

Exodus

1543 After Jacob, Joseph, and the Egyptian leaders who knew them die, the Israelites are placed into slavery at hard labor. Then Moses is born, the man God will use to lead the children of Israel out of Egyptian slavery and back to Canaan which is their Promised Land.

1462 The Passover lamb is killed and the Israelites follow Moses out of Egypt.

Joshua

1422 Joshua succeeds Moses as leader of the Israelites and takes them back into Canaan after 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. The 40 years of wandering was God's punishment for their lack of faith in His power when they first reached Canaan after leaving Egypt.

Judges

1372 - 1061 Israel is ruled by a series of judges, ending with Samuel.

First and Second Samuel

1065 The Israelites ask God for a king so they can be like the nations around them. Saul is anointed the first King of Israel.

1030 Saul becomes an evil king and David is anointed as the new king, while Saul still reigns.

1029 David kills Goliath, the giant, and captures the adoration of Israel.

1018 David becomes king of all Israel in Jerusalem.

First and Second Kings

985 Solomon, the son of David and Bathsheba, becomes King of Israel after David dies.

945 Solomon dies and the kingdom is divided because of his sins. Rehoboam, Solomon's son, is King of Judah that consists of the two tribes to be known as the Southern Kingdom. Jeroboam is King of Israel that consists of the ten tribes to be known as the Northern Kingdom.

945 - 721 Israel, the Northern Kingdom, is ruled by a succession of wicked kings and is finally destroyed and scattered by Assyria in 721 BC. They become absorbed into the populations of the countries to which they were exiled and are now known as the Ten Lost Tribes.

721 - 586 Judah, the Southern Kingdom, continues to exist but sins frequently and is taken into captivity by Babylon in 586. However, the Israelites maintain their tribal identity while in exile and everyone we know as a Jew today has descended from these two tribes. Jesus Christ is of the tribe of Judah.

Ezra and Nehemiah

From here on, dates are AD for Anno Domino, year of our Lord

538 - 458 The Jerusalem wall and temple are rebuilt, the Israelites return to their homeland, and worship is restored there.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

5 Jesus Christ is born in Bethlehem of Judea.

25 Jesus begins His earthly ministry.

29 Jesus is crucified, rises again, and ascends into heaven.

Acts Of The Apostles

29 The Holy Spirit is given on the Day of Pentecost.

35 Saul, to be known as Paul, is converted on the road to Damascus.

49 - 57 Paul makes three missionary expeditions to evangelize the gentiles and the Gospel is preached in many places.

Revelation

???? The end of this age; the 1,000 years of peace; the final damnation of Satan, his demons, and all sinners in the Lake of Fire; eternity in Heaven for all persons whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

Chapter 4: Babies Need the Church

Your First Sunday School Class

By the time you read this book, you may have attended a few evangelical Sunday school classes and worship services. If you have, this chapter will help you understand what you already have experienced. If you are so recently born again that you are still anticipating your first Sunday in an evangelical church, these comments may be valuable in preparing you for experiences which can be spiritually uplifting and confusing at the same time.

Arrive Early

The first time you attend a Sunday school you should plan to arrive at least 15 minutes before starting time, especially if you have young children. This extra 15 minutes will give you time to get your children situated in their classes before it is time for your class to begin.

Structure Of The Sunday School Session

Sunday school usually lasts an hour. The traditional schedule for this hour used to include opening and closing exercises in the sanctuary with dispersal to classrooms for the time in the middle portion of that hour. However, this caused such fragmentation of a relatively short period of time that most Sunday schools have students reporting directly to their classrooms.

The study of the Bible should be done in the most efficient and effective manner possible. But Sunday schools are operated by volunteers who may have no professional training in good teaching techniques. However, many teachers do an excellent job. They spend hours preparing the lesson and make a sincere effort to keep things interesting. The lesson discussion should provide opportunity for interaction between teacher and students in the form of concept questions, exchange of ideas, and expressions of differing views.

Your First Morning Worship Service

You might expect the sanctuary to convey an atmosphere of awe and reverence. Instead, you may find worshippers chatting in the aisles and over seat backs as they wait for the service to begin. Remember that you are observing the family of God getting together for another family reunion. Evangelicals are known for their friendliness and the church often forms the hub of their whole lives. People who worship together are best friends as well as brothers and sisters together in Jesus Christ. That's why the exchanging of greetings and pleasantries may be an accepted part of pre-worship activities.

The organ prelude tends to quiet things down and some pastors ask the congregation to assume an attitude of prayerful meditation for two or three minutes before the service begins.

Call to Worship and Invocation.

This may be very informal, not much more than a few words of greeting and a brief, extemporaneous prayer by the pastor. The content of that short prayer of invocation is extremely important, however. The word "invocation" comes from two Latin words that mean to "call in" or literally, to "voice in". Therefore, the invocation is the act of calling in the presence of the Holy Spirit to the worship service.

Congregational Singing

Evangelical congregations are known for their enthusiastic and relatively spirited singing. A worship leader may conduct the singing and sometimes arm motions are used. Both piano and organ may be used and the choir will sing along. For the evening service, a small orchestra made up of volunteers may play along with the singing. Many churches have an orchestra for the morning service, also.

Many congregations are now using praise and worship choruses that are projected on a screen in the front of the church.

The Piano

Evangelical piano playing deserves a special mention at this point. If this is your first evangelical service, you may not have heard anything quite like it. The arrangements in the hymnal are very dull and unimaginative. They consist of solid, four note chords with few frills. This is because these arrangements were written to be sung in four part harmony. However, evangelical singing has given rise to a style of piano playing that expands the basic melody and harmony into a lively and vibrant accompaniment. This greatly enhances the congregational singing and special music. Many evangelical pianists are self-taught as far as the improvisations on the hymns are concerned. Some can play any song in any key by ear. If you are used to hearing hymns played (ker-plunk, ker-plunk) straight from the hymnal, you will be thrilled by a good evangelical pianist. This kind of playing may be a skill, it may be a talent, or it may be a gift straight from the Lord.

Click for more on the [evangelical pianist](#):

Prayer.

Evangelical pastors pray extemporaneously and sometimes with great fervor. On occasion, the pastor may call on a respected member of the congregation to pray. Some congregations follow the custom of simultaneous prayer. While the pastor or a layman is leading in prayer, members of the congregation may join in with oral prayers of their own. During the prayer, the congregation may stand, sit with bowed heads, or kneel in the pews while facing the rear of the church. Many churches provide an open altar during prayer time. This gives anyone an opportunity to go forward to the sanctuary altar and pray silently while the pastor is praying.

Choir Selections

The members of the choir may be volunteers rather than persons who have been selected by audition. They may or may not wear robes. However, evangelical

choir music is usually lively and quite sound musically. The selection may be an arrangement or variation of a hymn or Gospel song rather than an anthem. The choir members may take seats down on the floor of the sanctuary when their selection and all congregational singing is finished.

The Offering

Evangelical churches are financed through a process known as tithing. Tithing is giving ten percent of your income to the Lord. This custom was established by God in the Old Testament era as a means of maintaining the temple and the people who worked there. It is still the best system for supporting all that goes on in the church, from salaries to plant maintenance. The practice of tithing permits a relatively small congregation to maintain an attractive sanctuary and pay a pastor a living wage. Tithing is tax deductible, of course. Most churches maintain an accounting system and provide a receipt at the end of the calendar year for tax purposes.

You need to begin thinking about tithing. In addition to being a sound process for financing a church program, tithing can be a source of spiritual blessing for the contributor. However, if you are already tithing your income to some other ministry, or if you are still thinking through the doctrine of tithing for yourself and your family, a courtesy contribution of a dollar or two in the offering plate will be perfectly acceptable.

Special Music

Music is the hallmark of evangelical worship, as stated above regarding congregational singing and choir music. At least once during the service, usually right before the sermon, there will be special music. This may be a solo, duet, trio, quartet, or small vocal ensemble.

In recent years, special singers have been able to sing to recorded sound tracks. Some Gospel record companies are producing these orchestrated accompaniment sound tracks so non professional singers can sing a song from an album right in the home church. Many churches are able to play these tapes to good advantage because they have gone beyond a simple PA system and have installed a sophisticated sound system.

The Sermon

Now we have come to the main course, the most important portion of a worship service. The sermon, or "message" as it is often called, usually takes up about half the length of the entire service. The pastor may begin with a scripture passage followed by a brief prayer. Then he may announce his topic and the "text" for the sermon. The text is really a verse or portion of a verse that contains the central idea for the sermon.

Sermons fall into two broad categories. In the first category, the pastor will use the scripture lesson and text to support a topical discussion of a particular concept that will be developed in outline style. In the second category, the pastor will analyze a passage of scripture, verse by verse and, perhaps, word by word. A Biblical incident may be described within the context of the times and customs of

the author or persons being written about. The original meaning of Greek or Hebrew words may be discussed in order to help you understand what the passage has to say for us today.

The Altar Invitation

As the pastor nears the end of his sermon, he may begin setting the scene for an altar invitation. The invitation provides an opportunity for persons to walk to the front of the church and pray at the altar. This is done because such persons have recognized they have a need to accept Jesus and receive forgiveness for the sin in their lives. In addition, the altar is always open to persons who are not seeking any specific work of grace but who may have problems that they would like to take to the altar in prayer.

The congregation usually stands during the altar invitation. The organ may play softly while the pastor invites persons to come forward to pray. The congregation may sing a song of invitation. *Just As I Am* may be the world's best known invitation song because it has been used by Billy Graham in his worldwide crusades for many years. Between verses of the song, the pastor often exhorts persons to mind God if He is calling them to come forward and pray.

When the pastor has determined that it is time to end the altar invitation, he may invite persons who did not go forward to the altar to raise their hands for prayer. The pastor will make a mental note of these persons and pray for them during the week.

Socialization after Service

Following the benediction or close of the altar service, you will not see a stampede for the door. Although some people may leave right away, many will linger to exchange pleasantries and carry on conversations. There will be much hand shaking and introductions of visitors.

Your first visit to an evangelical church may not generate any opportunities for socialization that extend beyond the church premises. However, if you continue attending the same church for a few Sundays, you should start picking up invitations to participate in the informal social life of the church. Sunday night after church seems to be a favorite time for informal, impromptu fellowshiping. Two or more families may agree to meet at a family restaurant for a snack. A small group may go to someone's home for refreshments and table games. These affairs seem to work best with two or three families but larger groups may assemble, also. In a smaller group, you'll have a better chance to get to know people and to begin associating names and faces.

If you attend the same church for several weeks and no one offers an opportunity for socialization beyond the church building, it may be time to consider looking for a more friendly church.

Chapter 5: Babies Like to Have Fun

Since most modern forms of entertainment were not dreamed of in Bible times, the scripture does not contain any specific instructions on such things as movies, television, or rock music. Therefore, the baby Christian must seek guidance from a variety of sources, including the context of Bible passages, church doctrine, and personal convictions.

First, check what the Bible has to say about a certain practice or activity by making a special effort to "read between the lines". Second, find out what the church teaches. Each evangelical denomination has a written code of behavior that is sometimes called the "manual". If you have joined a church, you should feel bound by what your manual teaches regarding leisure time activities. If you have not joined the church, you may do well to be guided by the manual anyway. You need something to stand on and the doctrines in a manual can provide just such a base. When neither the church manual nor the Bible takes a specific stand on the issue in question, check your own conscience. It may be relatively undeveloped at this stage in your maturation but check it anyway. If something feels wrong for you, it is wrong for you, even when other members of your congregation are doing the same things with no problems.

In all your leisure time choices remember that much of what passes for entertainment has the distinct effect of normalizing sin. The lyrics of secular songs, the plots of TV soaps and sitcoms, and the content of best-selling novels consistently emphasize human behavior which is clearly sinful. As you listen, watch, and read, you may find you are being captivated by the very circumstances from which the blood of Jesus Christ has saved you. In this way, entertainment can have the effect of normalizing sin in your mind.

So be careful. Not all secular music, television programs, and novels are sinful. However, many of them do normalize sin by amusing, exciting, and stimulating you with sinful practices. They can be very dangerous for a baby Christian. They can be very dangerous for mature Christians as well.

There is a bright side to all of this. For every form of entertainment that normalizes sin, there is an alternate form of that entertainment which glorifies Christ. Here are several examples.

Music

Many of the styles of secular music are found in Christian music. As you get into Christian music, you will be amazed by the quality of the performers and recording techniques. Gospel music as we are discussing it here may not be available at your mall record shops, you may not hear it very often on your local radio stations, and it may be absent from the juke boxes. But, it does exist.

Your best source of Gospel music is your own library of recordings. Even though the secular record shops may carry very few Gospel artists, you can usually find a wide selection at your Bible book store. (This is the same place where you shopped for your Bible.) Here are a few nationally known Christian artists you might like to try, categorized by styles of music.

Christian Contemporary:

Annointed, Susan Ashton, Margaret Becker, Carman, Steven Curtis Chapman, DC Talk, Brian Duncan, Amy Grant, Phil Keaggy, Wes King, Mylon

LeFevre, Cindy Morgan, Out of the Grey, Petra, Michael W. Smith, BeBe and CeCe Winans

Southern Gospel:

Chuck Wagon Gang, Jeff and Sherri Easter, Gaither Vocal Band, Gold City Quartet, Hemphills, Lewis Family, Squire Parsons, Janet Paschal, Perry Sisters, Singing Americans, McKameys, John and Faith Stallings, Nelons, Florida Boys, Bob and Jeanne Johnson, Buck and Dottie Rambo, Chosen, Henry and Hazel Slaughter, Heavenbound, Roy Knight Singers, Paynes, Kingsmen, Talleys, Kelly Nelson, Rupps, Speers, Palmetto State Quartet, Perrys.

MOR (Middle of the Road):

Anthony Burger, Piano; Rudy Atwood, Piano; Ralph Carmichael Orchestra, Continental Strings and Brass, Dino: Piano, Kurt Kaiser Orchestra, Maranatha Orchestra, Rick Powell Orchestra, Bill Pearce: Trombone, Sonlight Orchestra, Dave Boyer, Evie, Doug Oldham, Lanny Wolfe Trio.

This is just a partial list of categories and artists. After you have sampled a few of these, you'll want to branch out and try many others. As you browse through the record racks of your Bible book store or hear Gospel songs on the radio, you'll get lots of other ideas.

Gospel Concerts:

Many of the nationally-known Gospel artists spend a lot of time on tour, presenting concerts in churches and auditoriums. The church concerts tend to be free with an offering taken during an intermission. An admission charge is to be expected for concerts in public auditoriums.

If you enjoy Gospel music on recordings and on the radio, make a special point of attending a concert when one of your favorite artists is in your area. You will grow spiritually from the experience and have a good time as well.

Christian Music Magazines: Both southern gospel and Christian contemporary have magazines devoted to their respective types of music. The *Singing News* covers southern gospel. *CCM* (for Christian contemporary music) does the same for contemporary side.

Christian Radio

Most communities of any size have at least one Christian radio station. These stations tend to broadcast much more teaching and preaching than music. However, many of these nationally syndicated inspirational programs can be a source of spiritual food for the baby Christian. Most of them solicit contributions from their listeners. With the advent of Internet radio, the choices for Christian music are much wider.

Christian Television

No TV network carries regularly scheduled evangelical programming in prime time. However, a number of syndicated programs are available on local stations. These programs are supported by viewer contributions, also.

Jimmy Swaggart operates a 24/7 TV network, the SonLifeBroadcasting Network. There is a mix of music and preaching and you may be able to get it on your cable. If you can't get it as a regular TV broadcast, try [clicking this link](#) while you are on your computer.

Wholesome Reading

Most of the best selling novels normalize sin with violence, profanity, and illicit sex. If you want to read a novel by a best-selling author, wait until it comes out as a Reader's Digest condensed book. The Reader's Digest versions retain the story line but screen out much of the more objectionable content.

Author's Note:

I have written two Christian novels and a third is almost finished. [Click to go to my download page](#). *Gone*, a story about people who were left behind when Jesus came back in the rapture, and *Parsonage*, a description of life in an evangelical pastor's family.

Christian Magazines:

Secular magazines can be poor nourishment for a baby Christian as well. However, there are some alternatives in the form of Christian periodicals that reinforce the evangelical lifestyle. Included in this category are: *Christianity Today*, *Christian Herald*, *Decision Magazine*, *Guideposts Magazine*, and *The Upper Room Daily Devotional Guide*.

***Time*, *Newsweek*, and *U.S. News and World Report* can present a world-view that is slanted against conservative evangelical Christians. However, *World* is a news magazine written especially for evangelicals. Since it is not as well known as the major magazines, I'll print an address for your convenience:**

World Magazine

**Box 2330
Asheville NC 28802-2330**

In addition to the national magazines, most denominations offer several publications for promoting spiritual growth and sharing information of national interest within their church.

Quite a few Christian publishing houses produce novels for all age groups that reinforce evangelical values. Some of these are well written and they do not contain content that normalizes sin. Novels of this type are available at your Christian book store.

Activities for Young People

If you have teenagers in the home, your new personal relationship with Jesus Christ may have given them quite a jolt. However, as Christian parents you will want your children to participate in activities that are in harmony with the teachings of Jesus Christ. Fortunately, there are a few organizations that provide a wholesome program for kids that is in step with the evangelical lifestyle.

Youth for Christ is dedicated to providing high school students with burger bashes, pizza parties, scavenger hunts, Christian movies, and rallies. These

activities are designed to promote healthy spiritual and social growth. Ask your pastor about the closest YFC center.

College students are served by Campus Crusade for Christ, Fellowship of Christian Athletes, and the Navigators. If your son or daughter is attending college away from home, encourage him/her to make contact with one of these groups.

The Apostle Paul had some good advice for all Christians regarding how leisure time should be spent:

"... whatsoever things are true ... honest ... just ... pure ... lovely ... of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Phil. 4:8.

Chapter 6: Babies Need to Grow

Your personal Bible reading and prayer, as well as regular church attendance, are primary sources of spiritual nourishment as you grow and develop from a baby Christian into a mature Christian. However, there will be a number of opportunities for you to support and accelerate that growth process.

Revival Services

In evangelical terminology, a revival is a series of worship services that features a special speaker and special music. The purpose of the revival is two-fold: (a) help born again Christians grow stronger spiritually, and (b) encourage persons who are not born again to accept Jesus Christ as a personal savior. Revivals vary in length but a typical pattern seems to be Tuesday evening over the following Sunday. In this schedule, the revival services will be held each evening and Sunday morning. Attend as many services as you can.

Rallies

From time to time you will hear about rallies for Sunday school, youth, or missions. In evangelical jargon, a "rally" is a special service with an emphasis on a particular group or topic. A youth rally is designed to appeal to young people. A missionary rally may feature a missionary as the speaker. Attend all the rallies you can. You will meet persons from other churches within your denomination and will begin to sense that born-again Christians aren't merely widely-scattered crack pots who have gone overboard on religion.

District Assemblies and Conventions

If your church is affiliated with a denomination, you will be within a geographic region known as a district or assembly. On a yearly basis, all the churches within such an area send their pastor and a group of elected delegates to a district convention. In addition to taking care of electing regional officials, such a conference often includes reports made by the constituent churches to the general body.

It is not likely that a baby Christian will be elected as a delegate in the first year. However, if the convention is being held within easy driving distance of where you live, make a special point of attending the evening sessions.

These evening sessions are more like revival services than business meetings. A national church leader in your denomination will likely speak and special music may be provided by a composite choir from area churches. You will get a chance to see your national denominational leadership, be thrilled by the togetherness of a large gathering of evangelical Christians, and get a chance to meet more and more people who believe as you do. Most of all, you will get a rich opportunity to continue the growth process which is so important for all baby Christians.

Camp Meetings

Many evangelical denominations maintain regional or district facilities for holding "outdoor revivals" known as camp meetings. The traditional camp meeting is scheduled to run over two Sundays with services held three times a

day. However, the camp meeting in your area may be scheduled for a shorter period of time with services once or twice a day.

The hub of the camp ground is the tabernacle, a large auditorium-type structure with open sides. Sawdust was used in the early tabernacles and a trip to the altar for prayer became known as "hitting the sawdust trail". The tabernacle is used for all general worship services. The facilities at some camp meetings are somewhat primitive. Others have air-conditioned and heated buildings that can be used year round.

Adult Education

Many churches have an adult education program with specific courses offered in Bible study, doctrine, church music, and Sunday school work. These courses are offered weekday evenings, Saturday, or on Sunday morning during the regular Sunday school hour. A certificate of accomplishment is granted upon the completion of a specific group of courses.

Another form of adult education is the membership class. This program is designed to help the baby Christian grow to the point where he/she is ready for membership in the church. As a rule, evangelical churches limit membership to those persons who have accepted Jesus Christ as a personal Savior and whose lives reflect an understanding of the teachings of Christ.

If the pace, style, or content of available training programs do not completely fulfill your educational needs, try a home study plan. This approach permits you to study in your home at your own pace. Home study programs are available from most church publishing houses. Your pastor will undoubtedly be happy to help you get started.

On-Line Bible Studies

The World Wide Web offers a wide range of spiritual growth opportunities on line. Use your favorite search engine and such key words as Christian Resources.

Vacation Bible School

Most evangelical churches provide a summer Bible school for the children. This kind of program is known across the country as "Vacation Bible School". It may last from seven to fourteen days. The favorite times seem to be 9:30 to 11:30 A.M. or 7:00 to 9:00 P.M. The seven to nine schedule permits working persons to get involved as teachers and helpers.

The format is usually equal parts of Bible study, arts and crafts, and music. Most kids get a lot of enjoyment out of VBS and you will want your children to attend. The program may be climaxed by a special assembly for parents and friends. At this time there may be singing, a short musical drama, and recitations. Afterwards there will be a chance for parents and friends to tour the rooms and admire the arts and crafts.

VBS provides a good opportunity for a baby Christian to begin getting involved in helping to carry out the programs of the church. Teachers and helpers are needed. If you have a particular craft or skill, you may be pressed into service working with the arts and crafts program. This applies to men and women alike.

Chapter 7: Babies Are in Danger

Warning: Demons at Work

There are two sources of power in the world that are not related to the laws of nature. The first and most obvious source of such power is God. His power is completely pure and holy. The second source of supernatural power is Satan. His power is totally evil. If a happening can't be attributed to the laws of nature, it is either the supernatural work of God or of Satan. There is no neutral source of supernatural power.

Satan is committed to using his power to destroy your new status as a baby Christian. Just as a lion roams the jungle looking for baby animals to kill, Satan roams the world and looks for baby Christians. His primary objective is to kill your relationship with God by tempting you to sin. Of course, he is just as interested in destroying mature Christians as well. Baby Christians are his favorite prey because they are the most vulnerable.

The power of Satan is extended by demons without number who help do his evil work. These demons have the power to enter humans and possess them. Once a demon possesses a person, only the power of the Holy Spirit can cast it out against its will.

Warning: The remainder of Chapter 7 of *First Steps* contains controversial material.

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Demon Possession Handbook

Real Evil. Demons are real personalities, not just some vague presence of evil. In our society, we have trivialized reference to evil powers. A comedian of the 70s was known for the phrase, "the devil made me do it!" Today, the term demon or devil can show up in a car name, a brand name, or even the name of an athletic team.

Demons in children's literature. Children's literature is filled with stories of witches and evil spells. Creatures such as trolls, gnomes, and elves are sanitized references to demons. A classic example of supernatural evil in the literature of children is the popular "Wizard of Oz". (By definition, a wizard is a person with supernatural power.) Everybody loves Dorothy, Scarecrow, Cowardly Lion, Tin Man, and even little Toto. But don't forget the Wicked Witch of the West. A witch in any context is a human being who has invoked demonic powers. Although fiction may talk about good witches and evil witches, all witches receive any supernatural powers they do have from the same source: Satan and his demons.

Remember the Monkey Soldiers of the Wicked Witch of the West and their marching chant in the movie? How does it go? "Doo dee doo, DEE doo doo" or something like that. The actual words of the soldiers' chant are, "Oh, we love the old one", referring to their witch, of course.

Now, watching or reading the "Wizard of Oz" as an isolated activity won't cause your children to become demon possessed. However, literature like this is

just one more way Satan has of normalizing and trivializing the evil supernatural power which originates with him.

Halloween as a celebration of evil

In the context of this book, we have to talk about Halloween. This celebration goes back hundreds of years to when the church observed November 1 as All Saints' Day, or All Hallowed's Day. In this same era, people who practiced witchcraft and sorcery decided to set aside the night before All Saints' Day as a special time for their evil activities. So, the night before All Saints' Day -- All Hallowed's Day -- was All Hallowed's Eve, just as the night before Christmas Day became Christmas Eve. As time passed, All Hallowed's Eve became contracted into Halloween.

There is nothing wrong with dressing up in costumes and trying to guess each other's identity. However, there is something wrong when those costumes represent witches, monsters, ghosts, and even Satan himself.

Here's a good rule to follow if you and your family wish to observe Halloween: base your costumes and decorations on natural things such as cobwebs, pumpkins, black cats, and corn stalks. Avoid supernatural things such as witches, ghosts, demons, and Satan.

The *World* magazine carried an article in its October 28, 1995 edition with this title: "Goblins 1, Saints 0". This was an analytical account of a conflict between conservative and evangelical parents, on the one hand, and pro-Halloween activists on the other hand. The location was the school district of Los Altos, Calif. The conservative parents objected to Halloween parties and parades being held during school hours which were, therefore, a required part of the school day for all children. The pro-Halloween coalition was made up of liberal parents, teachers, and school board members. The conservative Christian parents lost the fight and were characterized as kooks, and religious extremists by their opponents.

Hollywood and demons. Hollywood is convinced of the existence of literal demonic entities. Movies such as "The Exorcist", "Gremlins", and "Poltergeist" depict demons as actual personalities. In April 1989, a part of a Jim Henson TV special featured a story about demons and their interaction with humans. And Jim Henson is the originator of the "Muppets," a program for children.

Here's a good illustration of how TV and movie producers have a better understanding of demons and demon possession than many evangelical Christians. This occurred in a script of a sitcom aired during the 1993-94 TV season. The scene takes place in a junior high and the teacher has just given his students a math word problem.

Most of the students struggle to get the answer in the conventional ways: scratching their heads, chewing their pencils, and staring at the problem on the board. However, one female student uses an unusual strategy. She utters an ethereal "Uuhmmm", slumps in her seat, and declares she is going to channel an ancient Egyptian mathematician to come and help her solve the problem. In a few seconds she is out of her trance and the teacher checks her paper and declares the answer is correct. When a student sitting behind the channeler taps her on the shoulder to ask how she got the answer, she whirls in her seat, her face transfigured into a mask of hate, and utters a savage, guttural snarl.

Later in the story, the channeler is talking to that student who sat behind her. She appears to be her normal self, and asks sweetly, "Did your spirit guide speak to you and tell you the right answer?"

This sitcom scene might be passed off as a harmless bit of fluff. However, it is an illustration of how demonic and occult practices can be normalized by the skillful craft of professional script writers. As we laugh at such "silliness", we become desensitized to the actual evil such practices represent in the lives of real people.

Symptoms of Demon Possession Demon possession may last for relatively brief periods of time for any one individual. The rest of the time, the victim of demon possession may appear normal by social standards. Only when a demon is in residence will its presence be detectable in terms of the behavior of the victim. The behavior of these short-term victims of demon possession is characterized by four basic symptoms. These symptoms may appear alone or in groups, for just seconds of time, and in varying degrees of intensity.

The four basic symptoms are: (1) violence, (2) lust, (3) greed, and (4) an unnatural power of persuasion. A born-again (and Spirit-filled) Christian can discern the presence of demons in a human by using a technique which has been used by physicians for centuries: a study of the presence of symptoms. Although the demon (or demons) may never manifest itself openly by causing the victim to speak in a coarse, guttural voice or to act out in an antisocial manner, a study of the past behavior of such a person will reveal the presence of violence, lust, greed, and/or an unnatural power of persuasion.

The late-afternoon TV talk shows and tabloids, as well as the legitimate press, provide multitudes of case studies which document the classic symptoms of demon possession singly and in various combinations and degrees of intensities.

A. Violence. There is little doubt that all serial killers and serial arsonists are demon possessed. The classic case is Ted Bundy, who mixed violence with lust.

Massacre killers are clearly demon possessed, whether the scene of the crime is a school yard, a restaurant, or a commuter train. An assault weapon in the hands of a demon-possessed killer is a frightening thought, indeed. However, after the demonic urge to kill has passed, such a murderer may appear calm, in complete control, and even contrite. This is because of the intermittent nature of modern demon possession.

Violence against family members seems to be on the rise. This includes spousal abuse as well as child abuse. What makes a prominent and well thought of member of the community physically abuse his wife, to the point where someone calls 9-1-1? What drives a parent to go far beyond corporal punishment and cause physical injury which requires medical treatment? Intermittent demon possession is the clear answer.

Suicide is frequently associated with demon possession, especially in teens and in adults, where there is no discernible cause. If a demon can induce a person to commit suicide who has not yet accepted Jesus Christ as a personal Savior, Satan has won the battle for that soul forever.

B. Lust. There is a distinct difference between normal sexual desire and lust. The Bible clearly endorses sex within marriage to the point of full orgasm for both parties. The only sexual sin which can be committed between two people united in holy matrimony is selfishness. (See 1 Cor. 7:1-9 and Heb. 13:4.)

Lust is sexual activity outside the bonds and bounds of legal marriage. This includes fornication (sexual intercourse between two persons who are not married), adultery (sexual intercourse when one or both parties are married to someone else), homosexuality, incest, bestiality (sex activities between humans and animals), and child molestation.

Demons are drawn by a human's interest in illicit sex. Therefore, using pornography in combination with indulging in sexual fantasies is dangerous. Regarding using pornography, Ted Bundy said,

"Like an addiction, you keep craving something which is harder, something which gives you a greater sense of excitement until you reach the point where the pornography only goes so far. You reach that jumping off point where you begin to wonder if maybe actually doing it will give you that which is beyond reading about it or looking at it."

When two people are both demon possessed, they may have a lustful affinity for each other which defies all logic. As a minimum, such lustful affinity causes the end of marriages and careers. Often, demon-induced lust leads to murder, completing the profile.

A horrible mix of demonic violence and lust occurs in the case of a person who abducts a child, followed by rape and murder. The media fully documented such a case in late 1993, where an adolescent girl was kidnapped from her own home during a slumber party and later murdered.

C. Greed. Greed here is defined as a need for power as well as money. Problems in this area which relate to demon possession range from irrational shoplifting to overselling time shares.

D. An Unnatural Power of Persuasion. The modern cult leader is a classic example of a person with a demon enhanced power of persuasion. This is persuasive power which goes beyond a charismatic personality coupled with effective communication skills. This is the kind of persuasion which can convince large groups of people to band together with no visible and logical reasons for doing so. A cursory review of the lives of contemporary cultists will show an unnatural power of persuasion coupled with violence, lust, or greed in case after case.

Demons and Criminal Behavior: Ted Bundy and Jeffrey Dahmer

Ted Bundy. The most infamous serial killer of all time is Ted Bundy. According to his own words, Bundy believed his descent into the horrible pit of sexual assault and murder was driven by an alien evil force and fueled by an addiction to violent obscenity. What makes Bundy's case of immense interest to researchers is an execution-eve interview conducted by Dr. James Dobson, president of Focus on the Family. This videotaped interview took place Monday, January 23, 1989, 2:30 P.M. EST, at the State Penitentiary in Starke, Florida. Bundy called Dobson and offered the interview with the understanding that it would be used to warn the public of how his horrible downfall actually took place.

Quotes from this 30-minute interview have been transcribed for this book: "Ted Bundy Interview Transcript," Copyright (C) 1989, Focus on the Family, Colorado Springs, CO 80995. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

There are several important points made during the interview. These points are listed below and are reinforced with direct Bundy quotes taken from the transcript of the interview in the linked resource. The subheadings and comments are by the author.

Point 1: Bundy Was Not Born A Monster. He Began Life As A Normal Person.

Point 2: Bundy Was Eventually Driven By An Evil Supernatural Force
Although he never named this force as demon possession, his descriptions of it and the obvious results point to a classic case of intermittent (time-sharing) demon possession. The symptoms of violence, lust, and an unnatural power of persuasion are clearly evident.

Point 3: Obscenity Is Progressively Addictive

Point 4: There Is A Cause-and-Effect Relationship Between Using Obscenity and Criminal Sexual Behavior

Point 5: Bundy Recognized His Need to Be Accountable to Society and God For His Behavior

Regarding Point 2 above, Ted Bundy was featured in a February 1996 A & E cable broadcast of the program *Biography* moderated by Jack Perkins. The program said this about an outside force which contributed to Bundy's crimes:

"He would feel that he heard a voice. Now again, he would never admit that he "heard voices," because he knew that was insane. But, he would describe someone as "another Ted" . This other Ted would start talking to him in this growling voice and point out that this woman thinks you could never have her. 'Look at her walking by. What is she thinking about you ...' And work him up into this hatred where he would start this process of stalking ..."

Investigative reporters, psychologists, criminologists, and sociologists from all over the country are trying to discover the cause behind the rising number of sex crimes and murders. Some of these seekers for truth get rather close to the heart of the matter-- that intermittent demon possession is the cause. This is especially true of such TV tabloids as *American Journal, Limited Edition, Current Affair*, and even network standards like *20/20, 60 Minutes, 48 Hours, Prime Time Live, Dateline NBC, and Turning Point*. At one time or another, all of these programs have skated around the edges of what is obvious to anyone who can recognize the symptoms of demon possession: demons cause violent criminal behavior in what may otherwise be normal people.

Jeffrey Dahmer. Dahmer is a also a classic example of a demon-possessed criminal. He exhibited the obvious symptoms of lust and violence.

His unnatural power of persuasion may be less well known but no less clear. On the night of his first murders, while taking his dismembered male victim to the dump in garbage bags, he was stopped by a cop for wandering over the center line. He was such a smooth talker, the cop issued a ticket and let him go.

Near the end of his killing spree, a drugged male victim came awake while Dahmer was out for beer, and ran naked into the street, looking for help. A

passerby called 9-1-1 and Dahmer convinced the cops it was just a lovers' quarrel. Later that night, he killed the boy.

According to a *Biography* script on June 18, 1998, "... Jeffrey was ... always quite willing to blame the devil for taking over his soul ... "

Dahmer was sentenced to nine hundred-plus years in prison. He died in November 1994 after being bludgeoned by a fellow prisoner with a metal bar.

Beware of the pedophile: Few Americans have the slightest inkling of what has caused the current epidemic of child molestation and even fewer have any idea of how to combat it. This next section is of critical interest to everyone involved with the criminal justice system, everyone involved with the vast network of human services providers, and everyone who is a parent or guardian of a minor child. The fact is, humans who have been infected by demons are fully capable of sexually molesting children in ways which are sick beyond belief. One eloquent proof of this fact is the flood of child pornography which is available in every major city in the nation. The Supreme Court has determined that child pornography is not protected by the First Amendment. That one fact alone is indication of the depths of depravity to which demons can drive adults in their sexual activities with children. Since demon possession is not likely to be detected by persons who are not trained and sensitized to the presence of demons, any victim of demon possession can be the perpetrator of sex crimes against children. This is not limited to dirty old men in long raincoats, either. This involves both men and women who have easy access to young children and who are in positions of authority over them. The group of possible suspects does not exclude such stalwarts of the community as teachers (especially in the preschool and early childhood education category), scout leaders, medical practitioners, ministers, priests, rabbis, baby sitters, and, sadly, parents and other close relatives.

The worst kind of child molester is the pedophile. Such a person makes sexual involvement with children a compulsive way of life. Photography plays a large role in the activities of the pedophile. Pictures are taken of children in sexual situations whom they have molested. These pictures are treasured, exchanged with other pedophiles, and often find their way into super-slick child pornography publications. Unfortunately, the Internet and the popular on-line services are being used to facilitate the spread of this plague against children.

The North American Man-Boy Love Association (NAMBLA) is an organization dedicated to the normalization and legalization of this kind of perversion. Where NAMBLA (pronounced "NAM-bluh") is active, there is a strong chance that illegal child pornography is being produced, bought, sold, and exchanged close by. NAMBLA members have been reported to traffic in illegal kiddie porn and obscenity while portraying a facade of sophisticated normalcy to the local community. Members are often esteemed professionals in the fields of medicine, education, or business and maintain positions of responsibility and authority in the community. NAMBLA's primary objective is to make it convenient and legal for men to have sex with boys.

The criminals in child molestation cases get pledges of silence from their victims through threats of violence. Since the perpetrators of sex crimes against children often work regularly with young children and hold positions of authority over them, it is relatively easy for an adult to psychologically abuse, as well as sexually abuse, these young victims. Children are told, "If you tell, you'll die," or "your parents will die", or "your house will burn down". After the horrors of

sexual abuse, it's fairly easy for a small child to accept the possibility of horrible violence as well.

If a child does complain, the suspect presents a super-slick facade of innocence which is enhanced by the prince of liars himself, Satan. Back in the Garden of Eden, Satan lied to our first ancestors, Adam and Eve, and he's been doing it ever since. Part of the payoff the demons give sex criminals is the ability to lie to a judge and jury with a straight face, and to do it with such conviction that who will believe the word of a young child against a teacher, or minister, or scout leader, or baby sitter, or even a parent? And this problem is exacerbated by the horrible sexual crimes forced upon innocent children. When a tiny child says he or she was subjected to oral sex, or anal sex, or vaginal sex, or masturbation, or much, much worse, who is going to believe that poor child against the demon-enhanced lying of the criminal?

One of the best weapons the advocates of child victims have is the very innocence of that child before the molestation occurred. It's true that many children do have vivid imaginations. Unfortunately, inept and heavy-handed investigators may contaminate the memory and imagination of young victims through excessive and insistent questioning. Although it's true that some children do have difficulty distinguishing between truth and falsehood, it is unlikely that children will create a fantasy or falsehood out of something they know nothing about. Unless such a victim has been previously molested, or has been exposed to obscenity, or observed adult sexual activity, this child has nothing with which to fabricate a fantasy or falsehood involving extreme illicit sexual behavior.

As a Born-Again Christian, Am I Safe from Demon Possession?

The long answer is within the context of the description of the Solution to Demon Possession as outlined in Part 3. The short answer is YES, with certain qualifications: are you born again as described in John 3 and filled with the Holy Spirit as described in Acts 2? As long as you remain covered by the Blood of Jesus Christ, the context of the Bible -- taken as a whole -- says you are safe from becoming a victim in any spiritual warfare skirmish which may flare up between the forces of good and evil

Chapter 8: Babies Need to Share

As you begin to realize the peace and joy that are yours as a result of your life-changing experience with Christ, you will want to share the good news with others. This is in perfect harmony with Christ's plan for evangelizing the world.

In the beginning, He chose twelve men, known as disciples, to start spreading the good news of the plan of salvation. A ripple effect began which has continued with the blessing of the Holy Spirit for two thousand years. You heard about the power of Christ to change your life because someone told someone who told someone else, and on and on it has gone.

Sharing Your Faith with Others /

Now it is your responsibility and privilege to tell other people about what Christ has done in your life. These opportunities for sharing will come in the home among members of your own family, on the job with your fellow workers, and in the community among your social contacts. As you talk to other people about what Christ has done for you, remember these common-sense rules:

- **Be Relaxed.** Don't try to overpower your friend with a lot of heavy-handed religious talk. Speak in a conversational tone, use an everyday vocabulary, and be yourself.
- **Be Logical.** Learn the basic concepts of the plan of salvation and present them in a matter-of-fact manner. Back up the authority of what you say with the authority of what the Bible says. If necessary, illustrate the Bible's scientific accuracy and internal validity.
- **Be Prayerful.** At this point you have had relatively little opportunity to observe the Holy Spirit at work. The Holy Spirit is the presence of Jesus Christ among men. He can help you explain your feelings about salvation and help your friend understand your explanation. In a conscious act, mentally ask God to cause His presence to settle down over the two of you as you talk. This will greatly multiply your powers of explanation and persuasion and his/her power of comprehension.
- **Be Tactful.** Don't give the impression that you are suddenly holier than the average man on the street. Share the truth concerning Jesus Christ as you would a good investment tip, a good recipe, a great fishing spot, or an inexpensive vacation. Remind yourself that you are not better than your friend. You are just better off.

The Family Grows

Babies grow up and have babies. This has been the story of man since Adam and Eve. This is also the way the family of God grows. In the language of a contemporary Christian song of the 70s, every Christian has the responsibility to *Pass It On*. If you are able to win a relative or friend to Christ while still quite young spiritually, you can have the fun of growing up together as baby Christians. More importantly, your convert will be able to win other people to Christ. In this way, the gentle miracle of evangelical Christianity will continue and you'll be a part of it.

Chapter 9: Baby Talk

A Glossary

Accepting Christ; Born Again; Conversion; New Birth; Salvation; Saved: A conscious and climactic act of believing that Jesus is the Son of God and that His sacrificial death for our sin holds the power to free us from the guilt, domination, and punishment of sin.

Addiction: A chemical and/or psychological need to use tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs.

Adoption: When we accept Jesus as a Personal Savior, we are reinstated in the favor of God as a brother of Jesus Christ and the Son of God.

Age of Accountability: The age beyond which a child will be held responsible for his/her relationship with Christ.

Altar: A wide railing at the front of the church, between the platform and the pews, which is used as a place of prayer.

Altar Call; Altar Invitation: The part of the service when worshippers are invited to come forward and kneel at the altar for prayer; usually follows the sermon.

Anoint: The prayer of healing by a minister, usually accompanied by touching oil on the brow amid a chorus of oral prayer.

Baby Christian: The term used in this book for a person who has recently accepted Jesus Christ as a personal savior.

Backslide: According to Wesleyan doctrine, the ability to fall from the born-again state because of sinning, as illustrated in Ezekiel 18:21-24.

Baptized in the Spirit: According to Pentecostal doctrine, a special filling of the Holy Spirit usually associated with the gift of speaking in unlearned tongues.

Baptism, Adult: Complete immersion as a testimony of the fact that Christ has washed away all sin.

Baptism, Infant: Bringing a baby or young child before the altar for sprinkling with water; replaced by infant dedication in most evangelical churches.

Benediction: The concluding prayer in a worship service.

Book Store: In Evangelical jargon, a retail outlet which specializes in Bibles and Christian music, literature, and gifts.

Bulletin: A folder that includes the order of service and a listing of the week's activities.

Camp Meeting: A series of outdoor revival services held in a rustic setting.

Calvinist: The school of evangelical thought developed by John Calvin which is characterized by the following concepts: God has already decided (predestined) who will be saved and who will be lost and there is nothing we can do to change that; a Christian is filled by the Holy Spirit when born again instead of in a separate act of sanctification; all Christians sin daily in word, thought, and deed, and must ask for daily forgiveness; if a born-again believer returns to a life of sin, that person will not go to Hell if death or the rapture comes before repentance: he/she is eternally secure. Major denominations: the various branches of the Baptist Church.

Canon: The sacred writings that have been accepted as the official books of the Bible.

Charismatic: See "Pentecostal" .

Christian: A person who has been born again and who is living according to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Comforter: A term for the Holy Spirit found in the King James Version of the Bible.

Communion: A symbolic re-enactment of the Last Passover Supper when Jesus shared bread and wine with His disciples the evening before He was crucified; in Evangelical churches, grape juice is usually served instead of wine.

Concordance: A word index of Bible verses.

Conference, District: All the churches of one denomination within a given geographic area.

Congregational Singing: The part of a worship service when everyone sings together.

Consecration: Consciously turning your life over to Christ.

Conviction: A state of anxiety brought on by the knowledge that there is a need to accept Christ.

Dedication, Church: A special service for consecrating facilities to the service of God.

Dedication, Infant: Parents bringing a baby to the altar and promising they will train him/her in the teachings of Jesus Christ; this practice is used instead of infant baptism in most Evangelical churches.

Demons: The fallen angels who were thrown out of Heaven with Satan for rebellion against God; from the ancient word da, meaning the "knowing ones". See Revelation 12.

Demon Possession: The presence of one or more Satanic demons within the body and mind of a human being.

Denomination: A group of churches held together with a form of central government.

Devotions: Personal daily prayer and Bible reading.

Doctrine: A statement of what the Bible teaches and the church believes.

Eternal security: According to Calvinist doctrine, the inability of a born-again believer to miss Heaven because of sinning.

Evangelical: Any religious activity with an emphasis on encouraging others to accept Jesus Christ.

Evangelism: The act or process of encouraging persons to accept Christ.

Evangelist: A minister who makes a career of preaching in revivals and camp meetings.

Faith: Accepting the teaching of the Bible as fact even without "proof".

Family Altar: A time when the family has devotions together, including Bible reading and prayer.

Free Moral Agency; Will: The ability to choose good or evil without direct intervention by God or Satan.

Full-gospel: To be associated with Pentecostal activities, as in "Full-Gospel Business Men's Association".

Fundamentalist: A media term for "evangelical"; any person or group with a strong commitment to a religious belief.

God, the Father: The Chief of the Godhead who is holy, all powerful, all knowing, and present everywhere.

God, the Son: The second person of the Godhead who came to earth to die as a sin sacrifice for us.

God, the Holy Spirit: The third person of the Godhead revealed to us on the day of Pentecost.

Gospel Music: Christian songs with lyrics that have an evangelical emphasis.

Gospels: The first four books of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John.

Greek: The language in which the original New Testament was written.

Healing: The power of God to alleviate physical problems.

Heaven: The literal place reserved for the eternal joy of all persons saved by the blood of lambs [Old Testament era] or The Lamb [New Testament era].

Hebrew: The language in which the original Old Testament was written.

Hell: The literal place reserved for the eternal punishment of Satan, demons, and those sinners who die without accepting Jesus Christ as a personal Savior.

Hypocrite: A person who appears to talk better than he/she lives.

Inspiration: God's blessing on the Bible's authors that enabled them to write what they wrote.

Intercessory Prayer: Praying for someone else.

Invocation: The opening prayer of a service, calling in the Holy Spirit.

Justification: Total forgiveness by God.

King James Version: A popular translation of the Bible authorized by King James of England; completed in 1611.

Lamb of God: The title Jesus carries in heaven because He died for our sins.

Liturgy: Any form of worship.

Living Bible: A modern language paraphrase of the Bible written by Dr. Kenneth N. Taylor, and published by Tyndale House.

Manual: A book of denominational doctrine and regulations.

Membership: Vowing to accept a denomination's doctrine and live by its regulations.

Message: The presentation of the sermon by the pastor or evangelist.

Minister: The spiritual and administrative leader of a local church.

Missionary: A person who serves the Lord in another country as minister, doctor, nurse, or teacher.

New Testament: The second section of the Bible that contains the new contract we have with God: Jesus Christ will die as the Lamb of God so humans won't have to die for their sins.

NIV: *New International Version*, a popular modern language translation of the Bible published by Zondervan. Pronounced en-eye-VEE. Zondervan is pronounced ZON-dur-vun.

Offering: Putting money in the plate when it is passed.

Offertory: Music that is played while the offering is being received.

Old Testament: The first section of the Bible that contains the old contract with God: animals will die on the altar of sacrifice so humans won't have to die for their sins.

Pauline Epistles: Letters that the Apostle Paul wrote to his new churches.

Pentecostal: The school of evangelical thought developed around the fact that on the first day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was given, the observers were able to hear Peter preach in their native languages. (Acts 2). Pentecostal, or charismatic, doctrine is characterized by the following concepts: the Christian should be

baptized in the Holy Spirit after being born again; a Christian who is baptized in the Holy Spirit will receive special gifts such as the ability to speak in unlearned languages (tongues), interpret a message given in tongues, and/or pray for the sick with the "laying on of hands". The modern Pentecostal movement grew out of the three-year Azusa Street (Los Angeles) revival that began in 1906. Major denominations: Assemblies of God, United Pentecostal; Foursquare Church. Many non-Pentecostal churches have pockets of charismatic worshippers, including denominations not usually associated with Evangelicals.

Plan of Salvation: God's accepting animal deaths and then Christ's death as payment for man's sin.

Platform: The raised area at the front of the church.

Prayer: Talking to God.

Prayer Service: A midweek service devoted to prayer and Bible study; often held on a Wednesday.

Predestination: According to Calvinist doctrine, the fact that God has already decided who will go to Heaven and who will go to Hell.

Protestant: A Christian who is not a Catholic.

Pulpit: The lectern at which the minister stands.

Quarterly: A study guide for Sunday school classes that is issued every three months.

Rally: A special service for promoting a specific aspect of the church's program.

Rapture; Second Coming: The unannounced return of Jesus to take all Christians to heaven forever.

Regeneration: Being born again.

Responsive Reading: A leader and a group taking turns reading verses of scripture.

Restitution: After salvation, paying back what is owed and asking forgiveness where needed.

Revival: A series of services with an emphasis on spiritual growth and evangelism.

Sacrifice: The death of animals in the Old Testament and Jesus Christ in the New Testament because God requires the death penalty for sin.

Sanctification: According to Wesleyan doctrine, a second (after being born again), definite, instantaneous work of grace that removes the inbred carnal nature through an act of the Holy Spirit, thereby making it less likely for the believer to sin again.

Sanctuary: The portion of a church building used for worship services.

Satan; Devil: The primary evil supernatural being who wants everyone to sin and go to hell forever where he will be.

Scripture: The writings in the Bible.

Seekers: Persons who come forward for prayer during an altar invitation.

Sin: A willful violation of God's laws as set forth in the Bible.

Standards: Bible-based guidelines developed by a denomination regarding behavior and interaction.

Sunday School: A Christian education program that meets for an hour each Sunday morning.

Temptation: An urge to do something wrong as brought on by Satan and his demons.

Testimony: A public statement of having accepted Jesus Christ as a personal savior.

Text: A portion of scripture used by a minister as the basis for a sermon.

Tithing: Paying ten percent of personal income to the work of the Lord.

Tongues: Speaking in unlearned languages. See "Pentecostal" .

Trinity: The Godhead made of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Tureen Dinner: A fellowship meal comprised of casseroles brought by the participants.

Vacation Bible School: A summer Christian education program lasting one or two weeks.

Vestibule: The foyer or entryway of a church building.

Wesleyan: The school of evangelical thought developed by John Wesley that is characterized by the following concepts: the Christian should be sanctified by a filling of the Holy Spirit after being born again; a Christian who is sanctified is better equipped to resist Satan's temptations to sin; if a born-again believer returns to a life of sin (backslides), that person will go to Hell if death or the rapture comes before repentance. Major denominations: Church of the Nazarene, Wesleyan Church. Persons who follow the Wesleyan doctrine are also known as Arminians.

Witness: Telling another person about how to accept Jesus Christ as a personal savior.

Youth for Christ: A Christ centered youth organization for high school students.

Youth Society: A church's program for young people.

The author: G. Edwin Lint,

He has a broad knowledge base and extensive training, and experience. His formal education includes Bachelor of Science in Bible and Bachelor of Theology degrees from the Allentown, Pennsylvania campus of [Houghton College](#); Master of Arts in educational supervision and administration from [Rowan University](#) in Glassboro, New Jersey.



He has 36 years of professional education experience with state certification as elementary teacher, elementary supervisor, supervisor of curriculum and instruction, elementary principal, special education teacher, and supervisor of special education.

His professional experience includes 2 Years as elementary teacher at Cedarville, NJ, 8 years as teacher, supervisor of special education, and director of education at the Vineland [NJ] State School, 10 years as Assistant superintendent for Rehabilitation Services, and unit manager at the Laurelton [PA] State School, and 15 years as Special Education Adviser for the Pennsylvania Department of Education in Harrisburg.

Throughout his secular career, he has remained active in Christian service in a variety of capacities: Sunday school teacher, Sunday school superintendent, teacher trainer, director of Christian education; choir member, choir director, orchestra member (playing trumpet and tuba), member and manager of a regional Gospel singing group, owner of a Gospel music store; representative for the Pennsylvania Council on Alcohol Problems, interim and supply pastor.

For over 37 years he has worked as a part -time Gospel DJ. In 1971, he earned an FCC Third Class License with Broadcast Endorsement by passing the written examination. During 1973-1997 he produced and hosted a Gospel music radio program: *Gospel Caravan*. His program was on Internet radio via streaming audio 2000 through 2009.

Ed Lint claims that his most important credential is "a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. I have accepted Jesus Christ as my sin sacrifice. He is my Lamb of God. The Holy Spirit fills me. He gives me power to live a successful Christian life and protects me from Satan and his demons."

He retired in 1994 and has been an educational consultant and primary author of [DiskBooks Electronic Publishing](#).