

LESSON 5 New Life — New Activities

When we were children, we did the things that children do. We played games and explored our surroundings. We liked to run, jump, and play. Our responsibilities were few, because our parents cared for us.

But life changed when we became adults. We began to take care of ourselves. We formed our own families and began to provide for them. What we did in our spare time also changed. As our interests and skills developed, so did our activities.

A similar change is taking place in your life right now. Your spiritual life is unfolding. As you “grow up” in Christ, new interests replace old ones. There are also new responsibilities—ones that can bring you new kinds of rewards and satisfactions. In this lesson, we will look at these special changes and activities. You will discover also that other people share your new interests!

The Plan

- A. New Interests
- B. New Activities
- C. New Testimony
- D. New Partnership

The Goals

1. Identify the new interests you have.
2. Join with others who have the same new interests you have.
3. Choose to tell others about your faith in Jesus Christ.
4. Identify ways you can be a partner with God.

A. NEW INTERESTS

Goal 1. Identify the new interests you have.

How Do You Spend Your Time?

Of course you have to spend a certain number of hours each day working, eating, and sleeping; but how do you spend the rest of your time? What people do in their free time depends on what they and their families are most interested in. Some work all the time, and others play. Some go to church and take part in its work; others do not. You probably do not have enough time to do everything that you would like to do, but somehow you manage to find time for the things that interest you most.

Application

- 1** What people do in their free time is usually determined by
 - a)** how much time they have.
 - b)** their main interests.
 - c)** the opinions of others.
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When Your Interests Change

You do not play the same games that you liked when you were a little child because you are busy doing something that interests you more now. When your interests change, so do your activities.

Your old friends may be surprised that you are no longer interested in “having a good time” with them in things that would harm your health or hurt your soul. They may not understand that you have entered a life of deeper enjoyment, full of worthwhile, satisfying activities.

Should you go back to the things that you know cannot satisfy? Ask the man who is eating spoiled scraps from a garbage heap and then is invited to eat at a rich friend’s table every day. Would he go back to the garbage dump?

Application

2 Describe a new interest that you have since you accepted Jesus as your Savior.

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3 Describe something different you do now that you did not do before you accepted Jesus.

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A Different Purpose

As a child of God, you have new interests. These will lead you into group activities and personal responsibilities. You will still do many of the things that you used to do—working, eating, sleeping, and taking care of home duties—but your real life will center around your new interests.

Above all, when you love somebody, you want to be with and please that person. Now that you love God, you will want to spend time with Him and please Him in all you do.

Application

- 4** The different purpose you have as a child of God is to
- a)** try to make more money.
 - b)** enjoy yourself and the good things of life.
 - c)** spend time with your heavenly Father.
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We are intensely interested in our Father's kingdom and what He is doing on earth. He is at work now, bringing men, women, and children to himself through the preaching of the good news about Jesus. He is building His church, and He has called us to work with Him. What a privilege!

Application

- 5** We have a part in what God is doing in the world today by
- a)** explaining the way of salvation to others.
 - b)** ruling over those who are not Christians.
 - c)** doing many religious rituals and ceremonies.
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B. NEW ACTIVITIES

Goal 2. Join with others who have the same new interests you have.

Your new interests in God's kingdom will keep you busy and happy. Here are some activities that will give new purpose and meaning to your life.

Church Attendance

God's plan is for each Christian to become a member of a local church community. In keeping with this plan, Christians who live near each other meet together regularly to worship God, encourage each other, study the Bible, and share their faith with people who need to know about Jesus Christ. This is how they help each other do the work that God has given them to do.

These meetings, or church services, may be held in someone's home or in a building dedicated to God for this

purpose. You will want to attend these services as often as you can and take your friends with you to hear the gospel. You will enjoy the fellowship with your brothers and sisters in Christ and, most of all, the presence of the Lord as you meet with Him in these services.

As soon as possible, you will want to become a member of a church that serves God and preaches the gospel. Take part in its program, and enjoy its advantages and blessings. These lessons will help you become a good member.

Application

6 The paragraphs you have just read describe four activities that Christians do when they meet together. In the following list, one of these activities is missing. Write it in the space provided.

- a) Listening to messages from the Bible
- b) Praising God and thanking Him
- c) Witnessing about their faith
- d)



What would happen if someday the pastor, or another Christian, should unintentionally offend you? When one child hurts another's feelings in a family, the children do not usually leave home over it. But when this happens in church, some Christians revolt and refuse to return to church. Instead, they choose to stay home under the guise of worshipping God there. Be careful! That is a favorite trick that the devil uses to weaken a Christian and separate him or her from the Lord.

Remember that your Father expects His children to meet with Him in His house. The building may be humble, and you may not agree with the way everything is done, but you need to meet with your brothers and sisters in Christ to worship the Lord, study His Word together, and strengthen one another.

Hebrews 10:25 “Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Application

- 7** If the pastor says something that offends you, you should
- quit going to church or find another church.
 - tell others that he is not a good pastor.
 - forgive him and keep attending services.
- 8** One who believes it is not important to meet with other Christians should be reminded of the biblical instruction in
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Bible Reading

We have already mentioned the importance of reading the Bible every day. Can you get the other members of your family to join with you daily for Bible reading and prayer? We call this a family altar, or family devotions. Having family devotions each day will be a real blessing to your home. The truth from God's Word that you share will guide and strengthen you for the day. When you meet, you can take time to pray together for the needs of each person in your family.

Application

- 9** Perhaps you want to begin having family devotions. Circle the letter before each phrase that describes what you will do.
- Meet at home each day
 - Share needs and ask God for help
 - Include only the older children
 - Meet at the church once a week
 - Encourage each person to pray
 - Read from the Bible
 - Thank God for His blessings

Prayer: When to Pray

Prayer is one of the most important things that a Christian can do. When you pray and God answers, you are working together with God. So take time to pray.

- When you awake in the morning, begin the day with God and you will receive physical, moral, and spiritual strength for the problems of the day.
- Thank God for your food before eating.



- Have family devotions either in the morning or at night.
- Take advantage of the times of prayer during church services and when you arrive before the service begins. Jesus said, “My house will be called a house of prayer” (Matthew 21:13).
- Lift your hearts to God at any time, thanking Him for His blessings or asking for His help. You do not always have to speak words when you talk to your Father this way; He knows your thoughts.
- Before you go to bed at night, thank God for His care during the day. Ask His forgiveness for anything wrong that you have done, and entrust yourself to His care for the night.

Application

10 Use the list you have just read as a guide for prayer. Put a mark beside each of the suggested times for prayer that you want to add to what you are now doing.

Prayer: How to Pray

You may be saying to yourself, “But I don’t know how to pray.” Praying is not difficult. Just talk to God like you would to a friend. The Holy Spirit will help you.

Think about all that God has done for you, and thank Him for His blessings. Ask Him for your needs and those of your loved ones. Pray for the salvation of your friends and relatives. Pray for your pastor, your church, your brothers and sisters in Christ, and for God's work all over the world. Pray for new converts and their problems. Pray for your country. Just begin to pray, and you will soon learn how.

Jesus gave us a model that you may memorize and use in your prayers. This prayer is also referred to as *The Lord's Prayer*.

This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one." (**Matthew 6:9–13**)

Application

11 Memorize the Lord's Prayer.



C. NEW TESTIMONY

Goal 3. Choose to tell others about your faith in Jesus Christ.

Witnessing

To witness means to tell others what God has done for you. You can do this at home, on the street, in church services, or even by letter. Just as others spoke to you about Christ, you can speak to your friends and relatives. Pray for them to accept the Lord.

The Bible stresses the need of declaring publicly our faith in Christ, to let others know He is our Savior. Christ commnded the disciples to be witnesses. If you need courage, ask God for it, and He will give it to you. Thousands of people have been afraid to testify just as you may be now, but they have conquered their fear and found great blessing and new strength in witnessing for Christ. The Lord Jesus said,

Matthew 10:32 “Whoever acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven.”

Mark 8:38 “If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.”

Application

12 Following is a list of people you probably see often. Pray for them and ask God to help you share with them what Jesus has done for you.

- a)** Your family and your relatives
 - b)** People with whom you work
 - c)** Your friends
 - d)** Your neighbors
 - e)** Merchants in your community
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Singing to the Lord

The ability to sing and make music is one of God’s wonderful gifts to people. At home or at church, your songs will help, encourage, and bless you and others. It does not matter if your voice is not trained for singing; what matters is that you praise God from your heart.

Colossians 3:16 “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.”

Application

13 For a person to sing, the most important thing is for him or her to

- a)** have a pleasing voice.
 - b)** be able to sing in front of others.
 - c)** sing from the heart to glorify God.
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D. NEW PARTNERSHIP

Goal 4. Identify ways you can be a partner with God.

Preaching the Gospel

Preaching the gospel is a very important activity of the church. Some are called to give their full time to this work. God gives them the responsibility of being pastors, evangelists, and missionaries.

Giving

Our Father is generous. As His children we must learn to act the way He does. This is the most important reason why we give. Giving to others is one way of showing that we belong to God. The money we give in church offerings helps many people. Some go to brothers and sisters who need clothing; some support the pastor in his or her duties as minister; and some pay for church expenses such as lights, water, and maintenance.

Our money can also be used to buy Bibles, equipment, and Christian literature. It can be used to pay for evangelistic radio and television programs. God has given His children the important work of telling others about salvation. By giving our money, we have a part in doing this important work.

The Bible describes a pattern of giving one-tenth (called the “tithes”) to the work of God. Many Christians follow this as a guide. They recognize that all they have comes from God, including the strength to earn money. In turn, they give back to God one day’s wages out of every ten. What they earn on that tenth day goes to support the church.

Christians who give generously discover the joy of becoming partners with God. At the same time, they find that their own needs are met. You can make these wonderful discoveries for yourself!

Jesus said these words:

Luke 6:38 “Give, and it will be given to you.”

Your giving brings three kinds of blessings:

- Spiritual blessing. You become the kind of person God plans for you to become—generous to others.

- Satisfaction. You are glad to be a dependable member of God’s family, carrying your share of the load.
- Security. God has promised to meet all your needs. As you obey Him, you can depend on Him to take care of you. Thousands of Christians can tell you from experience that God has never failed them.

Malachi 3:10 “Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it .”

2 Corinthians 9:7 “Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

Application

14 Following are three statements about giving. Which one gives the most important reason *why* Christians should give?

- a) God is generous and gives good things to everyone.
- b) Those who give will have their own needs met.
- c) The tithe is one-tenth of God’s earnings.



Helping in Any Way You Can

Whatever work you do for the Lord—from sweeping the chapel to holding a neighborhood service for a Sunday school in your home—will help you grow spiritually. Ask your pastor what you can do for the Lord.

Taking Part in Church Organization

There are many ways to get involved in church. For instance, go to Sunday School and small group meetings. There you can be a faithful member of one of the classes and study God’s Word systematically. Do not miss this opportunity. The men, women, young people, and children may each have their own organizations. In their meetings they worship the Lord and carry out different projects for Him. Join one of these groups. You will receive a warm welcome and will enjoy its activities. These

groups try to reach, teach, and help those who need it. Although one person can do very little, God working through His children united will carry His cause forward in this world.

Application

15 Here are some ways people take part in the church. Circle the letter before any you think you would like to do. Offer your services to the pastor or the leaders.

- a)** Collecting or counting the offerings
 - b)** Caring for young children during worship services
 - c)** Visiting the sick and praying for them
 - d)** Helping older people come to the services
 - e)** Talking with those who have questions about what Christians believe
 - f)** Taking care of the church building and grounds
 - g)** Giving practical help to members who are in need
 - h)** Getting into a small group ministry
 - i)** Playing a musical instrument on the worship team
 - j)** Joining the choir
 - k)** Participating in evangelistic outreaches and events
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Too Many Activities?

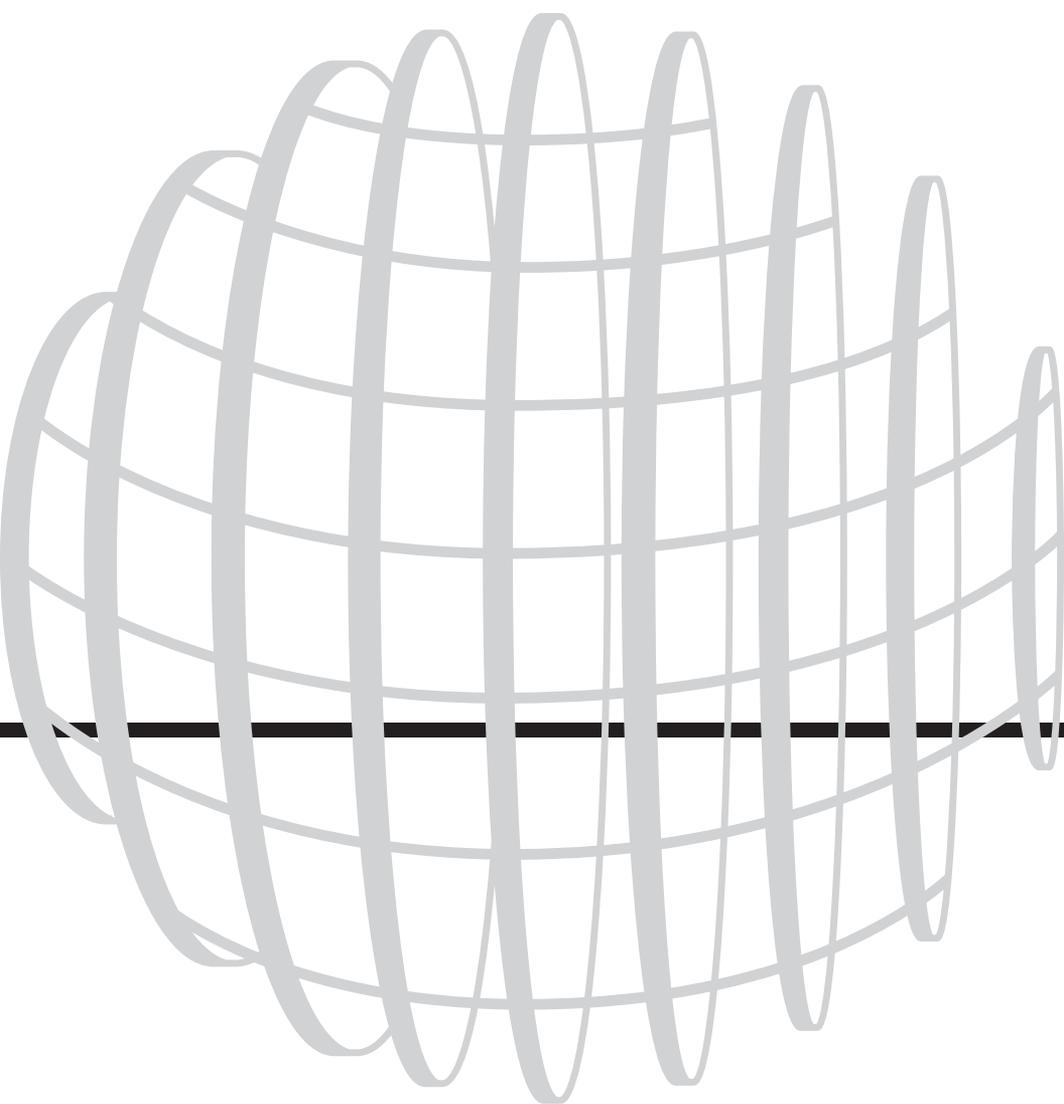
Do not worry if you cannot spend as much time in these activities as some people can. The Lord understands, and He will help you do what you can.

You will enjoy these activities of your new life. It will be satisfying to know that you are helping others to escape eternal punishment and find eternal life. For everything that you do for the Lord now, He will richly reward you in the world to come.

Now that you have completed the first unit, you are ready to answer the Unit One Evaluation. Review the previous lessons, then, follow the directions on the Unit One Answer Sheet. You should complete and send your answer sheets to your instructor for corrections.

Check Your Answers

- 7 c)** forgive him and keep attending services.
- 1 b)** their main interests.
- 8** Hebrews 10:25.
- 4 c)** spend time with your heavenly Father.
- 9** Phrases **a, b, e, f,** and **g** describe what you should do when you have family devotions.
- 5 a)** explaining the way of salvation to others.
- 13 c)** sing from the heart to glorify God.
- 6 d)** An answer such as “encouraging each other” would be correct.
- 14 a)** God is generous and gives good things to everyone.



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Unit

Lessons

- 6** Your new standards
- 7** You have a Helper
- 8** Your life is a light
- 9** How to have a happy home
- 10** Your new freedom