



WINTER 2019

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**LEADER GUIDE INCLUDED**

## YOU ON MISSION

All believers are qualified for missions.



## WHAT MATTERS MOST

None of it matters if I don't endure to the end.



## GODS POWER AND ME

I've been changed by the Holy Spirit living in me.





## Staying Fit ... Spiritually

We talk a lot about the importance of staying physically fit, but what about the health of your spirit? Connect, Grow, Serve, Go is a call to evaluate your present spiritual condition and discover ways to improve your spiritual health. Packed into each biblical concept—Connect, Grow, Serve, Go—is a simple way you can move forward, not remain stagnant. Best of all, these tools will stand the test of time—no “fad” diets here. They will help you become spiritually healthy, and stay that way.



WITH AN OPEN HEART  
*MARK 12:29-31*



IN BODY, MIND, & SPIRIT  
*ROMANS 12:2*



WITH WILLING HANDS  
*1 PETER 4:10-11*



WITH READY FEET  
*MATTHEW 28:19-20*

**Connect** urges you to worship, pray, fellowship, and relate to others in positive relationships at work, at home, and in other settings. Spiritual fitness results when you connect with God, with others, and with your church family.

**Grow** refers to learning and understanding more about God and His expectations of His people, which comes through Bible study. You grow by applying that knowledge to your everyday living.

**Serve** describes the work you do inside your church. Your church is full of ministry and service opportunities. You serve by using your spiritual gifts, skills, and passions to glorify God. All of us must work together for the church to function as God intended.

**Go** moves you outside the church and into the community and the world. Evangelism and missions are ways to go into your community and the world in the name of Jesus Christ. It might be uncomfortable at first, but you will experience first-hand the difference Christ can make through you.

Connect, Grow, Serve, Go must impact YOU, the individual, before it can permeate your circle of friends, your Bible study group, and then the church as a whole. But balance is the key! We must be actively participating in all four areas if we want to be spiritually healthy. All Go and no Connect with God or other believers results in powerless activity and wears you out. A steady diet of Grow without the action of Serve or Go leads to unhealthy spiritual obesity and laziness. We need a balanced spiritual diet to remain fit and able to serve God in the ways He has gifted us.

The **YOU** lessons will help you Connect , Grow , Serve , and Go . Look for these icons throughout this issue. They will help you check and maintain your spiritual health.

Visit [www.lifeway.com/adultstrategy](http://www.lifeway.com/adultstrategy) for more about Connect, Grow, Serve, Go.

### IN EVERY ISSUE

2	How to Become a Christian	8	Suggested Disciple-Making Resources	101	How to Use Leader Pages
3	Staying Fit Spiritually	9	YOU Winter 2018-19 RDC Recap	160	Key Words Glossary
6	A Word from the General Editor	99	Scripture Memory Cards	162	Meet the Writers
7	A Word from the Editor				Coming Next Quarter

## FEATURES

# 29

### PRAY, TELL, GO, AND SEND

by Pam Lilly



# 57

### WHY CHARACTER IS SO IMPORTANT!

by Mark A. Croston Sr.



# 85

### A DIVINE TEACHER WITH UNLIMITED POWER

by Alvin Miller Sr.



# 122

### YOU'RE HIRED!

by Stacey Carmichael



# 140

### A SOLDIER IN GOD'S ARMY— ON THE BATTLEFIELD

by Francia Noble



# 154

### MORE THAN A WEATHERMAN

by Maina Mwaura





## UNIT 1 YOU ON MISSION



**11** **Mission Petitions**  
1 Timothy 2:1,3-4; Matthew 9:36-38;  
Acts 4:29-31  
 *Leader Pages (pp. 102–105)*



**31** **The Mission from the Manger**  
Matthew 1:18-23; Luke 1:30-33  
 *Leader Pages (pp. 114–117)*



**17** **Up to the Task**  
2 Corinthians 5:14-21  
 *Leader Pages (pp. 106–109)*



**37** **Time to Tell**  
2 Corinthians 4:3-6,16-18  
 *Leader Pages (pp. 118–121)*



**23** **Money for Missions?**  
2 Corinthians 9:6-13  
 *Leader Pages (pp. 110–113)*



## UNIT 2 WHAT MATTERS MOST



**45** **Live It Out**  
1 Timothy 1:3-6,12-16,18-19  
 *Leader Pages (pp. 124–127)*



**59** **It's Good to Be Godly**  
1 Timothy 4:4-5,7-10,14-16  
 *Leader Pages (pp. 132–135)*



**51** **Character Counts**  
1 Timothy 3:1-3,7-10,14-16  
 *Leader Pages (pp. 128–131)*



**65** **Winners Don't Quit**  
2 Timothy 2:4-13  
 *Leader Pages (pp. 136–139)*



## UNIT 3 GOD'S POWER AND ME



**73** **The Powerful Helper**  
Romans 8:26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14;  
2 Peter 1:19-21  
 *Leader Pages (pp. 142–145)*



**87** **The Powerful Transformer**  
Romans 8:1-2,5-7,9,11,16-17  
 *Leader Pages (pp. 150–153)*



**79** **The Powerful Counselor**  
John 16:7-15  
 *Leader Pages (pp. 146–149)*



**93** **The Powerful Equipper**  
Luke 12:11-12; Acts 8:26-29;  
1 Corinthians 12:4-7  
 *Leader Pages (pp. 156–159)*

**DAILY READINGS** are included after each lesson.

**ERIC GEIGER**

Vice President, Church Resources

**MARK CROSTON**

General Editor

**BEVERLY SONNIER**

Content Editor

**KEN BRADY**

Manager, Adult Ongoing Bible Studies

**MICHAEL KELLEY**

Director, Groups Ministry

**Send questions/comments to:** Content Editor by email to [beverly.sonnier@lifeway.com](mailto:beverly.sonnier@lifeway.com); or mail to Content Editor, YOU!, One LifeWay Plaza, Nashville, TN 37234-0175; or make comments on the Web at [lifeway.com](http://lifeway.com).

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# A WORD FROM THE GENERAL EDITOR **MARK CROSTON**

New LifeWay Research suggests that 20 percent of churchgoers want their church to help them find new ways to serve.<sup>1</sup> Serving helps give meaning to the things we learn and the things we say we believe. Millennials are especially tied into living out their faith and having a meaningful impact through service. That is exactly the focus of this issue of YOU. In December we will look at missions, how to serve. In January we will study trustworthy sayings. They help us know the kind of people we need to be to serve most effectively. In February our focus will be the Holy Spirit. He gives us the power to serve.



While I was serving as a pastor, once in my devotion I was praying for God to send workers. The Holy Spirit directed me to Luke 10:2, “The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.” This new research says the workers are finally here. Let’s get ready for the harvest!

In addition to this study, here is training that can really help. Make your plans now to join us at the Black Church Leadership and Family Conference. Join us for this all-in-one, energizing week, July 22–26, 2019, at the LifeWay Ridgcrest Conference Center just outside of Asheville, North Carolina.

Learn more at [www.lifeway.com/blackchurchlife](http://www.lifeway.com/blackchurchlife). You’ll find a full program for every member of the family! I hope to meet you there.

Thanks for joining me in this season of study. Grab your Bible and allow God to speak through YOU!

**Be Blessed!**



Dr. Mark A. Croston Sr.  
YOU General Editor  
National Director of Black Church Partnerships  
[www.lifeway.com/BlackChurchLife](http://www.lifeway.com/BlackChurchLife)



# A WORD FROM THE EDITOR...



My first international mission trip was to Juarez, Mexico. I led a multigenerational team of seventeen men, women, and teens from David Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, Austin, Texas. Our mission was to assist a local church in witnessing in the church community and in building classroom space and an indoor bathroom.

Back then Juarez was well-known for the high rate of drug cartel murders taking place just across the border from El Paso, Texas. For most of our team, it was their first time “being on mission.” Admittedly there was some (all right, a lot of) apprehension on the part of the team. However, we went believing that God would provide for our every need and that He would use our words and actions to impact His people. And He did!

Since that first international mission trip, I’ve had the opportunity to serve in several countries around the world and numerous cities domestically. I absolutely love it! As a young Christian, I never thought I had what it took to “be on mission”—anywhere. Sadly, today many Christians believe missions do not concern them. However, I’ve grown to learn and embrace the fact that every believer has been called to live a missional lifestyle and to participate in the work of missions.

It is my heartfelt prayer that these lessons on the basics of missions, trustworthy sayings, and the Holy Spirit will lead you to embrace biblical truths that should matter most in your life and lead you to give of your time, talents, and treasures to advance God’s kingdom here on earth.

Because of His love,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Beverly". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

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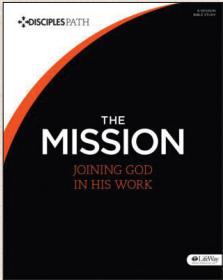
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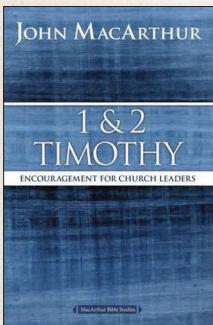
# SUGGESTED DISCIPLE-MAKING RESOURCES

Here's a list of resources you can use to deepen your understanding of the units of study this quarter. These resources complement the lessons for this quarter and can be used for small group study, midweek study, or personal Bible study.



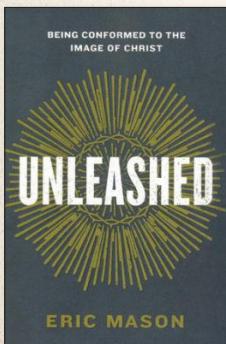
## THE MISSION (FOR UNIT 1)

*The Mission* Bible Study Book by LifeWay is a six-session study that asks disciples to explore the question, What does a disciple do in relationship with the world? This study begins and ends with Jesus as it guides growing disciples along the journey to missionality together with Him. Like all the releases in the Disciples Path series, *The Mission* helps facilitate transformational discipleship that leads users to take their next step as disciples of Christ. Optional activities include but are not limited to reading plans, prayer exercises, personal study, and journaling.



## 1 AND 2 TIMOTHY (FOR UNIT 2)

*1 and 2 Timothy: Encouragement for Church Leaders* by John F. MacArthur is a twelve-session study. In these personal letters Paul gives practical pastoral instruction to his protégé Timothy, highlighting godliness and holy living to help him fulfill his calling and effectively carry out his important tasks in the church. Paul challenges Timothy to persevere in his faith. Paul's godly counsel was helpful not only to Timothy but is also helpful to each believer today.



## UNLEASHED (FOR UNIT 3)

*Unleashed* by Eric Mason is a six-session practical study that unleashes believers for spiritual growth in Jesus Christ while helping participants understand the lifelong process of spiritual growth and maximizing God's work to conform them to the image of Christ. God's will is not just for us to be born again but for us to grow into spiritual adults. Paul instructs, "Those he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he would be the firstborn among many brothers" (Rom. 8:29). In light of these rich realities, believers must clearly understand how we can intentionally cooperate with the Holy Spirit's work to grow us into the likeness of Jesus.

Visit [www.lifeway.com](http://www.lifeway.com) or call **1-800-458-2772** for more information or to purchase any of these products.

# REGIONAL

## OUTLINE DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE



Lifeway Christian Resources  
Nashville, Tennessee

Another dynamic team of pastors, ministers of Christian education, discipleship/evangelism leaders, and student ministry leaders came together for a three-day period to develop the YOU Winter 2018-19 lesson outlines. This strategy has proved to be beneficial in promoting a sense of church ownership for the Bible study curriculum while undergirding the continuous evolution of YOU as an easy-to-use, culturally relevant, and biblically strong Bible study resource for small and large groups.

We were honored to welcome participants to the new LifeWay headquarters on March 20-22, 2018. Karen Bell (LifeWay Groups administrative assistant) coordinated the conference and we were able to fully utilize the state-of-the-art technology prevalent throughout the campus.

Participants included Dr. Mark Croston (YOU general editor); Curtis Honts (LifeWay content editor); Janice Bell (LifeWay customer service director); Demetria Mallett (student minister, Mt. Gilead Baptist Church, Nashville); Carmella Kelly (administrator, Mt. Gilead Baptist Church, Nashville); Rev. John Rollins (senior pastor, Simeon Baptist Church, Antioch, TN); Rev. Jay Wells (pastor emeritus, Simeon Baptist Church, Antioch, TN); and Rev. Terrence Chandler-Harrison, senior pastor, The Liberty Church, Clarkesville, TN). Beverly Sonnier (YOU content editor) served as the conference facilitator. It is our continued prayer that the team's input reflected throughout this quarterly will help churches in their mission of making disciples. Thanks again for pouring into YOU!



# Unit 1

## You on Mission



## A Bible Study on the Basics of Missions

Remember freeze tag? A group of kids take off running in different directions. One child attempts to tag other players causing them to “freeze” in position. The only way a person can be “unfrozen” is for a different player to tag him or her. The unfrozen person could then continue playing and even unfreeze others. The cycle continues as long as there are people available to do the unfreezing.

Similar to playing freeze tag, people are “frozen” or immobilized by things like natural disasters, illness, poverty, or worse, their own sin. Believers have a responsibility to

evangelize, disciple, and minister to their human needs. We can help mobilize them so that they, in turn, can do the same for others. This is what missions is about. During this unit of study, we’ll delve into the basics of missions and tackle topics such as how to pray for missions, why missions is important, and why we should give to support missions.

Surely no one wants to stay frozen in sin or some physically debilitating situation. Gladly, as long as believers are available and willing to share Christ and His love with others, the missions cycle continues. Play on!

# Mission Petitions

**Background Passages:** 1 Timothy 2:1-4; Matthew 9:35-38; Acts 4:23-31

**Lesson Passages:** 1 Timothy 2:1,3-4; Matthew 9:36-38; Acts 4:29-31

**The Question:** How can I pray for missions?

**The Point:** Jesus commanded His followers to pray for missions.

## LESSON PASSAGES

### 1 TIMOTHY 2:1,3-4

<sup>1</sup> First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone,

.....

<sup>3</sup> This is good, and it pleases God our Savior, <sup>4</sup> who wants everyone to be \* saved and to \* come to the knowledge of the truth.

### MATTHEW 9:36-38

<sup>36</sup> When he saw the crowds, he felt **a** compassion for them, because they were distressed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. <sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, “The \* harvest is abundant, but the workers are few.

<sup>38</sup> Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

### ACTS 4:29-31

<sup>29</sup> “And now, Lord, consider their threats, and grant that your servants may speak your word with all **b** boldness,

<sup>30</sup> while you stretch out your hand for healing, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” <sup>31</sup> When they had prayed, the place where they were assembled was shaken, and they were all **c** filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God boldly.

## KEY WORDS

**a** **Compassion:** “Sorry” (ICB); “deep concern” (NIRV); a heart “filled with pity” (GNT).

**b** **Boldness:** Speaking freely and confidently. Because the Holy Spirit indwells believers, He equips us with the power to witness to others (Acts 1:8). Christians shouldn’t be fearful or ashamed of sharing the gospel (2 Tim. 1:7-8).

**c** **Filled with the Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit permanently indwells believers, but when we encounter a harsh trial, we often need a fresh “refueling” of the Holy Spirit to be able to withstand the new demands and new dangers of that specific trial.

For more information about key words (\*), visit the glossary on pages 160–161.

## MEMORY VERSE

**Acts 4:29b**

Grant that your servants may speak your word with all boldness.

# Mission Petitions

1 Timothy 2:1,3-4; Matthew 9:36-38; Acts 4:29-31



## How can I pray for missions?



### UNIT 1 LESSON 1

Engines can be powerful. HEMI engines are under the hoods of many muscle cars. And, when we have a burning question, search engines help us find answers instantaneously on the Web. At one time steam engines were heavily used to keep various machinery in motion. But “prayer,” according to the late evangelist and theologian A. B. Simpson, “is the mighty engine that [moves] missionary work.” So, how can we pray for missions and advance the gospel? Today’s study explains. Let’s rev our prayer engines!

## Focal Passage Outline

### PRAY FOR CONVERSION

(1 Tim. 2:1,3-4)

### PRAY FOR COMPASSIONATE WORKERS

(Matt. 9:36-38)

### PRAY FOR COURAGE

(Acts 4:29-31)

## PRAY FOR CONVERSION

### 1 TIMOTHY 2:1,3-4

**Read 1 Timothy 2:1,3-4.** Could you fathom a church where some of its leaders favored people of a particular heritage or where Christianity was deemed for “the elite”? Sadly the church at Ephesus could. Teachers were spreading false doctrines and portraying Christianity as an exclusive religion. So Paul instructed Timothy on the urgency of saying prayers—“petitions, . . . intercessions, and thanksgivings” (v. 1)—for all people so that they might be \* saved (see Key Words Glossary, pp. 160–161). He highlighted the importance of prayer by saying it should occur “first of all” (v. 1) during their worship services. Paul’s message is still relevant today. We must be diligent in our prayers for everyone—authoritative figures, the unsaved, and people of all races. We all need Christ.

**In what ways have believers invited exclusivity and bias into churches today? How does this affect evangelism efforts?**

God desires that everyone hear the gospel, believe it, and receive His gift of salvation in faith (v. 4). (For more insight, see \* come to the knowledge of the truth, Key Words Glossary, pp. 160–161.) However, not everyone will respond. God won’t force us into a

relationship with Him; we must desire it. Still, He is sovereign. His power and knowledge are superior to all, yet He chooses to include the church in His work to change the world. One way this is accomplished is through prayer. What a mission we all have as believers! (For more on prayer, see Did You Know?, p. 14.)

**Salvation is God’s duty as Savior (1 Tim. 2:3). So, why are we sometimes tempted to take rejection personally during our evangelism efforts?**

No matter how many times we tell people about Christ and His saving power, we shortchange others when we neglect to pray first. Prayer is where evangelism begins. We must pray for conversions because human effort alone won’t save anyone. But, when God is invited into the work, watch out; transformation happens.

## PRAY FOR COMPASSIONATE WORKERS MATTHEW 9:36-38

Many of us can recall a situation that burdened us and moved us to provide assistance. Perhaps it was a natural disaster or a terrorist’s act. Maybe our **a** compassion (see Key Words, p. 11) was stirred after learning about some social injustice. Regardless, when dealing with “broken” people, we must show consideration and care as Jesus did.

**How have current events affected your prayers and actions?**

**Read Matthew 9:36-38.** Jesus traveled through various sites in Galilee on mission—teaching, preaching, and healing (v. 35). (For more on missions, see Diggin’ Deeper, p. 13.) Along the way He saw the residents’ great distress and hopelessness. He knew the people needed leaders to care for them. Using a metaphor, He described the people as “sheep without a shepherd.” Consequently, through His compassionate acts, Jesus distinguished Himself as their Shepherd.

**Think about a rough time when a leader or worker ministered to you. What spiritual or emotional state might you be in today without their help?**

Jesus was only one Person, and crowds of people needed salvation. He enlisted the help of His disciples to pray for God to send workers.



## Diggin’ Deeper



## Missions

When people think of missions, they sometimes envision groups of religious zealots preaching in foreign countries and living in shacks with dirt floors, thatched roofs, and mud walls. But not all missions work is done abroad or in groups. Being on mission also does not require living in destitution. Plus, many who “go” (whether down the street or overseas) have everyday vocations that aren’t associated with religious work. At their core, missions requires sharing the gospel and meeting human needs. However, successful missions might also include components like financial giving, mentoring, and planting churches.

- Why should every believer participate in missions?
- How are you living a missional lifestyle?

# Mission Petitions

1 Timothy 2:1,3-4; Matthew 9:36-38; Acts 4:29-31



## Did you know?

Read the following Scriptures to find encouragement to pray for missions.

- **Acts 13:1-3.** When believers at Antioch were commissioning Paul and Barnabas as missionaries, they prayed, fasted, and laid hands on them. Paul became one of the greatest missionaries ever.
- **Acts 16:25-34.** While they were imprisoned, Paul and Silas's midnight prayer and worship were followed by their jailer's salvation.
- **Acts 16:13-15.** After Paul's missionary team spoke to a group of women convening for prayer in Philippi, one of them (Lydia) became Europe's first convert. This Gentile woman was called "God-fearing."

Using a second metaphor, Jesus described the people as produce, which, upon being harvested, would be placed in barns (symbolizing God's kingdom). Sadly, there weren't enough people to do the harvesting. The need was great; the available helpers were few.

**If what believers have in Christ is so great (e.g., peace, hope, salvation, eternal life), why aren't more of us willing to share our faith with others and demonstrate it through purposeful, compassionate acts?**

Not much has changed today since Jesus last trekked through Galilee and saw the needy crowds. We still need more believers who are willing to lead "sheep" and workers who'll bring in the abundant \* harvest (see Key Words Glossary, pp. 160–161). More important is the need for believers who will pray for God to send people—compassionate believers—who will minister to both the saved and the unsaved. It's time to show some love!

## PRAY FOR COURAGE ACTS 4:29-31

**Read Acts 4:29-31.** We might consider withdrawing from a risky situation, but Peter and John did not. When the Sanhedrin dished out threats and ordered the men to stop preaching about Jesus, they held a prayer meeting. There the assembly of believers asked God for **B** boldness (see Key Words, p. 11) to continue sharing the gospel. Calling themselves Christ's slaves (v. 29b) (see Memory Verse, p. 11), they chose to honor God's will instead of the Jewish leaders. After all, Jesus had commissioned His disciples to "go," make new disciples, baptize, and teach (Matt. 28:19-20). God still holds that same desire for believers today.

**What hinders you from sharing Christ as often as you'd like? How do you expect to overcome this hindrance?**

The assembled believers began their prayer in Acts 4:24 by proclaiming God's sovereignty. They recalled Scriptures that reminded them this wasn't the first time people had tried to refute Christ as Savior (vv. 25-28). Consequently, they were hopeful that God would continue to preserve the gospel message. So, despite

threats, they asked for boldness (v. 29) to keep on preaching. Closing their prayer, they asked to do mighty works in Jesus' name (v. 30). To many unbelievers these works would serve as validation that Jesus was indeed their Savior. What a great model prayer this is for believers today! Though we also struggle with fear, we, too, can expect boldness to say, to do, or to show something that will glorify God.

**What events from the past give you confidence in God for the present? What might your prayer for encouragement include?**

Once the men finished praying, the whole assembly felt the Holy Spirit's presence. Literally. The meeting place shook, and immediately the men were **filled with the Holy Spirit** (v. 31) (see Key Words, p. 11). They were empowered to boldly speak God's Word. The Holy Spirit had "refueled" the men with His power so they could complete their assignment given the new dangers before them.

**Describe a time when you received a fresh supply of the Holy Spirit to tackle a tough situation or to address a difficult person. How did you recognize His presence?**

Many of us have driven over a nail, and a flat tire resulted. If a puncture isn't too bad, we consider a DIY (do it yourself) method and patch the hole. Unlike a flat tire missions work was never meant to be a DIY job. We need to include God and pray for conversions, compassionate workers, and courage to evangelize boldly. Besides, Jesus commanded His followers to pray for missions.

This week, take a prayer walk. Pray for the people you pass, the inhabitants of homes you see, and drivers who whiz past you. Remember: Believers' prayers can be used by God to transform individuals, families, communities, and more.

## SO WHAT? How does this apply to me?

On long road trips my family often refuels, gets snacks, and takes a stretch before continuing the next leg. Replenishment is good. Likewise Peter and John needed spiritual "replenishment" to continue the risky mission work ahead. So they prayed for boldness, and God equipped them for the task. How are you praying for God to use you in missions?

- **Recall your conversion experience. How has it changed your prayers for others' conversions?**

- **What behaviors, tendencies, and attitudes do you need to correct in order to be more compassionate in missions?**

- **What challenging missions tasks might require you to seek a fresh "in-filling" of the Holy Spirit? Why?**



## 1. PRAYER IN ACTION

1 Timothy 2:1-4

Praying is an action. It is our communication with God. We thank Him. We praise Him. We make our requests known to Him. Oftentimes the challenge is not only to pray for ourselves but to pray for others. Our intercessions can change the course of someone's life or circumstance and may be just what is needed to light the way to Christ. This pleases God because His desire is for everyone to know Him, His truth, and His love.

***Abba, Father, as I pray to You today regarding my own needs, help me to be as passionate about praying for the salvation and general needs of others.***

## 2. DOES ANYBODY WORK HERE?

Matthew 9:36-38; Acts 4:29-31

Have you ever gone to a store and needed assistance with finding an item or ready to check out but there was no one to help? "Does anybody work here?" Now consider yourself that one available salesperson in a crowded mall full of lost people looking for hope, guidance, and fulfillment. They may be frustrated and hostile due to the long wait. Even so, will you help them find the true Savior they seek? The harvest is indeed plentiful.

***Lord of the harvest, empower me to be bold and courageous as I labor for You and spread the gospel of Christ to those You send my way.***

# DAILY READINGS

## 3. LENS OF LOVE

John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:14-15

When viewing the world, enhance your vision by looking through the lens of love. Life is full of tragedies and hardships in life. Yet good can also be seen all around us if we choose to recognize it. God chose to be merciful and love us despite our misgivings through the gift of Jesus Christ. Let our love for Christ compel us to be accountable to God by loving and serving others and being an extension of His graciousness.

***Dear God, give me the vision to see Your goodness in all things by looking through Your lens of love daily.***

## 4. GOD IS MINDFUL

2 Corinthians 5:17; Psalm 8:4

*Mindful* is being fully aware of what is happening now and making the best of it. That is how God operates. He is ever present and mindful of us. Each moment God is aware of our innermost thoughts and desires. He then embraces and covers us with His love. He makes us new creations and changes us for the better from the inside out. Say good-bye to the old you and welcome the new you being transformed through Christ.

***Thank You, God, for being mindful of me and for making me new and improved through Christ Jesus!***

# HOW TO TEACH



## Step 1: Read the Lesson and study the Leader Commentary.

### Unit 1 You on Mission

#### A Bible Study on the Basics of Missions

Remember freeze tag? A group of kids take off running in different directions. One child attempts to tag other players causing them to “freeze” in position. The only way a person can be “in motion” is for a different player to tag him or her. The unfrozen person could then continue playing and even unfreeze others. The cycle continues as long as there are people available to be the unfreezing.

Similar to playing freeze tag, people are “frozen” or immobilized by things like natural disasters, illness, poverty or wars. Their own sin. Believers have a responsibility to

evangelize, disciple, and minister to their human needs. We can help mobilize them so that they, in turn, can do the same for others. This is what missions is about. During this unit of study, we'll delve into the basics of missions and tackle topics such as how to pray for missions, why missions is important, and why we should give to support missions.

Surely no one wants to stay frozen in sin or some physically debilitating situation. Gladly, as long as believers are available and willing to share Christ and His love with others, the missions cycle continues. Play on!

### UNIT 1, LESSON 1

#### Mission Petitions

**Background Passages:** 1 Timothy 2:1-4, Matthew 9:36-38, Acts 4:29-31  
**Lesson Passages:** 1 Timothy 2:1-4, Matthew 9:36-38, Acts 4:29-31

**The Question:** How can I pray for missions?  
**The Point:** Jesus commanded His followers to pray for missions.

#### LESSON PASSAGES

##### 1 TIMOTHY 2:1-4

First of all, then, I urge that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for everyone, to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

This is good, and it pleases God our Savior, who wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

##### MATTHEW 9:36-38

When he saw the crowds, he felt compassion for them, because they were distressed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, “The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few. Therefore, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out workers into his harvest.”

##### ACTS 4:29-31

And now, Lord, consider their threats and grant that your servants may speak your word with all boldness. As they stretch out your hand for healing, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” When they had prayed, the place where they were assembled was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak the word of God boldly.

#### KEY WORDS

- Compassion:** “Sorrow” (NIV); “to feel with one” (NLT); “to feel with one” (NLT).
- Address:** Speaking to God directly and confidently. Because the Holy Spirit already indwells the believer, the words go in with the power to witness to others (Acts 1:8). Christians should not be fearful or ashamed of sharing the gospel (1 Tim. 3:16).
- Filled with the Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit empowers individuals, believers, but we also encourage church that we do not have a “monopoly” of the Holy Spirit so He is able to witness to the non-believers and also new dangers of that specific kind.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT KEY WORDS:** Visit [www.lifeway.com](http://www.lifeway.com) pages 100-105.

#### MEMORY VERSE

**Acts 4:29b**  
Grant that your servants may speak your word with all boldness.

### BEFORE YOU TEACH FOR UNIT 1, LESSON 1 (pp. 11-15)

#### STEP 1 TELL THEM WHERE TO LOOK.

Do you get blank stares when you use a word that was explained in the Key Words Glossary? It's time to take a moment to review the key words comprising the day's lesson. Be sure to point out there's more. Introduce learners to the revised dates in their books for that month or download the dated Study Plan available at [www.lifeway.com](http://www.lifeway.com).

#### STEP 2 TELL THEM WHY WE DON'T DATE.

Even some seasoned YOW Bible study participants have asked why their lessons don't come presented with the month and day. Keep in mind that some churches use the material for midweek Bible study. Others use it for Sunday School or outreach ministries. At the beginning of each unit, consider encouraging learners to write the dates in their books for that month or download the dated Study Plan available at [www.lifeway.com](http://www.lifeway.com).

#### STEP 3 END WITH A SONG.

To close the session, you'll be asked to play “Endure Me” by The Clark Sisters. Be sure you have a copy of your electronic device. You'll delay everyone by searching for it online during your group's meeting time. Know that other artists have collaborated to create renditions of this song. If you find a different one that might resonate better with your group, use it.

#### STEP 4 ARE YOU REALLY ON MISSION?

Many believers may interchange the following terms: disciple making, missions, community outreach, and benevolence. Although the words share some similarities, they are not synonyms. Be prepared to share definitions for each with the group so you mitigate chances for confusion.

### LOOK BACK

Welcome members and guests. Invite several volunteers to discuss highlights from the last lesson based on Acts 29 (Unit 1, Lesson 4), “On Mission: No Requests,” Fall 2018, pp. 33-37. To get the discussion started, remind learners of The Question and The Point (p. 83). Wrap up with a one-sentence summary of your own. Ask that the learners talk about their experiences from last week's Live It! challenge (p. 97). Then transition to the new unit of study that delves further into the basics of missions.

### YOU OBJECT LESSON

#### JUMPER CABLES

Display your jumper cables. Ask: What might you do when someone's car won't start? Say: We might add gas or continue to try the engine again. But when someone's battery is dead, we need the help of jumper cables. Explain that prayer is to missions what jumper cables are to dead batteries. When we encounter someone who is spiritually dead (saved), our efforts alone (kindness, teaching, and physical help) can't save the person. But, when we pray, we invite God into the work. He alone has saving power. Say: The next time you see a jumper cable, remember that God can use your prayers to jump-start missions.

### MISSION PETITIONS (TEACHING PLAN) FOR UNIT 1, LESSON 1 (pp. 11-15)

#### INTRODUCTION

Think about a successful movie most learners would have seen. Prior to class, determine who the producers, directors, and screenwriters are. Call out (or display) the names during your session. Ask: Who are these people, and what do they have in common? Consider giving other titles until learners are able to name the movie with which they're affiliated. Point out that many of us don't think about all the people who work in the background to help make a box office hit. Is this our take on missions too? Although prayer occurs behind the scenes, surely it is the backbone of missions.

Transition to the new unit of study by referring to the unit title, “You on Mission,” and summarizing the Unit 1 overview on page 12. Read the Question (“How can I pray for missions?”) and the Point (“Jesus commanded His followers to pray for missions”) on page 11. Invite a learner to read the lesson introduction on page 12.

#### DIG INTO THE TEXT

##### PRAY FOR CONVERSION 1 TIMOTHY 2:1,3-4

- Invite a learner to read 1 Timothy 2:1-4 about. Summarize paragraph 1 under the heading “Pray for Conversion” (p. 12). Use the Biblical Illustration article to explain the types of prayer Paul typically used. (Log on to [www.lifeway.com/YOU](http://www.lifeway.com/YOU). Click on the “Leader Resources” link to get downloadable content for this lesson.) Mention that Paul's focus here, though, was not him of the different types of prayer but on its value.
- Say: Everyone has the opportunity to be saved, and God desires for His will. Ask: So, why can't every person save? Can parents' prayers secure their children's salvation? Explain that God can soften hard hearts and open minds for spiritual understanding when we pray for others' salvation. However, being in a relationship with Christ is an individual choice that God gives us the free will to make. Direct learners' attention to the Key Words saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (pp. 100-101). Point out some of the conversions mentioned in Did You Know? page 14. Ask: What helps you broaden the scope of your prayers to include all people?

##### PRAY FOR COMPASSIONATE WORKERS MATTHEW 9:36-38

- Call a learner to read about Matthew 9:36-38. Direct learners' attention to the Key Words compassion (p. 11) and harvest (pp. 100-101). Discuss the meaning of the two metaphors Jesus used. Encourage the group to brainstorm to come up with new ways that we modern-day language to illustrate the shortage of compassionate workers in evangelizing the unsaved today.
- Ask: How might an overwhelmed, opinionated, or impatient worker affect others' views of Christianity? Say: Broken people require conversation and care. Explain how “church hurt” can be one of the hardest types to overcome. Let's represent the church (and the One to whom it belongs) well. We should pray for compassionate believers to minister Christ's example.

## Step 2: Prepare to teach an exciting lesson using the Before You Teach page for each lesson.

## Step 3: Use the Teaching Plan for each lesson to prepare and facilitate an in-depth discussion of the lesson passage. Don't forget that you can cut out the Teaching Plan if you want to be on the same page as members of your group.

### LEADER COMMENTARY FOR UNIT 1, LESSON 1 (pp. 11-15)

#### Mission Petitions

**Lesson Passages:** 1 Timothy 2:1-4, Matthew 9:36-38, Acts 4:29-31  
**The Question:** How can I pray for missions?  
**The Point:** Jesus commanded His followers to pray for missions.

This commentary is designed to help you think about the question, “How can I pray for missions?” and drive home that one truth: Jesus commanded His followers to pray for missions.

#### FOCUS ON THESE POINTS

##### Pray for Conversion (1 Tim. 2:1-4)

Paul wrote 1 Timothy to encourage Timothy, his protégé in ministry. False doctrines focusing on genealogies and myths had diminished the Ephesus church and sowed confusion (1:4). The negative effects of these false teachings infiltrated their worship, impeding attitudes and behaviors surfaced. Paul underscored the need to pray by citing two examples. Only subtle differences exist between each of them. “Petitions” are requests made for specific needs. “Prayers” is a general word to describe our request approach and communion with God. “The intercession” suggests making a request of God in complete confidence and trust. “Thanksgiving” commonly characterized Paul's attitude in his prayers. Even when a whole followed. Paul typically started his letters with thanksgivings for God's people.

Paul knew evangelism begins with prayer. Prayer shows our dependence on God to save. Paul reiterates that “God [is] our Savior” (v. 3). Our efforts alone won't save anyone, but our prayers for others' salvation please God because He “wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (v. 4). Praying like this—according to God's revealed will—moves our focus toward God and away from self-centeredness.

The more Jesus moved around Galilee, the more hardened the hearts of the spiritual condition of the people. Paul's letters to Timothy say that the Jews' hearts refer to the gospel. When Paul talks about coming to know the truth (conversion to Christianity) and being saved (depending from sin and placing our faith in Christ) (v. 4), he's implying a relationship with Christ.

##### Pray for Compassionate Workers (Matt. 9:36-38)

The more Jesus moved around Galilee, the more hardened the hearts of the spiritual condition of the people. Paul's letters to Timothy say that the Jews' hearts refer to the gospel. When Paul talks about coming to know the truth (conversion to Christianity) and being saved (depending from sin and placing our faith in Christ) (v. 4), he's implying a relationship with Christ.

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Need more commentary/articles to increase your understanding? Visit [www.lifeway.com/YOU](http://www.lifeway.com/YOU).

## Step 4: Visit [www.lifeway.com](http://www.lifeway.com) for more leader commentary, articles to enhance your understanding of the lesson passage, and a midweek plan that can be adapted for midweek or worship services.

# BEFORE YOU TEACH

FOR UNIT 1, LESSON 1 (pp. 11–15)

## STEP 1 TELL THEM WHERE TO LOOK.

Do you get blank stares when you use a word that was explained in the Key Words Glossary? Let's face it: some learners may not look past the five pages comprising the day's lesson. Be sure to point out there's more. Introduce learners to (or remind them of) the items available in every issue from disciple-making resources (p. 8) to Scripture memory cards (p. 99) and beyond.

## STEP 2 TELL THEM WHY WE DON'T DATE.

Even some seasoned *YOU* Bible study participants have asked why their lessons don't come preprinted with the month and day. Keep in mind that some churches use the material for mid-week Bible study. Others use it for Sunday School or outreach ministries. At the beginning of each unit, consider encouraging learners to write the dates in their books for that month or download the dated Study Plan available at [www.lifeway.com/YOU](http://www.lifeway.com/YOU).

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Many learners may interchange the following terms: disciple making, missions, community outreach, and benevolence. Although the words share some similarities, they are not synonyms. Be prepared to share definitions for each with the group so you mitigate chances for confusion.



## LOOK BACK

Welcome members and guests. Invite several volunteers to discuss highlights from the last lesson based on Acts 26 (Unit 3, Lesson 4, "On Mission, No Regrets," Fall 2018, pp. 93–97).

To get the discussion started, remind learners of The Question and The Point (p. 93). Wrap up with a one-sentence summary of your own. Allot time for learners to share about their experiences from last week's Live It! challenge (p. 97). Then transition to the new unit of study that delves further into the basics of missions.

# YOU OBJECT LESSON



## JUMPER CABLES

Display the jumper cables. **Ask:** *What might you do when someone's car won't start?* **Say:** *We might add gas or continue to try the ignition switch. But, when someone's battery is dead, we need the help of jumper cables.* Explain that prayer is to missions what jumper cables are to dead batteries. When we encounter someone who is spiritually dead (unsaved), our efforts alone (kindness, teaching, and physical help) can't save the person. But, when we pray, we invite God into the work. He alone has saving power. **Say:** *The next time you see a jumper cable, remember that God can use your prayers to jump-start missions.*

## INTRODUCTION

Think about a successful movie most learners would have seen. Prior to class, determine who the producers, directors, and screenwriters are. Call out (or display) the names during your session. **Ask:** *Who are these people, and what do they have in common?* Consider giving other hints until learners are able to guess the movie with which they're affiliated. Point out that many of us don't think about all the people who work in the background to help make a box office hit. Is this our take on missions too? Although prayer occurs behind the scenes, surely it is the backbone of missions.

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## DIG INTO THE TEXT

### PRAY FOR CONVERSION

#### 1 TIMOTHY 2:1,3-4

- **Invite a learner to read 1 Timothy 2:1,3-4 aloud.** Summarize paragraph 1 under the heading "Pray for Conversion" (p. 12). Use the *Biblical Illustrator* article to explain the types of prayer Paul typically used. (Log on to [www.LifeWay.com/YOU](http://www.LifeWay.com/YOU). Click on the Leader Resources link to get downloadable content for this lesson.) Mention that Paul's focus here, though, was not on the different types of prayer but on its value.
- **Say:** *Everyone has the opportunity to be saved, and God desires it for us all.* **Ask:** *So, why isn't every person*

*saved? Can parents' prayers secure their children's salvation?* Emphasize that God can soften hard hearts and open minds for spiritual understanding when we pray for others' salvation. However, being in a relationship with Christ is an individual choice that God gives us the free will to make. Direct learners' attention to the Key Words **saved** and **come to the knowledge of the truth** (pp. 160–161). Point out some of the conversions mentioned in Did You Know?, page 14. **Ask:** *What helps you broaden the scope of your prayers to include all people?*

### PRAY FOR COMPASSIONATE WORKERS

#### MATTHEW 9:36-38

- **Enlist a learner to read aloud Matthew 9:36-38.** Direct learners' attention to the Key Words **compassion** (p. 11) and **harvest** (pp. 160–161). Discuss the meaning of the two metaphors Jesus used. Encourage the group to brainstorm to come up with new ones that use modern-day language to illustrate the shortage of compassionate workers in evangelizing the unsaved today.
- **Ask:** *How might an overwhelmed, opinionated, or impatient worker affect others' views of Christianity?* **Say:** *Broken people require consideration and care.* Explain how "church hurt" can be one of the hardest types to overcome. Let's represent the church (and the One to whom it belongs) well. We should pray for compassionate believers to mimic Christ's example.

# MISSION PETITIONS (TEACHING PLAN)

FOR UNIT 1, LESSON 1 (pp. 11–15)

- **Invite a learner to read *Diggin' Deeper*** (p. 13). Invite learners to answer the first question that follows: “Why should every believer participate in missions?” Discuss responses.
- Emphasize how benevolence, outreach, and missions differ. **Say:** *These things are important and necessary. But, if we aren't using them as tools to share Christ with others, we aren't on mission.*

## PRAY FOR COURAGE ACTS 4:29-31

- **Enlist a learner to read Acts 4:24-30 aloud.** These verses contain background Scriptures not printed in the learners' lesson. Reading them allows learners to experience the early believers' prayer in its entirety. Point out the leaders' threats, components of the disciples' prayer, the unity they experienced, and the motivation they had by the time they finished praying.
- Direct learners' attention to the Key Word **boldness** (p. 11). **Invite a learner to read Matthew 28:19-20.** **Ask:** *What interferences have you encountered when attempting to share Christ? How have you shown boldness despite them?*
- **Read Acts 4:31 aloud.** Discuss what it means to be **filled with the Holy Spirit** (see Key Words, p. 11).

## SO WHAT? HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO ME?

We love highlighters. In Facebook we apply colorful backgrounds to bring attention to special posts. In Bible apps we highlight memorable Scriptures. On contracts we highlight where to sign. Just as highlighters make text bold, prayer can result in believers' boldness for Christ. God came through for Peter and John when they prayed for boldness. He can do the same for us. Use these questions to consider how prayer is integral to missions today.

- *When you don't see immediate, visible signs of the Holy Spirit at work in a mission effort, who or what encourages you to continue praying and sharing the gospel?*
- *What behaviors, tendencies, and attitudes do you need to correct in order to be more compassionate in missions?*
- *What are some of the unique benefits of corporate prayer in missions work? How have you seen God work mightily as an answer to a group's prayers?*

## CLOSE THE SESSION

*Invite learners to reflect on how they can pray for missions. Emphasize that prayer is often a behind-the-scenes effort, but it's a necessary part of missions. When we ask God for courage, compassionate workers, and conversions, we can expect great things to happen for His glory. Encourage learners to complete the Live It! challenge on page 15 this week and to remember that believers' prayers can be used by God to transform individuals, families, communities, and more. Play the song “Endow Me” by The Clark Sisters. Then dismiss by thanking God for endowing all believers with power to share Christ with others.*

## Mission Petitions

**Lesson Passages:** 1 Timothy 2:1,3-4; Matthew 9:36-38; Acts 4:29-31

**The Question:** How can I pray for missions?

**The Point:** Jesus commanded His followers to pray for missions.

*This commentary is designed to help you think about the question, “How can I pray for missions?” and drive home this one truth: Jesus commanded His followers to pray for missions.*

### FOCUS ON THESE POINTS

#### **Pray for Conversion (1 Tim. 2:1,3-4)**

Paul wrote 1 Timothy to encourage Timothy, his protégé in ministry. False doctrines focusing on genealogies and myths had diminished the Ephesus church reach and stirred confusion (1:4). The negative effects of these false teachings infiltrated their worship; improper attitudes and behaviors surfaced.

Paul underscored the need for prayer by citing four examples. Only subtle differences exist between each of them. “Petitions” are requests made for specific needs. “Prayers” is a general word to describe our reverent approach of and communion with God. “Intercessions” suggests making a sober request of God in complete confidence and trust. “Thanksgivings” commonly characterized Paul’s attitude in his prayers. Even when a rebuke followed, Paul typically started his letters with thanksgivings for God’s people.

Paul knew evangelism begins with prayer. Prayer shows our dependence on God to save. Paul reiterated that “God [is] our Savior” (v. 3). Our efforts alone won’t save anyone, but our prayers for others’ salvation please God because He “wants everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (v. 4). Praying like this—according to God’s revealed will—moves our focus toward God and away from self-centeredness.

In Paul’s letters to Timothy and Titus, the term *truth* refers to the gospel. When Paul talks about coming to know the truth (conversion to Christianity) and being saved (repenting from sin and placing our faith in Christ) (v. 4), he’s implying a relationship with Christ.

#### **Pray for Compassionate Workers (Matt. 9:36-38)**

The more Jesus moved around Galilee, the more burdened He was by the spiritual condition of the

people (v. 36). The Greek word translated “felt compassion” literally meant to be moved inwardly and deeply as in a longing of the bowels or intestines. The bowels were considered the seat of gentle, affectionate emotions like kindness, benevolence, and compassion. The spiritual state of the Galileans was gut-wrenching and Jesus responded with empathy.

Jesus met people who were “distressed and dejected” (v. 36); “harassed and helpless” (v. 36, NIV); and “weary and worn out” (v. 36, HCSB). He described these people with two metaphors. First, He said they were “like sheep without a shepherd.” In Scripture sheep were commonly used to describe God’s people. Leaders, whether political or religious, were referred to as shepherds. Elsewhere Jesus identifies Himself as “the good shepherd” (John 10:11). He was ready to sacrifice Himself for them.

Assessing the vast number of people to be reached, Jesus, in His humanity, could not minister to them all. He sought help from His disciples using a second metaphor using agrarian imagery: “The harvest is abundant, but the workers are few” (v. 37). He compared the people to a field that was ripe and ready for workers to harvest. Jesus commanded His disciples to pray for more workers (v. 38).

#### **Pray for Courage (Acts 4:29-31)**

When Peter professed the resurrected Christ, religious authorities had him arrested along with John. The men refused to stop preaching about Jesus, making their intent clear: they would never stop preaching Christ. Nevertheless, the Jewish leaders let them go free.

Instead of asking God to take them out of their threatening situation, the believers asked God to give them “boldness” (v. 29) to continue spreading the gospel. And, when they asked God for *parresia*, the Greek noun translated “boldness,” (v. 29), they were literally asking for the ability to speak “every word.”

The group’s prayer was answered immediately, and God caused the meeting place to shake (v. 31).



Need more commentary/articles to increase your understanding?

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## KEY WORDS GLOSSARY

The first page of every lesson provides an overview of the lesson, including the lesson title, lesson passages, and key words from the biblical text. The key words marked with a \* have been explained more fully in this glossary.

**Angel of the Lord:** A messenger of God. This angel was not divine but spoke with the authority of the Godhead. (Unit 3, Lesson 4)

**Believe:** Belief is a main theme in John's writing. It is not wishful thinking but is synonymous with faith. It is a firm conviction in what Christ is doing even if it doesn't make sense to us. (Unit 3, Lesson 2)

**Bound:** Placed under legal or moral restraint or obligation. (Unit 2, Lesson 4)

**Come to the knowledge of the truth:** Conversion to Christianity. The point at which the Holy Spirit indwells someone who not only repents from sin but also believes what God's Word says about Christ's life, death, resurrection, and saving power (the gospel). (Unit 1, Lesson 1)

**Confession:** An acknowledgment or admittance. Two responses to God in worship involve confession—confessing our sins (Matt. 3:6) and confessing our faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord (Phil 2:10-11). Today it's also common to hear the phrase "profession of faith." In this context the words *profession* and *confession* have been used synonymously among various Bible translations. (Unit 1, Lesson 3)

**Eternal:** The blessings awaiting believers in the age to come are eternal (forever). In contrast Paul describes our circumstances on earth as temporary (passing). Our focus should be an eternal one because the Holy Spirit helps us manage our day-to-day trials with faith and joy. (Unit 1, Lesson 5)

**Evaluated:** "Discerned" (NIV; NKJV; ESV). The only way to judge and understand spiritual things is to filter them through God's Spirit. (Unit 3, Lesson 1)

**Faith:** Trusting commitment of one person to another, particularly of a person to God. (Unit 2, Lesson 1)

**Gifts:** Supernatural abilities given to believers by the Spirit. See also Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 27-31; Ephesians 4:11-13. (Unit 3, Lesson 4)

**Harvest:** A term signifying the abundance of souls ready to hear the gospel. Jesus used the word in a similar context while in Samaria after talking with the woman at the well. There He told His disciples that the fields were ready to be harvested (John 4:35). (Unit 1, Lesson 1)

**Immanuel:** A Hebrew word meaning "God with us." It refers to Jesus, the One who "became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14). (Unit 1, Lesson 4)

**Light:** Illumination. Light signifies purity and holiness. It is concerned with spiritual revelation. God saw that light was good during the creation (Gen. 1:3-4). Thus, it is used symbolically in Scripture to represent that which is good. Jesus called Himself "the light of the world" (John 8:12). Those who haven't professed Christ (the Light) as Savior are described as being in darkness. Darkness opposes light and symbolizes death, sin, and wickedness. (Unit 1, Lesson 5)

**Ministry:** The word *deacon* is derived from the Greek word translated "ministry." However, ministry is every believer's role. Although ministry is often described as Christian service, here another facet of ministry is defined: financial stewardship through Christian giving. (Unit 1, Lesson 3)

**Morning star:** In the ancient world, the planet Venus was known by this title. However, this reference points to Christ, specifically in relation to His second coming. (Unit 3, Lesson 1)

**New creation:** In the Old Testament physical circumcision marked men who belonged to the community of faith. Regarding New Testament believers, God Himself changes Christian converts with a figurative circumcision of the heart, complete with new behaviors and perspectives. This change is so radical, the convert is considered a new creation. (Unit 1, Lesson 2)

**Reluctantly:** “With hesitation” (CEB); “grudgingly” (KJV). To warily or cautiously perform an act. (Unit 1, Lesson 3)

**Righteous man:** “Good man” (ICB); “just man” (KJV); “faithful to the law” (NIV); “man who always did what was right” (GNT). (Unit 1, Lesson 4)

**Saved:** In the Old Testament, God’s saving work often involved a physical deliverance (Gen. 45:4-7; Esther 7–9). Here, though, the term’s connotation is spiritual. (See Rom. 6:23; 10:9; Eph. 2:8-9.) (Unit 1, Lesson 1)

**Sincere:** The personal quality of living life from a pure motive without deceit. (Unit 2, Lesson 1)

**Testifies:** The Holy Spirit confirms what our own spirits sense about our relationship with God. (Unit 3, Lesson 3)

**Unspoken groanings:** Deeply emotional in nature but effective because of the unity shared by the Spirit and the Father. (Unit 3, Lesson 1)

**Whatever he hears:** The Holy Spirit works in conjunction with the other members of the Trinity to share what Christians need to know and apply. (Unit 3, Lesson 2)

**Worldly perspective:** A phrase literally meaning “according to the flesh.” It is concerned with favoring earthly mindsets as opposed to those that honor God. For example, Zacchaeus, a tax collector, had a worldly perspective on money and wealth-building principles prior to his conversion (Luke 19:1-10). (Unit 1, Lesson 2)

## COMING NEXT QUARTER



### UNIT 1 GROW

#### The Faith Journey

- Lesson 1 Move Forward by Faith  
Genesis 12:1-9
- Lesson 2 The Doubt Factor  
Genesis 15:1-5,8-10,17-18
- Lesson 3 Now Hear This!  
Genesis 16:1-9,12
- Lesson 4 Faith Tested and Approved!  
Genesis 22:1-2,5-12
- Lesson 5 The Victory of Faith  
Genesis 22:8; John 1:29;  
Revelation 5:5-6,9-14



### UNIT 2 CONNECT

#### One or One Another

- Lesson 1 Love One Another  
1 John 4:7-12,18-21
- Lesson 2 Outdo One Another  
Romans 12:9-18
- Lesson 3 Don't Sweat the Small Stuff  
Romans 14:1-3,16-17,19-23
- Lesson 4 Live in Harmony with One Another  
Romans 15:1-9a



### UNIT 3 GROW

#### Moments of Truth

- Lesson 1 Tell the Truth  
John 4:19-26
- Lesson 2 The Whole Truth  
Galatians 5:1-4,7-10,13-15
- Lesson 3 Nothing but the Truth  
Matthew 23:13-16a,23-28
- Lesson 4 So Help Me God!  
Ephesians 4:13b-24

## MEET THE WRITERS

**Cherise Bopape** wrote Unit 1 Learner, Leader, Object Lessons, and Leader Commentaries. Cherise has taught children of all ages about Christ. She and her husband, Thabo, are active in the couples ministry at Zion Baptist Church, Marietta, Georgia. They have three children.

**Georgeann McCrary** wrote Unit 1 Daily Readings. She is a writer and licensed independent social worker who has worked with veterans in the areas of mental health, primary care, and caregiver support. She is the Book Club Ministry leader at United Faith Community Church in Reynoldsburg, Ohio.

**Rick Prall** wrote Unit 2 Learner, Leader, Object Lessons, and Leader Commentaries. An ordained minister, Rick has served churches in California, Texas, Oklahoma, and Tennessee. He and his wife, Helene have been married thirty-four years. They have two adult children and one granddaughter.

**Tanya West** wrote Daily Readings for Units 2 and 3. She and her husband, Clarence, serve as young adult ministers at East End Baptist Church, Suffolk, Virginia. They have three children. Tanya also writes a blog, ReflectonPurpose.com, to encourage women to become Psalm 31 women and wives.

**Bob Bunn** wrote Unit 3 Learner, Leader, Object Lessons, and Leader Commentaries. He is a seasoned Christian-publishing writer and editor. Bob holds degrees from Liberty University, Ohio University, and Southern Seminary. He teaches youth in his local church. Bob and his wife, Mary, are the parents of three children.

**Brian Carmichael** wrote the downloadable Midweek Sermon Starters, available at [www.lifeway.com/YOU](http://www.lifeway.com/YOU). He serves as pastor at Holy Temple Missionary Baptist Church, Memphis, Tennessee, and has earned master and doctor of divinity degrees. Brian and his wife, Stacey, are regular LifeWay writers.