



# 10

## Becoming Like Jesus

### Key Theme

- God works in believers to accomplish His purpose.

### Key Passages

- 1 Peter 1:13–16; Matthew 22:34–40; Ephesians 6:10–20

### Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe Jesus as the standard for our holiness of life.
- Explain the connection between the “armor of God” and holy living.



## Lesson Overview



### Come On In

Write on the board, “What is our standard of holiness?”

Students will complete the Memory Verse Review Sheet. If time allows, have them recite the verse together.



### Studying God’s Word

Jesus said the greatest commandments are to love God with all your heart, soul, and mind and to love your neighbor as yourself. God gives all believers the armor of God to help them obey Him. This armor is Jesus Christ and the Word of God. Learning, understanding, and obeying these commandments will equip believers with the “armor” needed to stand firm in their faith against the devil’s attacks and to live holy lives pleasing to God.

Study the Prepare to Share section.

Go Before the Throne.



### Activity: To Be like Him

Students will examine passages that describe our progress in holiness to become more like Christ.

Student Guides

Pencils



# Prepare to Share

## SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above with this background.

Believers in Jesus Christ are promised amazing things. We are forgiven of sins and have been born again to a living hope—an inheritance that is being kept in heaven for us (1 Peter 1:3–4). We have received the Spirit of adoption and can now call God, “Abba, Father” (Romans 8:15–16). We can come boldly and confidently to the throne of grace where God promises to meet us and mercifully help in our times of need (Hebrews 4:16). These and many more promises are guaranteed to all those who are children of God.

Sinners saved by God’s grace become new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). The Bible tells us as new creations that we are to present our bodies as living sacrifices that are holy and acceptable to God (Romans 12:1). And as followers of Christ, we have been predestined to be conformed to His image (Romans 8:29).

Christians can be confident that they are God’s workmanship who have been created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God has prepared in advance for them to do (Ephesians 2:10). But that doesn’t mean we don’t have a responsibility to obey the Lord. Jesus told His disciples, “If you love Me, keep My commandments” (John 14:15).

Those commandments can seem demanding. We are to love the Lord our God with ALL our heart, with all our soul, and with all our mind. And we are to love our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:36–39). Even on the best of days this is difficult because the spirit indeed is willing to obey, but the flesh is weak (Matthew 26:41). In fact, because we are sinners, we often find that the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh so that we often do not do the things we wish we would do as followers of Christ (Galatians 5:17).

How then, can we become more like Christ? How can we put to death the deeds of the body (Romans 8:13)?

We will never do it perfectly. In fact, our battle is against the devil himself (Ephesians 6:11–12). But God gives each believer who desires to live a life more like Christ’s the “armor” to stand strong in the day of evil (Ephesians 6:13). The Bible gives us a list of the pieces of this armor.

First, we have the belt of truth to be buckled on (Ephesians 6:14). We know that the devil is the father of lies (John 8:44). Jesus, on the other hand, is the truth (John 14:6). His words, His life, His death, His Resurrection—the gospel—is the only truth that can save. We must know the truth of Jesus Christ according to the Bible.

We then see that God provides the breastplate of righteousness (Ephesians 6:14). This breastplate is intended to protect God’s children. The righteousness referred to here is not in any way the righteousness of men. After all, our righteousness is like filthy rags to the Lord (Isaiah 64:6). No. This righteousness is the righteousness of Christ, which is the only righteousness by which sinners can be brought to God (1 Peter 3:18).

We are to put the gospel of peace on our feet (Ephesians 6:15) as we go boldly into all nations, preaching the truth, making disciples, and baptizing them as commanded by Jesus Himself (Matthew 28:19).

Next, we can take up the shield of faith which is meant to protect us from the lies of the devil (Ephesians 6:16). That faith that protects like a shield includes the Word of God. We are told that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God (Romans 10:17). Faith, trust, and dependence on God’s Word will keep the fiery darts of the evil one from our hearts.

For our heads we are given the helmet of salvation (Ephesians 6:17). We are called to think on the glorious truth of the gospel—Jesus Christ, who knew no sin, was made to be sin for us so that we might become His righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21). Humbly remembering that Jesus, the Son of God, died a horrible death for our sins will keep our minds gratefully fixed on Him and keep us from discouragement and doubt in the Lord’s salvation—both of which the devil knows can lead us into temptation.

Finally, we come to the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Ephesians 6:17). In Jesus’s time the sword was the only weapon a soldier used. And so it is with us. The Word of God is living and active. It is sharper than any two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12). It is all we need to successfully fend off the temptations Satan desires for us to fall into.

How can we live the Christian life and grow toward holiness? How can we become more like Jesus Christ? We must intentionally put on ALL of the armor of God each day. It is the only way we can keep the devil, the roaring lion who longs to destroy us, at bay (1 Peter 5:8).

## HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

The Bible tells us that there is an unseen world in which we live. There are spiritual forces that we cannot see, but they affect our world and wage constant battle in and around human society. On the one side is Satan and his demonic forces. Satan was originally one of the chiefs of God’s heavenly beings; he was a creature of beauty and gave praise to God. However, Satan

became jealous, desired to become God, and rebelled, along with other angels, against the Almighty (see Ezekiel 28:12–15 and Isaiah 14:12–15). To this day these demonic forces—these fallen angels—long to prevent people from seeing the light of the gospel and to harass, attack, and corrupt Christians.

On the other side of this eternal conflict is God and His holy angels. The angels are perfect, sinless, powerful creations of God. They are ministering spirits that carry out God’s plan, and they work for the benefit of God’s people. Their goal is to serve and glorify God. The people of God—born-again believers in Christ—are included as part of this angelic army, while also being protected by its hosts.

In the church today, there seem to be two extreme views on this holy war, this cosmic conflict, with a minority taking the middle ground. On one side are those who, because of a fear of anything even remotely supernatural, either ignore the spiritual conflict, totally rejecting the idea that believers have any role in it, or adopt a kind of agnosticism about it. They admit that a spiritual war exists, but they are unwilling to study it or take part in it.

There are also those who see a demon under every bush, equating sins with specific demons (such as “a demon of lust”) and “binding” Satan on a regular basis. The biblical truth about spiritual warfare lies between these two extremes.

What does the Bible say about spiritual warfare or battle? And what part do we play in it? Most of these spiritual battles are fought out of our sight (see Daniel 10:12–14). But Christians still have a part in them. Our part, however, is not mystical, magical, grand, or highly visible, and it is not flashy or earth-shattering. In a very simple way, Scripture commands us to submit ourselves to God and resist the devil (James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8–9); we are to cast down imaginations and strongholds in the minds and hearts of people and bring every thought into obedience to Christ (2 Corinthians 10:4–6); we are to take the Word of God to all the world and make disciples (Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 1:8; 1 Thessalonians 1:8), delivering people from the dominion of Satan to God (Acts 26:18); we are to continually study to show ourselves approved by God (2 Timothy 2:15). This is how Christians war! We are not called to war with voodoo-like incantations, or prayers of “claiming” or “binding,” nor are we to war with human philosophy (1 Corinthians 2:1–6). We are to war with the pure Word of God. We fight the good fight with the gospel!

But there is another aspect of this spiritual warfare that we should be aware of. In Ephesians 3, Paul wrote about the mystery that was hidden for ages. Paul says that God’s eternal purpose and plan was accomplished

in Christ Jesus our Lord. And that plan is being made known to the “principalities and powers in the heavenly places” (Ephesians 3:9–10). This revelation is most likely being revealed to both the good and fallen angels, and to the devil himself.

But how is this master plan being made known to them? Paul states that it is made known through the church! The existence, growth, preservation, and work of the church are the great evidence to the heavenly enemies of God that God has won the victory over them through Jesus Christ!

No wonder Satan hates the church! The church is the symbol, the banner, of his ultimate defeat! No wonder the devil does all he can to bring the church down! But Jesus has promised that not even the gates of Hades will prevail against the church (Matthew 16:18).

Believers are involved in the spiritual warfare that wages even today by active participation as members of the church of God. By living a faithful Christian life, by husbands loving their wives as Christ loved the church, by wives loving and submitting to their husbands, by children honoring their parents, by loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, by obeying the Great Commission—in all these ways, and many others, we proclaim the final defeat of Satan. You, believer, are a demonstration to Satan and his evil band of their final defeat through the victory of Jesus Christ.

So, when Paul calls us to spiritual warfare in Ephesians 6, to take up the full armor of God, he is actually calling us to faithfulness in the Christian life. All of the elements of the armor of God are simply part of the Christian life: truth, righteousness, salvation, faith, God’s Word, the gospel of peace. As we don this armor, we enter into the battle and participate with God’s holy angels in the warfare that will rage until Christ returns in glory.



## BEFORE THE THRONE

Lord Jesus, you have provided all we need for life and godliness as we fight spiritual battles here on earth. Help us all, Lord, to understand that the “armor” you have given us comes from your Word and the Savior, Jesus Christ. Lord, I pray for my class today, that they will better understand the power that we have in the truth, righteousness, gospel, faith, and your salvation. Give them a desire to learn the Word of God so they will be strong to stand firm when the testing comes!

## Review

Today is our final lesson looking at the truths from the epistles that help us understand how to live a life that is pleasing to God. We have looked at doing good works as a result of our salvation, the benefits we have in Christ as adopted children of God, and the great privilege we have of going to God in various forms of prayer. Our last lesson from the epistles is going to focus on growing in holiness to be more like Christ.

The word we use to describe the biblical doctrine of holiness is *sanctification*. Basically, something is sanctified when it is set apart for a specific use. For example, there were certain tools set aside for service to God in the Temple—these were sanctified. Likewise, the Bible describes

Christians as sanctified, or set apart for service to God (e.g., Acts 20:32). It is the same root word that is translated as “saints.” In the opening of 1 Corinthians, Paul addresses “the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.” Saints have been sanctified by God—set apart to holy service for Him.

While we are set apart at the moment of our salvation, there is another sense in which we grow in holiness. This is typically referred to as progressive sanctification—growing in holiness. And this is the topic of study for us today.



► Write on the board, “What is our standard of holiness?”



## Studying God’s Word

### READ THE WORD

Let’s read 1 Peter 1:13–16 together and look for the standard of holiness we are called to live by. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

### EXAMINE THE WORD

#### Observe the Text

- ? What three commands does Peter give in verse 13? *Gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest in grace.*
- ? What does Peter mean by “gird up the loins of your mind”? *He is using the ancient imagery of a person gathering up their robe to prepare for work or walking/running. Pulling the robes up around the waist or thighs (loins) would allow for easier movement. The ESV and NASB translate the idea as “prepare your mind for action.” Today we might use a phrase like “buckle up” or “tighten your laces” in a similar manner.*
- ? When is God’s grace to be brought to believers? *At the revelation of Jesus Christ.*

► Remind the students that historical context is an important part of proper Bible interpretation, especially with figures of speech.

- ? **What does the “revelation of Jesus Christ” refer to?** *This is a reference to the Second Coming with the word “revelation” coming from the Greek word apokalypsis. This refers to the same event back in verse 7 that was discussed in Lesson 8.*
- ? **What analogy of obedience does Peter use?** *He uses a family analogy, calling the believers to be obedient to God as they would be obedient to a father.*
- ? **What are the believers not to do?** *Conform themselves to their former lusts; this is similar to the instructions in Romans 12:1–2.*
- ? **When does “former” refer to?** *Former refers to before they were Christians.*
- ? **How does Peter describe their former condition?** *They were conforming themselves to their own lusts in ignorance.*
- ? **How does the word “but” shift the statement to a command?** *Peter is pointing them to a new direction that is opposite the direction of their former lives.*
- ? **What command is given in verse 15?** *Be holy in all your conduct.*
- ? **Who is the He in verse 15?** *God the Father.*
- ? **What model of holiness does Peter give?** *He points to God as the model of holiness.*
- ? **What reason for pursuing holiness is given in verse 15?** *Since God has called you to Himself, you should be holy in response to His kindness in calling you to salvation in Christ.*
- ? **What reason for pursuing holiness is given in verse 16?** *Be holy because God is holy.*
- ? **Whose words is Peter quoting?** *God’s words.*
- ? **Where does he take this quote from?** *This idea is presented many times in the Old Testament, but Leviticus 11:44–45 and 19:2 have the most direct connection.*
- ? **When was this command given?** *The context of Leviticus is God affirming His covenant with the Israelites in the wilderness.*
- ? **How often are the believers to obey?** *Peter uses the phrase “in all your conduct” to indicate a total submission to God in every area of our lives.*
- ? **How does Romans 12:1–2 relate to Peter’s command to the believers?** *Paul is calling the believers to live lives of holiness in service to God, conforming their minds to God’s will rather than the world system which they used to follow.*
- ? **In Matthew 22:34–38, Jesus was questioned about obedience to God through the commands of the Law. What did He identify as the most important form of obedience?** *Jesus said that to love God with all our heart, soul, and mind is the first and great commandment.*
- ? **What does the use of heart, soul, and mind indicate?** *This indicates the whole being of a person. In Mark’s account, the idea of strength is added (Mark 12:30).*

Romans 12:1–2

Matthew 22:34–38

► **Pace your lesson!** Use the clocks to mark the time you want to finish each section. This will help you stay on track and finish on time. You may need to shorten or drop sections as necessary.



- ? **What did Jesus identify as the second great command?** *Loving others as you love yourself.*
- ? **Does this passage call you to love yourself?** *Many people mistakenly turn this passage into three commands, adding “love yourself” to the list. But Jesus clearly says there are two commands. Jesus knows that people already love and care for themselves, so He is calling people to love others as they already love themselves.*

## Discover the Truth

We are commanded to be holy! And we are commanded to be holy because the God who has called us to Himself is Holy. As you think about that, it might cause you a little indigestion or fear. That is an amazingly high standard to achieve. And it isn't in just one area of our lives, but in all our conduct. You aren't called to be a holy parent, a holy friend, a holy student, a holy neighbor, or a holy citizen alone, but to be holy in every area of your life.

HOLY

- ? **What attribute of God is in view in this command, and why is it so important?** *The holiness of God is in view in these commands. It is such an important thing to consider because it is often considered the overarching attribute of God through which we understand all of His attributes.*

While there are many nuances to consider as we live lives that are holy before God, Jesus really simplified it by describing obedience to God in two categories—loving God and loving others. He referred back to commands that God had given the Israelites—these are not new concepts, but the standard God has always had for His children. If we consider the Ten Commandments, the first four are directed at loving and worshipping God properly, and the final six are directed at loving others properly. We can simplify our thinking by beginning our day praying to God and asking the Holy Spirit to help us to love God and to love others. We do not battle our flesh and the world on our own—we have the power of God in us to live lives that are pleasing to God. We need to be ever mindful of Paul's exhortation: “Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh” (Galatians 5:16).





# To Be like Him

## MATERIALS

- Student Guides
- Pencils

## INSTRUCTIONS

*As you work through this activity, emphasize that our standard of obedience is Jesus, not other people.*

As believers in the New Covenant, we are no longer bound to the broad set of laws given to the Israelites under the Old Covenant. So, how do we know what the standard of obedience to God in holiness looks like? As you examine the questions in the To Be like Him activity in your Student Guides, I think that will become evident. Look at those passages in small groups, and we will discuss what you find in a few minutes.

## CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Let's look at what each of these passages tells us about living in holiness.

- **Romans 8:28–30** *As we are called to God and seek to love God, the trials in our life are working to conform us into the image of Jesus. Jesus is the standard to which we are to look as we grow in holiness.*
- **2 Corinthians 3:14–18** *By the power of the Holy Spirit, we are being transformed into the image of the Lord (Jesus).*
- **Ephesians 4:11–16** *The saints are being taught by those appointed by Christ (through gifts of the Holy Spirit) to be conformed through the knowledge of the Son of God into the "measure of the stature of the*

*fullness of Christ" and growing up in all things to be like Christ.*

Rather than a *what* as the standard for our obedience, we have a *Who*. As believers, we are called to follow and imitate Jesus Christ. He is the only person who has lived a life of perfect obedience to the Father's commands and God's will. While we walk as Christians, we can think of it as a climb to the top of a hill resulting in holiness and conformity to the character of Jesus. We can see that peak in the distance as we walk. There may be some dips and valleys we pass through, but our goal should be to grow in holiness and to be like Christ in all we do. As we look back, we can see our former ignorant conduct below us and the progress that we have made toward being like Christ. As we look forward, we can see that we still have a long way to go before we are like Him. Ultimately, that will only be fulfilled when we are glorified with Him in eternity.

But when we stumble and fall in those valleys, we must remember that we do not make the climb in our own strength—we do it knowing that Christ has already made the journey for us and that His Spirit is in us. Knowing what Jesus has done for us gives us motivation to continue to strive to put away our own desires while we rest in the work He has done for us. As we walk up the mountain, we must keep the truths of the gospel in mind lest we become discouraged in our own efforts.



## READ THE WORD

So, we know that God has called us to holiness and to be more and more like Christ by the power of the Spirit. Now let's look at a passage that gives us some practical instruction for *how* to do that. We live in a world which is under the influence of Satan and in bodies which are influenced by our fleshly lusts. In Ephesians 6:10–18, Paul gives us a plan to battle against these influences. Since Paul is writing to believers, we are going to think about this passage as though Paul were writing to us personally as believers. *Have someone read the passage aloud.*

## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

- ? **Where does Paul tell us to look for strength?** *We are to look to God for strength, relying in the power of His might.*
- ? **What analogy is Paul using in this passage?** *He is using the various pieces of armor that an ancient Roman soldier would have worn to relate the "armor" that God has given to us. So, the Christian life is compared to a battle and the believer to a soldier equipped by God for the battle.*
- ? **Who is the foe in our battle?** *The devil.*
- ? **What does the armor allow us to do in the presence of the wiles of the devil?** *It allows us to stand against his wiles or schemes.*
- ? **What do we tend to think we are battling against?** *Paul reminds us that we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, which is how we normally think. Paul is reminding us that our battle is not against people, but against the wicked ideologies they stand for and which are influenced by Satan.*
- ? **Who is the battle against?** *It is against the spiritual beings who rule the darkness of this age. These are wicked spiritual beings who have influence in the world and over the people in the world.*
- ? **What do these terms refer to?** *These various terms refer to demonic spiritual beings who are organized into various hierarchies (principalities and powers), much as an army would be on earth. The battle is against the spiritual army under the direction of Satan.*
- ? **What word is repeated in the first five verses?** *Stand is used four times, once as withstand.*
- ? **What will taking up the armor of God allow us to do?** *To stand against the devil's evil schemes.*
- ? **What elements of armor are mentioned?** *A belt (this is implied from "having girded your waist"), breastplate, shoes (implied from "shod your feet"), shield, helmet, and a sword.*
- ? **What attribute does the belt have?** *Truth.*
- ? **Where is a believer to find truth?** *We look to the Word of God and the Person of Jesus as the source of truth as we stand against the devil.*
- ? **What attribute does the breastplate have?** *Righteousness.*

- ? **Where does a believer's righteousness come from?** *Our righteousness comes from Christ who gives us His perfect righteousness and who protects us from the attacks of the devil.*
- ? **What attribute do the shoes have?** *The gospel of peace.*
- ? **What do we learn of the gospel of peace?** *The Bible contains the message of the gospel that brings peace between man and God through Jesus.*
- ? **What attribute does the shield have?** *Faith.*
- ? **What does it allow us to do?** *By faith we can quench the fiery darts of the devil. These are likely referring to the temptations and lies that come at us through the world's system, which is influenced by Satan.*
- ? **What do we use to determine truth from lies and determine which temptations are sinful?** *We compare everything to the Bible to recognize lies and ungodly temptations.*
- ? **What attribute does the helmet have?** *Salvation. (Since Paul is talking to believers, this reference is to assurance of salvation and acknowledgment of that reality rather than the initial salvation of a believer. See Isaiah 59:17 and 1 Thessalonians 5:8 for similar references if time allows.)*
- ? **Where do we learn about our salvation?** *From the Bible and the person and work of Jesus on our behalf.*
- ? **What Person is the sword connected to?** *It is the sword of the Spirit.*
- ? **What does Paul tell us this refers to?** *The Word of God.*
- ? **What can we understand the Word of God to refer to?** *This implies all of the words of truth from God which we have today in the Bible.*
- ? **After taking the armor, what other action does Paul call us to?** *He calls us to constant prayer for the saints.*
- ? **What is the goal of this prayer for the other saints?** *The supplication for all the saints is connected to the previous mention of the armor indicating prayer for mutual protection of other believers from attacks of Satan.*
- ? **What does Paul ask for prayer for himself?** *He asks for prayers for his own boldness that he would proclaim the gospel message as a good ambassador.*

## Discover the Truth

As we mentioned earlier, God has called us out of the kingdom of darkness and the power of Satan into the kingdom of the Son of His love. He has set us apart for holy service in His kingdom; but He has not left us on our own. He has given us amazing truths in His Word where we can read about His faithfulness to His children and all He has done for us in Christ—the topic we reviewed two weeks ago. As we begin each day, we can use this analogy of the armor of God to remind us that as we seek His truth in the Bible and come before Him in prayer, we are prepared for the battle we will surely face.

Whether that battle comes through direct attacks of the enemy, from temptations present in the world around us, or from our own lusts, we

have the power to fight because He is with us. His Spirit dwells in us and brings to mind the truths of Scripture and what Christ has done to secure our salvation. We can recognize lies and proclaim the truth. We can see coming sinful temptations and turn toward righteousness as we claim God's promises in the Scriptures. And we can do all of this only in His power, boldly seeking to live righteous lives and to proclaim the gospel as ambassadors of Christ.



## Applying God's Word

### WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

The call to be holy in all areas of our life is an awesome calling. It is not a calling that we can attain to on our own. We must rely on the power of God and His might to live a life that is worthy of all God has done for us. And our goal is not to meet some checklist of steps to godliness or earn a bunch of merit badges in different areas. Our goal is no less than to be conformed into the image of our Savior. It is not some godly men of the past that we seek to emulate, but Jesus Christ. He was the only man, though God in the flesh, to live a life of perfect obedience to the commands of His Father. No other person, born in sinful flesh, has ever accomplished that, and you never will. You can only trust that Christ has already done it for you and seek to grow in holiness.

But, by the grace of God in our lives and the work of the Spirit in us, we can continue to grow in holiness, being progressively sanctified. We have the truths of His Word as armor for us to wear into the battle against our own lusts and the forces of darkness that work against us. We also have His Spirit dwelling in us, and other Christian brothers and sisters alongside of us, as we fight the darkness and let our lights shine before all men, proclaiming Jesus as the Light of the World.

In all of this, we must remember that when we fail to obey, we can bow before our merciful and gracious Father to ask His forgiveness in the name of Christ. We do not strive after holiness to earn His favor, but because He has already shown His favor to us in sending Christ to die in our place, rising from the grave, and now preparing a place for us to meet Him some day.

### GOD'S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD

- ? In light of the truths in these passages, where do you find yourself struggling as you seek to live a holy life? *Discuss various answers reminding the students of the hope of the gospel where we fall short.*

? **What power do we have to live a life that is holy and pleasing to God?** *We can answer this in three parts: First, we have the Spirit of God living in us. Second, we have the Word of God revealed to us so that we may know what God has done for us and what He wills for us to do. Third, we have other believers to encourage and exhort us to holy living, as well as praying with us and for us to that end.*

? **In 1 Corinthians 11:1 Paul told the believers in Corinth to imitate his life in the ways that he was imitating Christ. What is the danger in thinking of another godly person as our standard of holiness rather than Jesus?** *As humans, we are imperfect and prone to failures. If we look to a person as our model of perfection, we are going to be disappointed when we see them fail. When we look to Christ, we know we have a perfect example to follow and a High Priest who is sympathetic to us. While we can look to others as an example inasmuch as they are imitating Christ, we must ultimately fix our eyes upon Jesus as the author and finisher of our faith (Hebrews 12:1–4).*

? **Many people say that they reject Christianity because of all the hypocrisy. There are many Christians that don't act like Jesus, so how can we respond to accusations like these?** *This could be a misunderstanding on their part ("judge not") believing something that is not true and judging by a false standard. It could also be the result of being hurt by someone in a church. But we must ask them to judge by the truths of who Christ is and what He has done, not what someone may have done in His name. However, this is a reminder that we should be seeking lives that genuinely reflect Christ. And we should seek forgiveness from others when we sin against them.*

? **When we are confronted by skeptics who reject the truths of the Bible, why is it important to remember that they are not the true enemy we are fighting?** *While the person is fighting against God, it is the influence of sin and Satan that has darkened their minds to the truth. We are not ultimately fighting the person, but the ideas they represent. The person was made in the image of God and needs to hear and respond to the gospel message. As 2 Corinthians 10:4 and Ephesians 6:12–13 remind us, we are fighting a spiritual foe that has a human face. We must also remember that Jesus calls us as His followers to pray for our enemies, hoping that God will call them to Himself so they, too, can be delivered from darkness to light just as we have been.*



### MEMORY VERSE

**1 Thessalonians 5:16–18** Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.



### GROUP PRAYER TIME

Be sure to pray with your class before you dismiss them.

- Thank God for calling us from darkness to light.
- Praise God for His holiness.
- Ask God for power to live a life pleasing to Him and in true holiness.

