

YOUR
FIRST
FORTY
DAYS



THE DENVER CHURCH OF CHRIST

Your First Forty Days Study Guide

In all probability, someone has given this study guide to you immediately following your decision to die with Jesus Christ in baptism. You have just come forth from the water and all your sins have been forgiven and there is now a new power at work in your life, the Holy Spirit of God! You were willing to “count yourself nothing” and now God has raised you up to life on higher plains.

One of the things a disciple of Jesus learns very quickly is that there is much that he or she doesn’t know or understand. You too will learn this, but it should in no way discourage you. It just means you have a lifetime of growing and developing ahead. It will never become boring. God’s love is wide and deep and long and high. (See Ephesians 3:17—19). The more we grasp his love, the better it all becomes.

This study guide is designed to help you have some direction each day for the next forty days as you start listening to the voice of God as he speaks to your whole life. Why forty days? We have picked this because that was the length of testing Jesus himself went through following his own baptism. (See Matthew 4:1—11). He passed victoriously through that testing because he knew the Word of God and each time Satan came, he drove him away by using the very words of the Scripture. Satan will make his attack on you. He knows you are young and more vulnerable, but God is with you and with the weapons of righteousness in the right hand and left, you can defeat anything that would take your new life from you.

Determine right now that you are going to make this a rich and powerful study. Open wide your heart and let God do with you all he wants to do. Make sure that you have a definite time and definite place reserved each day to be studying the Scriptures so you can keep hearing the Word of God. Don’t let anything or anyone keep you from this most crucial time. You will be greatly helped if you buy a notebook to put this booklet in along with your notes.

Week One—“Dead to Self—Alive to Christ”

This week you will be studying passages in the Scriptures that show us so clearly what the problem is. The problem is the “self” that lives for itself. Christ calls us to crucify the old self and he promises to raise up a new and very different self.

1st Day

- 1) Before you actually begin your Bible study program, please take a few minutes to write down in your own words what your baptism into Jesus Christ meant to you. Why did you do it? What is it going to mean? If you will keep this in a safe place, it will mean a great deal to you for years to come. It will serve as a reminder to you of the serious commitment you made on the day of your baptism.
- 2) Turn to Luke 9:18—26. Read that study this passage several times.
- 3) Now turn to Luke 18:28—30 and look at the promise that is attached to discipleship, indeed to the very decision you have just made.
- 4) These two passages will become very important as you share your life in Christ with others. Remember where they are and what they say. As you continue to go through this study, remember that everything you learn is something that you will be responsible for passing on to someone else. Don’t skim over it. Learn it as you go.
- 5) Be sure to spend time in prayer during your study sessions. Learn to communicate deeply with your Father who loves you so very much. (Reading the Psalms can help you develop this deep connection with God, by imitating the way David and others communicated to God).

2nd Day

- 1) Turn to Romans 6:1—14. Read and study this carefully. Each time you come to the word “we” or “us”, substitute your own name. (For example: verse 2—“By no means. **John** dies to sin, how can he live in it any longer?”)
- 2) Write down some of the things about your new self that caused it to receive the death sentence.
- 3) Write down some things about your new self that you really want to express.
- 4) How do you specifically plan today to live out verse 13?

3rd Day

- 1) Before you start today’s study, ask yourself a very important question: *Am I staying in close touch with other Christians?* This is crucial and all next week, the Bible study will focus on this, but we can’t wait until next week so say something about it. If there is anything in you that is not wanting to see or be with other disciples, then you can be sure that it is not of God and must be crucified. It is your old independent self, not the new self God is giving you.
- 2) Turn to Romans 7:14—24 and read how powerless we are to live this new life alone. Do you see why we must deny the self? Especially note verse 24.
- 3) Now, go on to Romans 8 where we see how we can do the impossible. You were told at your baptism that you would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Study some of what that Spirit means in your life while reading verses 1—17. Write down notes on the things that strike you most significantly. Remember to keep substituting your own name for the pronouns.

4th Day

- 1) As you have questions about things that you are studying or things that are happening to you, seek out some of your older brothers and sisters and let them help you. They have been through many things that you will go through. Lean on their wisdom and understanding.
- 2) For this Bible study, you will need both an Old Testament and a New Testament. If you don't have both, make arrangements to get them right away.
- 3) When we are children, we need to be taught things we don't know, and we need to be corrected when we are wrong. You are a baby in Jesus Christ. There is much you don't know and there are some areas where you need correction. We can say that for every new Christian (and every older one). How you take correction is going to make all the difference in your growth in Christ.
- 4) Turn to Proverbs 12:1—2. Next look at Proverbs 12:15. Go back and read chapter 10:17.
- 5) Write down your own attitude toward being corrected. Distinguish between those things that are left over from your old self and those things that Jesus Christ is putting in your heart.
- 6) Go to the New Testament now and read 2 Timothy 3:16 and answer these questions: *Why are older brothers and sisters to bring the Word of God to you? What is going to be your attitude when they do?*

5th Day

- 1) In your new life, you will find that "attitude is everything". If you develop a critical or negative or pessimistic attitude, you will put out the Spirit's fire in your life. Today, the Bible study will focus on the reason you can keep a great attitude even in the worst of circumstances.

- 2) Read and examine each of the following passages: John 16:33, Romans 8:28, Philippians 4:12—13 and 19, and James 1: 2—4.
- 3) When these are all put together, what are they promising you about everything in your life?
- 4) How does this fit with having a good attitude regardless of what is happening?
- 5) List anything that is tending to cause you to have a bad (negative, complaining, pessimistic) attitude. Confess this right away to another disciple and ask for their prayers and encouragement.

6th Day

- 1) By today, you have likely realized that you are not doing all for Jesus Christ that you determined to do five or six days ago. You want to love him with all your heart, soul, mind and strength. But you have failed in some specific areas. What you will study today will be very important in dealing with this for the rest of your life.
- 2) Turn to 1 John 1:5—10. Read it carefully.
- 3) Think of the difference in light and darkness. Think of the difference between a bright open room with lots of windows and a totally dark basement area. In one, things are out in the open; you can see them as they really are. In the other, things are hidden and covered by the darkness. With this in mind, what does God mean when he calls us to “walk in the light”? Do you see how this fits with verse 9 and the call to confess our sins?
- 4) We all (from the oldest to the youngest in Christ) sin. If we claim that we don’t, we lie (verse 10) How then are we to handle all this? Do we cover and hide our sins? Or do we bring them out into the open through confession?

- 5) Look at the two results of walking out in the light as described in verse 7. How will this cause a deeper fellowship with the brothers and sisters?
- 6) Remember this trustworthy saying: Satan's only ground is darkness. When we confess our sins and bring them out into the light, we take his only base of operation away from him.

7th Day

- 1) As you come to the end of this first week as a committed disciple of Jesus Christ, go back to the most basic idea in discipleship. Turn to Galatians 2:20.
- 2) Every time your old nature tries to assert itself, you can say, "I have been crucified with Christ." Concerning what things do you especially need to say that today? Write them down.
- 3) As you determine what you should do with your day, remember: "I no longer live, but Christ lives in me." Meditate on the very things that Jesus Christ is most interested in.
- 4) Focus on Paul's words today. "You are not your own; you were bought with a price." (1 Corinthians 6:19—20). Believe that with all your heart. You are not your own. Jesus Christ has purchased you for his purposes by this death on the cross. Carefully distinguish between your purposes and his purposes and live as one who has been "bought with such a great price."

IMPORTANT REMINDER: As a new baby in Christ, you need to be in daily touch with others who are ready to give you encouragement and guidance. If you have been avoiding that contact, determine now to deal with that wrong attitude that is developing.

Week Two—"No Life Outside the Body"

This week you will be studying passages in the Scriptures that emphasize the importance of being connected to the body of Christ through our relationships with other Christians.

8th Day

- 1) Begin today by reading Matthew 18:18—20, concentrating on verses 18 and 20. What do these two verses say to you?
- 2) Jesus Christ who has all authority, taught us that the church is very, very important. In Matthew 16:16—18, Jesus hears Peter confess him to be the Christ, the Son of God and immediately Jesus said, "Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it." Jesus saw the church at the center of his plan. He wanted to build it and he intended to make it so strong that the forces of Satan could not stand against it. What Jesus counted as so important, we too must count as so important.
- 3) For a true picture of what the church should be striving to become every day, look at Acts 2:40—47.
- 4) What can you do today and the rest of this week to contribute to this kind of life among God's people (the church)?
- 5) If the church you are a part of is not like this at all, what should you do? Complain vigorously? Leave the church and go it alone? Or is there a better option; a more Biblical opinion?

9th Day

- 1) Paul describes the church as “the Body of Christ”. Read Romans 12:1—8 and see how giving yourself first to God leads to giving yourself to other people in the Body of Christ.
- 2) Notice particularly verse 5 which says, “... each member belongs to all the others.” (NIV) or “...members of one another.” (NASB). How does this fit with or conflict with the American ideal or individualism?
- 3) List three things that you know already that you can do for other members of the Body of Christ. Share these with a prayer partner or someone who is close to you and get their reaction.
- 4) List at least three things that you know you need from the Body of Christ in order to grow in Christ. Share these also with another person.

10th Day

- 1) Read Ephesians 4:1—5. Why does it seem to you that God is so very concerned about the body of Christ being in unity and peace?
- 2) Turn to 1 John 1:5—10. Read it carefully.
- 3) Turn to Romans 14:13—15:3 and read how far we should go and how much we should bend to keep the Body of Christ together.
- 4) Is there anything in your life that is so important to you that you would not give it up even if it was keeping people from coming to Jesus Christ or growing in him? If there is, look back to verse 21 and seek help in dealing with this area of your life.

11th Day

- 1) God is greatly concerned about the UNITY of the church, and he is greatly concerned about the PURITY of the Body of Christ. We are called to a holy life and a pure life. Sin in the Body that is kept hidden or ignored will destroy the power of the church.
- 2) Read Ephesians 5:1—4. List those things which are described here as improper for God's holy people.
- 3) How would living as "children of light" be totally different from these things you have just listed? What is the basic difference.
- 4) You are a young Christian, but what should you do if you see brothers or sisters falling into some sin? Read Galatians 6:1—2.

12th Day

- 1) What is the one thing that must be in the church and in our relationships above all else? Read the following passages: John 13:34—35, 1 Corinthians 13:1—3, Galatians 5:6,13—14, Ephesians 5:1—2, Colossians 3:14 and 1 Peter 4:8.
- 2) For a more precise definition of love, compare John 13:34—35 with 1 John 3:16. List all the things you can think of that describe the way Jesus Christ loved us.
- 3) How are you progressing in your relationship with your new brothers and sisters in Christ? Are they seeing your love for them? Many new Christians just want to be loved and to be served. Break this pattern and reach out to others because Jesus Christ has reached out to you.

13th Day

- 1) One of the things we can all do for one another in the Body is give encouragement. Read a powerful statement about this in Hebrews 3:12—14.
- 2) According to this passage, what is to be the specific purpose of our encouragement? What do you think will be involved in giving this kind of specific encouragement? (If this is not clear, be sure and discuss it with an older brother or sister).
- 3) Look at 2 Timothy 4:2. Notice that we can encourage people by bringing the Word to them (not just by complimenting them). In your new relationships, try to share with someone everyday something that you have found in God's Truth that is inspiring and encouraging to you.

14th Day

- 1) When problems develop in the Body between brothers and sisters, they must be dealt with so that Satan is given no opportunity to enter in. Read Matthew 18:15—20, which gives us the right way to deal with such situations.
- 2) Determine early in your Christian life that you will not complain or grumble behind someone's back about what they have done. Determine that you will always go to them and resolve the problem with God's help (see verse 20).

Week Three— “Go Make Disciples”

This week we want to look at how God plans to use you to bring others into the freedom from sin that you have found in Christ. First, we will consider how important your own life is in sharing with others.

15th Day

- 1) To be a disciple is to come under the discipline of Jesus Christ. To be a disciple is to let Jesus Christ be Lord in all the areas of your life. Examine carefully the following items and make sure that you are opening up and working on those that are applicable to you.
 - Financial status: Are you using your money wisely? Are you taking care of debt? Are you giving money generously to the church? Is all your money, God’s money?
 - Sexuality: Are you completely free of any immoral relationships? Are you opening up your struggles to others who can help and encourage you? Are you strongly rejecting the world’s attitude toward sex and replacing it with God’s attitude? This area is a real stumbling block for many young Christians. Don’t dismiss it lightly.
 - Time Management: Are you eliminating wasted time from your schedule? Do you have definite plans at the beginning of each day? Have you shared your schedule with someone else to get their opinion and input?
- 2) Read 1 Thessalonians 4:1—12 for Biblical encouragement in all these areas.

16th Day

- 1) Turn to 1 Peter 13—17, especially noting verses 15—16.

- 2) What is involved in each of these statements:
 - “In your hearts acknowledge Christ as the Holy Lord”
 - “Always be prepared to give an answer...”
 - “With gentleness and respect”
 - “Keeping a clear conscience”
- 3) Who are the people around you? Write down their names. They need to hear the answer about Christ as Lord in the spirit of the passage you have just read.

17th Day

- 1) The last words a person speaks usually tell us a lot about the major things on their heart. Turn to Matthew 28:18—20 and read again the final commission of Jesus before he left this world.
- 2) What does it mean to you that “all authority has been given to Jesus Christ”? What does it mean that he has all authority over you?
- 3) When we “go”, what does Jesus Christ want us to do?
- 4) Look back over the list of people you wrote down yesterday. Begin praying for them specifically that you may “go” to them with the message Jesus has given you.

18th Day

- 1) Start today with Colossians 4:2—6.
- 2) List all the things you find here that relate to sharing your faith with someone.
- 3) What does it mean to “Make the most of every opportunity”? How have you used the opportunities of this week? What can you do to use them more for the Lord?

19th Day

- 1) We tend to think that certain situations are not good ones for sharing the Gospel. Most of us would find being in prison and in chains, a terrible circumstance for evangelism. Read Acts 16:22—34.
- 2) To see that this was no fluke, turn next to Philippians 1:12—14 and listen to what Paul has to say while writing from another prison. (This one was probably in Rome, where he was chained to a guard).
- 3) What situations are you in right now? Write down why these situations make sharing the Gospel difficult. Having done this, now give all these excuses up to the Lord and claim the fact that he is able to work powerfully in all circumstances.
- 4) Turn over to Philippians 4:4—6 for encouragement.

20th Day

- 1) To “Go Make Disciples” we need great boldness and courage. In ourselves, we don’t have what it takes. The Holy Spirit will fill us with the boldness we need. Read Acts 4:8—13, especially noting verse 13.
- 2) Also notice the message we must proclaim. It is found in verse 12. Don’t ever water this message down. It is the only thing that can change men’s lives.
- 3) Look also at 2 Timothy 1:7. When you find yourself being timid, you can be sure that it is your SELF. For God has not given you a spirit of timidity or fear. It doesn’t come from him. The self must be denied and we must give God’s Spirit the freedom to fill us with power and love and self-control. There are many statements in the Scripture concerning the courage and boldness God will give us. Keep studying and never be satisfied with timidity or fear.

21st Day

- 1) No real evangelism or discipling takes place until we have brought a person in to the Body of Christ. As you share with people, make every effort to introduce them to the members of the Body where you are. Experience shows that this is a powerful tool in reaching people.
- 2) Look at Acts 2:42—48. This is to be the spirit found in our fellowship; when outsiders come in, they will be convicted that something is missing in their lives.
- 3) You have now been a disciple for over three weeks. You should be having an impact on others for Jesus Christ by now. If this is not happening, or if you see that it could be happening much more, get with an older brother or sister and share what is going on. Let them encourage and help you.

Week Four— “The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”

During this week of study, we will look at the God we worship and the way he expresses himself in the Father, the Son, and the Spirit.

22nd Day

- 1) Turn to Mark 14:32—36. Notice the word Jesus uses for God. It is the Aramaic word “Abba.” It was an intimate word and no Jew ever used it before Jesus to describe God. It was the word little boys and girls used for their daddies. Look at Romans 8:15—17 and Galatians 4:6. Do you see the kind of God we have and how we can approach him?
- 2) Look at Matthew 7:7—12. What does this specifically say about God’s concern for you today? What things are you concerned about? What does God feel for you?

23rd Day

- 1) Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Our whole faith is built on the fact that he came into this world from his own special place and put down his life with us. What does that tell you about such a one?
- 2) Read John 1:1—18. According to this passage, what is it that we find in Jesus Christ? What does it all mean to your personal life that he is this way?
- 3) Look closely at what he went through for you. Look in the Old Testament at Isaiah 53 and see the statement made about Jesus even before he appeared on earth.

24th Day

- 1) When you were baptized into Jesus Christ, you received the gift of the Holy Spirit.

- 2) Today and tomorrow, we want to look at some of the ministries of the Holy Spirit in your life. Turn to John 16:16—27 and read carefully, looking for teaching about the work of the Spirit.
- 3) Notice he (1) is the Spirit of Truth, (2) will be with you forever, and (3) will live in you and be in you. What is this going to mean to your life?
- 4) Read John 16:5—11. The work of the Spirit involves convicting us of sin, righteousness and judgment. How would you relate this passage to the ideas found in Ephesians 6:17, 2 Timothy 3:16—17, and Hebrews 4:12—13.

25th Day

- 1) Turn and read Romans 8:1—17 as we continue to look at the work of the Holy Spirit.
- 2) Focus on vv. 9—11. What kind of promise is made to you here? Write down some ways you can see this practically affecting your life.
- 3) In our lives we have been enslaved to various passions and desires. On our own, we found we had no real power to break free from those. Notice the message of vv. 12—13. How do we put to death the misdeeds of the body?
- 4) Notice in vv. 14—17 how the Spirit of God in us brings us into intimate relationship with God.

26th Day

- 1) It is important to learn all you can about Jesus Christ because of what the following Scriptures teach: 2 Corinthians 3:18 and Romans 8:29. What do these passages teach about our relationship to Jesus Christ?
- 2) Look also at 1 John 3:2—3. What is the “hope” referred to in verse 3?
- 3) List at least three things that are found in Jesus Christ that you want to work on in your own life.

- 4) How would you respond to someone who might say, "Trying to be like Jesus Christ is an impossible dream. It can only frustrate you."?

REMEMBER: Get help from an older disciple as you move deeper into this study. Let him or her check out what you are finding.

27th Day

- 1) Look at the picture of Jesus Christ found in Hebrews 4:14—16.
- 2) Write down what each of these statements means to you:
 - Jesus is the great high priest who has gone into heaven.
 - Jesus is able to understand and relate to our weaknesses since he was tempted in every way like us (yet without sin).
 - Because of Jesus, we can approach God's throne of grace with confidence.
- 3) How does this understanding of Jesus Christ affect you right now at school, on the job, in the home? Write down the way it changes your attitude.

28th Day

- 1) There may be some things that will happen to you to make you wonder if God is for you or against you. Read Romans 8:31—39 to see the kind of God you worship.
- 2) Go back to verse 28 for still another promise!
- 3) Paul lists a number of things that might seem to cut us off from the love of God. What are some things in your life that are difficult or threatening? Write out verse 37 just as Paul says it. Then write out verse 38 substituting the things in your life that might interfere with your relationship to God.

Week Five—“Submit to Every Authority”

This week, you will study one of the keys to the Christian life. It is totally opposed to worldly wisdom, but it is something we see perfectly in Jesus and he wants to see it in us. It is the principle of submission.

29th Day

- 1) Already you have studied passages that tell you who really has all the authority today. It is Jesus Christ, but God has set up certain orders in society. These (1) maintain order and (2) teach us to be submissive and obedient in spirit so we can ultimately and basically submit to and obey Jesus Christ.
- 2) To follow Jesus Christ, one must have an obedient spirit. One must be willing to submit to another's authority. Read 1 Peter 1:14. What kind of children does God want?
- 3) Read Ephesians 2:1—2 to determine what kind of spirit God is opposed to.
- 4) Look at Hebrews 5:7—9 for an important statement about Jesus Christ, who is our example in all attitudes. What did he learn? How was it learned? What does God want us to learn? How will it be learned?

30th Day

- 1) Return to 1 Peter where yesterday we learned that God wants obedient children. Now look at 2:11—17.
- 2) Our old self with its sinful desires (described in verse 11) does not want to obey. It wants to do things “my own way.” It doesn't like to be told what to do. That's why Jesus says, “Deny yourself.” It is not willing to cooperate with God's plan.
- 3) Notice in v. 13 why you should submit to every authority.

- 4) List all the authorities you can think of that are in your life currently, meaning all the people that are in some role where they can tell you what to do or strongly expect you to do what they ask. What is your attitude toward these authorities?

31st Day

- 1) The question is often asked, "Do I have to submit to these authorities in my life even when they are wrong? That do you think the mind of Christ would say here.
- 2) Continue the passage you started yesterday. Read 1 Peter 2:18—23. What does it contribute to the question raised above?
- 3) What we are being told here, in Ephesians 5—6 and in Colossians 3 is that should have a submissive and obedient attitude at all times. We should be ready to over those God has put over us. See Acts 4:18—20 for a clear example. Study this carefully. When a command of some man or woman constitutes a clear violation of Scripture, then we cannot obey that person; but we should not then take on a rebellious attitude. We should lovingly and with respect for their authority, decline to submit in that area (but not in all others).

32nd Day

- 1) In the body of Christ, God has placed certain men over you. First, there are the elders or overseers in the body. Then, there are those who have been given special authority by the elders. Look at what Hebrews 13:17 says about your responsibility to these men.
- 2) Do you know the names of the elders and other leaders that are working in special ways to lead and guide you? How can you specifically make their work a joy and not a burden?

- 3) Does this passage say we have to agree with everything a leader does before we can submit to him and obey him?
- 4) Make sure your relationships with your leaders are good ones. If there is anger, resentment or hurt in you toward any one of them, don't put off sitting down with that leader and opening up your heart. If you see others in the body developing rebellious and disobedient attitudes, go to them and encourage them to deal with that.

33rd Day

- 1) Start reading in Ephesians 5:21 and go through chapter 6:4. Regardless of who you are, you are most likely in some kind of family relationship. In these relationships, you can show the love of God...the kind of love that is willing to lay down it's life for others in the family.
- 2) If your spouse, parents, or children have not been seeing the things described in Ephesians 5 –6 in you, then a confession to them could open up many new possibilities in your ministry to them.
- 3) Remember, your ultimate concern is that your family members would come to know the living God in a deeper and deeper way, through your life's example.

34th Day

- 1) Turn to and read Romans 13..
- 2) List as many clear teachings in this passage as you can find.
- 3) Is there anything wrong with a bitter, complaining attitude about the government one lives under?
- 4) Again, when must a Christian say "no" to government? In what way should we say "no"?

35th Day

- 1) One of the great texts in the New Testament is Philippians 2:1—11. Read this carefully, looking for the deeper teachings about the power of submission.
- 2) In what ways can you “empty yourself”? (This is literally the word translated in some versions: “made himself to be nothing”).
- 3) In what ways (specific) can you take the form of a servant to your brothers/sisters and to those who are lost, this week?
- 4) What happens to those who submit? What does God do?

Week Six—“Fighting the Good Fight of Faith”

There are many scriptures that remind us to “stand firm” and “fight the good fight” throughout our Christian walk. This week we will look into some of these passages. It will help you so much as the years go by, to make a commitment now to always stay in the fight—the spiritual battle—trusting in God’s strength.

36th Day

- 1) You are well over a month into your life as a disciple of Jesus Christ. If you have been serious about it, this month should have been one in which you faced many things about yourself that need changing. You also should have been filled with joy because you know that God is for you and Jesus Christ is with you to help you become like him.
- 2) Look at Paul’s words about joy in Philippians 4:4—6. How often does it say we should “rejoice”? Compare this with 1 Thessalonians 5:16—18. When should we rejoice? When should we be thankful?
- 3) If you have been guilty of complaining or being negative about your life, seek out another disciple or those you have hurt and let them know you are sorry because you have all the reason in the universe for joy.

37th Day

- 1) The image of a soldier or warfare is often employed in the New Testament. The reason is: we are at war. The ways of God and the ways of men (influenced by Satan) are totally opposed. Our culture is constantly bombarding us with its message of how to find life, but God’s message is completely different. One cannot survive in warfare unless he is equipped and knows how to do battle.

- 2) Start with Ephesians 6:10—18. There is enough here for several days of study. We will take a little at a time.
- 3) First of all in warfare, we need to clearly identify the enemy. Verses 10—11 make that identification very clear for us. Who is the enemy? What are some of the schemes that you can see him working out in your life to take you out of the light of God?
- 4) Please realize now and always, that your boss is not the enemy, your parents aren't the enemies, your husband or wife is not your enemy/ Flesh and blood people are not the enemies. Any time we identify them as the enemies, we fall into Satan's scheme and begin shooting at the wrong person. List some times that you have done this recently (or have come close to doing it).
- 5) Set your mind against the real forces of darkness that Satan commands. Pray for strength and for God's mighty power to overcome it.

38th Day

- 1) Read Ephesians 6:10—18 again.
- 2) Satan's power is described in real terms. You will be so vulnerable to him if you are not aware of his power. Why is it true that we don't have to be fearful in this warfare?
- 3) We don't have to be fearful, but we do have to put on the full armor of God. Without the protection and the spiritual weapons he supplies, we will be overcome. Let's look at them one at a time.
 - The Belt of Truth. Where do you find truth? John 17:17
 - The Breastplate of Righteousness. Read Philippians 3:8—9.
 - The Gospel of Peace. Read Ephesians 2:14—18.
 - The Shield of Faith. How does it put out the fiery darts of Satan?

- The Helmet of Salvation. Read Romans 8:1—2.
- The Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God. See Hebrews 4:12.
- And pray in the Spirit on all occasions. How has your prayer life developed?

You now know what the armor of God looks like. Please realize that, like any good soldier, you will have to put it on every day. One of Satan's schemes is to make you believe once will do it for all time. Every day, you need to be into God's truth, reaffirming the gospel, reclaiming your righteousness and salvation in Christ, restating your confidence in prayer and in the God who answers prayer.

39th Day

- 1) Begin today with 2 Timothy 2:1—7.
- 2) Focus in especially on vv. 3—4. To be a Christian is not like going on a picnic. It is like enrolling in an army, going into training, using spiritual weapons, and then going into battle. If you are really walking with Jesus Christ and waging his warfare, you will experience HARSHIP. Look at 2 Timothy 3:12. What does this promise say? What are we assured of?
- 3) Because of this passage, we can say with confidence that the person who never experiences any persecution from the forces of the enemy must not be fighting against the enemy. If the attitude of the people of this world toward you is that you are a really great and okay person, then you need to examine your commitment and your boldness for Jesus Christ. Look at what Jesus himself promised in John 15:18—21.

- 4) Returning to 2 Timothy 2:4, we see that the warfare is going to be so serious and so intense that the Christian soldier must not get involved in "civilian affairs". There are a lot of things to do in the world that are not "wrong". But they are wrong for us if they take us away from the front lines and from fighting the good fight. Are there some things in your life that need to be given up because they are "involvement in civilian affairs"?

40th Day

- 1) Your "1st 40 Days" study guide ends today, but may your Bible study never end! You are on your way to things too glorious and enriching to even describe. Never, never, never, never, never give up!
- 2) Read carefully the call of these passages: 1 Peter 2:1—2, Hebrews 5:11—6:3 and Colossians 2:6—10.
- 3) Keep studying, keep confessing your sins, keep encouraging others, keep sharing your faith, and whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Prayer: "Father, thank you for taking our broken lives and making something beautiful out of us. May we always put ourselves in your hands to be molded and shaped up by you. Use our very lives to draw many people into the Kingdom of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Through Him, Amen."

