

# BIBLE TEACHING AND WORSHIP GUIDE



## FOR THE HOME-BASED CHURCH

Produced Weekly

***Soul Competency and the Priesthood of the Believer***  
Genesis 1:26-27; Jeremiah 31:29-34; Matthew 16:16-17;  
John 3:16; 1 Peter 2:4-10

Copy this sheet for the Gathering Time, Bible Study, and Worship Experience leaders for the next meeting of the church.

## Leaders' Responsibilities:

**Important:** Each person who will be leading one of the three parts of a session during a Unit of sessions needs to have access to the "Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study". That information is often provided at the beginning of that Unit of sessions. The weekly session "Background" located in the Teacher Preparation is much more specific to that day's study.

1. **The Gathering Time Leader** will gather all of the people together and help them prepare their minds and hearts for a wonderful worship experience before God. His/her responsibility is to introduce the congregation to the theme (content) and the Scripture that will be central to their worship experience for the day.

2. **The Bible Study Leader** will then help the people understand what the Scriptures have to say and teach us about the content of the study for the day. He/she will guide the people to make a general application of the study (ie: How does this Bible study apply to people today?)

3. **The Worship Time Leader** has the responsibility to use the theme and Scriptures to guide the congregation to make personal commitments to God's will for each one in regard to the study for the day. He/she will use others to lead in the music, taking the offering, ministry moment comments, and other activities and parts of the **Worship Time** that can aid in participatory worship.

## Prior to this Coming Session:

### **Gathering Time Leader:**

Make a copy of the quotation found on the final page of this session for every participant of the "Gathering Time". The preschoolers will feel more included if each has a slip of paper just like the older members, even though they cannot yet read.

### **Bible Study Leader:**

### **Worship Time Leader:**

©2001-2009, Eternal Interactive, LLC, All Rights Reserved. [www.homechurchonline.com](http://www.homechurchonline.com)

*Soul Competency and the Priesthood of the Believer* – 05 14 11-en

Unless otherwise noted, scripture taken from the Holy Bible, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. All rights reserved throughout the world. Used by permission of International Bible Society.

Make sufficient copies of the scriptures found on the final page of this session so that the congregation can read them aloud together at the appropriate times.

**Music Sources:**

“**Great is the Lord**”, #11, *Maranatha! Music*, Third Edition.

“**Come Into His Presence**”, #15, *Maranatha! Music*, Third Edition.

“**I Am His, and He Is Mine**”, #336, *Baptist Hymnal*, 1991. Other sources.

## ***Soul Competency and the Priesthood of the Believer***

### ***Focal Text***

Genesis 1:26-27; Jeremiah 31:29-34; Matthew 16:16-17; John 3:16; 1 Peter 2:4-10

### ***Main Idea***

Copy the following quote for each person. (You will find it in copy format at the end of the session along with items to be copied for Worship Time readings).

Ask a preschooler or child to hand them out. Read it as an introduction to the day's study and say, "Please keep this quote in a place where you will see it again and again. Try to understand what it means in terms of our responsibility and growth as a Christian.

"There should be no institution, human person, rite, or system which stands between the individual person and God...All have equal access to the Father's table, the Father's ear, and the Father's heart." (Herschel H. Hobbs and E. Y. Mullins, *The Axioms of Religion*, revised edition. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press 1978, page 75.)

### **Gathering together:**

Ask: "Please name something that a parent must do for a baby?" Write the answers on a newspaper page with a marker.

Then ask: "At what age should the baby begin doing each of these activities for him/herself?" There comes a time when each person should be capable of doing many things for himself.

Say: We call it "growing up" or maturing. Everyone also reaches an age of accountability - each of us must deal personally and individually with God. This Biblical truth—that we are each accountable to God—leads to an important doctrine: the priesthood of the believer.

Like the child who grows into maturity under the teaching and guidance of wise parents, we as Christians should grow into maturity and with that maturity assume responsibility for reading, interpreting and applying Biblical truth to our lives. It is much easier to leave understanding deep Biblical principals to "professional religionists – preachers,

pastors, missionaries, or seminary teachers. But what a wonderful thing it is that each one of us as individual Christians has access to the Word of God and responsibility for learning what it means for our own lives.

## **Closing the Gathering Time:**

Take time at this point to mention items of prayer concern for the church, announcements of ministry or activities, and anything else that needs to be shared with or by the congregation. Pray for these needs. Remember to praise God in prayer.

Break time! Take five minutes between sessions. Encourage children to use the washroom so that they won't need to leave during the Bible Study time.

Distribute youth/adult Bible study outlines or paper for note-taking, if available.

Also hand out the activity sheets for preschool and younger children to use during Bible Study and/or worship.

# 2

Copy this section for the Bible Study leader.

**Note to the Bible Study Leader:** Suggested teaching time for the Bible study should be about 35 minutes. Use the “Teacher Preparation” for your personal study during the week before the session. Use the “Bible Study Plan” for the actual session.

## Teacher Preparation

### ***Soul Competency and the Priesthood of the Believer***

#### ***Focal Text***

Genesis 1:26-27; Jeremiah 31:29-34; Matthew 16:16-17; John 3:16; 1 Peter 2:4-10

#### ***Background Text***

Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7; Exodus 19:1-6; Psalms 8; 42:1-2; Jeremiah 31:29-34; Ezekiel 18:1-4; Matthew 16:13-17; John 3:1-16; 8:36; 14:12; Acts 4:12; 1 Corinthians 3:21, 23; Galatians 5:1, 13; Ephesians 2:11-21; Hebrews 4:14-16; 8:8-13; Revelation 5:1-10

#### ***Main Idea***

“There should be no institution, human person, rite, or system which stands between the individual person and God...All have equal access to the Father’s table, the Father’s ear, and the Father’s heart.” (Herschel H. Hobbs and E. Y. Mullins, *The Axioms of Religion*, revised edition. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press 1978, page 75.)

#### ***Questions to Explore***

Who might be a person which could stand between the individual person and God?

What institutions or systems can stand between the individual person and God?

What does “equal access” to the Father’s table, the Father’s ear, and the Father’s heart mean to you?

#### ***Teaching Aim***

To lead the class to identify implications of soul competency and the priesthood of the believer.

### **Introduction to your personal study:**

A Christian was talking to a lady on her front porch about her relationship to Christ. The visitor asked, “What do you think it takes for a person to be a Christian?” The lady

©2001-2009, Eternal Interactive, LLC, All Rights Reserved. [www.homechurchonline.com](http://www.homechurchonline.com)

6

***Soul Competency and the Priesthood of the Believer – 05 14 11-en***

Unless otherwise noted, scripture taken from the Holy Bible, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. All rights reserved throughout the world. Used by permission of International Bible Society.

thought, and then responded: "I'm a Christian because I live in a Christian nation." She was wrong, of course. God is not limited to one nation. God is available in all countries. God is not limited to one race. Individuals and groups place barriers and obstacles in the way of others getting to God. Some would answer the question by saying: be baptized, take the Lord's Supper, go to a certain church, count beads, light a candle, do certain good works. The list could go on. Today we examine the scripture to see how each person has direct access to God and that there should be no external barriers placed in the path of any individual.

## **Background:**

Please ask for and read the information contained in the "**Basic Information for Leading the Unit of Study**", found at the beginning of this Unit. Whoever downloaded this session for you should have that material for you as well.

Today's session focuses on God's intent when He created us. It remains one of those most simple to understand yet least accepted doctrines in the Bible. Simply put, God created "man" (all human beings) in his image. As God's very special creation, each of us are capable of a personal relationship with God. Therefore we also have the personal responsibility of choosing to accept that relationship with Him or choosing to deny it. Every person who ever lived has made that choice. Every person who will live will make that choice.

We must leave some questions unanswered, such as the obviously beautiful relationship between many severely mentally challenged persons and God. Yet, in normal circumstances, we accept the condition of person's responsibility to choose or reject God's offer of salvation and eternal relationship with Him.

## **Focusing on the Meaning:**

### **Made in the Image of God** Genesis 1:26

This verse begins the second part of God's sixth day work, that of his creation of man. It's interesting to learn that man was created after the animals, ocean creatures, and birds. Man had nothing to do with the beginning of lesser life on earth. This order of creation follows the pattern of moving from the lesser to the greater. Man was the last created. All previous creations were for his benefit. There is a difference in the creation of man. In the other creations the account begins, "**And God said....**" The account of man's creation begins, "**Let us make man....**" Man was made in the image of God, something that the previous creations were not. Animals and man were made the same day but man is made in the image of God. "Image," a perfect resemblance describes man, yet "likeness" spotlights that man, who is like God, is not God.

Genesis 1:27 Man is made in the image of God, or God likeness, yet he is not God nor deity. He is finite, limited and made of clay. Animals live by instinct. Man is to live in

personal relationship and fellowship with God. Where animals live by instinct, man is given ability to make intelligent and rational choices.

### **Man is Individually Responsible to God** Jeremiah 31:29-34

Jeremiah 31:29-34 The people of God would no longer be responsible for the sins of their fathers. God would not punish the child for the wrong doing of the parent. Everyone would be responsible for his own decision and life. Individuals would feel the consequences for his sin, just as the one who eats the sour grape has his own teeth set on edge. God speaks of the new covenant that he will make with the people of reunited Israel and Judah. This new covenant will not be like the one that God had with the Children of Israel as he led them out of Egypt. This covenant was between God and the Israelites, as if they were blind, or lame or weak. This covenant had been made by God but broken by the people. Even though God had been as a loving, tender, faithful and careful husband to the people. The old covenant had failed because the people had persistently broken it.

This new covenant was to be different than the old covenant. It would be the same law but a different relationship. This law would not be on tablets of stone but would be written on the individual hearts of the people. God would write this covenant on the heart where it would be available when each believer has occasion to use it. The individual becomes the focus of the new covenant, not the nation. The responsibility to use it would be the individual's. This covenant promises that the things of God will become clearer than ever before because of the Gospel. Man, in this new covenant, would know God personally. This relationship would come about because of a dynamic, personal, and intimate fellowship between God and man. It would not come about because of ritual, creed, or ceremony. This relationship would come about because of the forgiveness of sin. God will not only forgive but will forget. These truths stated **“thus says the Lord”** point toward the cross of Christ. All of these point to an event some six hundred years in the future.

### **Man Can Have a Personal Relationship with God** Matthew 16:16-17

Matthew 16:16-17 Simon Peter responding to Jesus' question of “Who do men say that I am?” by making a strong statement that he is the Christ, the promised Messiah. Peter receives the affirmation from Christ about the accuracy of his statement. Peter received this knowledge not from man, ecclesiastical power, or religious expert, but directly from God. God spoke directly to Peter.

John 3:16 The Gospel in this one verse indicates that because of his love, God sent Jesus as a sacrifice for all. The last half of the verse states that the one who believes, trusts, and commits himself to Christ will have eternal life. It teaches that this is a personal, individual act and not a group response. It is not something that one individual can do for another.

### **From the Background Comments:**

©2001-2009, Eternal Interactive, LLC, All Rights Reserved. [www.homechurchonline.com](http://www.homechurchonline.com)  
**Soul Competency and the Priesthood of the Believer – 05 14 11-en**

Unless otherwise noted, scripture taken from the Holy Bible, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. All rights reserved throughout the world. Used by permission of International Bible Society.

**Man Is to Become a Priest** 1 Peter 2:4-10, Genesis 2:7, Exodus 19:1-6, Psalm 8:1-9, Psalm 42:1-2

1 Peter 2:4-10 Christ was chosen by God to be the key to the new covenant, but was rejected by the Jews. Peter speaks of the idea that Christians are other stones in this structure. Together with Christ they are to become a new spiritual house, a new temple for the dwelling of God. In this new temple, Christians are to render service to God. Each individual believer is to be a priest for himself/herself before God. He/she will not have to go through another to have fellowship with God. He/she is also to be a priest for other believers. "A royal priesthood" in verse 9 indicates that that each individual believer serves as a priest.

Genesis 2:7 Man, formed by God out of dirt, became the highest creation by receiving the breath of God. He was a living being, the apex of creation. He was formed in the image of God. Understanding what it means to be made in the image of God is complex. At the least it means that humankind is capable of relating to God; is capable of decision-making and mindful living.

Exodus 19:1-6 In this call to a covenant life with God, the Israelites are invited to meet God and to obey him. In this covenant relationship, the people are to become a kingdom of priests and a holy nation. This promise to the Israelites to become a kingdom of priests is related to the idea that every person covered by the covenant is a priest before God, not depending on another to be an intermediary.

Psalm 8:1-9 After reviewing the majesty of God and the greatness of his creation, the psalmist is amazed at the fact that God has been mindful of mere humankind and how humans have been honoured. Humankind has been made a little lower than God and has been crowned with glory. Humans have been given dominion over the sheep, oxen, beasts, birds, and fish and have the freedom to use these as needed. Given the majesty of this Psalm and the concept of humankind being made a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned with glory and honour, it is well to remind ourselves that dominion here refers to caretaking and good stewardship.

Psalm 42:1-2 The heart of a believer thirsts for God, not ceremony, ritual, form, but a personal fellowship with the Living Father. He is parched as in the imagery of a deer seeking water. These verses speak of an individual's desire for a full relationship with the creator and sustainer of life. It is a desire for fellowship and communion.

**Man is Personally Responsible for Himself** Ezekiel 18:1-4, John 3:1-16, John 8:36

Ezekiel 18:1-4 Contrary to traditional Israelite belief that punishment for sins of a person would be extended to descendants of several generations, this passage places the responsibility and punishment for sin on the person committing it. A person would be punished for his/her own sin, not that of another. This points out the direct responsibility of every individual.

John 3:1-16 This man of the Pharisees, one who strictly obeyed the law and was a member of the ruling council, discovers that a relationship to God is not achieved by being religious. It is a personal commitment to Jesus Christ, a new birth, which makes an individual right with God. This personal surrender to the Lordship of Jesus brings the person eternal life.

John 8:36 Freedom from sin comes about as Jesus the Son sets an individual free. The person is no longer a servant of sin. He/she is free from that bondage because of Jesus.

**Man Has a Personal Relationship to God Through Faith in Christ** John 14:12, Acts 4:12, 1 Corinthians 3:21, 23; Galatians 5:1,13; Ephesians 2:11-21

John 14:12 Faith refers to a stable conviction with a full awareness of God's truth; it is a personal surrender to Jesus with behaviour inspired by this commitment.

Acts 4:12 A right relationship to God comes because of faith in Christ. No other way of salvation is available. Ritual, sacrifice, tradition, family heritage, works - none of these will give salvation. It is only through Jesus who died on the cross and was raised from the dead that a person can have eternal life.

1 Corinthians 3:21, 23 No individual has wisdom which is God-centered wisdom as shown in the death and resurrection of Christ. This is learned, not in living, but through what God reveals at the cross. This wisdom comes as a gift of God. Bragging about whose human convert you are impacts the unity of the believers. Believers do not belong to a human leader, all belong to Christ.

Galatians 5:1 Christ set the believer free from legalism, the strict, minute obedience of the law. Believers were challenged to remain firm. They were not to become oppressed again by the burden of the law.

Galatians 5:13 The believers were set free. They were not, however, to use their freedom unwisely; they were not to relax the moral requirements in their lives. They were not to live in such a way that sin was of no consequence. This libertinism was the total opposite of legalism. They were commanded not to use freedom as an opportunity to live worldly lives. They were to serve one another, to fulfill the great commandment, "to love your neighbour as yourself."

Ephesians 2:11-21 The Gentiles had previously been cut off from Israel and from the promises of God. Christ's death had broken down the wall between Jew and Gentile. They had both been reconciled as one body to God. There were now not strangers. They were fellow citizens. They were all parts of a spiritual temple where God's spirit lived.

## **Man's Relationship to God is not Through Outward Ritual but is Inner and Direct** Hebrews 4:14-16, Hebrews 8:9-13, Revelation 5:1-10

Hebrews 4:14-16 Jesus, the great high priest, had made the complete sacrifice for sin, and is now in heaven. Believers were challenged to be obedient to the faith they professed. Though exalted, Christ sympathizes with believers. He faced every temptation, as the disciples did, yet he was without sin. Believers were commanded to come to his throne boldly. This privilege of direct approach to him is one of many points of pre-eminence in the new covenant as compared to the old.

Hebrews 8:9-13 The new covenant would not be like the old, which the forefathers did not remain faithful to and thus caused God to reject the people. The new covenant is superior because, first, it was internal rather than external. Two, it was to be universal and direct with personal relationship to God. Third, the new covenant was to secure true righteousness.

Revelation 5:1-10 John, on the Isle of Patmos, is told that Christ was worthy to open the scroll of God. The victory that he had won fitted him to open the book. By the Cross, Satan and the world were overcome and God's purposes could be achieved. By his sacrifice men of every tribe and language were redeemed. Jesus had made them into a kingdom. He had made them into priests to serve God.

### **Your Goal as the Leader of this Bible Study:**

The list of teaching objectives found at the beginning of the Teacher Preparation succinctly describes what you need to emphasize.

To lead the class to identify implications of soul competency and the priesthood of the believer. (Lead the congregation to see the enormous importance of believing that every person is totally responsible for their/our own relationship to God).

Who might be a person which could stand between the individual person and God? (Only Jesus, the Messiah—who is completely God and completely man. And He gives direct access to every person who wants it.)

What institutions or systems can stand between the individual person and God? (Absolutely none).

### **For Personal Reflection:**

**What have I learned from this study?**

**What personal experience does this lesson bring to mind?**

**What is one action I will take this week to apply this Scripture passage to my life?**

## **Bible Study Plan** (Suggested time: 35 minutes)

### ***Soul Competency and the Priesthood of the Believer***

Regroup the church after the Gathering Time and break by singing a chorus that young children can relate to—or another praise chorus if your congregation does not have children. Children who go to their own Bible teaching session should stay with the group until after this song. Have the preschoolers and children accompany the hymn with rhythm sticks, maracas, bells, etc.

**Begin by helping the group locate the Focal Text in their Bibles. Also, share with them the Main Idea to be learned from the Scriptures, and the Questions to be Explored by the group.**

#### **Focal Text**

Genesis 1:26-27; Jeremiah 31:29-34; Matthew 16:16-17; John 3:16; 1 Peter 2:4-10

#### **Background Text**

Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7; Exodus 19:1-6; Psalms 8; 42:1-2; Jeremiah 31:29-34; Ezekiel 18:1-4; Matthew 16:13-17; John 3:1-16; 8:36; 14:12; Acts 4:12; 1 Corinthians 3:21, 23; Galatians 5:1, 13; Ephesians 2:11-21; Hebrews 4:14-16; 8:8-13; Revelation 5:1-10

#### **Main Idea**

“There should be no institution, human person, rite, or system which stands between the individual person and God..All have equal access to the Father’s table, the Father’s ear, and the Father’s heart.” (Herschel H. Hobbs and E. Y. Mullins, *The Axioms of Religion*, revised edition. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press 1978, page 75.)

#### **Questions to Explore**

Who might be a person which could stand between the individual person and God?

What institutions or systems can stand between the individual person and God?

What does “equal access” to the Father’s table, the Father’s ear and the Father’s heart mean to you?

#### **Teaching Aim**

To lead the class to identify implications of soul competency and the priesthood of the believer.

#### **Connect with Life:**

©2001-2009, Eternal Interactive, LLC, All Rights Reserved. [www.homechurchonline.com](http://www.homechurchonline.com)

13

***Soul Competency and the Priesthood of the Believer – 05 14 11-en***

Unless otherwise noted, scripture taken from the Holy Bible, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. All rights reserved throughout the world. Used by permission of International Bible Society.

Comment to the congregation: Many people follow the religious pattern of going to a worship service, kneeling at a certain time, lighting a candle in a sanctuary, giving of money in the offering plate, and among some religious people even praying to ancestors.

Continue: The big question for today's study is: "How do these and similar actions give us access to God? What kind of steps are necessary for man to come into the presence of God?"

Now say: Today we are looking at scriptures which will give us truth on how we have access to God.

### **Guide the Study:**

Look for an answer to this: What characteristics of man do we find In Genesis 1:26-27?

Have a person read that scripture. Wait for responses. (Possible answers: Man was made in the image of God. Man was to rule over animal life, over the earth).

Using the **Teacher Preparation** discuss what it means to be made in the image and likeness of God.

Share this: Jeremiah 31:29-34 speaks to our statement about an individual's access to God. It contrasts the Old Covenant and the New Covenant that God made.

Continue: Let's read these verses and list the qualities of each.

Read Jeremiah 31:29-34.

On a sheet of paper write "Old Covenant" and on a second sheet "New Covenant."

After the scripture is read, ask members to share qualities of each covenant and list them on the proper sheet.

Probable answers for Old Covenant:

Written on tables of stone, given to a nation, God had functioned as a loving attentive husband, people had broken covenant, and sin punished for 2nd and 3rd generation.

On the New Covenant sheet some of the qualities:

Written on heart of individual, focus to be on individual, responsibility on the individual, individual would know God personally, consequences of sin to be on sinner himself.

Say: In the New Testament we find another scripture that speaks to an individual's access to God.

Comment: Let's read Matthew 16:16-17 to discover it. Read scripture.

Seek an answer to this question: Where did Peter get his understanding of who Christ was? Help members see that it was not from a church, pastor, creed, ceremony or anything from man. It was knowledge directly from God to Peter as an individual.

Look for a response: What does John 3:16 say about a person's access to God?

Have someone quote or read John 3:16. Repeat the question. Help pupils come to the conclusion that it is a personal access.

Add: Tradition, ecclesiastical authority, custom, etc. do nothing to control access. It is an individual encountering God directly.

Solicit individuals to look into the following concepts:

**One:** What does 1 Peter 2:4-10 say about a person's access to God. (Answer to number one: each individual was to be a priest for himself before God).

**Two:** What does Exodus 19:1-6 say about an individual's approach to God? (Answer to number two: God promised to let each person become a priest. Every person covered by the covenant was to be a priest before God).

**Three:** What does Psalm 8:0-9 say about the believer's access to God? (Answer to number three: God is mindful of man. He has been given dominion over animals. He is lower only than God).

**Four:** What does Psalm 42:1-2 say about an individual's fellowship and relationship to God? (Answer to number four: It is individual. It is a personal thirsting. It is not based on ritual, but on a personal, intimate basis).

**Five:** What does Ezekiel 18:1-4 say about the responsibility of a person for his sin? (Answer: Each individual is directly responsible for his own sin. He will be punished for his sin and not of another).

**Six:** What does John 8:36 say about how a person obtains freedom from sin? (Answer: Freedom from sin comes directly from Jesus. There is no human institution or act acting as a barrier between Jesus and the individual).

**Seven:** What does Galatians 5:1 say about a person's relationship to God? (Answer: Christ has set us free. The Christian is not to be burdened down with the law).

**Eight:** How does Hebrews 4:14-16 tell us a believer is to approach Christ? (Answer: The believer is to boldly approach Christ as the high priest who sympathizes with the weaknesses of the believer. He was tempted in every way, yet did not sin. We can come to him directly).

State: I'm going to read some statements. If you agree with the statement give a thumbs up sign, if you disagree with the statement, give a thumbs down sign.

**Note to the Leader:** Some of these items may be helpful in living a Christian life (such as not sinning, being baptized, and attending church) but none are necessary to have direct access to God. Therefore, all of them should require a thumbs down response.

Continue: Which of the following actions are necessary for a person to have access to God?

Read the list and wait for responses.

**Be baptized.**  
**Quit my sins.**  
**Pray to Mary or a saint.**  
**Participate in the Lord's Supper.**  
**Confess to a pastor or priest.**  
**Make a sacrifice of money, penance, time.**  
**Do a certain thing.**  
**Not eat certain food.**  
**Attend a certain worship service.**  
**Follow a certain ritual.**  
**Have a conference with a pastor.**  
**Go to a certain kind of building.**  
**Self-torture and self-mutilation.**  
**Fasting.**  
**Visit a sacred city.**  
**Go into sacred waters.**  
**Pray a certain prescribed prayer.**  
**Wear a certain type of jewelry.**  
**Visit a certain "holy place, city, building."**  
**Light a candle.**  
**Say certain words or phrases.**  
**Make animal sacrifices.**  
**Be circumcised.**

**Encourage Application:**

If you have two or more youth, this is the time to give them the **Youth!!! Take Ten** page and allow them to go away from the adults and apply the lesson by and for themselves.

Summarize by writing on a sheet of newsprint the following:

“All people have equal access to God. No institution, person, rite, or system should stand between the individual and God.” Read the statement to the group.

Pray thanking God we can come to him any time, any place, without having to do anything except come to him.

**Take a five minute break to separate the Bible Study and Worship Time. Children may need to use the washroom again before worship.**

# Youth!!! Take Ten

## Bible Study Application for Youth

*You may wish to move away from the adults for the final five to ten minutes of the Bible study and help each other as youth to apply the lesson to your own needs.*

### ***Soul Competency and the Priesthood of the Believer***

**Genesis 1:26-27; Jeremiah 31:29-34; Matthew 16:16-17;**

**John 3:16; 1 Peter 2:4-10**

A youth will lead the following activity and comments. No adults need to be present. If possible, teens should take turns in leading the application time.

### **My Soul is Competent and I Am a PRIEST!!!**

Soul Competency sounds like an old fashioned concept. The Priesthood of the Believer sounds like a complicated theological idea. Yet these two aspects of our relationship to Christ are exactly what the teenager and young adult faces in their faith experience. For those teens raised in a Christian environment, there may have been a number of years of being taught about the Bible and led in faith experiences. But in the teen years, one must decide for him/herself if these teachings have meaning and what that meaning is. That is soul competency. Every one is responsible for relating to God directly and for studying scripture and understanding for oneself what it means.

The priesthood of the believer refers to the relationship each believer has with God. There is no one between the believer and God – no parents, teachers, pastor or priest. Oh sure, these people still give advice and good guidance, but the bottom line is that each young person must decide for him or herself what to believe and what to do. Awesome freedom! Awesome responsibility!

**Worship Time** (Suggested time: 30 minutes)***Soul Competency and the Priesthood of the Believer***

**Genesis 1:26-27; Jeremiah 31:29-34; Matthew 16:16-17;  
John 3:16; 1 Peter 2:4-10**

**Beginning the Service:**

Have the children present hand out a copy of the scriptures to be read. Ask them to make sure that each person has a copy.

Sing: **"I Am His, and He Is Mine"**

Read the following scripture together as a group.

(Make copies of the passage for each person from the final page of this session.)

***"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time."***

(1 Timothy 2:5 NIV)

**Offering:**

**Leader, say:** "The concept of the 'priesthood of the believer' includes the responsibility of every priest to bring before God the first and best of the results of the work that we do to earn our living. In the **Old Covenant** with God, the appointed priests did this on behalf of the people of God. Now, under the **New Covenant** through Christ, every Christian must do this for himself or herself. The Bible speaks of this as 'bringing our tithes and offerings to God.'

No one can fulfill the responsibilities of a priest without doing this. God has declared all followers of his Son, Jesus, to be priests. Therefore, each and every one of us who knows Jesus as Saviour and Lord must bring our own portion as a gift to God to be used for the growth of his Kingdom. The holiness of the gift and the blessings from God that the gift brings to ourselves and others does not depend on its size. Some earn very little and others much more. Some are given resources that they have not earned by working. Yet, in God's eyes, when our giving is sacrificial, God receives them with equal

joy and blesses equally. No person holds any right to judge. God, and only God, knows our hearts and our sacrifices. And what we give, we give to God and God alone.

Our church has provided a way to give our tithes and offerings to God. As members, let each of us commit to fulfilling our roles as the priests of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ our Lord.”

### **Praying for the World:**

In the summer, the population of Alexandria, Egypt increases by 2 million, mostly Arab tourists. Many followers of Jesus will be available to share their testimonies. Pray that these believers will not fear but will be strong in the Lord. Ask that they will find many people open to listening to and accepting the truth.

Even during a time of civil turmoil and change in Egypt, Egyptian authorities remain committed to a new tourism development program for the North Coast area which stretches from Alexandria west to Libya. There will be many new jobs as a result, with the possibility of Egyptian Christians moving into the area. However, the development will also displace many of the Bedouin and disrupt their lives. Pray that the Bedouin will see that Jesus is the only certainty and the anchor for the soul when everything around them is changing.

### **Sharing Guide:**

**This sharing guide is written to assist the person who directs the worship time to reemphasize the teaching for the day and help guide the congregation to respond to God’s call and will for their lives in regard to the scripture studied. The leader may choose to follow the guide closely. Or, he or she may wish to only use it to give direction and a concept for preparing an original message. The leader is free to choose other ways to communicate and share the concepts presented here.**

## **Unravelling the Mystery of Man** **Genesis 1:26-28**

### **Introduction:**

I remember my sixteenth birthday well. I had reached the age to get a driver’s license. My father went with me. I expected him to answer the questions for my license. The officer looked at me and expected me to answer his questions. Then I had to take the test without any help from my father. I had to deal directly with the agent before I got my license.

Scripture is clear from creation that each of us must deal directly with God for salvation, direction, and fellowship with him. We call that “the priesthood of the believer.” God has given us the ability to know and respond to him through the Holy Spirit. We are

©2001-2009, Eternal Interactive, LLC, All Rights Reserved. [www.homechurchonline.com](http://www.homechurchonline.com)

20

*Soul Competency and the Priesthood of the Believer – 05 14 11-en*

Unless otherwise noted, scripture taken from the Holy Bible, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 International Bible Society. All rights reserved throughout the world. Used by permission of International Bible Society.

competent as a soul to choose God's offer of salvation through Jesus Christ our Lord. Each of us must deal directly with Jesus and no other for salvation.

Our text is the watershed of what we believe about who man is. It unravels the mystery of man. The psalmist says we were created ***"a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honour. You made him ruler over the works of your hands; you put everything under his feet (Psalms 8:5-6)."*** Our text will help us understand who we are, where we came from, and where we are going. The Bible is clear about our origin. God, in a special act, created man in his own image as the crowning work of his creation. Let's explore the text and unravel the mystery of man.

### 1. God created man.

Many attempts to explain man's existence do not offer a satisfactory answer. A wonderful book on the subject of evolution, **From Goo to You by Way of the Zoo**, (Harold Hill, Logos International, Plainfield, New Jersey, 1976) reasons that man could not have evolved as many have thought. Man was no accident. We were and are a unique and most precious Divine creation, however God chose to do it.

Our Biblical text clearly states that God created man. He did so in a separate, distinct, and decisive act. In creation, God imparted to man his "image" and "likeness." Scripture makes no such statement about any other creation of God.

### 2. Man was created for God.

Being created in the likeness and image of God, it follows that God desired fellowship with his creation. In verse 28, God blessed his creation and spoke to them. He gave man intelligence to follow a command. Man would have a personality so that each person would have a unique fellowship with God. Each person would have the ability to choose good over evil. In the Garden of Eden there was no thought of dying, but of living forever as God does. What a great place God made for man to rule over. Genesis 1:31 says, ***"God saw all that he had made, and it was very good."*** Bill Cosby has a wonderful comedy routine in which he points out that man is always describing the things he does as colossal, superb, or excellent. God's creation is described as just good. Wouldn't it be wonderful if our excellence was as good as God's "very good?"

### 3. God created man to make choices.

Genesis 2:16-17 records man's challenge to choose God's will instead of his own. God commanded ***"You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die."*** Man had the freedom to choose. In chapter 3, Satan, in the form of a snake, tempted Eve to ignore God's command. She had the freedom to do so. Adam could have refused the fruit, but he did not. Sin entered the world by man's free will.

Throughout the Bible sin is described as iniquity (warped conduct), enmity (willful rebellion), transgression (unlawfulness), and to fall short (missing the mark). The ultimate result of sin is a broken fellowship with God and separation from him. Adam and Eve were driven from the Garden of Eden and faced death as God had promised. Choices have consequences.

#### **4. God created man to glorify him.**

Glory to God is the only successful conclusion to his creation of man. It glorifies God when we choose to do his will over our own. God's goal for our lives through salvation is to restore in us what we lost through sin. John writes, ***"...now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is (1 John 3:2)."***

#### **Call to Commitment:**

As children, most of us had a place where marks were made to record our growth. Many of our childhood pictures reveal a steady growth, first up, then out. We must learn to count so we can later count our wrinkles. If we look diligently, we can also find spiritual marks in our lives that reveal Christian maturity. John writes, ***"Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is (1 John 3:2)."***

#### **Concluding the Service:**

(Make copies the passage for each person from the final page of this session.)

Read as a group: ***"To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen."***

(Jude, vv. 24, 25, NIV)

**Copy the following for each person expected to attend the Gathering Time:**

“There should be no institution, human person, rite, or system which stands between the individual person and God...All have equal access to the Father’s table, the Father’s ear, and the Father’s heart.” (Herschel H. Hobbs and E. Y. Mullins, *The Axioms of Religion*, revised edition. Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman Press, 1978, page 75.)

+++++++ Cut apart ++++++

**Copy the following for each person expected to attend the worship experience:**

At the beginning of the worship experience:

Read as a group: ***“For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time.”***

(1 Timothy 2:5 NIV)

At the end of the worship experience:

Read as a group: ***“To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—to the only God our Saviour be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.”***

(Jude, vv. 24,25, NIV)