

## I LOVE GOD BUT CHURCH ISN'T FOR ME 🛦

You probably selected this study because you have been where I have been before. Have you been church-hurt? Offended by church? Saw hypocrisy in church?

You know what I said to myself? 'People are fickle, but God is stable.' There is not one perfect person or church on this earth – but there is one perfect God – and He is living.

## Personal testimony on leaving the church and coming back:

I mentioned in one of the studies how I left church because of an offense. I didn't explain what happened but it basically was because depression hit me because a relationship didn't work out. I was sad and when I went to the people or friends I thought I had at church they didn't want anything to do with me. They said they don't know how to help me, they are used to 'Fun and exciting' personality from me.

I thought this was hypocritical coming from people from church, I thought it was fake. I eventually walked away from church and I remember saying to God, "I am walking away from church but not from You. At the right time, come find me and I will serve You for the rest of my life."

Eventually, I left God too. I enjoyed the temporary pleasures of what the world offered – but I came back more empty.

I went back to an old relationship that spiritually made me worse dealing with homosexual thoughts and dreams that only came from my past boyfriend because of what he was secretly dealing with.

People are spirit-beings and we need deliverance and the only One who can do that is Jesus.

I felt like a hamster on a wheel going nowhere but running fast.

As I mentioned in the Understanding the Holy Spirit study, God did indeed rescue me when I hit rock bottom. I was looking for churches. God led me to the church I am in right now and I am so happy.

It's not about the people, but God's heart for me, when I am filled with the Holy Spirit I will love the people no matter how they are not because of what they have done but because God loves them just the same.

## ▲ I Love God But Church Isn't For Me Bible Study

Open up the Bible or YouVersion Bible app (A physical Bible is better for studies) & take a piece of paper and write your answers down (it's so powerful when you write it down, your heart truly changes with this study!)

# Importance Of Church, Community, & Tithing:

## Have you been turned off to giving your tithes because you have seen hypocrisy or inauthenticity in the church?

Well, I have news for you. It's not about the people or church, it is about your faith in God. In the Word, it says give your 10% to the Lord. This is an action of faith to put a seed into what you are believing in God, not man. Jesus went into temples flipping tables over because he saw corruption in the courts, of course this world has fallen but your relationship with God doesn't have to be. Don't look at the people, look at God. It's you and Him. Him and you.

- Read Hebrews 10:24-25: "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching."
- **Read Acts 2:42-47:** This passage describes the early believers devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer, emphasizing the importance of community and mutual support.
- Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27: Describes the church as the body of Christ, with each member having a vital role to play, highlighting the interconnectedness and importance of community within the church.
- Read Malachi 3:10: "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it."

- Read Proverbs 3:9-10: "Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine."
- Matthew 23:23: "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You give a tenth of your spices—mint, dill and cumin. But you have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness. You should have practiced the latter, without neglecting the former."
- Read Galatians 1:10: "Am I now trying to win the approval of human beings, or of God? Or am I trying to please people? If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ."
- 1. Why do you think meeting together as believers is emphasized in Hebrews 10:24-25?
- 2. How does Acts 2:42-47 illustrate the benefits of community within the early church?
- 3. What principles about giving do you find in Malachi 3:10 and Proverbs 3:9-10?
- 4. How do you interpret Jesus' words in Matthew 23:23 regarding tithing and the weightier matters of the law?
- 5. What are some practical steps you can take to cultivate a habit of faithful giving in your life?

## & Church Denominations Are Not What God Intended

The concept of denominations, as we understand them today, is not explicitly addressed in the Bible because the organizational structures of denominations developed centuries after the New Testament was written.

However, there are several passages in the Bible that emphasize the unity of believers and encourage harmony within the body of Christ:

Read 1 Corinthians 1:10: "I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought."

Read Ephesians 4:3-6: "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope

when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."

**Read John 17:20-23:** In this passage, Jesus prays for unity among believers: "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me."

**Read Romans 12:4-5:** "For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others."

While these passages emphasize unity among believers, they do not specifically address denominations. The development of denominations in Christianity occurred over time due to various theological, cultural, and historical factors.

"If God never intended it – people are fickle, God is stable."

Find a church that is alive and moving in the vision of what God wants found in the Bible. Pray to God to connect you and let the Holy Spirit lead you to a church that is a fit for you.

## Did You Leave Church Because Of An Offense?

I have done this in the past. It is easier said than done. Let's look at the story of the Prodigal Son, the father had a chance to be offended because his son left. But what did the father do?

### The Setup:

A man had two sons. The younger son asked for his share of the inheritance, which his father gave him. The younger son then left home and went to a distant country, where he squandered his wealth in wild living.

### The Son's Downfall:

After squandering all his money, a severe famine hit the land, and the young man found himself in desperate need. He took a job feeding pigs and was so hungry that he longed to eat the pods the pigs were eating.

### The Son's Repentance:

At his lowest point, the son came to his senses and realized that even his father's servants had more than enough to eat while he was starving. He decided to return home, confess his sins to his father, and ask to be treated as one of his hired servants.

### The Father's Response:

While the son was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion. He ran to his son, embraced him, and kissed him. The son began his prepared speech, but before he could finish, his father interrupted him and ordered a celebration. He instructed his servants to bring the best robe, put a ring on his finger, and sandals on his feet. He then prepared a feast to celebrate his son's return.

### The Older Brother's Reaction:

Meanwhile, the older son, who had remained faithful and obedient to his father, was working in the fields. When he heard about the celebration, he became angry and refused to join the festivities. He complained to his father, expressing his bitterness that he had never been rewarded for his loyalty while his wayward brother was being celebrated.

## The Father's Explanation:

The father went out to the older son and pleaded with him to join the celebration. He reminded him that everything he had belonged to him and that it was right to celebrate his brother's return because he was lost and now found.

#### The Moral:

The parable illustrates God's boundless love and forgiveness. It highlights the joy in heaven over one sinner who repents and returns to God. It also serves as a lesson on forgiveness, reconciliation, and the dangers of pride and self-righteousness.

The story of the prodigal son teaches that no matter how far we may stray from God, He is always ready to welcome us back with open arms when we repent and turn to Him.

(Luke 15:11-32)

## **Running From Your Purpose?**

Have you ever had a knot in your stomach like you know you're supposed to do something and you do what you want instead? God gives us free will. He is a gentleman, He will never violate your free will - you have a choice to follow or not.

### Let's look at the story of Jonah

The story of Jonah is found in the Old Testament of the Bible, in the Book of Jonah, which consists of four chapters.

It narrates the account of the prophet Jonah, who is called by God to deliver a message of judgment to the city of Nineveh, but initially refuses and attempts to flee from God's command.

After a series of events, including being swallowed by a great fish and subsequently being vomited out onto dry land...

Jonah eventually fulfills his mission and delivers the message to Nineveh, leading to its repentance and salvation from destruction.

Getting swallowed up by a fish or hitting rock bottom because you're not following God's plan or will for your life is not a fun experience. Trust me. God loves you too much and too deeply to see you going down the wrong path.

## Your Sin Separates You From God

Read 2 Peter 2:20-22: "If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and are again entangled in it and are overcome, they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the sacred command that was passed on to them. Of them the proverbs are true: 'A dog returns to its vomit,' and, 'A sow that is washed returns to her wallowing in the mud.""

**Read Matthew 12:43-45:** "When an impure spirit comes out of a person, it goes through arid places seeking rest and does not find it. Then it says, 'I will return to the house I left.' When it arrives, it finds the house unoccupied, swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and takes with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and

they go in and live there. And the final condition of that person is worse than the first. That is how it will be with this wicked generation."

**Read Hebrews 10:26-27:** "If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God."

These scriptures illustrate the dangers and consequences of returning to sin after experiencing the truth and grace of God. They emphasize the importance of repentance, righteousness, and obedience to God's commands.

Read Romans 3:23: "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

**Read 1 John 1:8:** "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us."

**Read James 4:17:** "If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them."

**Read Romans 6:23:** "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Read 1 John 3:4: "Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness."

**Read Galatians 5:19-21:** "The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

## The Fear Of God

### Fearing God:

- Read Proverbs 9:10: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding."
- Read Psalm 111:10: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise."
- Read Proverbs 1:7: "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction."

### Living Holy/Righteous:

- Read 1 Peter 1:15-16: "But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: 'Be holy, because I am holy.'"
- Read 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8: "For God did not call us to be impure, but to live a holy life. Therefore, anyone who rejects this instruction does not reject a human being but God, the very God who gives you his Holy Spirit."
- Read Romans 12:1-2: "Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will."

These verses emphasize the importance of fearing God as the beginning of wisdom and living a holy life as a response to God's holiness and calling.

### God's Wrath:

- Read Romans 1:18: "The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of people, who suppress the truth by their wickedness."
- Read Ephesians 5:6: "Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient."
- Read Colossians 3:6: "Because of these, the wrath of God is coming."

### **Eternal Damnation:**

- Read Matthew 25:41: "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels.""
- Read Matthew 25:46: "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."
- Read 2 Thessalonians 1:9: "They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might."

### **Gnashing of Teeth:**

- Read Matthew 8:12: "But the subjects of the kingdom will be thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
- Read Matthew 13:42: "They will throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."
- Read Matthew 13:50: "and throw them into the blazing furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

These scriptures depict the serious consequences of rejecting God and living in disobedience, emphasizing the reality of eternal punishment and separation from God for those who do not repent and turn to Him.

## Jesus Is Calling You Back Right Now

### Repentance:

- Read Acts 3:19: "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord."
- Read Luke 15:7: "I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to repent."
- Read 2 Corinthians 7:10: "Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death."

### **Jesus is Coming Back:**

- Read Revelation 22:12: "Look, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to each person according to what they have done."
- Read Matthew 24:30: "Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven. And then all the peoples of the earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven, with power and great glory."
- Read John 14:3: "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me so that you also may be where I am."

### Rapture:

- Read 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17: "For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever."
- Read 1 Corinthians 15:51-52: "Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed— in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed."
- Read Matthew 24:31: "And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other."

#### New Heaven:

- Read Revelation 21:1: "Then I saw 'a new heaven and a new earth,' for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea."
- Read Isaiah 65:17:"See, I will create new heavens and a new earth. The former things will not be remembered, nor will they come to mind."
- 2 Peter 3:13: "But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, where righteousness dwells."

These scriptures highlight the importance of repentance, the certainty of Jesus's return, the promise of the rapture, and the hope of a new heaven for believers – but most importantly God's love for you. He doesn't want to see you go down the wrong path, he loves you and wants you to repent of your sins.

Has this study impacted your heart deeply? Do you want to change your ways right now to the right path? Say this prayer declaration out loud.

## **Prayer Declaration:**

Lord, It's me, I want to come back. I want your presence in my life again. I want to know you deeper. Please remove my heart of stone like it says in Ezekiel 36:26. You said you will give me a new heart and a new spirit and give me a heart of flesh. I thank you for being brand new again in you. Right now, Lord, I ask for forgiveness of my sins. I renounce to all the wicked ways that despise you. Lord, baptize me anew and afresh in Jesus name. Right now, I repent of my ways, lead me to your ways. I love you, I want a supernatural encounter with you Lord. Now, I am ready. Thank you for your mercy and grace. In Jesus name. Amen!

## **6** Call to salvation:

Will you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior today? Or have you known Jesus before and slipped away? He is calling you back! He died for you and me and wiped the slate clean of our sin. We have a second chance. If you want to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior or recommit your life to him, say this prayer out loud right now:

Heavenly Father, I recognize that I am a sinner and that my sin separates me from you. I repent of all my sins and confess Jesus as my Lord and my Savior. I believe with all my heart that God the Father raised Jesus from the dead. Lord Jesus, come into my heart and come into my life. The day I die, when I open my eyes, I will be in your arms. Amen!

Did you give your life to Jesus today? We want to hear from you! **Text saved to (954) 998-4054** one of the TBG members would like to pray for you and connect you with a community of believers.