FOLLOWING JESUS TOGETHER:
PART 2 - SIX ELEMENTARY TEACHINGS TO GET STARTED WELL

Welcome - we are glad that you are ready to learn more about Jesus and what he asks of those who want to follow him. This study on the six elementary teachings about Jesus is the key next step for someone who has concluded they want to follow Jesus! (This study guide has 12 pages)

Denis and Marianne introduce the six elementary teachings of Hebrews 6:1-3 here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KJtvWnexdKY

If you landed on this page at the recommendation of a friend, but you need to hear more basic info about Jesus before you jump in to this study, you can find part 1 of our series here: https://docs.google.com/document/d/17cntNQUV1fhIJrxlSNeoEjmkyX7B3F5lZUQqlawzSao/edit

Here is one of the most important statements in the Bible about living as a follower of Jesus: **Hebrews 6:1 Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, 2 instruction about cleansing rites, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment. 3 And God permitting, we will do so. (NIV)**

Let's say you got invited to visit the White House. You don't just walk into the Oval Office. There is a security protocol and an expectation of respect and behavior that matches that protocol. Someone will verify who you are, check you in, and escort you. You will certainly feel the authority of the place and the person in the office. You will address everyone you meet by their proper title. Your time with the President will be completely determined by what the President decides. You won't ramble in with a coffee and wander around asking random questions!

God has established clear protocols as well. Our text in Hebrews tells us there are six elementary teachings about Jesus that form the foundation of our life's adventure of faith with God. These must be understood and mastered according to the protocol established by God before we can move on to maturity and greater fruitfulness. Many people start a journey with Jesus without understanding these divine requirements and this causes them untold pain and frustration. But the Lord wants us to understand these things and grow to maturity!

We have met many people who "invited Jesus into their hearts" or "gave their lives to Jesus", expecting their lives to suddenly be better. They expected personal transformation, healing, or even improved relationships. Yet nothing seems to change. The enemy attacks, and he wants us to wonder if Jesus is even real. We lose focus as we experience the same cycle of sin, shame and frustration. Jesus tells us that we will have demonic opposition, difficulty and suffering, but he also promises inner transformation and holiness. So what went wrong?

When we do not experience the movement of God in our lives as disciples of Jesus, we are missing something. A holy God requires that we do things his way to experience his holy

presence. We must follow his requirements or we will be disappointed. From the text above, we can easily see the six foundational requirements:

1. Repentance: turning away from all known sin, knowing it leads to death.
2. Placing our faith in Jesus Christ as our atonement and the rightful Lord of our lives.
3. Being baptized in water for cleansing of sin, conscience and resurrection life.
4. Laying on of hands for receiving the filling or baptism in the Holy Spirit.
5. Understanding the implications of the resurrection of the dead.
6. Knowing the certainty and criteria of the coming eternal judgment.

This study briefly explains what the Bible says about each of these elementary teachings so you can be confident you have a durable foundation in your relationship with Jesus. Then you will be able to build an effective and fruitful lifestyle because you will be following God's requirements and not human requirements. As you study, please read all the Scripture passages for yourself. These texts are the living words of God that will make the real difference in your life and your journey! Let's look at each of these six elementary teachings in turn.

1. Repentance: turning away from all known sin, knowing it leads to death.

Denis and Marianne give an overview of repentance here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swgXJTDokFY

Since God is Holy and perfect, there can be no relationship with God unless we deal with our sin, which has separated us from the life of God. (Ephesians 4:18) So the first step is to understand and see our sin. What is sin? The word for sin in the original language was an archery term meaning "missing the target". So what's the target? The target represents the ways and laws of God - how he wants us to think and act. As creator and owner of everything, his standards are rightfully the ones we must acknowledge and obey.

Unfortunately, we are chronically self-centered and we especially love to do what we think is right. In our culture, there is a massive shift underway. Up until the 1700's, most of the western world accepted the Biblical worldview as the authoritative standard for life, ethics, and morality. In the enlightenment (1800's-1900's), Science became the dominant standard for truth. In the last 100 years, we have seen yet another significant shift to self-determined ethics, where each individual sets their own standards for truth and morality.

While human standards have shifted from Scripture to Science to Self, God's standard has never changed, and every single human being has failed to obey God. (Romans 3:23) We are separated from God by our many sins - both those of omission and those of commission. The good news is that Jesus came to take away sin and open a pathway back to a relationship with his perfect Holy Father. Jesus announced this good news as the arrival of his Kingdom, commanding people to repent. (Mark 1:15)

That word repent can also be translated “to think a new way” or “to change your mind” or “to do a 180”. It is a multi-layered shift - of our will, our mind, our emotions, our desires and our actions - from self and sin to God. God is the one who brings true repentance (Romans 3:4) - he actually helps us see our sin. He does this by having us learn his Word, by the Holy Spirit, and he also uses our conscience where he has imprinted right and wrong. (Romans 2:15). He even uses his creation (Romans 1:20). Everywhere, God is actively helping us see our sin, to lift the blindness Satan has imposed (2 Corinthians 4:4) so we can come to our senses (Luke 15:17) and realize we are at odds with our Creator.

Repentance is seeing, admitting, and speaking that our way was wrong and that God’s ways are always right. Repentance is always specific, not a general feeling. Repentance includes turning from both evil deeds and good deeds done without God. Repentance always leads to action. Repentance is not regret, and it is not remorse. These tend to focus on how we feel and not what we have done in the sight of God. Paul explains the difference between true repentance and remorse - that repentance is godly sorrow and remorse or regret are worldly sorrow. You can see this in 2 Corinthians 7:9-10.

In the process of repentance, we will see the need to confess our sins - all that we have done wrong in the sight of God. Confession means to come to agreement with God. In the process, we need to be very specific about each sin. This process may take some time as God brings things to mind. It may feel heavy - but that is good because it is really weighing us down! Read Psalms 32 and 51 slowly, let God work each bit of evil out of your heart. You must turn away from your sin and forsake it, in order to receive God’s forgiveness and cleansing. Read 1 John 1:9 and memorize it. This is the only way to make a start in your relationship with God.

If you asked Jesus to come into your heart - he won’t do that until you confess your sin, every specific sin you can think of. Even if you genuinely desire to give your life to Jesus, you must repent and be cleansed first. If you are having trouble getting a sense for all the sins you may have committed, ask God to reveal your sin according to Psalm 139:23-24.

Practical assignment: Make a list of every sin you can think of. Use the inventory by Finney if needed. Ask God to show you the sins you need to turn from and confess to him. List every secret sin you have never had the courage to confess to anyone before. When you are ready to confess, find a mature Christian you can talk with in person, letting them know you need them to listen to your confession. When you are done, have them pray 1 John 1:9 over you. Then burn the list - you are clean - for now. Who the Son sets free is free indeed! Confession is an ongoing process, and you will want to repent regularly and do a more thorough soul-cleaning like you just did every year. Many believers do a Spring-cleaning in the period of Lent leading up to Resurrection Sunday.

Once you have laid the foundation of repentance, you should experience lightness and freedom. That’s because you have jettisoned the real weight of sin that has been keeping you from knowing the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Now you are ready for the second elementary teaching, which is to place your faith in Jesus, your Messiah (that’s the Hebrew word for Christ).

2. Placing our faith in Jesus Christ as our atonement and the rightful Lord of our lives.

Denis and Marianne give a brief overview of placing our faith in Jesus at the link below: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TPARtVXXE88

The second part of Jesus' Kingdom announcement (Mark 1:15) after the call to repent was to "believe the Good News". Jesus invites us to believe the Good News that he has come to set us free from all our sin and bondage to sin. Jesus is focused on his Kingdom. He is the King who sets us free and he did this in a really awesome way. He obeyed every single law of his Father perfectly, then he died as the perfect and acceptable sacrifice that met every single detailed requirement the Father had established in his Law.

Having met all the requirements we were unable to meet, Jesus rose from the grave on the third day, proving that the Father accepted his work. Then 40 days later, Jesus ascended into heaven and took his place at the Father's right hand, receiving the glory and authority he deserves as the victorious King. The Good News is that our King has made a way into eternal life with the Father. Our job is to believe in him and receive what he did for us. He died to pay for our sins and by believing in him, we can have eternal life instead of eternal death. (John 3:16) This is the Gospel of the Kingdom - that in Jesus, we can be reconciled to God by faith, and take part in the eternal rule of our King, beginning with his Lordship and rule over our lives.

It's like you were in a golf tournament, and you had a miserable set of scores that put you in last place at 25 over par. The winner shot 68 all four days for a total of 16 under par. After he signs his scorecard in the scoring tent, he is declared the winner and collects his prize. You get nothing and with all the expenses, you actually come out in the negative. When we place our faith in Jesus, we don't have to hand in our life's scorecard. When we get to the heavenly scoring tent at the gate of heaven, we who place our trust in Jesus get to give the Scorekeeper the perfect life scorecard that Jesus achieved on our behalf. By faith, we get to collect the prize of eternal life and the full inheritance of Jesus as adopted sons and daughters!

The kingdom of darkness will be destroyed by the Kingdom of light. Jesus will return and set every wrong to right. He will punish those who refused his powerful work, and he will usher in eternity for all those who believe in him. That eternal life starts now when we place our faith in Jesus, because he promised us an abundant life free from our enemy, Satan. (John 10:10) Faith or belief can be expressed as trust and risk. Trust represents the reality that we depend on Jesus for all of life - for our future, for our needs, for our desires, and for our forgiveness. Faith also has an element of risk, as we depart from trusting the things we can see to the things that are unseen, spiritual, and eternal. (2 Corinthians 4:16-18)

Placing our faith in Jesus means that we accept his work and sacrifice on our behalf as a matter of truth. Only faith in Jesus can please God (Hebrews 11:6) It is the only way to God the Father (see John 14:6) It means acknowledging that God created us, that he sent Jesus to die for us, and that the Holy Spirit is the one who helps us see all these spiritual realities. It means we

emigrate from Satan's kingdom into the Kingdom of God. We change destinies and we change bosses! Jesus is now Lord over our lives - we were bought by him at great cost. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). We will live with him for all eternity because he bought our freedom and atoned for our sins.

Placing our faith in Jesus means we believe him at his Word, and we act on our faith. He rules over us now instead of sin. So we will be making changes by entering into a lifestyle of ongoing repentance. We will be moving our lives into alignment with Jesus by obeying his teaching (John 14:15). We may have doubts from time to time, but since no-one else has promised to save us, no one else has promised to return for us, Jesus is the only one we can trust. Only Jesus can bring us back to the Father. (John 14:6) This means we will obey him as he leads us into the future. He is worthy of our trust because he died for us even when we were his enemies. (Romans 5:8) We deserve death (Romans 6:23) but we got eternal life instead!

Placing your faith in Jesus is not a cheap decision. It is costly because it cost Jesus everything and it will mean you are giving Jesus your total allegiance. You are not believing Jesus as a mere intellectual assent. You are declaring him to be your Lord, Savior, Boss and King. You are taking his yoke upon you - he will teach you how to live. If you have known the real Jesus, you will know his yoke is easy and his burden is light. You will have escaped from religious effort into a gloriously awesome relationship. (Matthew 11:28-30)

Practical assignment: The process of placing our faith in Jesus is actually one of entering into a covenant. The Kingdom of Jesus is the new covenant between him and his Father promised by the ancient prophets. In the covenant, Jesus fulfills all the requirements of the Father, and we join in his family and Kingdom by faith. We make him Lord and we no longer live for ourselves, but rather, live for him. (2 Corinthians 5:15) One practical way to make this real is to take out a piece of paper, and sign your life over to Jesus. Simply state that you hereby give all you are and all you have and all you will ever have or become to Jesus. Sign and date it. Put it in your Bible as a reminder of your decision to surrender to Jesus by faith! You are no longer simply a believer, you are now a disciple - committed to your Master forever.

Having counted the cost and made your decision to place your faith in Jesus, you are ready to lay your next foundation stone, which is to be baptized in water as a new believer.

3. Being baptized in water for cleansing of sin, conscience and resurrection life.

Denis and Marianne give an overview of water baptism here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fZzHGJRItfk

The term baptize is a word borrowed directly from Greek into English. It means to submerge. In the Scriptures, we are promised several benefits from baptism. At the baptism of Jesus, we see the Father declaring his love for his son, and we see the presence of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:13-17). Baptism is a time of being officially included in the family of God. It is a public

declaration of your faith, and as you enter the waters of baptism, you experience the joys of repentance and faith, and get several other benefits.

Hebrews 6 uses the term “cleansing rites”. The Jewish culture was very attentive to maintaining ceremonial or ritual cleanliness. The Old Testament provides detailed instructions of ceremonial cleansing from sin and impurity. This was implemented by taking ceremonial baths, which were called “mikveh”. These were available in most villages and there were many of these baths located near the Temple. A mikveh was required to ascend to the Temple Mount.

In the process of bringing the Kingdom to the Jewish people, Jesus was preceded by John the Baptist. John’s job was to call people to repentance in preparation for the Jewish Messiah, and he called them to make their repentance real by immersion for cleansing. Jesus underwent this baptism - even though he never sinned - in order to fulfill all righteousness - and to humbly blaze the path for us.

When Peter preached the first sermon after Jesus returned to heaven, he called people to repent and believe, just like Jesus did, and then he told them they must be baptized. (Acts 2:36-41) This sermon was most likely preached at the Temple Mount, which is where hundreds of mikveh were available. This explains how they could baptize 3,000 people in one day!

Peter went on in his letters to encourage people to holy living. He teaches that baptism brings us the pledge of a clear conscience toward God (1 Peter 3:21) and he reminds us that this is all accomplished by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Paul continues the resurrection theme by teaching that in baptism, our submerging under water is like being buried with Jesus in his grave. Paul then teaches that as we come out of the water, we are being raised like Jesus from death into resurrection life (Romans 6:4, see also Colossians 2:12)

Baptism in water is the sign that we are joining the household of God, the church - the people called out of the world into the Kingdom of God. It is clearly a step of the journey intended for those who understand what they are doing. Infant baptism came about in the days of plagues, when families were concerned that babies would go to hell, and so it became almost a superstitious ceremony. While there are texts about entire households being baptized (see Acts 16:33) it seems clear that this was a call to faith for those who understand the message and the commitment they were making to Jesus.

One aspect of cleansing that is important prior to Baptism is to help the new believer to shed spiritual baggage that may be left over from the kingdom of darkness. This can take the form of curses, soul ties, addictions, trauma, and other adverse experiences due to the sin of others, along with the believing of lies. The believer will have already confessed their own sin in foundation one above, but there may be unforgiveness and lies related to the sin of others and the related adverse experiences these caused.

Ephesians 6:10-18 shows us how to put on the armor of God and defeat the spiritual curses of the enemy so we can stand firm. By renouncing all previous spiritual influences known and

unknown, the new believer can be set free spiritually. Depending on your age and background, this process may require more time, effort and resources. To start, each believer can forgive all known sin against them, confess all unbelief, and declare all curses null and void. You are also going to experience great freedom as you pray through the prayer below. This prayer has 40+ Bible verses embedded in the text, so you can cleanse the effects of the enemy's efforts by the Word of God. This type of spiritual cleansing was common in the early church and always took place before water baptism. Here is the prayer - go through it slowly:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1K5JlzKQ9ag0Q3QBR4EU1P0mw6gGUgvRc/edit?usp=sharing&ouid=111907018244671604215&rtpof=true&sd=true

Baptism itself does not save. However, it is a specific step of obedience commanded by Jesus in the Great Commission passage - Matthew 28:18-20. Once someone becomes a disciple, Jesus commanded that they be baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This means that they are being immersed in the character of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Baptism is an act of faith and obedience (which are the same thing - see Romans 1:5 and 16:26) In fact, it is the first thing a disciple should do to express their faith and obedience.

Practical assignment: If you have not been baptized, or were baptized as an infant, or were baptized without knowledge and understanding, plan to be baptized as soon as possible. Ask the person who has played a significant role in your journey to dunk you - you do not need a pastor for this - you only need a baptized disciple. And gather your friends and family to share the moment with them. Explain the reasons for your baptism, and declare the truths you have discovered in this study so far.

Now that you have obeyed the third elementary teaching, you are ready to progress to the fourth - the filling of the Holy Spirit - or as it is also known - the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

4. Laying on of hands for receiving the filling or baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Denis and Marianne give an overview of Spirit baptism here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7kqpXWT5K8

In the New Testament, the use of the term "laying on of hands" refers once to healing by Jesus (Luke 4:40) and four times to pray for the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The first two are related to new believers receiving the Holy Spirit. (Acts 8:18 and 19:6) The other two are for the appointment of leaders (1 Timothy 5:22), and for Holy Spirit fullness with an emphasis on specific gifts for ministry (2 Timothy 1:6). On balance, in the context of a text outlining the basics of the faith, the text in Hebrews 6 is most likely referring to the laying on of hands for the fullness of the Holy Spirit for the basic equipping of the new believer. It is the promise John the Baptist made in Matthew 3:11-12, that Jesus made in Luke 11:13 and Acts 1:5, that Peter echoed in Acts 2:38-39 and that Paul taught in Acts 19:1-11 and in 1 Corinthians 12:13.

You will notice that the repenting, believing, and water baptism steps above can be taken by the individual's initiative. If the individual is experiencing God in true heart change, these are very productive steps. If the individual is not truly repentant, or does not understand the basis of their salvation and the authority of Jesus, or misunderstands water baptism, these steps will not be effective. This fourth step is totally in God's hands. If the individual has met the inward requirements of the Lord, he will grant the Spirit in fullness. We see in the early chapters of the book of Acts that the believers are praying and being filled with the Spirit multiple times. When the motives are not good, the Spirit is withheld. (Acts 8:20-23) The fullness of the Holy Spirit is a continuous process requiring ongoing repentance, confession, prayer, earnest seeking and joyful receiving of God's fullness.

The filling of the Holy Spirit, or the baptism of the Spirit is crucial to the effective life and ministry of the disciple. If we seek and receive the power of the Spirit, we will be able to live according to Scripture. If we attempt the Chrstian life without assurance of the Spirit's power, we will be weak and ineffective. Paul outlines this reality in Ephesians 5. The first half of the chapter describes the command to imitate God and the challenges of doing so in an evil world. The second half of the chapter talks about God's command to be filled with the Spirit, which will then lead to four continuous activities in the disciple's life: speaking, singing, thanksgiving, and mutual submitting. (Ephesians 5:18-21) These are the lifestyle markers of the Spirit-filled disciple - and these are necessary for home and work life (Ephesians 5:22-6:9), and spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:10-18)

How do we know we have the Spirit? Progress in the Spirit-filled life can always be tested by the presence of the fruit of the Spirit in the disciple's life. The evidence of growing love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control is evidence that the person is growing less dependent on the flesh and more empowered by the Spirit. (Galatians 5:19-26) Lastly, the evidence of spiritual gifts, and the degree to which they are used lovingly to build others up is a sign of a Spirit-filled disciple. (1 Corinthians 12:1-14:40) These tests are given in Scripture to bring love and accountability to the Body of Christ.

Being filled with the Spirit or being baptized in the Spirit is a supernatural experience where the Spirit, in unity with the Father and the Son, takes up residence in our bodies. This manifests differently for each person, and is influenced by many factors. However, as Jesus teaches in Luke 6:45, what comes out of our mouths is driven by what is in our hearts. When the Spirit is in your life, evidence will come out of your mouth. This includes speaking about Jesus, singing and praising God, a constant verbal thankfulness and in prayer, often with verbal gifts like the gift of speaking and praying in another language, prophecy, words of knowledge, and wisdom always in humble submission to others. (See 1 Corinthians 12:1-11) It is the aroma of Christ! The presence of the Spirit is clearly discernible to the person with the Spirit but not by those without. (1 Corinthians 2:10-16)

The spiritually empowered believer is called to humbly help a fellow believer who is struggling with sin, usually because they do not have or understand the Holy Spirit's role in the process of discipleship. (Galatians 6:1-2) Perhaps they have not repented, or truly trusted Jesus, or been

water-baptized - and more often than not, it is because they have not understood the power and ministry of the Holy Spirit. He has been called “The Forgotten God” because he does not draw attention to himself, but he is the key to living the New Covenant. For some, this basic Holy Spirit Bible Study has made the difference between a grinding effort-laden Christian life and a Spirit-filled adventure with Jesus. If you want more and you are serious about walking in the Spirit, do this study:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ncgHB9dp-ic5Hm3XQALosK5JS0rSRFpg/edit

Practical assignment: When you have reviewed all these Scriptures and sought the Lord in your quiet time, call on 2-3 spiritually mature disciples to pray with you for the filling or baptism of the Holy Spirit. Ask them to speak over you and lay hands on you. Let some time pass, because the Lord may give you some gifts, like tongues, dreams, visions, prophetic words. The Spirit may also strongly impress on you that the Father has indeed adopted you - and you may begin to call him Abba (see Romans 8:15) Share with your prayer team what the Spirit has shown you and done in your life. Repeat prayer with your friends as needed. Continue to seek the fullness of the Holy Spirit in your daily prayers and Scripture reading until you are satisfied that you have received from the Lord what you asked! (Luke 11:13)

You are now well on your way to walking with Jesus in your full adoption as a son or daughter by our heavenly Father, and in the fullness of the power of the Holy Spirit. The fifth elementary teaching is to grasp the amazing reality of the resurrection and what that means for you, now and later!

5. Understanding the implications of the resurrection of the dead.

Denis and Marianne give a brief overview of the resurrection here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mLIx1hXU_C4

Let’s start by looking at what the Bible means by the resurrection of the dead. It is not the same as resuscitation from the dead. Resuscitation is what Jesus did for Lazarus, restoring him from death to his previous life. (John 11:43-44) It is also not the same as reincarnation, which is the process whereby a person dies in one life and body, and their spirit and soul is born again into another life and body. This was common in the first century and is perhaps what Herod believed had happened to John the Baptist in Matthew 14:1-2.

In describing the resurrection of Jesus, the Bible authors use a different word - anastasis. This refers to the new life and different kind of body that Jesus possessed when he came out of the tomb. In the Gospel accounts, when he left the tomb, Jesus’ body was more radiant and yet firm to the touch. Jesus had new powers - for example he could move through walls. His new body was just different enough that his disciples did not recognize him until he spoke, either from the radiance or the other changes noted by Paul. His body also had the holes in his hands and feet from the nail piercings on the Cross, and the hole in his side from the spear of the Roman soldier testing to see if he was dead. Jesus was also able to eat in his new body, and

people could touch him and recognize he was not a ghost. (Luke 24, John 20) So how does the resurrection of Jesus impact us centuries later? There are two main ways.

Jesus described himself as the resurrection and the life in John 11:25. The New Testament describes resurrection life on two levels - the life we begin to enjoy now by the grace of Jesus, and the life we will enjoy later when we actually receive our resurrection bodies. In Romans 6:4-14, Paul describes the way of life that we can live now as we come out of the waters of baptism. In resurrection power, we can overcome sin. In Colossians 2:11-15, Paul explains that the life of freedom from Satan is available now. Ultimately, this experience of "Kingdom in part" is limited and we must await the return of Jesus for the "Kingdom in full". The receiving of our new bodies and the new heavens and the new earth will be the full payment of our salvation, of which the Holy Spirit - as awesome as he is - is only a down payment (Ephesians 1:14).

Let's turn from the promise of resurrection life now to the resurrection body we will one day receive. In Colossians 1:15-20, Paul describes Jesus as the firstborn over all creation, and the firstborn from among the dead. That word firstborn is a Greek word that gives us the English word prototype. So Jesus determined what Adam would look like to his specifications, looking ahead to when he became the second Adam. Likewise, Jesus took on a resurrection likeness relative to his first body that would help us see how our resurrection bodies would be relative to our first bodies.

Paul describes the resurrection body in response to a question from the church in Corinth. In 1 Corinthians 15:42-44. Paul says the normal human body is natural, which means it is perishable, and subject to weakness and dishonor - probably meaning the effects of sin, aging and death. In contrast, the resurrection body is spiritual, which means it is imperishable, powerful, and glorious. From this, we can deduce that the resurrection body will not age, but last forever. It will not require the kind of rest and refreshment our current bodies need, although we will be able to enjoy a rest or eat as Jesus did. And our bodies will be infused with brightness without us being ghosts.

Every human will experience resurrection, but there will be two resurrections. The first will include those who trusted Jesus before death, those who trust Jesus at the point of his return, and those who will trust Jesus during his Millennial Kingdom. The second resurrection will be at the conclusion of his Millennial Kingdom and include all those who rejected Jesus in all these time periods. The righteous will inherit eternal life and the unrighteous will be sent to eternal punishment. This reality ought to encourage us to live this life with eternity in mind, and to pursue the same goals Paul expresses in Philippians 3:7-14.

The resurrection bodies of Jesus and his followers will last forever. They will be spiritually driven. They will be given to us when Jesus returns. (See 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and Revelation 19). The risen believers will rule with Jesus for 1000 years in what is called the Millennial Kingdom. We will serve with Jesus in what John called the first resurrection. (Revelation 20:1-6) Then after the eternal judgment, we will rule with Jesus in our resurrection bodies in a new creation - the new heavens and the new earth prophesied in Isaiah 65:17 and depicted in

Revelation 21-22. Our future is on the new earth with Jesus, as it was supposed to be in the original creation. God will fulfill his plan for his creation!

Practical assignment: Go to a cemetery. Read the names of the people buried. You may notice some are clearly Christians by what they have inscribed on their headstones. Read Matthew 27:50-54. Imagine the day when Jesus returns, and people coming out of their tombs. Imagine yourself coming out of your tomb. Anticipate the benefits of your resurrection body - new knees, new teeth, restoration of scars, new energy, no extra weight, a full head of hair, perfection. Give thanks for the coming resurrection and ask God to help you anticipate it!

The resurrection life that God has planned for us goes way beyond all we can imagine. (Isaiah 64:4) And the first resurrection makes us invincible from the second death. Unfortunately that is not the case for everyone. That brings us to the sixth elementary teaching about the final judgment or eternal judgment.

6. Knowing the certainty and criteria of the coming eternal judgment.

Denis and Marianne give an overview of the eternal judgment here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tm-hz6t1b_U

The eternal judgment takes place after the 1000 year rule of Jesus on the earth - which is known as the Millennial Kingdom. Despite Jesus' perfect leadership, the nations of the earth will gather together to rebel against Jesus and his people - and they will be swiftly destroyed. (Revelation 20:7-10) Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire, joining the beast from the land and the beast from the sea who were thrown into the lake of fire in Revelation 19:20.

Then the earth and heavens will flee and the Lord will sit on a great white throne to judge the rest of humanity. All those who were not part of the first resurrection will be raised from the dead to face eternal judgment. (Revelation 20:11-15) The text tells us that they will be judged by their works, which is very bad news, since we know the only way to pass through divine judgment is to be judged by appropriating the works of Jesus by faith. Since they have rejected the salvation provided by Jesus, their names will not be found in the book of life.

All those raised from the dead in the second resurrection will be sent to the second death - eternity in the lake of fire - separated from the life of God forever. There are two births, two deaths and two resurrections. Those who are born again will only die once and they will be in the first resurrection to eternal life. Those who are not born again will be raised to eternal judgment and they will experience the second death for eternity.

God has made the terms of relationship that he requires very clear. He has made the terms of eternal judgment equally clear. It is imperative for our faith to include an absolute certainty and clarity about the coming eternal judgment. It is forever, and so we are living this life "for keeps". We must be certain not only that God's gracious kindness is deep enough to offer his Son in our place as a saving atoning sacrifice. But we must also know that his severity is equally certain

towards those who reject his Son. (Romans 11:22) The Lord is absolutely crystal-clear about this in the Bible and we must stand against those who try to “erase hell”.

Jesus himself speaks of heaven and hell often in the Gospels, nowhere more clearly than in Matthew 5, 10 and 23. And his role in the book of Revelation makes it clear that he will execute judgment impartially, justly and thoroughly. Knowing this, our motivation for evangelism begins with seeking the glory of Jesus, and it is all made personal by our knowledge of how badly we needed his grace. Our motives are made complete by developing real love for all those far from God and knowing what outcome awaits them if we are too cowardly to speak up, or too lazy to spend the time developing our skills as disciples. The latter is the focus of part 3 of our discipleship training resources available at the link below.

Practical assignment: Examine your life as you read 2 Corinthians 13:5. Receive the assurance of the Holy Spirit, or repent of anything God shows you. Then make a list of all the people in your life who are far away from God. As you pray over the list, ask God to give you love for them and wisdom and tact as you engage them with the Good News in the days ahead. The next study will equip you to take these action steps, so for now pray and ask our Father to draw each one towards Jesus according to John 6:43-45.

Summary comments as you complete this study:

Somewhere along the way of reviewing these six elementary teachings about life in Jesus Christ, your heart will experience deep change. This is the work of God’s regeneration or the refreshing of your spirit, where you move from death to life by the work of the Holy Spirit. (John 5:24) Jesus called this being born again - or in some translations, born from above. It is the new spiritual birth that he was trying to explain to Nicodemus in John 3:1-17. It is not predictable because the Spirit is sovereign and moves as he pleases. (John 3:5-8) It is not prescribed that each of us would experience this rebirth at the same point in the process, but we will experience “new life” inside. Real change, real transformation. Real joy and excitement. If you are already born again, this study will light your heart on fire! But don’t stop here!

Well done! Denis and Marianne give a brief summary of the six elementary teachings here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j5wV9iYOqHU

As it says in Hebrews 6:1-3, God wants you to move on to maturity and he is with you in the journey! When you have completed this study and carried out all the personal assignments, you are ready to move on to part 3. There we have an equipping study where you will learn seven basic skills for every disciple of Jesus. That study can be found here:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1amMI5UnO3IMsF3BVToJMXadpk1BB1rYX/edit