



THE CHURCH OF NIGERIA (Anglican Communion)

2025 BIBLE STUDY OUTLINE

THEME:

THE REIGN OF GOD:

CHILDREN AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

(Matt. 19:14)

FOREWORD

We appreciate God for bringing us to another year as we continue on the earthly pilgrimage. We remain grateful to the Lord for His sustenance and nourishment in His Word, especially through our communal Bible Study.

Last year, under the theme: The Christian Race, we considered the various challenges and factors that help a believer live a victorious Christian life in a world that is antagonistic and rebellious to God. It is a race set within divine guardians and rules, a narrow way that demands perseverance and faithfulness to the end. Our eyes must be fixed on Jesus Christ, the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2). We need the grace of God in running the Christian race for "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy" (Romans 9:16).

The Theme of our Bible Study, this year, is "The Reign of God: Children and The Kingdom Of God (Matt 19:14)". Our text, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." The passage takes place when parents bring their children to Jesus so that He might lay His hands on them and pray. The disciples, believing perhaps that Jesus' time should be reserved for more important matters, rebuke the parents. Ironically, the disciples, whose primary calling was to be "fishers' of men" were the ones hindering those bringing souls to Christ.

In a society where children were considered insignificant, Jesus' elevation of children as models for the Kingdom of God was radical. It illustrates that humility is a key characteristic for entering God's kingdom. Again, Jesus' recognition and ministering to the children becomes a model for our ministry and missions in the Church of God, we must make room for the downtrodden, less privileged, the weak, the voiceless, and vulnerable people in our congregations.

This Bible study outline will be a great resource in understanding Jesus Christ's ministry model and priority and how He expects us to respond to both opportunities and distractions as people of God. This edition included Bible Studies on Gender-Based Violence from the CON Transformational GBV Prevention project.

We commend this Bible Study Outline to the entire people of God in the Church of Nigeria as a very rich and relevant spiritual resource that must be availed of.

We greatly appreciate the good work of the Liturgy and Spirituality Committee led by The Rt. Rev'd Dr Foluso Olugbenga Babatunji..

God bless you all.

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INTRODUCTION

It is fitting that our Lord's teaching about marriage should be followed by His blessing of the children, for children are the happy heritage of those who are married. Jesus did not look on the children as a curse or a burden. "Two shall become one flesh" is fulfilled in the birth of children, and the love of the parents is deepened and matured as it is shared with others in the home.

Many parents were bringing children to Jesus for Him to place His hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples felt this was a waste of Jesus' time. They began rebuking those bringing their children. Apparently, the disciples had already forgotten what Jesus said earlier about the worth of children and the seriousness of causing them to fall (cf. Matt. 18:1-14). Jesus rebuked the disciples, telling them to let the little children come and not hinder them. The kingdom of heaven is not limited to adults who might be considered to be worth more than children. Anyone who comes to the Lord in faith is a worthy subject for the kingdom. This implies that Jesus had time for all the children (Matt. 19:15), for He did not depart from the region till He had blessed them all.

Furthermore, the emphases our Lord Jesus Christ placed on children in relation to the kingdom of God are so heavy that if anyone cannot fashion his/her lifestyle to emulate childlike humility and innocence, such can never enter the Kingdom of God (Matt 18:1-4). For these reasons, our Bible study outline this year is focused on THE REIGN OF GOD: CHILDREN AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD (Matt 19:14).

The outline is thematically arranged into Ten Sub-themes and fifty-two topics. Beginning from the Concept of Child; Initiating the child; Personality and character traits of a child; Unveiling Gender Based Violence in the Scriptures; Traits of negative behaviours in Children; Imparting Positive Knowledge on Children; Child Discipline; The unborn Child; Child abuse; it ends in accepting the gospel like a child. Special emphases are placed on special Sundays like Mothering Sunday, Fathers' day, Palm Sunday, Easter Sunday and Ember day so as to integrate the study into the traditional contexts of the Church.

We sincerely commend the untiring efforts of our resource persons in this work under the leadership of Ven. Charles O. Fakiyesi for their time and virtues in the production and editing of this outline. We also thank the Team leaders and provincial coordinators and all our consulting fathers in God, for their dedicated times and commitments. May God bless them and reward their labour of love in His vineyard.

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THEME: The reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Concept of Child -1

TOPIC: The Universal perspectives of a Child

TEXT: Gen 16:11; 21:8; 1Sam 1:20-27

AIMS:

- i. to explain the universal concept of a child.
- ii. to discuss the importance of accepting the gospel like a child.
- iii. to discuss the positive attributes of a child that Christians need to emulate.

INTRODUCTION

In the biological science, a child is defined as a person between birth and puberty. Whereas, in legal parlance, the term child refers to anyone below the age of majority which is 18 years in most nations - This definition is upheld by UNICEF. Biblically, Child and children are mentioned in over 1,500 times in the Bible (KJV) and the word always refers to the baby in the womb or to a person between the weaning ages to puberty. In our text, Jesus shows His displeasure at His disciples who rebuked the children from coming to Him and He affirms that His kingdom belongs to them and those who can receive the gospel like a little child. The child has always found a place in the literary imagination, both as a character in his or her own right and as a representation of all the qualities associated with childhood: innocence, humility, simplicity, purity, receptivity, freshness, emptiness, vulnerability, freedom, and potentiality. This study should quicken us to display the positive attributes of a child in our daily living.

STUDY GUIDE

1. From the study today, analyse the universal and biblical perspectives of a Child. Gen 16:11; 21:8.
2. According to our text and other biblical passages, what are the basic rights of a child? 1Sam 1: 22-24; Prov. 22:6.
3. With reference to Mark 10:15, explain what it means to accept the gospel like a Child.
4. Discuss some of the ways Christians can emulate the positive attributes of a child to advance the kingdom of God. Matt 18:1-5.

CONCLUSION: The child signifies the goal of human development and also represents that stage of life in which the old person, transformed, acquires a new simplicity. As children grow, mature, and develop a sense of devotion to their parents so are Christians expected to grow unto maturity in their walk with God and be devoted unto Him.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: You must become as little children in your walk with God.

MEMORY VERSE: Mark 10:15 - "Verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein."

THEME: The reign of God: Children and the kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Concept of Child -2

TOPIC: Biblical concept of a Child (1)

TEXT: Gen. 25:21-26

AIMS:

- i. To explain the biblical concept of a child as a Baby in the womb.
- ii. To discuss the biblical injunction on abortion. iii. To discuss the care of the baby in the womb.

INTRODUCTION

The biblical doctrine of life is that life begins at conception (Ps 139:13-16) and thus the biblical meaning of a child is a human being between the stages of conception (Baby in the womb) and puberty. In our text, the Lord opened the womb of Rebecca, and she conceived two children of promise representing two nations in her womb. The scripture affirms that all human life has been created by God and in the image of God, and this means that every child in the womb is a product of God's work (Isa 44:2, Eccl. 11:5). The child in the womb is a universal symbol of future potentiality and that is why he/she needs special care and nurture, and utter dependence on his/her mother for growth and survival. Today's study should inspire you to value every child in the womb and to treat the child in the womb with uttermost care.

STUDY GUIDES

1. According to our study, what is the biblical concept of a child? Gen. 25:23, 38:27, Isa 44:2
2. Is the child in the womb a living being or ordinary unliving thing? Isa 49:1, Jeremiah 1:5, Luke 1:41, 44
3. What is the biblical injunction on abortion? Gen. 9:5-6, Exodus 20:13, Exodus 21:22-25, Matt. 18:14.
4. How can we appreciate the gift of human life in the womb? Judges 13:12-14, Luke 1:15, Luke 1:42.

CONCLUSION: Throughout the scripture, God affirms the value of every human life – from children in the womb to the elderly. Therefore, every human life in the womb should be appreciated and not destroyed because the child in the womb represents incredible power, vitality, persistence toward growth, and hope for the world.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Every human life in the womb is of great value.

MEMORY VERSE: Jeremiah 1:5 – “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.”

THEME: The reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Concept of child (3)

TOPIC: Biblical concept of a child (2) An infant

TEXT: Luke 2:40-51

AIMS:

- i. to study the characteristic of a child pertaining to their needs.
- ii. to pay more attention on things that can aid their growth

INTRODUCTION

An infant is a child from birth till adolescent age. The earthly parents of Jesus provided all the amenities necessary for his physical growth such as, good food, shelter and clothing for him. Moreover, they never fail to provide for his spiritual well-being, by taking him to Jerusalem for spiritual rites. This made Jesus to grow and become strong in Spirit, filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon him. As Christians and Parents, we need not allow the present-day challenges to shift our focus from our heavenly mandate of making provision for our Children's physical and spiritual needs. Our Study today will beam more light on how to achieve these.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Mention some physical signs that differentiate infant from adolescent stage of a child. 1Cor 13:11; 1Pet. 2:2
2. What lessons can we derive from the incidence in Luk 2:43-46?
3. As believers, pinpoint those things that can jeopardize our growth both physically and spiritually and how best to avoid them. Luke 2:40; Jam 3:14-16
4. What is the importance of teaching Christ to our young ones? Prov. 22:6

CONCLUSION:

As Christians, let us ask ourselves how often we visit our Children in their schools? we may face numerous challenges that made it difficult or impossible to meet our children needs, however, our prayers, perseverance and steadfastness in faith shall definitely enable us.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Build a child today, he will build the nation tomorrow.

MEMORY VERSE: Prov. 22:6, "Train up a Child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.

THEME: The reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Concept of child- (4)

TOPIC: Biblical concept of a child (3) Newborn in Christ

TEXT: 1 Peter 2:1-3

AIMS:

- i. to study the nature of new birth in faith
- ii. to verify the signs and reward of new birth.

INTRODUCTION

Another Biblical concept of a child is a “newborn in Christ”. It means a new convert, popularly referred to as “Born Again”. It simply means turning away from old or sinful ways of life to godly livelihood.

He that is born again becomes partaker in the things of heaven. As a Christian, we must make concerted effort through the help of Holy Spirit to develop good relationship with God as to qualify as a child of God.

STUDY GUIDE

1. What do you understand by a newborn in Christ and how best can we relate with a newborn in the Church? 1Pet 2:1-3; Heb. 5:12-14.
2. Mention the physical and spiritual signs of a new birth in Christ. 1Cor 13:11; 1John 3:9; 4:7; 5:18
3. What do we stand to gain as genuine born-again Christians and the repercussion of not been born again? 1John 5:4; Rom. 8:16-17; 2Pet 1:4.
4. In your own opinion, what are the dangers of fake “born-again” syndrome as noticed in some denomination to Christian faith? Matt 15:8-9; 23:27-28; Eph 4:14.

CONCLUSION: In the light of today’s lesson, believers need to shun lifestyles that are capable of portraying them as fake born-again children of God, and through the love of Christ relate well with the new convert in the Church.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Are you a born again or born against?

MEMORY VERSE: 1Pet 2:2: “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby”.

THEME: The reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Initiating the child (1)

TOPIC: Wean and instruct in the right manner

TEXT: 1 Sam. 1:20-27

AIM:

- i. to expose the concept of weaning a child
- ii. to study the relationship between physical and spiritual weaning.

INTRODUCTION

Initiating means to start a way of life with someone. Weaning of a child is a mark of advancement in the life of the child. The child moves from breastfeeding to other sources of nourishment. At this point, the child does not depend on milk. Living on milk alone could not sustain his new level of physical development. From the spiritual point of view, a Christian is expected to develop to the point of not living on “milk” alone. It is at this point that he can instruct and be instructed in the right manner.

STUDY GUIDE

1. What is your understanding of weaning a child?
2. What did Hannah do, after weaning Samuel? 1Sam 1:24-27 and what lessons can we derive from this as Christians?
3. Discuss the relationship between physical weaning and spiritual weaning. 1Sam 2:11-18; Luk 2:39-40; 1Co 13:11; 14:20; Eph 4:14.
4. Discuss the effects of spiritual weaning in the context of Isa 7:15; 1Co 2:6; Heb 5:13-14.

CONCLUSION: Christian parents have the responsibility of bringing up their children in godly ways and nurturing them until they advance to the next level of their lives. The same responsibility is required of us in nurturing people spiritually until they stand mature in Christ.

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Cor. 13:11: “When I was a child, I spoke like a child. I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child, when I became a man, I gave up childish ways.”

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Weaning a child leads to winning the child.

THEME: The reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Initiating the child (2)

TOPIC: Invoke God's blessing on them

TEXT: Luke 2:34-35

AIM:

i. to show the importance of parental blessings upon the children.

INTRODUCTION

Invocation is the act or process of petitioning for help or support. In Christianity, it is a prayer of entreaty (as at the beginning of a service of worship) and calling on God for guidance, spiritual blessings and justification. Invoking God's blessings continually upon the children is part of the weaning process among Christians. The blessing of Simeon and Anna the Prophetess upon Baby Jesus, shows us the importance of invoking blessings upon children from their infancy because it is part of their spiritual foundation (Proverbs 22:6). Parental blessings upon their children keep and sustain them in the years ahead.

STUDY GUIDE

1. In your own term, define invocation and parental blessing in the context of Luke 1:67 and 76
2. Read Gen. 49:22-26; Luk 2:34-35 and discuss the invocation of blessings of Jacob upon Joseph and that of Simeon upon Jesus.
3. How does the invocation of Jacob and Simeon manifest in the lives of Joseph and Jesus as they grew? Gen 50:15-23; Luk 2:40, 46-47, 52; Mk 1:21-22.
4. Discuss ways through which parents can invoke God's blessings upon their children. Deut. 6:6-7; Eph 6:4.

CONCLUSION: Parents stand the risk of losing their children to the evil one if they don't consciously invoke God's blessings upon them. Let us therefore as Christian parents take this role seriously in order to raise a generation that will carry and sustain God's blessings.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Am I a blessing or a curse to my children?

MEMORY VERSE: Luke 1:76: "And thou child shall be called the prophet of the Most High, for thou shall go before the Lord to prepare His ways."

THEME: The reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Initiating the child (3)

TOPIC: Infant Baptism

TEXT: Acts 16:15, 33; Col. 2:11-12

AIMS:

- i. to explain infant baptism,
- ii. to relate baptism with circumcision and
- iii. to expatiate on some biblical bases for infant baptism

INTRODUCTION

“Paedobaptism,” also called “Christening in some Christian tradition, is the practice of baptising infants. The baptism of infants is believed to be the New Testament typology of the Old Testament doctrine of circumcision as enshrined in Col. 2:11-12. Children were part of God’s Covenant as seen in the Bible (cf. Gen. 17:7; Deut. 29:10-12; Acts 2:38-39). Likewise, baptism is the seal of this New Covenant in Christ, as it brings cleansing from sin and acceptance of children into Christendom which circumcision signified.

STUDY GUIDE

1. What is your understanding of infant baptism?
2. From the following passages, discuss biblical basis for infant baptism. Gen 17:7; Acts 16:14-15,32- 33, and its connection to circumcision; Col. 2:11-12
3. As a Christian, how can you justify infant baptism? Matt 19:13-14; Acts 2:38-39; Rev 20:12.
4. Does baptism automatically lead to heaven? Discuss in line with righteous upbringing in preparing our children for the kingdom of God. Acts 21:8-9; 2Tim 1:5-6.

CONCLUSION: Infant baptism is one of our many rich heritages as a church. Even though it is not a license into the kingdom of God, but a reception of children into the Christian fold through confession made on their behalf by their godparents. Therefore, we must encourage Christian parents not to deny their children this all-important opportunity of having them initiated into the Body of Christ.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Quick eradication awaits any religion without children

MEMORY VERSE: Acts 16:33: “And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their wounds, and he was baptised at once, with all his family.”

STUDY 8 SEXAGESIMA SUNDAY FEBRUARY 23, 2025

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Personality and character traits of a child (1)

Topic: Activeness

Text: Luke 2:41-50

AIMS:

- i. to discuss the nature of activeness in a child and
- ii. to expose the relevance of Children's activeness to our Christian race.

INTRODUCTION

To be active according to Merriam-Webster online dictionary means quick in physical movement. Activeness in a child is that ability in them to always wanting to do something at all times. Children are naturally energetic because they are still growing and developing. Physically, active children are motivated, focused and mostly successful in all that they do. In our text today, Jesus, our perfect example activated his intention to do His father's work by staying back in Jerusalem. (Luke 2:43). Our study guide shall expose us more to this and how we can learn from this in our Christian race.

STUDY GUIDE

1. How can you explain activeness in a child in the context of Luke 2:43? Compare Exod 2:4, 7-8; and 1Sam 3:1.
2. In the contexts above, (Luke 2:43; Exod 2:4, 7-8; and 1Sam 3:1) how can you justify that children's activeness mostly leads to success?
3. What is Christian Activeness? And the benefits in the context of Exod. 23:25-26; Josh 1:8; 1Sam 7:3; Acts 4:33-34.
4. How can we, like children, be active in the things of God in a time like this, when zeal for Christian stewardship is going down? Psalm 69:9; Matt. 6:33; Jam 2:17

CONCLUSION: As Christians, let us learn from the active trait of a child and be active in our Christian race. Being a believer is not enough; we must be active in preaching the word and continuously take part in the things of God.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: To be active in the things of God is for God to be active in our lives.

MEMORY VERSE: James 2:17 "In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead"

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Personality and character traits of a child (2)

TOPIC: Ambitious

TEXT: Genesis 37:5-10

AIMS:

- i. to expatiate on ambition in children and
- ii. to discuss the scriptural context of ambitious and its effect on our Christian race

INTRODUCTION

Ambitiousness is a strong desire for achieving or obtaining success or specific goal. It is a driving force for courage and success. Ambitiousness in a child is the ability to achieve anything. According to our Bible passage today, this virtue was found in Joseph through his dreams (Gen. 37:5-10). David (in 1Samuel 17:32-50) had a very high ambition to fight Goliath. Running the Christian race without ambition to succeed and to reign with Christ can be very fruitless. Our Bible study is designed to discuss more on this.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Discuss children ambition in the context of our text (Gen. 37:5-10)
2. Critically study 1Samuel 17:32-50 and narrate the ambitious nature of David and its result.
3. According to Phil 2:3, is ambitiousness a sin or a virtue for a Christian to be cultivated? And how can ambitiousness be a virtue in soul winning according to Matt. 28:19-20; 1Cor.9:16
4. What is over-ambitious and how can it be a bane to Christendom? 2Sam 6:3, 6-7; John 18:10-11.

CONCLUSION: As Christians, it is not wrong for any of us to have the goals and ambitions that drive us, our ambition must focus on God and fulfilling his will. We must position our heart and mind on Christ, ready and willing to move forward as he leads; knowing that success is not based on how much we get, but rather on the opportunities to love and serve others and glorify God in the process.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Godly ambition is focused on Christ.

MEMORY VERSE: Phil 2:3 “Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourself”

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the kingdom of God

SUB- THEME: Biblical Perspective of Gender Based Violence

TOPIC: Unveiling Gender Based Violence in the Scriptures

TEXT: Gen. 34:1-27

AIMS:

- i. To explore the concept of gender-based violence using scripture
- ii. To explain the contributing effects of social, cultural and parental factors to GBV within the biblical context
- iii. To discuss the negative impact of GBV drawing examples from the Bible
- iv. To discuss the biblical recommendations of recovering from GBV
- v. To highlight the role of the church in mitigating the factors causing GBV

INTRODUCTION

Considering the text under study (Gen. 34), Dinah the daughter of Jacob was raped by Shechem the son of Hamor, and that incident led to a feud that claimed the lives of all of the males in the land of Shechem.

This goes on to say that Gender-based violence could give birth to other kinds of violence or war between nations or tribes if care is not taken.

STUDY GUIDES

1. Read the following passages, Gen. 16; 19; Judges 19:22-end; 2 Sam. 12; Hosea 1-3; Ezek. 16; 23 and explain Gender-based violence in your own words.
2. Discuss the repercussions attached to GBV cases in the Bible, focusing on the case of Dinah Genesis 34, also 2 Sam.13:8-14,
3. Could the patriarchal superiority and dominance seen in the OT be a factor for violence against women today? Read Judges 19:22-end; 2 Sam.11:1ff; Gen19
4. Why are women always at the receiving end in cases of gender-based violence? Read Exod. 21:7; 22:18; Deut. 22:22-23. Is gender violence against males prevalent in our society today? (Gen. 39:6-18). Discuss?

CONCLUSION: Gender-based violence is seen in various forms and so requires various approaches to tackle it.

The word of God remains the surest tool to handle the various Gender-based violence seen above. Child or underage marriage should be discouraged with a strong voice.

Awareness should be created of the dangers of rape and the perpetrators of such should be brought to book. There should be some sort of parental control on social media as to the kinds of content released. Besides, Galatians tells us that we have self-control (Gal. 5:23). Thus, we can handle whatever temptation the world brings our way.

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 119:11 "I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the kingdom of God

SUB- THEME: Unveiling Gender Based Violence 2

TOPIC: Violation of God's justice

TEXT: Judges 19:22-End

AIMS:

- i. To explore the concept of gender-based violence using scripture
- ii. To explain the contributing effects of social, cultural and parental factors to GBV within the biblical context
- iii. To discuss the negative impact of GBV drawing examples from the Bible
- iv. To discuss the biblical recommendations of recovering from GBV
- v. To highlight the role of the church in mitigating the factors causing GBV

INTRODUCTION

The Bible unequivocally condemns all violence as an offense against God and humanity, associating it with wickedness and deeming it "detestable to the Lord." Particularly, violence against women is explicitly condemned in scripture.

The impact of violence- including rape and sexual assault; extends beyond physical harm to enduring emotional distress, unwanted pregnancies, complications during birth, and Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STIs). The Bible addresses various instances of violence against both genders, emphasizing that all forms of gender-based violence are criminal acts contrary to God's law.

This Bible study aims to explore gender-based violence from a biblical perspective, seeking guidance to understand and pray for an end to this injustice in alignment with Bible ' teachings on love and peace.

STUDY GUIDE

1. How does the Bible define justice and righteousness? Psalm 106:3
2. 1b. In what ways can gender-based violence be seen as a violation of God's justice and righteousness? Psalm 11:7
3. Read the story in John 8:1-11. (a) What do you feel about the woman caught in the very act of adultery but brought alone to Jesus to be condemned? (b) Do you see such examples of different standards and unequal expectations for men and women in the church and society today?
4. Jesus subverts the status quo by not condemning the woman in the story above. In what ways might we need to subvert the religious or cultural status quo to bring about gender justice in our world? Discuss
5. What are the implications of violating this fundamental principle? In Deuteronomy 22:22-23, Prov. 3:33.

CONCLUSION:

The scripture in Psalm 11:5 declares God's hatred for the wicked and those who love violence, linking violence with wickedness and deeming it "detestable to the Lord."

The church must address gender-based violence (GBV), considering any harm that impedes peace and possess potential for injustice. Eradicating GBV is crucial, and the church must actively discourage it among members and communities, aligning with God's justice.

Scripture emphasizes exposing and stopping abuse, urging support for legal authorities to punish offenders. Embracing God-given human authorities, the church plays a role in preventing abuse and ensuring justice (Ephesians 5:11-13, Romans 13, 1 Peter 2, Acts 23:12-22).

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 11:5 The Lord tests the righteous, but his soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence.

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the kingdom of God

SUB- THEME: Unveiling Gender Based Violence 2

TOPIC: Factors influencing Gender Based Violence [Cultural, Social & Parental factors]

TEXTS: Proverbs 31: 8-9, Micah 6:8

AIMS:

- i. i. To explore the concept of gender-based violence using scripture
- ii. To explain the contributing effects of social, cultural and parental factors to GBV within the biblical context
- iii. To discuss the negative impact of GBV drawing examples from the Bible
- iv. To discuss the biblical recommendations of recovering from GBV
- v. To highlight the role of the church in mitigating the factors causing GBV

INTRODUCTION

Gender-based violence is a pervasive issue that transcends geographical boundaries and affects individuals across the globe. Understanding its root causes and contributing factors is essential in combating this pressing concern. This introduction explores how cultural, societal, and parental factors collectively influence and perpetuate gender-based violence. By delving into the intricacies of these influences, we can develop a more comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted nature of this problem and work towards effective solutions that promote gender equality and violence prevention in the society.

STUDY GUIDES

1. In the light of Matt.7:17-18, analyse how conflicting parenting can be a threat to the future existence of their children. How can this be controlled?
2. How have social interactions – i.e. watching films, surf internet and substance abuse including drunkenness contributes to GBV among the youth and elderly in our societies today? Gen.19:32-35
3. Identify some cultural norms you know that reflect or promote GBV? How can the Bible's message guide our approach to them as Christians? Matt.15:3-6; Col.3:1-3; 2:20, Ephesians 5:25-28

CONCLUSION: In conclusion, gender-based violence is intricately linked to cultural, societal, and parental factors. Cultural norms, traditions, societal power structures, and parental upbringing constitute a strong influence on the GBV prevalence. Religious perspectives can guide the promotion of respect, equality, and love, forming the foundation to combat gender-based violence. It is crucial for individuals, communities, and religious institutions to actively create an environment condemning violence and promoting values aligned with various scriptures, employing a comprehensive approach to address and eliminate gender-based violence.

MEMORY VERSE: Micah 6:8 He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?

STUDY 13 4TH SUNDAY IN LENT: MOTHERING SUNDAY MARCH 30, 2025

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the kingdom of God

SUB- THEME: Parental Impact on a child (1)

TOPIC: The godly Mother

TEXT: 2 Tim 1:1-5

AIM: to expound the importance of mothers and some of their duties in raising a godly child.

INTRODUCTION

A mother is simply defined as a female parent; a woman who gave birth to a child. A godly mother is therefore a woman who nurtures her children in the ways of God. In our Text today, we read about how Lois impacted her daughter Eunice, the mother of Timothy with a great faith in Christ and Eunice also impacted Timothy her son with the same great faith in Christ. Timothy received the Faith and was converted to Christianity. (Acts 16:1-3; 1 Tim. 1:2) He became an Evangelist of the gospel (1 Tim 4:14) and accompanied Paul in most of his missionary journeys. (Acts 17:14, 15, 20:4; 1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1). He was commissioned with another evangelist to the region of Macedonia (Acts 19:22-26). He was a very good godson to Paul in Prison (2 Tim 4:13) and possibly suffered imprisonment with him at a time of his life for the sake of the gospel (Phil 1:1; Heb. 13:23). These evangelical feats by Timothy were based on the impact of his mother and grandmother's faith on him.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Define a mother and some natural works a mother does in her child's life at infant.
2. How can you describe the personalities of Lois and Eunice in our Text today?
3. Diligently study Prov 14:1 and Prov 31:10-25 and discuss how mothers can impact their children with virtuous manners.
4. From the introduction of our study today, identify the virtues of Timothy which were as a result of his mother and grandmother's spiritual impact on him.

CONCLUSION: As we celebrate our mothers today, it is very important to remind them of their importance as well as their physical and spiritual impacts on their children in order to nurture them towards the path of God's kingdom. May God bless our mother with more virtues to impact their children in Jesus' name. By God's grace we shall meet again on June 15 2025 to discuss the Part 2 of this study which is Parental Impact on a child (2): The godly father.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: A good child reflects his mother's virtues.

MEMORY VERSE: Prov 14:1 "Every wise woman buildeth her house; But the foolish plucketh it down with her own hands".

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the kingdom of God

SUB- THEME: Personality and character traits of a child (3)

TOPIC: Curiosity

TEXT: Gen. 22:1-8

AIM: to discuss how children's examples of curiosity can help us in the knowledge of Christ and His kingdom

INTRODUCTION

I visited one of my friends and was met at the door by his little son. Within a minute, he had asked me my name, my house, my motor, the type of my motor etc until his father stopped him and sent him into his room. Children are always curious! Curiosity means the desire to know, to see, to touch and to feel. Every little child has this virtue for their development. Curious children not only ask questions, but they seek the answers. From our text, Isaac asked his father about the ram to be used for sacrifice. Today's topic will touch-light how children's example of curiosity can help us in the knowledge of Christ and His kingdom.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Define curiosity in the context of our introduction and narrate an experience.
2. Compare Genesis 22:7-8 with the way or ways some parents negatively respond to their child's curiosity.
3. According to John 3:1-16 discuss the curiosity of Nicodemus in knowing the way to the kingdom of God.
4. Critically examine how children's example of curiosity can help us in the knowledge of Christ and His kingdom? Psa 42:1-2; Phil 3:9-10.

CONCLUSION: Children ask questions innocently without prejudice. Also, as Christians, curiosity is not a dangerous trap; it is what God's grace for knowledge. We must be curious to innocently know more of God and His way so as to continue in the knowledge of Christ.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Seeking to know more of Christ is the foundation of more knowledge.

MEMORY VERSE: Philippians 3:10 "I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of sharing in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death"

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the kingdom of God
TOPIC: Hosanna! by the Children
TEXT: Matt 21:12-16

AIMS:

- i. to expound the attitude of children to Jesus in the Temple,
- ii. to analyse how children are silenced and
- iii. to identify methods of encouraging children's talents and potentials in our congregations.

INTRODUCTION

Hosanna simply means we beg thee; save us. It is a Hebrew word. One of the virtues or personality traits in children is conscientiousness. It is truthful virtue in children. Their white is white and black is black. In our Bible text, we see the children crying hosanna to Jesus Christ as he entered the temple. This means that the Children naturally and by reflex, acknowledged Jesus Christ as the Messiah (Saviour) who is from the tribe of Judah. (Isa 11:1, 10). These children had not yet known the sins of bigotry, hypocrisy, envy and indignation; therefore, they approached Jesus Christ as the Messiah with all sincerity.

STUDY GUIDES

1. What do you understand by "Hosanna" and according to Luk 3:15-16, why were the children shouting Hosanna?
2. Discuss Psalm 8 verse 2 in relation to our study today and mention some wonders of God through children especially from conception till adolescent.
3. Analyse the attitude of the Pharisees towards the children in our text and mention various ways by which some adults in our Churches do silence the potentials of Children.
4. Identify some talents and potentials in children and discuss how to encourage them in our congregation.

CONCLUSION: As it was difficult to silence the children of Jesus' days, so it would be very difficult and even impossible to silence the potentials, talents and godly virtues in any child of God in our Churches. They are born to thrive and excel.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Today's children are genius tomorrow; embrace them.

MEMORY VERSE: Psalm 8:2 "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou might still the enemy and the avenger".

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the kingdom of God
TOPIC: Spiritual Resurrection
TEXT: Luke 15:11-32

AIMS:

- i. to expound spiritual death, causes and
- ii. to analyse spiritual resurrection and the context in Christendom.

INTRODUCTION

Spiritual death is when one's conscience to sinfulness is totally dead. The person is alive, but his or her conscience is totally dead and inactive to good things. The younger child in our text today was totally dead. He lost his conscience to frivolity, extravagancy and became a vagabond. The day he died to sin was the day he realized his mistakes and took a decision to come out of his spiritual death thereby resurrecting spiritually and went back to take his lost possession (Luk 15:17-19). Can Christians die or resurrect spiritually? Our study Guides will torchlight to us more.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Explain spiritual death and spiritual resurrection in the context of today's introduction.
2. How can somebody die and resurrect spiritually? Gen 41: 9; 42:21-22; Luk 22:56-62; Rom 6:11.
3. Is it possible for someone who died spiritually never to resurrect spiritually? Expound from Matt 27:3-5.
4. In the context of Luk 15:25-30, what are the attitudes of some "Christians" to sinners who repented and accepted Christian livelihood? How best should we react to forgiven sinners among our congregation? Acts 9:26-28.

CONCLUSION: As we celebrate Easter today in commemoration of the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ for our redemption, we should put on Christ's love to look for erring sinners and preach Christ to them as well as welcome and receive those who confessed and repented of their sins into our congregations.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: To live in Christ is to die to sin

MEMORY VERSE: Luk 15:32 "It was meet that we should make merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found".

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the kingdom of God

SUB- THEME: Personality and character traits of a child (4)

TOPIC: Logical

TEXT: Luke 2:41-52

AIMS:

- i. to analyse traits of logic in children and
- ii. to discuss the relevance to our Christian knowledge of the kingdom.

INTRODUCTION

According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, logic is the principle of proper thinking, used to arrive at a better conclusion. Logic is an attribute of God. We serve the God who encourages us to be rational (Isa 1:18). One of the characters in a child is the ability to ask for reasons: why this?, why that?. This is logic. From our text, Jesus engaged in discussion with the teachers of the law and asking them questions (Luke 2:41-52). To defend the faith, Christians must use truth, facts and reason appropriately and prayerfully. Our study guide will open our eyes to more of this.

STUDY GUIDE

1. In your own understanding, explain logic and illustrate an example in children with life experience.
2. According to Luke 2:46-47 and Isa 1:18, how can logic be of help to us in winning souls for Christ?
3. How can the logical traits in children be a challenge to godly reasoning concerning repentance and reconciliation? Mark 11:29-33; Acts 2:37-38; 16:30-31.
4. What are the dangers of not using logic in a proper way? 2Tim 4:3-4; Titus 3:9.

CONCLUSION: The study today serves as a challenge to godly reasoning concerning repentance and reconciliation to God. The proper use of logic is to remove intellectual barriers that hinder a person from accepting Jesus as saviour. However, we must know that logic cannot replace the inspiration gained through the prompting of the Holy Spirit, nor the clear truth of God's word.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Logic is good, but to be inspired by the Holy Spirit is better.

MEMORY VERSE: Isa 1:18 "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool".

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Traits of Negative Behaviours in Children (1)

TOPIC: Bullying

TEXT: Gen 21: 1-9 (KJV)

AIMS:

- i. to bring to our consciousness the existence of bullying in our society and
- ii. to reaffirm biblical teachings against bullying

INTRODUCTION

Bullying is described as mocking, hurtful teasing, threat, coercion and the likes while relating with one another. It comes in form of abuse, aggression, forceful dominance or intimidation. It is a social demean. In our passage today, Ishmael bullied Sarah and his son Isaac by mocking at them at the entertainment made at Isaac's weaning; Bullying is a bad act, it is a sign of immaturity, and it could also be as a result of lack of proper home training among children. Our study guides shall expatiate more on this topic.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Explain bullying in the context of our study today. Analyse in Children Concept.
2. What are the Biblical teachings against bullying? Rom 12:18-19; 1Cor 13:4-5; Eph. 4:29.
3. What are the effects of bullying in our Bible Text today and in our Christian children's livelihood? Gen 21:10-12; Matt 12:36-37; Mark 13:13.
4. How should Christians teach their children to react to bullying? Lev 19:18; Matt 5:11-12; 5:44.

CONCLUSION: As Christians, we must be very wary of bullying through teasing, name-calling, threat, backstabbing, embarrassment and gossip. We should also teach our Children against it because all humans are created in the image of God.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Whoever mocks a fellow person, mocks an image of God.

MEMORY VERSE: Matt 21:9 "And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, which she had born unto Abraham, mocking".

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and The Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Traits of Negative behaviours in Children (2)

TOPIC: Lying

TEXT: Act 5:1-11

AIMS:

- i. to expound the concept of lying,
- ii. to expose the lying potentials in us and teach us to avoid lying and lies in our daily living
- iii. to understand the implications of lying in the scripture and

INTRODUCTION

Lying means deception in speech or a deliberate act of deviating from the truth. It is one of the seven abominations to God (Prov. 6:16, 19). In today's text, Ananias and Sapphira lied; and thereby sinned against God which ended their lives abruptly. Lying has become a common sin among Christians today as many do not take telling lies as anything serious. God hates lies and loves the truth. The community of God's people should be a place devoid of lies but rather one that fully embrace and exemplify the truth as Jesus our Saviour is the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Explain how you understand lying and give examples of lies that children easily tell.
2. From the following passages, discuss the biblical stand on lying: Lev. 19:11; Ps. 101:7; Prov. 6:16-17; 19:9; Rev. 22:15.
3. Discuss the potentials of lying in Christian and children's livelihood in our present age. Gen. 18:15; 27:6-19; 37:31-32.
4. In the context of Acts 5:4,11, how can the understanding of today's study further the course of the Gospel of Christ in our society and among the children? Matt. 5:16; 6:33; Mark 1:15; Rom. 14:17

CONCLUSION: The sin of lying contradicts the very character of God. God cannot lie, (Tit. 1:3; Heb. 6:18); it is against His very nature to advance falsehood. Lying is a serious matter and to be abhorred because the reward is eternity in hell (Rev. 21:8).

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Though lying can be sweet but the end is always bitter

MEMORY VERSE: Proverbs 12:22 "Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD, But those who deal truthfully are His delight".

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Traits of Negative behaviours in Children (3)

TOPIC: Cheating

TEXT: Gen. 27:5-14

AIMS:

- i. to expose the concept of cheating among children,
- ii. to understand the effects of cheating to our Christian life and
- iii. to discuss how cheating can affect the kingdom work of the Church .

INTRODUCTION

Cheating is the art of getting a desired result with lies and other deceptive ways. Rebekah in our text taught Jacob how to cheat on his brother to the extent that she placed curse on herself; and Jacob's acceptance led to the enmity between him and his brother. Many people deceive today for the purpose of getting their desired results forgetting that God's standard can never be manipulated (Lev. 19:35-36). Christians should know that cheating ruins Christ-like character in us and enlists us in the company of the devil (Joh. 8:44).

STUDY GUIDE

1. Explain how you understand cheating especially among children.
2. What are the implications of cheating by Christians? Prov. 12:22, Prov. 19:1; 29:2, Amos 8:4-7.
3. What effects does cheating, especially by Christians, have on the Gospel of Christ today? Isa 59:2; Acts 6:1; Matt. 5:37; Acts 19:13-16; 1Cor 9:12b
4. What are the biblical injunctions to teach children against cheating? Lev. 19:35-36; Deut. 25:13-16; 1Tim 6:6; James 4:17.

CONCLUSION: Cheating might get someone what he or she desires, but the aftermath is always unpleasant to the person and the victim. It is a godly thing for every child of God to live a life of selflessness, honesty and truth that is devoid of cheating to foster peaceful co-existence in the society and the Church.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: A house built with saliva will be destroyed by dew.

MEMORY VERSE: Acts 6:1 "And in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplied, there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration".

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB THEME: Traits of Negative Behaviours in Children (4)

TOPIC: Laziness

TEXT: Prov. 6:6-11

AIMS:

- i. to identify early signs of laziness in our Children,
- ii. to bring out lazy habits in parents that influence lazy habits in Children and
- iii. to encourage working hard to earn judicious livelihood.

INTRODUCTION

Rogation Sunday is set apart to pray for the works of our hands. Therefore, to celebrate meaningfully, we must shun laziness. Laziness is when one is not eager or willing to work or exert oneself. Laziness ultimately leads to not being productive. A lazy hand is an idle mind mostly given to frivolities instead of substance. Laziness is a product of the mind. God's intention from the creation is for man to be gainfully engaged and not being lazy (Gen. 2:15; Col. 3:25; 1 Thess. 4: 10 - 11; 1 Tim. 5:8). Laziness produces indolence which is potentially capable of rendering someone useless while diligence on the other hand ensures that one stands before kings and not mere men.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Discuss how to identify laziness in children from the following passages Prov. 6:9-10; Prov. 24:33-34; 2Thess. 3:10-11.
2. How can parents influence their children against lazy habits? Prove 22:6; Matt 25:14-29; Rom 12:11.
3. What are the effects and consequences of laziness? Prov. 12:24; Prov. 13:4; Prov. 19:15; Prov.10:4-5; Matt 25:30.
4. As children of God, how can we deal with laziness in our relationship with God? Eccl 5:2; 8:3; Gal 6:9; 1Thess 4:11-12

CONCLUSION: As today is Rogation Sunday, to commemorate the blessing of our works, Children must be encouraged towards working judiciously to earn their living and never to be lazy, idle, and unproductive; wasting their mind, time and resources. God did not design us to be lazy but wants us to work and make things work.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Laziness has no place in the character of God.

MEMORY VERSE: Rom. 12:11 "Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord."

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB THEME: Traits of Negative Behaviours in Children (5)

TOPIC: Disrespectful

TEXT: Pro 20:20; 30:17.

AIMS:

- i. to expatiate on the concept of disrespect,
- ii. to expose consequences of being disrespectful and
- iii. to study the consequences of disrespectful to God and to parents

INTRODUCTION

Disrespect is to show lack of respect in the way that one speak or behave to someone. A disrespectful child shows attitudes of rudeness, being impolite, being offensive, not keeping to terms, not keeping to time, not honouring agreements, etc. Children are expected to respect their parents and elders by giving them special honour. It is very pertinent that we know that God our maker also deserves our respect.

The scriptural texts today made us understand that there are curses attached to being disrespectful. A life that disrespects is in danger of being short-lived.

STUDY GUIDE

1. What does it mean to be disrespectful? How do you identify a disrespectful child?
Read Judges 14:1-3 and discuss on how Samson behaved in a disrespectful manner.
2. How can a Christian be disrespectful to God our Father? Exo. 20:12; Prov. 20:20; 30:17; Mark 7:9-10
3. Compare Numbers 6:2-3 with Judges 13:3-4, 14:8-9 and Judge 18:30-31 also compare 2 Sam 15:10 with 2 Sam 18:9, 14 and identify the consequences of being disrespectful.
4. Describe how disrespectful attitudes are displayed in our contemporary churches

CONCLUSION: Samson died prematurely because of his disrespect to the law of God concerning the Nazirite's vow. He ate from the dead carcass of a lion. (Judge 14:8-9 Comp Lev 21:1) while Absalom died prematurely because he disrespected his father. Parents should endeavour to model their children towards the path of respect through which they will position them to respond appropriately to God as they grow up.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: A disrespectful soul is a soul at risk.

MEMORY VERSE: Prov 30:17 "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it".

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB THEME: Traits of Negative behaviours in Children (6)

TOPIC: Defiance

TEXT: Matt. 21:28-31; Rom 13:1

AIMS:

- i. to understand the concept of defiance,
- ii. to educate Christians on the need for the Holy Spirit in suppressing defiance and
- iii. to expose the consequences of being a defiant child

INTRODUCTION

Today is Pentecost Sunday, in commemoration of the gift of the Holy Spirit on the early Apostles. To be defiant is to behave in a disobedient manner. It is the refusal to obey instructions. It is like a determined opposition against authority. The Bible text today describes reveals a defiant child as one that disobeys his parent. Our study today on defiant will open us to one of the traits of the absence of Holy Spirit in any child of God.

STUDY GUIDE

1. From our Introduction, define defiance and enumerate factors that can bring about defiance in a child?
2. Can a Christian be defiant against God? If yes, how in the context of 1Sam 3:16-18
3. Discuss the place of the scripture through the Holy Spirit in redeeming a defiant child in the way of God. Eze 11:19; 36:27; 2Ti 3:14-16.
4. What are the consequences of being defiant against God? 1Sam 2:30-36; Prov 29:1; Isa 1:19-20

CONCLUSION: Everyone should understand that the only one in charge of the world is God, and that we must always do things according to His dictates which include obedience to those He has given charge over us. However, we cannot do all these without the help of the Holy Spirit. Let us allow it in our lives as on the day of Pentecost and surely defiance shall be suppressed.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: A defiant child without proper correction will grow up to be a defiant adult.

MEMORY VERSE: Isaiah 1:19 -20. "If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured by the sword"; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken."

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and The Kingdom of God

SUB- THEME: Parental Impact on a child (2)

TOPIC: The godly father

TEXT: 1 Kings 2:1-12

AIM: To study the biblical context of a godly father's impact on his child.

INTRODUCTION

We thank God for this year's fathers' day. May God bless our fathers more and make them factors of positive impacts on our children in Jesus' name. On March 30, during mothering Sunday, we studied the first part of this sub-theme. Today, we shall study the second part. In our Bible text, we see King David's farewell speech to Solomon his son. Our study guides will expound how this admonition later tutored Solomon in the right way of governance.

STUDY GUIDE

1. From our Text, analyse the admonitions of David to Solomon.
2. According to 1 King 3:4-5 and 2 Chr 1:3; how can you describe the impact of David on his son Solomon?
3. Analyse in your experience, how some fathers do mislead their children in our generation and also how some fathers are leading their children in godly paths.
4. Mention and analyse some of the responsibilities of a godly father. Luk 11:11; Eph 5:28; 6:4; Col 3:21.

CONCLUSION: The father is the head of the family. There are various types of fathers today in our society; however, a godly father loves, provides and tutors his family in godly manner. May God grant all our fathers the grace to do these in Jesus' name.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: A godly man makes a goodly father.

MEMORY VERSE: Eph 6:4 "Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord".

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and The Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Traits of Negative Behaviours in Children (7)

TOPIC: Ungratefulness

TEXT: Gen 40:1-14, 23

AIM:

- i. to understand the concept of ungratefulness
- ii. to expose the signs of ungratefulness in our lives and consider biblical teachings on ungratefulness.
- iii. to understand the importance of the habit of gratefulness and to impart it on our children.

INTRODUCTION

Being ungrateful means failure or refusal to acknowledge receipt of something good from another. The moment we give something to our child or children, and they cannot easily show gratitude, we should know that trait of ungratefulness is already building up. In our text today, we can see the butler forgot Joseph after the benevolence and plea of Joseph. It is very important for us as parents to quickly notice the trait of ungratefulness in our children and thus warn them against it at an early stage of their lives.

STUDY GUIDE

1. In the context of 2Tim 3:1-2, how best can you define ungratefulness especially in children?
2. What are the signs of being ungrateful as a child of God? Deut 8:11-14; Prov 30:11, 13, 15; Rom 1:21.
3. What is the Biblical injunction about ungrateful habit? 1Thess. 5:16-18; Eph. 5:20; Num.14:27-30; Heb. 13:5-6.
4. How can we teach and tutor children to be grateful? Deut 8:11; Luke 17:11-19; Eph 5:20.

CONCLUSION: Ungrateful habit is a character flaw that will not allow us to enjoy God and people around us to the fullest. Let everyone examine him or herself to check whether we have the traits of ungratefulness.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: An ungrateful child is like a thief of virtues.

MEMORY VERSE: Gen 40:23 “Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph but forgot him”.

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Imparting Positive Knowledge on Children (1)

TOPIC: Honesty

TEXT: Jer. 35:1-14.

AIM:

- i. to understand honesty and impart its importance on a child and
- ii. to expose us to the cost or consequence of honesty.

INTRODUCTION

Honesty simply means refusal to lie, steal, or deceive in any way. Character traits of one who is honest will include integrity, truthfulness, fairness and faithfulness. In our text, the honesty of the Rechabites as instructed by their grandfather was put to test by God through Jeremiah the prophet. They were given wine to drink in the Lord's house by the man of God, but they vehemently refused as it contradicts the instruction of their father, Jonadab. God used their honest lifestyle as a reference to the dishonest priests of Judah.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Define Honesty and discuss how the Rechabites manifested it in our text (Jer 35:5-10).
2. Why do you think a child needs to understand the importance of honesty in their livelihood? Pro 21:6; Jer 17:11; 22:13.
3. From the following passages, how can we impart children with honest virtues? Lev. 19: 35-36; De 25:13; Zech. 8: 16-17.
4. Using the parable in Matt. 21: 28-31, give typical examples of people doing opposite of what they say and then point out the implication of that in children upbringing. Compare with Prov. 12: 22; Acts 5:3-5.

CONCLUSION: God rewarded the honesty of the Rechabites by shielding them from the enemies' wrath. (Jer 35:18-19). Our ability to successfully practice and impart honesty in our day-to-day life will assist in removing deception in the family, the Church and the society at large.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Honesty may be unfavourable; however, it attracts God's favour.

MEMORY VERSE: Prov. 19:1 "Better is the poor that walketh in his integrity, than he that is perverse in his lips and is a fool".

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Imparting Positive Knowledge on Children (2)

TOPIC: Supportiveness

TEXT: Phil 4:13-19

AIM:

- i. to understand Supportiveness and its biblical relevant and
- ii. to discuss the supportive ways at children and parish level.

INTRODUCTION

To support is a call to help in whatever way possible, like caring for the needy or weak, providing material and spiritual needs. In our text, Apostle Paul extols the virtues of the Philippian's Church in their supportive manner towards his ministry and the spread of the gospel. To further strengthen the need to help, our study guides shall expose us to more reasons and ways to support each other in Christendom.

STUDY GUIDE

1. What is your understanding of supportiveness and substantiate your answer according to our text today.
2. According to Matt 25:34-40 and Rom 15:1-2 mention some of the ways we can be supportive to our children and in the Church.
3. Read Acts 6:1-5 and Joh 6:9, 11 and analyse the importance of support groups among children and at every parish.
4. What is the biblical injunction for supportiveness as well as the implication for lack of supportiveness in a Christian's life? Acts 20: 35; Matt. 25:41-46.

CONCLUSION: Supporting the needy provides a sense of belonging and it has reward from God. Children who are so taught and imbibe such culture will make our world and Parish a better place.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Am I a true Christian that is supporting the needy?

MEMORY VERSE: Acts 20:35 "I have shown you in every way, by labouring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said; It is more blessed to give than to receive."

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Imparting Positive Knowledge on Children (3)

TOPIC: Integrity

TEXT: Job 2:1-3

AIM:

- i. to understand the concept of integrity and
- ii. to discuss the values of integrity and its benefits among children and the Church.

INTRODUCTION

The word Integrity evolved from Latin adjective 'integer', meaning whole or complete. Therefore, Integrity is an inner sense of 'wholeness' deriving from qualities such as honesty and consistent character. Job, the character in our text today, successfully passed the test of Integrity as he was made a reference personality by God before Satan. Our Integrity is put to test daily by a culture of corruption, falsehood and dishonesty. Our study guide will open us to more discoveries on this vital topic.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Describe Integrity in your own words using God's description of Job in today's text.
2. Identify and mention the attributes of Integrity from the following references: Job 2:3; Prov. 4:25-27; Phil. 4: 8.
3. Someone tells his child he is not at home when truly; he was sleeping inside the house. Discuss this in line with our topic today and the impact on such a child.
4. How will you apply the following bible passages to impart Integrity on your children? Gen. 39:7-9; Dan. 1:5, 8; Acts 21:8-9.
5. What are the benefits for an individual or a Church with Integrity? Gen. 41: 39-41; Neh. 7: 1-2; Job 42:10.

CONCLUSION: The Christian's Integrity in the workplace and anywhere cannot be overemphasized as they include: sincerity; loyalty; obedience; moral uprightness; honesty; steadfast commitment to righteousness; and maintaining consistency under pressure. The more we do these, the more we receive favour from God and people around us.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Do what you say and act what you believe.

MEMORY VERSE: Job 2: 3 "Then the Lord said to Satan, "Have considered My servant Job, that there is that there is none like him on earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? And still he holds fast to his integrity, although you incited Me against him, to destroy him without cause."

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Imparting Positive Knowledge on Children (4)

TOPIC: Optimism

TEXT: Dan 3:16-18

AIM:

- i. to discuss the concept of optimism and
- ii. to enlighten on how to impart children with optimistic Christian values.

INTRODUCTION

Optimism is hopefulness about future success and gloriousness. It is confidence that everything will turn out good. Our text today exposed us to the result of the Hebrews' faith in God which led to their optimism concerning their deliverance. Their hope for deliverance was manifested in their total deliverance.

STUDY GUIDE

1. In the context of our text, explain optimism and how you can minister to an average Nigerian Youth on the current economic challenges.
2. In a society where compromise seems to be the order of the day, how can you impart optimistic values in children on contemporary challenges? Ps. 30: 5; Isa 43;2; Phil 4:13; 19; Heb. 10: 23
3. Read Job 2:9-13 and explain the factors and challenges that can destroy optimism in a Christian's life.
4. As Christians, what should be the focus of our optimism in Christendom? Php 3:20; Heb 11:15-16; 13:14.

CONCLUSION: Faith is the foundation and rock on which we stand as Christians and hope is the confidence and expectation that God's promises will be fulfilled. Optimism is a combination of the two that turns conviction and enthusiasm of hope into reality.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Christians, remain hopeful despite life challenges.

MEMORY VERSE: Heb. 10: 23 "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering; for He who promised is faithful."

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME 5: Imparting Positive Knowledge on Children (5)

TOPIC: Respect

TEXT: John 4:7-30

AIM:

- i. to understand the concept of Respect along and
- ii. to discuss practical ways of imparting the virtue in children and Church members.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of Respect is essentially to either admire another person or to have regard for the feelings, wishes, and rights as they are due as human being. It is to see that each person is God's creation and so deserves to be treated as we would like to be treated. The concept is clearly brought out in our text where Jesus, as a Jew without looking down on the Samaritan woman who perhaps based on her loose life could not go to the well at the regular time other women would go. Jesus never disregarded her, but requested from her, drinking water. Our study guide will expose us to the result of Jesus respect for this woman.

STUDY GUIDE

1. How do you understand the concept of Respect especially as demonstrated by our Lord Jesus Christ in our text.
2. Explain the result of Jesus' respectful dialogue with the Samaritan woman according to Joh 4:28-30.
3. What are the biblical injunctions concerning respect for various categories of people? 1 Pet. 2:13-18; 3: 1; 5:1.
4. How can we impart the virtue of Respect to children? Prov. 17:5; 20:20; 23:22; 30:17

CONCLUSION: Respecting others demonstrates the value God places on life. As parents and teachers, teaching and training our children on how to respect others will give a better and pleasant atmosphere to our society and Church community.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Respect and you shall be respected.

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Pet. 2: 17 "Honour all people. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king."

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Imparting Positive Knowledge on Children (6)

TOPIC: Curiosity

TEXT: John 3:1-15

AIM:

- i. to understand Curiosity from biblical perspective and
- ii. to expatiate on the essence of curiosity in children development.

INTRODUCTION

Curiosity is a disposition to want to know more or to learn more about a wide variety of things including personalities. In our text, Nicodemus, a Pharisee, and a ruler of the Jews went to Jesus by night in order to know more of Jesus. This curiosity led to the dialogue concerning the new birth through which Nicodemus was enlightened more concerning the kingdom of God..

STUDY GUIDE

1. Define Curiosity in the context of our text today.
2. In the context of our topic today, how do you understand the verses in Joh 3:6, 8?
3. What is the importance of Curiosity to our spiritual growth? Discuss in the context of Exod. 3:1-10; Luke 19:1-10.
4. How should parents encourage and empower children to cultivate a healthy sense of Curiosity? Deut. 29:29; Prov. 25: 2; Jam 1:5.

CONCLUSION: Curiosity enables Nicodemus discovered some spiritual mysteries. Therefore, curiosity enlightens children to explore the world around them with a new perspective.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Curiosity determines the level of knowledge.

MEMORY VERSE: Prov. 25: 2 "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing; but the honour of kings is to search out a matter."

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Imparting Positive Knowledge on Children (7)

TOPIC: Self-Confidence – a tool for lifelong success

TEXT: 1 Sam. 17: 42-49

AIM:

- i. to discuss self-confidence and its sources and
- ii. to identify practical ways of developing it for the kingdom purpose.

INTRODUCTION

In Christianity, confidence is an assurance of one's relationship with God with the boldness and conviction that one's destiny is secured in God. In our text, David, was a youth without previous experience in war but displayed self-confidence based on his faith in God by boldly engaging Goliath, a warlord in battle. Our study guides will beam more light on how self-confidence can be a vital tool that can positively impact the lives of our children when they are so taught.

STUDY GUIDE

1. What is your own understanding of self-confidence and how does David exhibit it in his encounter with Goliath? 1Sam 17:44-45
2. Where did David derive his self-confidence from and how do you teach that to a child? 1 Sam. 17: 34-37; Ps. 27:1-3; Jer. 17: 7-8; Phil 4:13.
3. David, the youngest of Jesse's sons was made a shepherd where he developed his skill in self-confidence. Discuss the practical things we can put our children through to develop their self-confidence, especially the shy ones. Prov. 3: 25-26; Zech 4:6, 7, 10; Mt 21:21; Phil. 4: 13; Heb. 10: 35-36.
4. How can self-confidence help in expanding the kingdom of God? Isa 41:10, 13; Matt 10:19, 28; Acts 4:31-32.

CONCLUSION: As the righteous is as bold as the lion, so is the person whose confidence is based on his faith in God. Therefore, a child that is self-confident becomes a pride of his parents and can successfully face the challenges of life.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: The self-confident person is a victor.

MEMORY VERSE: Phil. 4: 13 "I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me,"

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Imparting Positive Knowledge on Children (8)

TOPIC: Adaptability

TEXT: Phil. 2:5-8

AIM:

- i. to explain the adaptability of Jesus and its importance for gospel ministers and
- ii. to discuss practical ways to help children adapt for the kingdom's fortune.

INTRODUCTION

Adaptability is the ability to change and fit into a new situation. Adaptability often requires living above circumstances and conditions. It also entails humility and yielding your will and mind to God and His plan. In our text today, our Lord Jesus Christ displays a good example in adaptability. He left his heavenly glory to come to this world in human nature and as innocent as he is, to die as a criminal for our sin. Our study guide will further explain how we can adapt like him.

STUDY GUIDE

1. How best can you explain adaptability according to Jesus' mission on earth?
2. What are the virtues for adaptability for the propagation of the gospel? Matt 3: 13-15; Rom. 6:13; 1 Cor. 9: 19-23.
3. Practically, how can we teach our children to adapt to challenging situations? Phil. 4: 11-13 and differentiate between adaptability in godliness and complacency in ungodliness. 2 Cor 6:14.
4. How well can we adapt our evangelism style to effectively enhance the kingdom fortunes? Matt, 9: 14-15; Luke 22: 35-36

CONCLUSION: Like Jesus willingly accepted to be refashioned according to His Father's will and plan in humility, every child of God must be obedient and willing to do things in God's way no matter the situation. However, we must be very cautious to know that adaptability in godliness is totally different from complacency in ungodliness.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Divine demands require your yielding to God's plan.

MEMORY VERSE: Rom. 6:13 "Neither yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God; as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments unto God"

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Imparting Positive Knowledge on Children (9)

TOPIC: Creativity

TEXT: Exod. 35:30-35

AIM:

- i. to understand the root of creativity from biblical context
- ii. to discuss ways of developing creative skills in a child and
- iii. to discuss the importance of Creativity to God, humanity, and the Church

INTRODUCTION

Creativity is rooted in God because He is the creator of all things on earth and in heaven. So, whether you are a painter, seamstress, designer, musician, etc, we all have some level of creativity in us, since we are made in the image of God. Creative skills involve open-mindedness, curiosity, ability to brainstorm, experimentation, networking, observation, organization, communication etc. In our text, God called and made Bezalel and Aholiab artisans by imparting them with His Spirit of wisdom, understanding and knowledge in all manners of workmanship.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Define creativity and identify the personalities in our text and the source of their creative skills. Exod 35:30-31.
2. From biblical context, how can you prove that God is the ultimate creator and the source of all creativity? Job 5:8-9; Ps. 139:14; Jam 1:6-7.
3. Mention the creative skills in Exod 35:32-35 and how can parents encourage their children to develop such skills in a situation of lack of employment opportunities? Ps. 8:1-2; 104:24; Isa 8:18.
4. How can creativity be a vital tool for evangelism and mission? Psa 68:4; 107:15-16; Acts 16:25-33; Rom 12:6-8.

CONCLUSION

Creativity and the creative process are good and beautiful ways of glorifying the wonders of God. Therefore, the Lord equips and inspires us to use His gracious gifts for His kingdom expansion on earth.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Life without creativity is valueless

MEMORY VERSE: Exod. 35: 35 "He has filled them with skill to do all manner of work of the engraver and the designer and the tapestry maker, in blue, purple, and scarlet thread, and fine linen, and of the weaver – those who do every work and those who design artistic works."

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Imparting Positive Knowledge on Children (10)

TOPIC: Courage

TEXT: Matt 14:22-32

AIM:

i. to define courage and

ii. to discuss the method to use in imparting Courage to kids in daunting insecurity situations

INTRODUCTION

Courage is the ability or quality of the spirit that enables one to face danger or pain without showing fear. It was this kind of quality that Peter displayed when he found out in our text that Jesus was walking on the sea and asked Jesus if he could come to him by walking on the sea. Jesus encouraged him to come, and he jumped into the waters and started walking on the sea. However, when he started looking at the wind blowing around him, he started sinking. Our study guides will beam searchlight into how children and Christians can be spiritually imparted with courage in a sinking and stormy world.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Define courage according to our text and explain why Peter was able to walk on the sea and why he started sinking on the sea.
2. Failure in examinations is one way to discourage a child in progressive moves. Mention some other means of discouragement and from biblical points of view; give possible methods to impart courage in such a child. Josh. 1:5-9; Ps. 23:1-4; Rom 8:28; Phil 4:13.
3. Children are always confronted with challenges like bullies at school, insecurities, kidnappers on the road etc, what method should a parent or guardian adopt to impart courage in a child in the face of such challenges around us? Deut. 31:6; Psa 27:1-3; Isa. 43:1-4; 2Tim. 1:7.
4. Considering the current threats on the Church, discuss how courage can be a good tool for evangelization in Christendom. Dan. 3:16-26; 6:16-26; Matt. 28:20.

CONCLUSION

Having experiential knowledge of God's presence in one's life will produce Courage fuelled by faith to face challenges. So, when we trust in God's power, promises and His word; we have full assurance of victory that overcome fear and at the end of every challenge.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Courage with faith in God overcomes fear.

MEMORY VERSE: Deut. 31: 6 "Be strong and of a good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them' for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. He will not leave you nor forsake you."

THEME: The Reign of God: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Imparting Positive Knowledge on Children (11)

TOPIC: Patience

TEXT: Gen. 17: 1-6, 15-17

AIM:

- i. to teach Patience through some Biblical examples and
- ii. to discuss some practical ways of imparting Patience into children

INTRODUCTION

Patience is the capacity or virtue to tolerate challenges, delays, or denial without getting upset. In patience, you don't lose your temper. In our text, Abraham and Sarah had to wait for twenty-five years before having the promised child, Isaac. Their experience is a virtuous example of Patience for both parents and children of our generation.

STUDY GUIDE

1. How do you understand Patience in the context of our text? And how do you relay same to children?
2. Learning from God's example of His Patience with the Israelites in Deut. 29: 2-5, how should we apply this virtue as parents and children in our Christian lives? Eccl 7:8; Luk 21:19; Rom 12:12; 2Tim 2:24.
3. How should parents impart this important virtue to children through 'delayed gratification', 'sowing and harvesting' etc.? Zech. 8: 12; Heb. 6:12; Jam. 1: 3-4
4. Just as Joseph was rewarded for his patience for the manifestation of his leadership dreams in Gen. 37: 5, 9-10; 45: 4-7, what are other benefits of Patience to the Church and individuals? Ps. 40:1; Isa 33:2; Lam 3:25; Luk 2:25; Act 1:4; 2:1-2.

CONCLUSION

We can only receive the virtue of Patience through our individual relationship with the Holy Spirit. Just like Abraham, Sarah, Joseph had the fulfilment of God's promises through patience, so shall all believers in Christ Jesus who patiently wait for His second coming, inherit the kingdom of God.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Patience is important for fulfilment of God's promises

MEMORY VERSE: Heb. 6:12 "That you do not become sluggish but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

THEME: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB THEME: Child Discipline (1)

TOPIC: Avoid overindulgence

TEXT: 1 Samuel 2: 12-18

AIM:

- i. to study the Biblical idea of Child Discipline and its rewards and
- ii. to examine the effects of lack of discipline [overindulgence] on the Child and the society

INTRODUCTION

Child discipline may be described as the boundary set, or structure put in place by parents to effectively help their children fit into the real world with happiness. In our text today, Prophet Eli was inoffensive to his children and overindulged them in their sinful manners. The Bible enjoins parents to train their children to obey ethical rules, sometimes using punishment to correct disobedience [Proverbs 19:18; 13:24; 22:15]. In today's study, we shall examine the benefits of child discipline and consequences of lack of it through overindulgence on the child and the society.

STUDY GUIDE

1. What is Child discipline and its effects in the following passages? Genesis 39:6-10; Jeremiah 35:3-7; Daniel 1:8; 11-15; Hebrews 11:24-25.
2. Read 1 Samuel 2:13-17; 22-24. Was it appropriate for Eli to have waited until when he became old, and his children became adults before trying to correct them? Discuss.
3. Discuss apparently inoffensive adult routines that may harm a child's future if exposed to them.
4. How can we enforce child discipline seamlessly at home, in the Church and in the Society? Deut. 6:6-7; Prov 29:17; Eph 6:4, Col 3:21.

CONCLUSION: We often forget that child discipline really means to teach, not always to punish them. Children are the Lord's lambs and parental examples will go a long way in feeding them. The Christian child should be raised with the mind-set that these are good seeds and children of the Kingdom.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Persuasion or Coercion, Child discipline is crucial.

MEMORY VERSE: Prov 29:17 "Correct thy son, and he shall give thee rest; yea, he shall give delight unto thy soul".

THEME: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB THEME: Child Discipline (2)

TOPIC: Discipline through denials

TEXT: Deut. 8:2-6

AIM:

- i. to study the divine intention behind Christian hardships
- ii. to learn how we may apply denials to inculcate the virtue of discipline in our children

INTRODUCTION

As a boy, the famous Methodist Preacher, Dr W. E. Sangster went to a camp. He soon ran out of money, sent a telegram to his father asking for more. He got no reply. His friends mocked him that his father didn't love him. Sangster said, "I know I am loved, only I don't know why my father did not reply. When I get home, I'm sure he will tell me himself". At home, his father said he was tempted to send more money, but felt his son was not treating money with sufficient care and needed to learn its value. In our Bible text, we can see how God guides the Israelites' paths through hardship and denying them of pleasure route. Our study Guides will open our eyes to how we may apply same discipline to guide our children.

STUDY GUIDE

1. From the story in the introduction, how would you explain discipline through denials?
2. Why did God lead His people along a long arduous route? Exod 13:17; Num 14:1-4; Deut. 8:2-3.
3. Read Hebrews 12: 5-11 and explain the reasons behind divine parental discipline.
4. In your own analysis, suggest ways to discipline our children through denials.

CONCLUSION: Like magnet in a field of iron, children are so vulnerable and could readily pick up activities around them. Parents are required to deny the children certain things/associations as insulation against bad influences. They may not immediately agree that they should be denied what they believe we can afford, but with time, they will understand and thank us for applying timely discipline at the right time.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Momentary denials can breed enduring appreciations.

MEMORY VERSE: Deut. 8:3 "He humbled you, causing you to hunger, and then feeding you with manna to teach you that man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD."

THEME: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: The unborn Child (1)

TOPIC: Valuable to God

TEXTS: Psa. 127:3; Ps. 139:13-16

AIM:

- i. to study the concept of an unborn child in biblical context and
- ii. to expound the value God places on an unborn child.

INTRODUCTION

Our topic today is like a continuation of study 2 of January 12 2025 that explained the biblical meaning of a child as a human being between the stages of conception (Baby in the womb) and puberty. Moreover, an unborn child is a human being between the stages of conception (in the womb) and delivery at birth. Our texts extol the values God placed on the unborn child and clarify that everything God created was good and beautiful, including man in His own image and in His likeness.

STUDY GUIDE

1. From the following passages, discuss scriptural view of the unborn child? Ps 22:9; 71:6; Job 31:15.
2. In the light of Gen 25:21-23; Psalm 127:3; Jer. 1:5; Gal. 1:15 discuss the value God placed on the unborn child.
3. What is your view of the foetus? Is it ordinary blood or a human?
4. Discuss ways through which unborn children are being abused in our generation especially by pregnant women.

CONCLUSION: The Lord Almighty places great importance on every unborn child (foetus). Therefore, we must be careful of how we care for them; never to disvalue them in order to avoid the wrath of God.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Am I devaluing God's creation?

MEMORY VERSE: Gen 25:23: "And the LORD said to her: "Two nations are in your womb, Two peoples shall be separated from your body; One people shall be stronger than the other, And the older shall serve the younger.'"

THEME: Children and the Kingdom of God
SUB-THEME: The unborn child 2
TOPIC: Abuse of the unborn child: Abortion
TEXT: Gen. 1:27; Ex. 20:13; Deut. 5:17; Psa 139:13-14

AIM:

- i. to discuss the concept of abortion in the context of practices based on culture, exposure and circumstances and
- ii. to evaluate the issue of abortion from biblical point of view as believers in Christ.

INTRODUCTION

Our topic today is a continuation of last Sunday's study; that the unborn child is the foetus (developing child) between the stages of conception (in the womb) and delivery. Abortion simply means the termination of a pregnancy by destroying the embryo or foetus (developing child in the womb). Though, there is no explicit biblical reference regarding abortion; but the Bible describes the creation of humans "in the image of God" (Gen. 1:27); and beautifully created (Psa 139:13-14) Moreover, our texts today reveal that God sets a bound, ("do" and "don'ts") for the man He created. One of the rules is that we must not shed blood (Ex. 20:13; Deut. 5:17; Gen. 37:22). This study will help us to understand and to be conscious of the commandments of God, particularly as it regards the abuse of the unborn child.

STUDY GUIDES

1. Explain what you understand by "abortion and foetus" in the context of the introduction with references to Gen 37:22b and Exod 20:13.
2. According to your cultural background, discuss some reasons why pregnancies are terminated and your opinion about permitting abortion on health ground (health of the mother) and because of rape? Are they justifiable?
3. Who is to be blamed in abortion; the baby in the womb or the abortionist?
4. Considering indecent dressings and unholy relationships, discuss biblical steps and godly advice we must take as Christians to avoid unwanted pregnancies especially through rape. 1 Cor 5:9; 2 Cor 6:14-17.

CONCLUSION: As we round up this study, do you know that what some people are destroying through abortion is what some people like Hannah are desperately looking for? Unfortunately, what some people call "ordinary blood" eventually develops to human being. Imagine if the foetus of Isaac, Deborah, Esther, Samuel, David and other great people in the Bible were aborted?... Therefore, when pregnancies are terminated, destinies are destroyed. However, preventive measures must be taken against unwanted pregnancy especially measures against being a victim of rape.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: What could that aborted child have become.....?

MEMORY VERSE: Gen. 37:22b: "Shed no blood..."

THEME: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Child abuse (1)

TOPIC: Abuse of house-help

TEXT: Deut. 24:14-15

AIM:

- i. to study the concept of house-help,
- ii. to expound God's stand on the abuse of house-helps and
- iii. to open our eyes to the importance of godly relationship with our house-helps.

INTRODUCTION

A house-help is someone (male or female) that is employed or living with a family for the primary duty of assisting in our domestic activities. Some house-helps have parents or parents that are so impoverished, while some of them are totally orphans who need help. Our Bible text today reveals to us the stand of God on these helpers in our house. How do we treat these helpers, what is the Christian standard in relating with them and what is God's command concerning them? These and other pertaining points shall be expounded in our study guide today.

STUDY GUIDES

1. Who is a house-help? And why do many of them engage in such work?
2. In the Context of Deut 15:7-10; how do some people abuse or treat their house-helps? What lessons do you learn from the relationship between Naaman, his wife and the maid in 2 Kings 5:2-5.
3. According to Lev 19:13; Deut 24:14-15; 1Tim 5:18, how are we expected to treat our house-helps as Christians?
4. Discuss God's displeasure over maltreatment of house-helps. Exo 21:20; Jer 22:13; Jas 5:4

CONCLUSION: House-helps are not accursed human beings; they are born by parents like their masters or mistresses; they are not taboos to good livelihood and we as Christians should never treat them like that, instead, we must relate with them with social respect in order to avoid God's judgment.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Remember! Your house-help is another person's child!

MEMORY VERSE: Deut 24:14 "Thou shalt not oppress a hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thy brethren, or of thy sojourners that are in thy land within thy gates."

THEME: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Child abuse (2)

TOPIC: Sexual Abuse

TEXT: 2 Sam 13:1-29

AIM:

- i. to create awareness regarding the ugly trend of sexual abuse,
- ii. to torchlight the various contemporary templates for sexual abuses and
- iii. discuss means of guarding against it.

INTRODUCTION

Sexual abuse has to do with having carnal knowledge of someone by force (otherwise called rape). Occasionally, young people are lured with marks in examination, job appointments, financial assistance, pictures, magazines, movies including pornographic contents and other incentives. At other times, one person overpowers the other, taking advantage of his or her strength. In other circumstances, students are threatened with failure in exams in other to abuse them sexually. Our text today reveals how Amnon manipulated his cousin.

STUDY GUIDE

1. What is sexual abuse and mention some factors that can lead to it in our society.
2. Discuss examples of sexual abuse from the following passages: Gen. 34:1-2; 2 Sam. 13:11-14.
3. Narrate from contemporary incidences how students, housemaids, subordinates in workplace and even relations are abused sexually.
4. In line with contemporary stories and judgments on sexual abuses and according to 2 Sam. 13:28-29; what are the consequences for culprits of sexual abuse?

CONCLUSION: At times, what people call “love” is actually “lust” and once they satisfy their lust, they get out of the way. We must therefore guard our hearts against lust and sexual abuse. Christians are expected to live a decent life and not engage in any form of sexual abuse instead, discourage it in our speech, manners and relationships.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Am I driven by love or lust?

MEMORY VERSE: Gen 34:2 “And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, saw her, he took her and lay with her, and violated her”.

THEME: Children and the Kingdom of God
SUB-THEME: Child abuse (3)
TOPIC: Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)
TEXT: Lev. 19:29; Deut. 23:17-18

AIM:

- i. to expose Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC) as an illegal trade
- ii. to study the factors for this illegality and
- iii. to discuss the importance of protecting children against human scavengers of children in our generation.

INTRODUCTION

A commercial sexually exploited child is one who is lured to engage, agrees to engage in, or offers to engage in sexual conduct in exchange for money, clothing, shelter, goods or care. Whereas it is true that many went into this lifestyle as a result of hardship or other challenges; many resorted into this lifestyle because of poor parental care; whichever way, this practice is abhorrence to God and dangerous to the life of the child. The question now is at what point in their lives did they delve into this lifestyle? This should raise worry and curiosity in our hearts and a passion to safeguard our young children.

STUDY GUIDE

1. What do you understand by commercial sexual exploitation of children?
2. In the context of Deut 19:29, what can you say are the reasons behind the act of commercial exploitation of children in our generation?
3. Discuss God's injunction over this attitude in the light of the following scriptures: Lev. 19:29; Deut. 23:17-18
4. How can we save our children from this dangerous situation? Discuss in the context of Prov 19:18.

CONCLUSION: The little girls being sexually exploited are people's children, including Christian parents. Therefore, let us devote more time in training our children in godly manners and also inculcate the habit of dignified profession and livelihood in order to save them from human scavengers in our contemporary world.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Disciple your daughters in godly manner to avoid unholy profession.

MEMORY VERSE: Deut. 19:29 "Do not prostitute your daughter, to cause her to be a harlot, lest the land fall into harlotry, and the land become full of wickedness".

THEME: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Child abuse (4)

TOPIC: Child Trafficking

TEXT: Gen. 37:2, 25-28

AIM:

- i. to explain the meaning of child-trafficking,
- ii. to discuss factors that can lead to child trafficking and
- ii. why believers must not participate in such act.

INTRODUCTION

Child-trafficking is when children and young people are tricked, forced or persuaded to leave their homes and are moved out and exploited, forced to work for the advantage of the master, or sold. In most cases, it is done for fraudulent benefits. Joseph the son of Jacob is a typical illustration of the evil of child-trafficking. Sadly, there are still cases of child trafficking even in our generation, and some of the perpetrators are in church. What are the factors for this and the biblical standpoint? Let us continue in our study guides for more exposition.

STUDY GUIDE

1. What do you understand by “child trafficking”?
2. According to Gen. 37:25-28: Identify and discuss reasons why Joseph’s brothers sold him.
3. Discuss reasons why people get involved in child trafficking today. Are those reasons justifiable?
4. What is God’s view and verdict about child trafficking? Exod 21:16; Matt. 18:5-6.

CONCLUSION: Every child born into this world has the right to liberty. Nobody was born to be the slave of another. Child trafficking is incurring the wrath of God and Christians should continuously preach and act against it.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Legit business counts!

MEMORY VERSE: Exod 21:16 "He who kidnaps a man and sells him, or if he is found in his hand, shall surely be put to death".

THEME: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Child abuse (5)

TOPIC: Shaken Baby Syndrome

TEXTS: Psalm 127:3; Eph. 6:4

AIM:

- i. to study the concept of shaken baby syndrome,
- ii. to expose God's injunction on such attitude and
- ii. to discuss means of discouraging such acts in our society.

INTRODUCTION

Shaken baby syndrome is a type of brain injury that happens when a baby or young child is shaken violently. Shaken baby syndrome usually occurs when a parent or caregiver severely shakes a baby or toddler due to frustration or anger – often because the child won't stop crying. This could cause brain damage or even death of the child. God is against any form of mistreatment of the child for whatever reason. This study is to expose this evil and call on every true Christian to abhor such practice.

STUDY GUIDE

1. What do you understand by "shaken baby syndrome"? Narrate an experience you have witnessed.
2. Which other ways are children mishandled that you considered wicked?
3. From the following passages, discuss God's injunction and the Scriptural stand on children: Gen 21:14-19; Psa 127:3; Eph. 6:4.
4. There are many single parents in our generation who are maltreating their own children because of frustration. How would you advice such parents in the context of Psalm 127:3?

CONCLUSION: When the Bible said that human beings are created in the image of God, children are not only part of that creation, but also a heritage of God. We must always ask ourselves at the point of transferring of anger to any child; who offends me, the child or the mother or the father? Therefore, we must never under any guise destroy the creation and heritage of God.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Who offends me, the child or the mother or the father?

MEMORY VERSE: Psa 127:3 "Behold, children are a heritage from the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward".

THEME: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Child abuse (6)

TOPIC: Institutional Abuse or Neglect

TEXT: Gen 21:14-19.

AIM:

- i. to define institutional abuse or neglect in biblical context and
- ii. to discourage every form of institutional abuse or neglect.

INTRODUCTION

Institutional abuse or neglect has to do with the abuse or neglect which occurs in any facility for children in public or private institutions, hospitals, care homes and so on. In our days, the practice of lecturers molesting students for marks, or demanding for sex before passing them, has become very rampant. Also, we hear stories of doctors taking advantage of their patients sexually and other similar occurrences. Worst of all these are cases of mothers abandoning their children after birth on the roadside or inside gutter ways. These trends are not supposed to be associated with one who claims to be an image of God (Eph. 5:3)

STUDY GUIDE

1. What do you understand by institutional abuse or neglect according to our introduction today?
2. How will you describe the attitude of Hagar in Gen 21:15-16 compare with the attitude of Moses' mother in Exod 2:2-4. Is there any difference? If there are, explain the difference between the two stories.
3. Mention an experience or share the story of an Institutional abuse or child neglect and discuss practical steps that can be taken to guard against these acts. Matt. 5:16.
4. From the following passages, what is God's position about these abuses? Gen 21:17-19; Isa 1:16; Luk 11:11-12; James 1:27.

CONCLUSION: A Christian with a living conscience is not expected to be associated with certain criminal activities, like the case institutional abuse or child neglect. It is very important that every person placed in position should respect such position and their calling without abusing it under any guise and children given to us must never be abandoned or neglected for danger.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Who knows the future of that abused child?

MEMORY VERSE: Gen 21:18 "Arise, lift up the child and hold him with your hand, for I will make him a great nation."

THEME: Children and the Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Child abuse (7)

TOPIC: Emotional Abuse

TEXT: 1 Sam. 2:12-17

AIM:

- i. to understand the concept of emotional abuse of children,
- ii. to relate it with adult emotional abuses and
- iii. to discuss how to curtail it.

INTRODUCTION

Emotional abuse is a pattern of behaviour in which the perpetrator insults, humiliates and generally instils fear in a child or an individual adult. It also means abuse of a privilege. Eli's sons abused the privilege given to them by God. Unfortunately, Eli himself did not pay attention to the emotional abuses inflicted on God's congregation by his sons; thereby wounding the heart of God. Emotional abuse has consequences both here and in eternity. Let's go on to discuss these.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Define emotional abuse and give concrete examples from your experience on how children are emotionally abused.
2. From the Bible passage today (1Sam 2:12-17), simply narrate the nature of the abuse by the sons of Eli on the congregation and God's attitude towards the actions in 1Sam 2:30-34.
3. Discuss the nature of such emotional abuse in Acts 6:1 and compare this with our contemporary emotional abuses between our political leaders and the citizens. How can we curb this as a principal officer or Government official in the context of Acts 6:2-7 and especially in local Government affairs?
4. As Christians, where can we find succour when emotionally abused? Psalms 13; 25; 37. Read these Psalms at home and whenever you are emotionally abused.

CONCLUSION: We must not toil with people's emotions. This can lead to frustration. Above all, we must not take the mercies of God for granted so that the fate of Eli's sons will not be our portion, instead, let us continuously respect the personality of others irrespective of who they are.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: People's emotion is germane to God! Don't toil with it!

MEMORY VERSE: Acts 6:1 "Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution".

THEME: Reign of God: Children and The Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Accepting the gospel like a child (1)

TOPIC: Embracing Unity.

TEXT: Psalm 133

AIM:

- i. to expound the type of unity found among children,
- ii. to highlight advantages of Christian unity over disunity and
- ii. to demonstrate that disunity is not compatible with Christianity.

INTRODUCTION

Unity among Children means to stay as one regardless of the differences and the circumstance. Among age group: 8-14 years, there is always unity and harmony with and among individuals in the group. Unity continues by accepting and appreciating each person and his or her contribution. As Christians we must shun disparity in propagating the gospel. Being united as Christians gives us strength in the propagation of the gospel. Individually, people can be weak and prone to failure, but togetherness brings power.

STUDY GUIDE

1. In your own words, explain or analyse unity among children and give examples.
2. In the concept of Psalm 133 what should be the harmony amongst Christians? Compare with 1 Cor. 12:12-13, 22-27; Eph 4:1-3.
3. Enumerate the benefits the church enjoys as a result unity in Acts 2:42-47.
4. Carefully examine Acts 15:36-40; Gal 5:13-15 and discuss the causes and demerits of disagreements in the body of Christ.

CONCLUSION: Unity in a church does not in any way mean that people cannot express their different opinions on issues; but that members consciously cooperate with one another. Consciously accommodate one another despite differences in education, tribe or nationality, economic status etc, etc. This unity gives the world a positive image of the church, fosters both spiritual numerical and material growth.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: A house divided against itself cannot stand.

MEMORY VERSE: Eph 4:3 “Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace”.

THEME: Reign of God: Children and The Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Accepting the gospel like a child (2)

TOPIC: Be Truthful

TEXT: Gen 37:1-2

AIM:

- i. to expose the truthful nature in children,
- ii. to highlight the fact that telling half-truth or outright untruthfulness is sinful and that
- iii. that God hates liars.

INTRODUCTION

A certain Christian man did not want to see his neighbour whom he owed some money. So, he told his five-year-old son to tell the neighbour that he (the father) was not at home. When the neighbour eventually came, he met the child who told him that his father said he should tell him that he is not at home. When asked if he knew where his dad went, the young child replied that his father was lying on the bed. Thus, he unknowingly exposed his father's lie. This is an example of the truthful nature of children. They don't know how to lie or deceive. Our Text today draws our attention to the fact that Joseph never joins the evil practices of his brethren as he always exposes them to his father.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Define truth in the children context and analyse what was wrong in the actions of the Christian father in the introduction above?
2. In the context of Joseph's brothers' behaviour in Gen 37:31-33, how will you analyse Joseph's truthfulness in Gen 37:2?
3. Describe the attitude of an early Christian couple in Acts 5:1-9 and God's judgment on their action.
4. What should be the Christian's standard in God's presence? Ps. 15: 1-2;51:6; Joh 8:32; And the consequence for all liars? Rev. 21:8.

CONCLUSION: Truthfulness is a godly virtue, while telling of lies is sinful and ungodly. The Bible is clear on what God says and his judgment on Christians who tell the truth and those who lie and deceive others. Therefore, we should always uphold the truth as little children.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Truthfulness is the main element of character.

MEMORY VERSE: Jn. 8:32 "Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

THEME: Reign of God: Children and The Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Accepting the gospel like a child (3)

TOPIC: Be Loyal

TEXT: Jn. 20: 10-17

AIM:

- i. to highlight the biblical concept of loyalty and its importance in Christianity and
- ii. to analyse behaviours that build disloyalty.

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever noticed that children will always run to meet anyone they love and are so familiar with? They cling to the person and when the person tries to leave, they start crying. This is the loyalty we are to have towards God as Christians. The word loyalty brings to mind a powerful sense of belonging and solidarity. With it comes the idea of wholehearted fidelity coupled with unswerving devotion and duty. The Biblical concept of loyalty is purely relational. This means our whole being is thoroughly committed to someone (Joshua 24:15). Such loyalty is expressed to us in both the divine and the human realms as given to us in the first two commandments: "Love the Lord your God with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength", and "Love your neighbour as yourself" (Mark 12: 30-31).

STUDY GUIDE

1. Give an example of a child's loyalty and then expatiate on Mark 12: 30-31 in the context of loyalty to God and man.
2. Analyse the loyalty of Ruth in Ruth 1:11-17 and Mary Magdalene in Joh 20:1, 10-17. In what ways do they express loyalty to human and Christ?
3. Mention some Christians' behaviour that amount to disloyalty to God according to Josh. 24: 15-16; Rom. 1:21-32 and 2 Cor. 6:14-16.
4. What is the reward for loyalty to Christ according to Rev. 2:26-28,3:4-5,11-13)?

CONCLUSION

As Jesus' disciples, we must demonstrate our loyalty and self-sacrificing allegiance by obeying His command that: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Mark 8:34). In our relationship with one another, we are called to steadfast loyalty like Mary Magdalene.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Loyalty is a decision and a resolution of the soul.

MEMORY VERSE: Mark 12: 30-31 "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your mind and with all your strength, The second is this "Love your neighbour as yourself". There is no commandment greater than these".

THEME: Reign of God: Children and The Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Accepting the gospel like a Child (4)

TOPIC: Be Humble

TEXT: Phil. 2:5-11

AIM:

- i. to discuss the concept of humility among children and
- ii. that all true children of God must endeavour to develop this Christ-like character.

INTRODUCTION

Children are always dependent on their parent or their older siblings to carry them, to back them or shoulder them while they are going together. They don't pretend to be able to do things themselves. That is why children will always say: carry me, back me, give me, bath me, wear my cloth for me etc. They are total dependents. In our text today, Christ demonstrated his humility by submitting to God's will to come into this world for the work of redemption. To be humble as Christians is to realize how weak we are, how helpless we are in changing the course of our lives by our own power. It is to ask God for His forgiveness and to trust Him for His guidance.

STUDY GUIDE

1. Explain what humility means within the context of children and our introduction and text. Phil 2:8
2. What useful lessons on humility can we learn from the life of children and that can be applied in all our relationships with God?
3. Read Matt 18:3-4; 1 Pet 5:5-6 and discuss why humility is a virtue towards God's kingdom.
4. What are the rewards for humble livelihood according to Matt 18:4; Phil 2:8-11; Col 2:3.

CONCLUSION: As we look forward to celebrating Christmas, we must learn from the humble birth and livelihood of our Lord Jesus Christ and lay aside all selfish pride, all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speaking, in order to cultivate and practice this Christ-like virtue known as humility.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Humility is Christ-like; pride is selfish.

MEMORY VERSE: Matt. 18:4 "Therefore, whoever humbles himself like a child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven".

THEME: Reign of God: Children and The Kingdom of God

SUB-THEME: Accepting the gospel like a Child (5)

TOPIC: Be Loving

TEXT: 1 Cor 13:1-13

AIM:

- i. to teach the concept of love among children and
- ii. to highlight practical working of Christian love.

INTRODUCTION

One of the basic characters in children is love among themselves to the extent that, they easily and quickly settle quarrels among themselves. A child once said to her friend “see, my mummy said I should not come to your house again o”. Surprisingly, they continued playing together. Christian love is directed outward towards others, not inwards towards us. This kind of love is natural to children but must never be confused with lust because love is selfless sacrifice while lust is selfish service in search for return.

STUDY GUIDE

1. In the context of our Introduction, explain love among children and explain with examples the difference between love and lust especially among our youths.
2. What are the main characteristics of Christian love according to 1Cor.13:4-8?
3. How did God demonstrate His love towards mankind? Joh 3:16; Ro 5:8; 1Jo 4:9. And how can we express our love towards Him? Lu 10:27; Joh 14:15,21,23
4. Discuss the fundamentals of Christian love according to 1Cor 13:1-3 and mention some areas where we need to show Christian love in our parish Church?

CONCLUSION: As we celebrate Christmas, the season should always remind us of God’s love in sending His only begotten son as gift of redemption for all mankind. Therefore, let us continuously show real love in our actions and attitudes by giving ourselves to the service of others and not ordinary feeling.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT: Christian Love is not self-seeking but self-giving.

MEMORY VERSE: 1 Jn. 3:18, “Dear friends let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and truth.”

