

LIVING
THE WORD

CARIBBEAN BIBLE LESSONS



Leaders

Adults • Ages 19 and Up • Learner Guide

May • June • July • August • 2022



Adult • Age 19 and Up • Learner Guide

The learning activities suggested in this book are used as part of the teaching plan provided in the *Adult Teacher Guide*. It is strongly recommended that each church provides a copy of the *Adult Learner Guide* for each adult and adult teacher.

Unit 1: Renewal: Overcoming Setbacks

May 1	Arresting Abuse	4
May 8	Valuing Life - Part 1	7
May 15	Valuing Life - Part 2	10
May 22	A Broken Marriage Can't Break Me	13
May 29	Leaping over Job Losses	16

Unit 2: Prayer in Worship

June 5	The Encounter	19
June 12	Empowered	23
June 19	Armed and Ignited	26
June 26	Stepping into My Purpose	29

Unit 3: The Holy Spirit

July 3	Promise of the Holy Spirit	34
July 10	Purpose of the Holy Spirit	37
July 17	Work of the Holy Spirit	40
July 24	Power of the Holy Spirit	43
July 31	Living by the Holy Spirit	46

Unit 4: The Changemaker

August 7	Resist False Doctrine!	50
August 14	Christ-centred Living	53
August 21	Taking Godly Steps	56
August 28	Being A Godly Leader	59

F E A T U R E S	Editor's Corner	2	Creative Expressions	49
	Meet Our Writers	3	Mission Point:	
	Distractions To Prayer	22	Help for Persecuted Christians	62
	Eternal Life Begins Now	32	Shout Out!	63
			How to Become a Christian	64

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EDITOR'S CORNER

Dear Brothers and Sisters,



It is a privilege to sojourn with you through this issue of Caribbean Bible Lessons (CBL) Bible Leaders Teacher and Learner Guide for adults. May we grow closer to God and each other as we seek to build up the household of faith (Galatians 6:10).

Family Month usually spans May and June for many churches in our 'neck of the woods.' In this issue we will be focusing on the family, the birth family and church family. This should be an informative, contemplative and inspiring period.

Renewal: Overcoming Setbacks is the theme for Unit 1. In it we confront family issues such as abuse, unplanned pregnancies, joblessness and relational challenges. It will show us how to deal with these real life matters, as a birth family, church family and individually. For Unit 2 we pivot in focus as we reflect on Prayer in Worship. This unit will encourage us to have more regular dialogue and meeting with God, the true and living God.

In Unit 3 we change gear as we seek to deepen our understanding of The Holy Spirit and how He works in and through the life of a Christian. We take things up a notch as we study the book of 1 Timothy and learn how we can become The Changemaker, in Unit 4. May we receive its charge to go out and be 'world changers' as we go about our everyday lives. (Matthew 28:19)

In this issue let us draw nearer to God, that He may draw nearer to us as we study and meditate on His Word (James 4:8). May our faith in Him deepen and become unwavering despite the storms of uncertainty and fears that abound. May we who are called by His name be open to serving Him in new and deeper ways.

We hope you find quiet contemplation and inspiration from the articles in this issue, which look at: Distractions To Prayer, Eternal Life Begins Now, Creative Expressions and 'Mission Point: Help for Persecuted Christians.

Finally, may I encourage us all to walk worthy of our calling in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 4:1). Let us seek to be exemplary in honouring God with our service and whole being as we live in worship of Him. May those of you who have not given your lives to the Lord seriously consider doing so, as the next moment is not promised to anyone of us. Let us count each day as precious and seek to do all we can for the Lord and His kingdom (Psalm 90:12, 17).

Yours in Christ,

Jetu Green

MEET THE WRITERS

UNIT ONE: Zoe Simpson, Jamaica

During her high school years, Dr Simpson became aware of her Christian responsibility to help others find Christ and grow in Him. Since then, she has used her writing and teaching skills to disciple others. The guiding Bible verse of her life is Ezra 7:10, because it confirms and fuels her passion of studying and sharing the Word. She has served as a Christian Education Director of the Missionary Church Association in Jamaica.



UNIT TWO: Cheryl Strachan, The Bahamas



Dr Strachan resides in Freeport, Grand Bahama. At a life-changing revival meeting in 1975, she met and accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as her Saviour. The entrepreneur and poet is a member of St John's Jubilee Cathedral in Freeport, Grand Bahama, where she is engaged in the Sunday School, children's and music ministries. She deems it a privilege and honour to serve God through the ministry of Caribbean Bible Lessons (CBL).

UNIT THREE: Lilly Samuels, Jamaica

Mrs Lilly Samuels is a retired educator, who serves as a deacon at Mona Baptist Church and Chair of the Jamaica Baptist Union Sunday School Committee. As a child, she accepted Jesus as her Saviour, and later as a young adult recommitted her life to the Lord. She has experienced God's strength and grace even in challenging times, which have drawn her closer to the Lord. She delights in serving others through teaching, discipling, mentoring and counselling...helping people find their purpose in Christ.



UNIT FOUR: David Fraser, Jamaica



The Honourable Mr Justice Fraser is a committed Christian who serves as a lay preacher and Sunday School teacher of young adults. He has been a Christian for over 40 years. Justice Fraser is of the conviction that writing Sunday School literature requires focused Bible Study and a mature consideration of the relevant application of God's Word to everyday decisions and situations. He serves in the judicial system in Jamaica and has provided legal services to the wider Commonwealth and Caribbean.

Arresting Abuse



BIBLE FOCUS

Deuteronomy 25:17-18; 2 Samuel 13:1-22, 28-29; Psalm 10:17-18; Genesis 39:1-20; Isaiah 50:4-9; Romans 12:17-21

KEY VERSE

You, Lord, hear the desire of the afflicted; you encourage them, and you listen to their cry, defending the fatherless and the oppressed, so that mere earthly mortals will never again strike terror.

– Psalm 10:17-18 NIV

BIBLE TRUTH

God never desires His people to be abused although He sometimes allows it. He will defend those who are abused and will punish the abuser.

LIFE QUESTION

How do I respond when I encounter abuse?

THAT'S LIFE

The cars of the members of the First Serve Service Club were parked near the netball/basketball court. They had arrived at the children's home for a treat and games day for the children. This was part of the club's community outreach.

Each member had been assigned a child to mentor. Kevin had been assigned Donna a 9 year-old girl who had experienced verbal and emotional trauma from her aunts and uncles after her parents died in a car crash three years earlier.

Kevin wondered what he would say to someone who had been abused. He wondered if it would have made more sense for a female to have been assigned to Donna. But the Community Service Director, Michelle had confidence in him because of his experience managing his church's netball team.

He introduced himself and gave her the black Barbie doll he bought. She said, "thank you", and smiled warily.

How would you advise Kevin to respond in dealing with Donna?

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH?

Abuse is a sad reality of the world in which we live. The onus is, therefore, on us to protect ourselves from being abused. Studies have shown that abusers might have also been abused, or have some personal issues that have been left unresolved.

1. Avoid Fatigue, Fight – Deuteronomy 25:17-18; 2 Samuel 13:1-22,28-29

Deuteronomy 25:17-18 recounts the story of how the Israelites were attacked by the Amalekites on their journey from Egypt to the Promised Land. The Israelites were abused by the Amalekites, while they were fatigued and possibly also disenchanted or disoriented on their journey. The passage signals that tiredness, sleepiness and disorientation, or unawareness of our surroundings can make us vulnerable to abuse. The passage is also a reminder that God shall punish those who abuse His people.

2 Samuel 13:1-22, 28 and 29 describe how Amnon, one of David's sons, sexually abused his sister Tamar. Amnon pretended to have been ill and invited Tamar to prepare and serve him a meal in the privacy of his bedroom. It was there that he raped her and then sent her away from his house. Tamar begged her brother not to commit that heinous crime against her. She was most traumatised by the abuse. The failure of David, the father of both Amnon and Tamar, to confront Amnon about his abusive behaviour, only served to worsen the experience for Tamar, and destroy other relationships within the family.

There are several lessons to be learnt from this story. ☐ Being alert and aware of our environment often helps us escape.

☐ Our examination of people's motives, sometimes helps us to identify potential abusers. ☐ Persons who are abused should fight back as much as they can. Assert your rights. ☐ Abusers should be confronted about their behaviour. ☐ Exposing an abuser early can help to save the potential victim and help the abuser get help for his or her sick mind and behaviour.

2. Flee and Free – Psalm 10:17-18; Genesis 39:1-20

The passage in Psalm 10 indicates that God who reigns as King over all the Earth will not ignore the plight of the abused person. He will instead provide several avenues for the escape, relief and healing of the victim. Abuse is unacceptable to God and He expects us to defend and protect ourselves and others from such atrocities (Psalm 10:17,18). God will also punish abusers or oppressors.

It is often a good idea to take yourself away from the situation if you are to escape the abuse. In Genesis 39:1-20, Joseph was an employee in the house of Potiphar, an official of Pharaoh. Potiphar's wife tried to entice Joseph to engage in sexual sin with her. Joseph resisted her advances to the extent where he had to flee the scene. His shirt was left in her hands.

You cannot be absolutely certain how things will turn out when you try to protect yourself from abuse. In Joseph's case, it was the word of Potiphar's wife against his. As a result he lost his job and was also imprisoned. You too may suffer loss of your job, loss of your status; loss of your friends; as you endeavour to maintain your integrity. You will, however, not lose the help, strength, love,

3. Face It – Isaiah 50:4-9

We should not be afraid to stand up for our Christian principles, ever mindful that we could face death in the process. Sometimes we need to confront our abusers and declare what we believe in, even if it results in more abusive action against us. In situations like these, we should depend on the strength of the Lord to take a stand before our persecutors.

Isaiah 50:4-9 is a prophecy about how Jesus would respond to His abusers. Jesus would declare the truth, which comforts the broken-hearted, harassed or abused. The passage is also an assurance that when those who trust in Jesus face abuse, He would help them. All those who are an enemy of Jesus' people become an enemy of Jesus; and He will fight on their behalf.

Most cases of abuse have legal consequences. Therefore, do not be afraid to report the abuser to the law, especially, if that person makes no attempt to end the abuse.

4. Forgive – Romans 12:17-21

Romans 12:17-21 encourages us to forgive instead of seeking revenge in the face of ill treatment. Forgiveness is a process that is unlikely to happen overnight. We may need help to overcome the trauma associated with the abuse and to forgive the one who abused us. It is important to ask God to help us to forgive and find healing. When we have truly forgiven, there will be no desire to harm the one who hurts us. Jesus is our wonderful example of forgiving those who hurt us (Luke 23:34-35).

Reality Check

What has been your response to situations of abuse which you have experienced or observed? When you tolerate abuse, you turn a blind eye to the abuser's sin and collude with his or her destructive ways. That kind of passive behaviour does not honour God.

Valuing Life – Part 1



BIBLE FOCUS

Psalm 139:13-16; 1 Corinthians 6:18-19; Exodus 2:5-10;
21:22-25; Luke 1:30-38

KEY VERSE

My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be

– Psalm 139:15-16 NIV

BIBLE TRUTH

God created and values the unborn child, regardless of the circumstances of conception.

LIFE QUESTION

How do I counsel someone facing an unplanned pregnancy?

THAT'S LIFE

Tomasina Monroe was in her late 30's and was excelling in her career as a business consultant. She and Mykaell Cotler had been dating for almost three years now. He was a lawyer and in his early 40's.

One night Mykaell when he was working late, remembered to check his cell phone for messages because he had not been able to answer it for several hours. He'll never forget that three word message, "Mykaell I'm pregnant", from Tomasina. "This can't be happening," he thought. "It's the wrong time,

we still have so much we want to achieve" he said to himself.

They talked for a good couple of hours and they decided that they would 'ride this wave.' They would go ahead with the pregnancy and try to see it as part of God's plan for their lives. But it was awkward and inconvenient. They told their pastor, asking for his guidance in this new part of their journey.

What advice would you give the couple about the unplanned pregnancy? How might the church help couples in a similar situation?

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH?

An unplanned pregnancy can occur in females of varying ages and in a variety of circumstances. Regardless of the account, an unplanned pregnancy can affect families and the church in many ways. Today's lesson reminds us that every life is precious in the sight of God.

1. Avoiding Unplanned Pregnancy – 1 Corinthians 6:18-19

Single adults are sometimes tempted to engage in sexual activity. Yielding to such a temptation can result in an unplanned pregnancy, even in cases where the individuals used contraception. The Bible provides us with instructions, which, if followed, will protect us from the challenges which accompany an unplanned pregnancy. 1 Corinthians 10:13 and 1 Corinthians 6:18-19 encourage singles to abstain from sexual practices as the best way to avoid an unplanned and unwanted pregnancy.

Christian singles are advised to *flee from sexual immorality* (v. 18), because our body is the dwelling place of God's Spirit, the Holy Spirit. Additionally, our body does not belong to us; it belongs to God and should be used to bring honour to God (v. 19). Living a life of sexual purity is, therefore, always best for singles. You will recall last week's lesson that reminded us of how Joseph fled Potiphar's wife who was luring him into sexual immorality (Genesis 39).

Unplanned pregnancies sometimes result from incest, rape and other forms of sexual abuse— a situation over which the victim has no control. Unplanned pregnancies can also occur in marriages. In such cases the married couple often feel they are in no favourable financial, physical and age-appropriate position to take care of another child.

2. Adoption—a good option – Exodus 21:22-23; 2:5-10

The life of the planned or unplanned baby is sacred and special to God. We must, therefore resist the temptation to accept abortion as the way to deal with an unplanned pregnancy. Exodus 21:22-23 states that there is punishment for the injury and death of the unborn child. Deuteronomy 30:19 states that we attract curses upon ourselves when we engage in any activity, which deviates from the way of God.

Both parents should take responsibility for raising the child. If one parent is not willing to shoulder the responsibility, then another option is for the willing parent to raise the child with the support of her or his extended family and friends.

In cases of rape or incest, some persons might not want to keep the child; which results from that ordeal. God's Word provides us with another solution for addressing and unplanned pregnancy—adoption.

Cases of adoption are highlighted in Exodus 2:5-10 and Acts 7:21, although they do not have to do with the results of rape or incest. Moses' parents chose to protect his life and gave him a bright future by allowing him to be informally adopted by the king's daughter. Esther was also adopted and raised by her cousin (Esther 2: 7). In cases of rape and incest, giving the child up for adoption is sometimes a way that will bring healing to the mother and provide the child with a good environment to grow up. Those who are *fit* and *proper* are given the right to adopt children

Another parenting or care option for unplanned babies is foster care—a minor is placed in a group Home (Children's Home) or private home of a state-certified caregiver. The placement of the child is usually done through the government's children's services division or a social service agency.

Single people, married couples and persons in common-law unions who face unplanned pregnancies should seek counselling, preferably Christian counselling, before and after the baby is born. This will help them cope with their feelings towards the pregnancy and the baby and explore the godly options available to them for raising the baby.

3. Acceptance and Repentance – Luke 1:30-38

Mary's situation was divine, supernatural and unique. God chose her to be the earthly mother of Messiah. In Mary's case, it was a fulfilment of prophecy that a virgin would bear Messiah and He would be conceived through the work of the Holy Spirit. We can, however, learn from her, the benefit of surrendering and accepting what the Lord wills (Luke 1:30-38)

Mary was surprised by the situation as most women might have been. She sought the counsel of an older relative and came to accept the plan and purpose of God for her life (v.8). Mary serves as an example of how to surrender to God.

Reality Check

We know that abortion is not a godly choice in dealing with unexpected pregnancies. Persons, however, who have had an abortion, should know that this act is not beyond God's forgiveness. Anyone who sincerely seeks God's forgiveness and repents of their sin will receive God's forgiveness (Isaiah 1:18 and Psalm 51:17). The individual needs to also forgive herself.

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