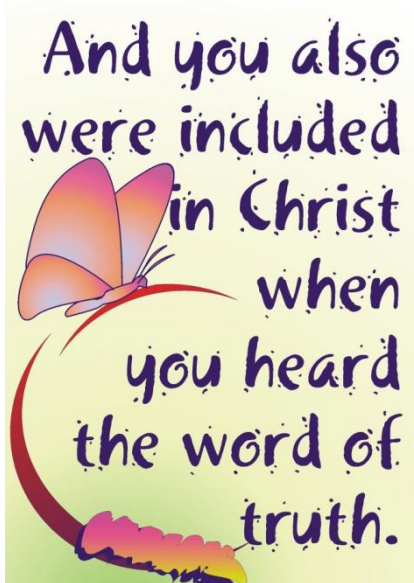


# SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

## LESSON 8



## MAN'S PROVISION

*Scripture Texts: Ephesians 1:12-14; 2 Peter 1:3-4; Ephesians 4:11-13; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; John 14:14*

God will own nothing but holy people, people in whom He dwells. His plan is that we be conformed to the image of Christ. But we find we are weak and unable to do or be anything good of ourselves. God, therefore, has provided all that we need to fulfill His plan for us.

A child gets free his food, clothing, shelter, and care. Are these free to the parents? If the child willfully brings disaster upon himself, what cost do the parents pay to mend the broken bones and mangled body and nurse it back to health? Compare this to what it cost God to bring us from sin to salvation, then to provide the riches of the kingdom here and hereafter. Also, how many humans did it take to pass the Gospel down to us?

God, at great cost, has provided all things necessary to bring us to complete unity with Himself in life and godliness. They are salvation from sin, His divine nature, prayer, the Bible, and Spirit-led leaders. We need them all.

**MEMORY VERSE:** *According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue.—2 Peter 1:3*

### The Right Start Provided

**Ephesians 1:12-14** Several steps are covered here: (1) First, we must hear **the word of truth, the gospel of . . . salvation**. What provided this Word for us? Jesus had to come, become human, live a human life, and die a human death. He had to die as a sinner, a curse (**2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13**). This set in motion the process by which the Gospel came to our ears.

(2) Having heard, we must believe and press our believing to its end of full trust in Christ. We must repent of sin and turn the dead soul and sinful self over to Christ to give it life and holiness. The change wrought in one when he believes on Christ as his sacrifice for sin is the work of God in the heart. A soul is born not **of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1:13)**. **Not of corruptible seed, but . . . by the word of God (1 Peter 1:23)**. **He is born of God. (1 John 5:18)**. **Born of the Spirit. (John 3:8)**. **It is the spirit that quickeneth (John 6:63)**.

(3) **In whom also—in Christ. After that ye believed**—as soon as you are forgiven, you are **sealed with the holy Spirit of promise**. This work was done when you believed unto salvation. It is part of the new birth. What is this work? This is the baptism of the Holy Spirit that Jesus promised to send in **Acts 1:5** and did send in **Acts 2:4**. He (the Holy Spirit) seals one. He is the seal that marks one as owned by God. He is **the earnest of our inheritance**, the down payment or foretaste of that to be inherited in full later. Becoming children of God puts them in line for an inheritance from the Father.

Jesus paid for this gift with His blood. He sent the Spirit to earth after He returned to Heaven (**Acts 2:33**). Everyone needs the Holy Spirit. The new birth saves one, but the Holy Spirit provides the power needed to stay saved. The Holy Spirit guides, teaches, enables, establishes, fills with power, and gives understanding to the things of God.

(4) **Until the redemption of the purchased possession**. This is a future work of God. When Jesus returns for His people, bodies will be made new, united with their spirits, and taken to Heaven where no evil nor pain nor death can ever come (**Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 15:52**).

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### Divine Nature Provided

**2 Peter 1:3-4** Saints need never fail in the Christian life. A vast storehouse filled with **all things that pertain unto life and godliness** is provided by God's **divine power**. To enable us, God makes us **partakers of the divine nature**—his nature. This He gives in the process of saving us. We cannot live the Christian life without His nature.

### Leaders Provided

**Ephesians 4:11-13** Jesus gave the church leaders **for the perfecting of the saints**—to keep us growing in spiritual things, to lead the church on in unity, understanding, and godliness toward the goal of **a perfect man ... to the fullness of Christ**. He calls leaders, fits them, and places them. He tells us to obey them (**Hebrews 13:17**).

### Scriptures Provided

**2 Timothy 3:16-17** That we may continue to live in Christ and grow spiritually, God has given us an inspired, living Book to feed upon. As God's Word, not man's, the Bible is powerful. By studying it, loving it, obeying it, we **may be perfect** in God's sight, perfect in holiness, and qualified for **all good works**. The Bible prepares the man to do the work and is the tool with which to do it.

### Prayer Provided

**John 14:14** What a promise! **If ye shall ask . . . I will do**. This is Almighty God stooping to obey man. But there are conditions. We must ask according to His will (**1 John 5:14-15**). **Ask . . . in my name**, Christ's name. He gives this authority to His people only. Only those in Christ can use His name (**John 16:23**). All others use it in vain. As we pray to the Father, He does not listen to the tongue to find Christ's name; He looks into the heart. If He sees Jesus there, He hears and answers the prayer.

### Something Man Must Provide

Since God has given us **all things that pertain unto life and godliness**, what remains for man to provide? Man must go through the door; he must enter the Christian life. Far too many people try to live the Christian life without entering the Christian life. Christ is the only door and the new birth, the only method of entrance. What prospect of success has one who starts with partial repentance? or no restitution? or little faith in Christ's deity? or still loving the world? How can these errors be avoided? A poor start cannot be turned into success.

### JUST A THOUGHT

**"Prayer is felt in the heart before it is spoken by the tongue."**

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