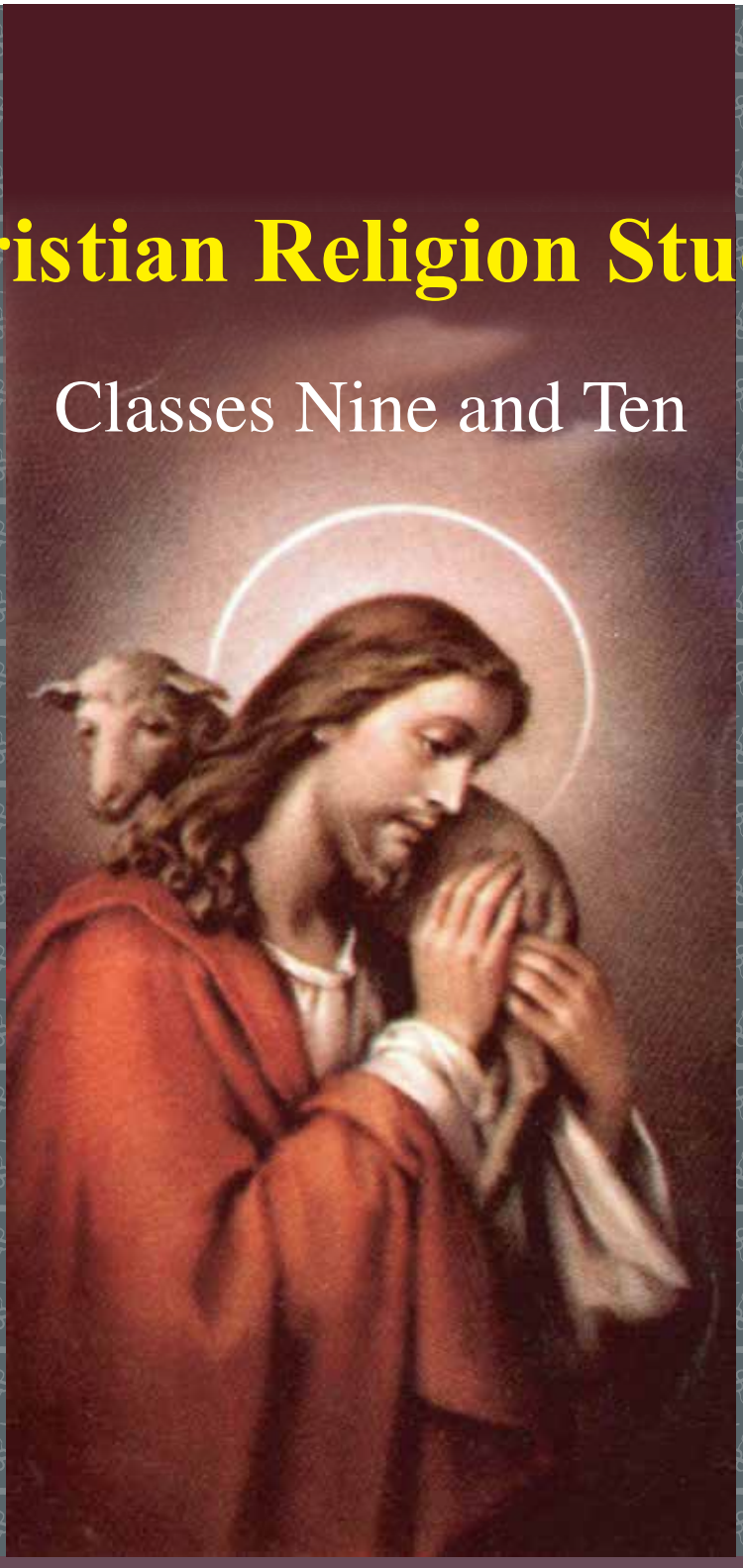
Christian Religion Studies

Classes Nine and Ten



National Curriculum and Textbook Board, Bangladesh

Prescribed by the National Curriculum and Textbook Board
as a textbook for classes nine and ten from the academic year 2013

Christian Religion Studies

Classes Nine and Ten

Revised for the year 2026

National Curriculum and Textbook Board, Bangladesh

Published by

National Curriculum and Textbook Board

69-70 Motijheel Commercial Area, Dhaka.

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First Publication : December, 2012
Revised Edition : November, 2014
Revised Edition : October, 2024
Revised Edition : October, 2025

For free distribution by the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

Printed by :

Preface

The importance of formal education is diversified. The prime goal of modern education is not to impart knowledge only but to build a prosperous nation by developing skilled human resources. At the same time, education is the best means of developing a society free from superstitions and adheres to science and facts. To stand as a developed nation in the science and technology-driven world of the 21st century, we need to ensure quality education. A well-planned education is essential for enabling our new generation to face the challenges of the age and to motivate them with the strength of patriotism, values, and ethics. In this context, the government is determined to ensure education as per the demand of the age.

Education is the backbone of a nation and a curriculum provides the essence of formal education. Again, the most important tool for implementing a curriculum is the textbook. The National Curriculum 2012 has been adopted to achieve the goals of the National Education Policy 2010. In light of this, the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) has been persistently working on developing, printing, and distributing quality textbooks. This organization also reviews and revises the curriculum, textbook, and assessment methods according to needs and realities.

Secondary education is a vital stage in our education system. This textbook is catered to the age, aptitude, and endless inquisitiveness of the students at this level, as well as to achieve the aims and objectives of the curriculum. It is believed that the book written and meticulously edited by experienced and skilled teachers and experts will be conducive to a joyful experience for the students. It is hoped that the book will play a significant role in promoting creative and aesthetic spirits among students along with subject knowledge and skills.

The textbook on **Christian Religion Studies** has been written in the context of the changing world at the beginning of the 21st century. It includes the call for life in the Bible and the life sketch of the people called by God, in the background of huge changes in the demands and attitudes of the students. The textbook has been written keeping in mind that the students are encouraged to know the life and works of the Savior Jesus by believing in his salvation, and they become inspired in morality, spirituality, tolerance, generosity, and a non-communal sense of life and equality.

It may be mentioned here that due to the changing situation in 2024 and as per the needs the textbook has been reviewed and revised for the academic year 2026. It is mentionable here that the last version of the textbook developed according to the curriculum 2012 has been taken as the basis. Meticulous attention has been paid to the textbook to make it more learner-friendly and error-free. However, any suggestions for further improvement of this book will be appreciated.

Finally, I would like to thank all of those who have contributed to the book as writers, editors, reviewers, illustrators and graphic designers.

October, 2025

Professor Robiul Kabir Chowdhury
Chairman (Additional Charge)
National Curriculum & Textbook Board, Bangladesh

Contents

Chapter	Title	Pages
One	Call to Freedom	1–12
Two	Freedom and Me	13–29
Three	My Freedom and My Society	30–42
Four	Growing in Freedom	43–52
Five	Freedom and Obedience	53–62
Six	Trusted Friend	63–71
Seven	Man and Woman	72–80
Eight	Freedom and Vocation	81–91
Nine	In front of the Father	92–101
Ten	Healing the Sick World	102–110
Eleven	The Silent Voice of Conscience	111–122
Twelve	Severe Pain of the Heart	123–131
Thirteen	Violence and Peace	132–140
Fourteen	We Want a Changed World	141–149
Fifteen	Our Way of Freedom	150–158

Chapter One

Call to Freedom

God's creation of human beings is an expression of His infinite love. He made them the greatest of all beings. The greatest gift that He has given His greatest creation is Freedom. But by misusing their freedom human beings disobeyed God and committed sin. They became the slaves of sins. Because of sin they became dependent. Yet the promise and hope which they received from God is freedom or salvation. God wanted that all humans should accept His only Son, Jesus as their Saviour and become free by using their freedom. Every human being has a deep desire of freedom.

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- describe the notions and characteristics of freedom;
- describe the ways to be a free person;
- describe the responsibilities and self-evaluation by analysing Christ's teaching about freedom;
- explain the true freedom of a true Christian and
- be inspired to live a free life.

Notions and characteristics of freedom

Human instinct is to be free. Everybody loves to be free. We learn from history that our country was not free; for many years it was a province under foreign domination of the British and the Pakistanis. But the freedom loving people of our country by fighting the bloody war for long 9 (nine) months and by sacrificing 30 million martyrs, liberated Bangladesh. March 26 is our Independence Day. We celebrate this day as our national day. We know from the Holy Bible that for many years the people of Israel were living as captives in Egypt. God liberated them and brought them into the Promised Land, Canaan under the leadership of Moses. From this idea we can understand that freedom means to be free from the bondage of others in order to be under self-control. But freedom does not mean only to live without force or control from outside political or other domination. The meaning of freedom is much deeper and more significant. It includes one's outward, spiritual, earthly freedom and freedom of life hereafter. Through it we understand/mean to be successful by adoring truth and to gain the power to love God and human beings by winning over sin.

We came to know from the beginning of the life of our Christian belief that we became the victims of the bondage of the sin of our first parents Adam and Eve. From that time we heard the assurance of safety. God assured us that He would send a Saviour to save us from the bondage of sin. Jesus was born on this earth as a man. Because of our sin he was tormented and was crucified. On the third day he was resurrected and freed us. He told us: "You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." (john 8:32)

Sometimes we think or may think that independence or freedom means to do whatever we like and wish to do. But true freedom does not mean that at all. Freedom means to have control over ourselves. But in Bangla language the word freedom has its own meaning. Freedom means independence or self-dependence. By self-dependence we mean persons who are free have the power of self-control. It means that what is bad or evil and what cannot bring any good for others that can never be freedom. The deep side of freedom is discussed below:

Freedom from anything: Freedom from anything that binds a person. Let us see first what the meaning of freedom from anything is. There are so many things that hinder the advancement or development of human beings. There are internal barrier and external barrier. Ignorance and uncontrolled passion are internal barrier. The external barriers are (a) physical barriers and (b) restrictions from the society.

Internal Obstacles

(a) Ignorance: Ignorance means to have inadequate or incorrect knowledge of anything. We all lack knowledge of so many things, which do not affect us. On the other hand, we face problem if we do not have the knowledge of many essential things.

(b) Uncontrolled passion or feelings: Fear, bad habits, anger, pride, jealously etc. At first freedom from internal obstacle is needed. Otherwise freedom cannot be enjoyed.

Now let us think about the external obstacles. We have seen before that these are (a) physical obstacle and (b) social restriction.

External Obstacles

(a) Physical obstacles: Here we mean bodily defects of various types which restrict our activity or thought. Some people inherit them by birth; such things as being crippled, blind, having low intelligence, etc. Or these can be gotten later in life through diseases, accidents, etc.

(b) Social Restrictions: Social restrictions are poverty, rules and regulations of the particular society, cultural traditions, etc.

Freedom to be Children of God

To grow up fully as a person means we have to enhance our God-given talents and thus to truly become the children of God.

Freedom of the Children of God: We became children of God through baptism, became free human being by giving up the slavery of sin.

Characteristics of Freedom:

a. Freedom is always related with something. This does not mean that one can do whatever one wishes to do. One should act so that others are not wounded by one.

b. Freedom is related to beinga fully human being. We are created in the image of God. God calls us to be a person that reveals His image.

c. Freedom is related to being a perfect person to be as perfect and pure as God wants us to be.

d. Freedom leads us to the way of salvation.

e. Freedom is a process. We have to work according to this process.

f. Freedom always focuses on values. Its main aim is to do good to others.

g. There cannot be any barrier in the way of freedom. It moves forward by overcoming all the obstacles.

h. Freedom is a gift of the Holy Spirit. We cannot be free only by our own ability or will. It is the work and gift of the Holy Spirit. He makes us free.

i. Freedom is above the boundary of all classes and races. Freedom is universal. No one can keep it only for himself or herself. Freedom is the

fundamental right of every person, society and nation. It overcomes all kinds of selfishness and meanness.

Task: 1. Individual : Describe the characteristics of a free person.
Task: 2. Group : Discuss in group and present the ways of becoming a free person.

Ways to be a Free Person

In the beginning God created human beings, making them free. He Himself offered them freedom as a loving gift. But they misused it and became disobedient and committed sins against Him. As a result, they became inferior to what they were before, because they became slaves of sin. Yet people try to be free. We shall discuss now how we can be truly free people.

1. Know thyself

Self-knowledge means knowledge of one's own self. Every human being is a unit or a distinctive individual. No one is exactly like any other person in the world. Not only in physical appearance, but differences are visible in behavior and personality too. Yet we are human beings with our good qualities and faults. Whenever we realize this we begin to become free persons. When we reduce the evils and foster the good in us we become what we are called to be. In this way if we can be what we are then gradually we become free people.

The Greek philosopher Socrates said: "Know thyself." If we can know ourselves our masks will be removed and our real appearance will be revealed. Then we accept the truth about us what we really are. Thus, we can become free persons. Jesus said: "The truth will make you free." (John 8:31).

2. To be Fearless or Dauntless

Fear is the main obstacle to freedom. People tell lies or cannot reveal their true self because of fear. Thus they cannot be free; rather be slaves to lies. Fear of human beings is born in lies and sin. We see that Adam and Eve in Eden Garden were filled with fear when they saw God. Because they had lost their freedom by being obedient to Satan. So we must be courageous and holy to be free persons. God said many times in the Holy Bible: "Do not be afraid." God sent His Son to make us fully free. We become free from fear through Jesus Christ and with the help of the Holy Spirit.

3. Faith and Trust in God

God Himself offered us freedom. This is a gracious gift of the Holy Spirit. Many times we try from our own efforts and schemes to get free but we fail. But God Himself gives us that gift of freedom. So we must keep our faith and trust in Him. The more we become aware of His presence in us, the more we can become free. The Holy Spirit makes us free. It we are aware of God's presence in our life we become more free.

4. Respect for Human Beings and all Other Creation

Humans are the best creation of God. God created humans and He created wonderful things for human beings. If we look around we can see the diversity of His creation. When we love human beings and all of God's creation, this frees us gradually. Because if we love people, we can never desire to harm anyone. We can realize the beauty of God's creation when we love His all other creation. Through people and His creation when we worship truth, beauty and do well to them then we unknowingly become independent or free. Rabindranath Tagore said in a poem: "Unite me with others and make me free from bondage." We become free beings by being united with others.

5. Responsibility and Maturity

Responsible and mature behavior makes people free. We are responsible for our every action. We are responsible for our 'yes' and 'no' to any action. We become free persons by trying to make right decisions and by proper behavior. Mature and responsible persons can easily accept their weaknesses and consider them as part of their life. Mistakes are also part of our freedom. By making mistake and by doing rectification people get the opportunity to grow up. In this way we become free.

6. Self-confidence

Freedom comes from self-confidence. Self-confident persons know in which way they are moving. They are aware of their thoughts and actions. Their self-confidence leads them to the right path. The feeling of truth remains awaken in him. This truth makes them free..

7. Discretion to Judge Good and Evil

Human conscience is made of discretion to judge good and evil. He who is holy person is guided by a right conscience. A conscience is formed by the Holy Spirit. A person who is guided by the Holy Spirit is a truly free person.

Task: 1. Find the ways that you can be a free person and share them with others in the group.

Task: 2. 'God wants man's freedom'- Justify this statement.

True Freedom of a True Christian

• Jesus Christ and Freedom

God was disappointed that man turned against Him and sinned, and that the world became full of sin. Human beings disobeyed God in the Eden Garden and committed sin. Then He promised them to send a Savior to set them free. He wanted to offer them complete freedom and a joyful life. Therefore He sent His own Son Jesus Christ into this world He became our freedom-giver or Saviour. In human history Jesus is the symbol of freedom. He lived for thirty three years. We come to know through His speech, His work and also through many incidents that He lived as a free man.

• Jesus in Words and Actions

Jesus taught the meaning of freedom and salvation in His words and deeds. He released many persons from the bondage of sickness, from the bondage of evil spirits. He scolded the Scribes and Pharisees without any hesitation He ignored the useless rules and regulations which can’t bring any good to the people. He cured sick people on the Sabbath day.

• The Judgment and the Death of Jesus

Jesus came into the world to give witness to the truth. He was never scared in front of the hypocritical religious leaders and rulers. Jesus often challenged those leaders and accused them of hypocrisy. They tried to find fault with Jesus so that they could accuse and punish Him. For this reason, they falsely blamed Jesus as a blasphemer. He was convicted as a criminal. Capital punishment was determined for him. He accepted death penalty to reveal the truth. The truth set Him free. He freely accepted the farcical judgement and the capital punishment.

• Life-giving Sacrifice

The greatest sign of Jesus' freedom is His free choice of His death on the Cross. Death glorified Him. He Himself said: "There is no greater love for a person that to lay down one's life for his or her friend" (John 15:13).

• Resurrection

God raised Jesus from the dead as Jesus had freely chosen His miserable death penalty by accepting the will of God the Father. On the third day by resurrection He conquered death and it was the greatest testimony of Jesus to freedom. He went beyond all barriers by conquering death.

• Jesus is Universal

Jesus came into this world for every human beings. He loved every one, people of every creed, color, rich and poor, saint and sinner, men and women, children and aged Jew and heretic. Though He was a Jew He associated with everyone freely. He went beyond traditional customs and boundaries. This is a clear sign of freedom in His life.

• Introducing Rules of Love and Service

According to Jesus' teaching, love and service are the best ways to gain human freedom. He set this example for us at the Last Supper by washing the feet of His disciples. He expressed His freedom in loving and serving others, and He directed us towards freedom.

• Jesus the First Child of God born with Freedom

The greatest freedom of Jesus is that He is God, but He became a human being. This is His greatest freedom. Jesus, who is the only God-Child, realized the Father's love, became man, and taught us to call God our Father. No one except Jesus has this freedom.

Jesus is known in human history as the Savior. We become free men and women by accepting Jesus in our life. Jesus is our model and our Messiah.

Task: Share with your friends several preaching, teaching and actions of Jesus that make you a free person.

Christians and Freedom: (Inspiration to live a life of Freedom)

The first call to be a Christian is to obtain freedom to accept His salvation. Therefore, we need to understand deeply the meaning of freedom and salvation. The first thing that freedom demands from us is to accept Him as the savior, to be live in Jesus and to live according to His teaching. In our personal life we acknowledge that Jesus is our Lord. By our belief in Jesus we become Christians and by walking in His path we receive salvation. We receive full freedom by believing Him. He came to this world to make it possible for us to have life and to have it to the fullest. We read the the following words in St. Luke's Gospel account of the beginning of Jesus' public life:

> "The spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> because He has chosen me to bring
> good news to the poor.
> He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
> and recovery of sight to the blind;
> to set free the oppressed
> and announce that the time has come
> when the Lord will save His people" (Luke 4:18-19).

We see a clear sign that from the beginning Jesus considered the full importance of freedom or liberation. His goal was to free people from all sorts of evil so that they can be saved. Various aspects of Christian freedom are discussed below:

1. Physical Freedom or Healing

Jesus came into this world to give us life and to make us free from all kinds of physical illness and pain. He wanted to reveal the Father's love to all people. He cured sick persons by His words: He cured the crippled, gave sight to the blind; gave speech to the dumb and hearing to the deaf. He offered physical freedom

by curing people from all sorts of illness. He gave new and sound life to the abandoned and neglected lepers by curing them from their leprosy and they received freedom. After they were healed from their disease became Christian disciples.

2. Freedom from Inhibiting Emotions

So many people who were captivated by conflict, fear, hatred, jealousy and selfishness went to Jesus, and He too offered them life completely free from all these evils. He wanted to give them new hearts which were free from all stain of sin. All who believe in Him will receive freedom and happiness of life.

3. Mental or Intellectual Freedom

Jesus was a free-thinking person. He freely expressed His thoughts, ideas and opinions. We can say that for this the Jews killed Him because He used to say openly what He knew and believed as true. Also Socrates, the Greek philosopher, was persecuted for his free thinking. But He did not give up his declaring the truth. Jesus desires that we become open minded people of free-thought, and reflect it in our thought. To protect our language, many intellectuals chose even the risk of losing their lives than to give up their free thinking.

4. Spiritual Freedom

The human heart is the foundation of freedom. People experience deepest peace when they have spiritual freedom. Jesus calls us to receive this peace and freedom from Him. That is why He calls us saying: "Come to me, those are tired and overburdened; I will give you rest." (Matt 11:28-30)

5. Social Freedom

A Christian desires to have social freedom. Jesus came to exalt those who were the downtrodden,excluded or outcast, oppressed and marginalized people. He came to stand for the deprived, exploited, persecuted, and oppressed people; to fight against all injustices and to establish justice and peace in our society. A Christian can obtain freedom and salvation through social justice.

6. Economic Freedom

Jesus came into the world to preach the Good News to the poor. He continued His ministries by standing beside the poor and the powerless people. He severely criticized those people who are greedy for power and money. He spoke of true freedom of our life by telling the story of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus. Today many Christians participate with Jesus to bring economic salvation; they dedicate their lives to put an end to poverty and to bring salvation from poverty for many people.

To have God whole heartedly through total salvation is the supreme achievement to a Christian. They want to inherit eternal life and the Kingdom of God. One day a young man asked Jesus: "Lord, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Jesus answered him: "Go, and sell whatever you have; give the money to the poor and then come, and follow me." Jesus compared the Kingdom of God with a precious pearl. He spoke of a rich man who had a true sense of real value, in order to buy the land where the precious pearl remained hidden. Christian freedom means to acknowledge God as the most precious pearl, and to live simple and controlled lives in order to gain that "pearl". This truth will make us free. Once Christians gain this freedom, then they agree to give up everything and serve others. Truly free persons become happy in life by offering their lives for others. Only then their lives become complete.

Task: How do you want to be a free as a Christian? In what aspects? Write how this freedom is possible in your life, then share it with others in your group

Sample Question

Multiple Choice Questions

1. How many interior barriers are there?

a. Two b. Three
c. Four d. Five

2. Why did Jesus come into this world?

a. to give us food. b. to give us life.
c. to give us security d. to serve us.

Read the following Paragraph and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.

One day some miscreants entered the Church during the prayer. They told all the faithful to refuse Christ. Many did so in fear of the danger of life. But little Probal cried out: "I love Jesus."

3. What kind of Christian freedom do we see in Probal?

a. Physical b. Emotional
c.. Mental d. Spiritual

4. Expressing one's opinion like Probal one can become-

a. Free person b. historical person
c. powerful person d. Lovable person

Which one is correct?

a. i b. ii
c. iii d. iv

Creative Questions

1. Hriday is an established person. To develop his village he has been working at night school, repairing roads and giving service to the villagers. He makes friends with everyone irrespective of creed, caste, color ,rich or poor, male or female, good or bad. Everybody likes him too.

a. What is the greatest creation of God?
b. What does freedom or liberty mean?
c. What kind of Freedom described by Jesus do you see in Hriday? Explain.
d. Is that one aspect of freedom enough for Hriday to be a free person? Give your opinion.

2. Oshan is a rich young man. One day he was driving his car recklessly. Suman's rickshaw suddenly came in front of his car and fell on the ground upside down. Oshan got angry; he came out of his car and said to Suman:" Stupid fellow! You hit my car with your nasty rickshaw." Then he gave some good slap on Suman's both cheeks. Oshan's girl-friend, Julie, told him: "Why do you hit him? It is your mistake. Admit your own mistake . Be sincere like Jesus."

a. How many external barriers are there?
b. What does it mean to judge good and bad?
c. What kind of freedom does Julie advice to Oshan? Explain.
d. 'Julie's advice can make Oshan completely a free person' - explain this statement.

Short Questions

1. What is freedom? Explain.
2. Write down the four aspects of Freedom.
3. Write in brief the ways to be a free person.
4. Write in brief about any two aspects of freedom in the life of a Christian.

Chapter Two

Freedom and Me

Each of the creations of the world is magnificent with unique beauty. Each of them is distributing its own beauty freely. Thus they themselves are being blessed by God and at the same time serving the whole world. Man is the most unique of them all. There are billions of human beings in the world. Yet none of them is like another. They are very different from each other. This is man's unique characteristic that gives him glory and dignity. When man is able to grow up with his unique characteristic then he becomes free. Man, because of his unique characteristics and freedom, wants to discover himself and wants to know himself deeper. Through knowing himself he comes to know that his strengths are limited and thus he becomes aware of his own actions and reactions. This makes him able to live his life meaningfully and keep a good relationship with others. Thus man can offer his own life for others and make his life effective and significant.

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- describe the ways and means of knowing thyself;
- explain with parables the reasons for each person's uniqueness;
- explain the importance of offering our life for the service of others;
- explain the meaning of Christ's offering his life for us and
- become inspired to serve the society.

Knowing thyself

Self-knowledge or to know thyself is the best knowledge of the world. We've already known about the very intelligent philosopher Socrates. He said: "Know thyself." Jesus said: "What will one gain by winning the whole world if he destroys himself?" There is nothing he can give to recover his own self (Matthew 16:26). Knowing thyself is very important. All the intellectuals and wise persons of the world were very conscious of their own selves. This means that intelligent people are eager to know themselves. We have already learned that one human being is different from other, he is unique. Each human being has his own thinking, beliefs, feeling, view point, expressions, manners and values. He behaves or reacts to the actions of others according to his own way. He has his own set of qualities,virtues, talents, efficiencies, and strengths, and his own limitations.

How do we react to the actions of others in various ways in various circumstances? To have knowledge of this is also a part of self-knowledge. Knowing thyself is a process. It is a life-long process. This process of knowing thyself ends with our death. There are many different ways and means of knowing ourselves. Below we are going to discuss them.

Ways and means of knowing thyself

1. Self-Consciousness: The very first step of knowing thyself is being conscious of own self. Consciousness of one's own behaviour, words, strengths and limitations, virtues and vices brings knowledge of thyself. Besides, becoming conscious of one's own actions and reactions in different circumstances and environments also brings self-knowledge.

2. Prayer and Meditation: Psychologists Joseph and Harry have compared thyself with a window that has four parts. It is named Joe-Harry Window after them as they invented it . There are four parts of the window.

1. Some of the characteristics of myself are known only to me, which are not known to anybody else except God.	2. Some of my characteristics are known to others except me. God knows them all.
3. Some of my characteristics are known both to me and others, and of course known to God.	4. Some of my characteristics are known to me nor to others. These are known to God.

3. Constructive Criticism: Constructive criticism is very helpful for self-knowledge because through this we can know of our own strong and weak characteristics clearly. Very often we find it very difficult to accept the criticism of others or when others show us our own faults. But through this we can know much about us. It is true that our critics or fault finders sometimes show us the truth. If we accept that neutrally and constructively then we can be benefited much.

4. Evaluation: We can have a clear conception of everything if we evaluate after everything we do, everything that we hear from others or we tell others, our actions and reactions, etc. This process gives us a clearer conception of ourselves. People caught Mary Magdelene and brought her to Jesus with the plan of killing her by throwing stones at her. Jesus told them that the one who has not committed any sin, let him throw the first stone . At this, one by one, all the people left her alone. In this way Jesus gave them a chance to evaluate themselves.

5. Various Psychological Tests: Many people take the help of psychological tests to know themselves. Through various tests people can know their character or personality. These tests are very helpful.

6. Events and Incidents: Various events and incidents of our day to day life are also helpful to know ourselves. We can judge ourselves in the light of those events and incidents. For example, through the steps that we take in different challenging and risky circumstances we can know ourselves. Besides, we know about ourselves from the steps that we take during different mental pressures. One story can be helpful in this regard. A mother had three children. She used to help her children in various ways. Often they used to complain to their mother during their many mental pressures of life.

One day the mother took her children to the kitchen. There were three water pots on three burners which were boiling. The water was boiling. In one of the pots she put an egg, in the second a carrot and in the third she put coffee. After a while they found the egg became hard, the carrot became soft and the coffee became mixed with water and started smelling wonderful, which made it very tasty and drinkable. The mother explained to the children that the same amount of temperature transformed three different things in three different ways. So let us see what happens to us during the pressure of life. She also told them that it is not appropriate to be only hardened like the egg or only soft like the carrot. Rather we have to adjust to the situation and learn how to live our life in our day to day circumstances.

7. Education: Education changes man's attitude. Our self-knowledge increases through education. Therefore, there is no alternative to education. True education is life's mirror. We become conscious through education. Consciousness is the first step of knowing ourselves. However, only theoretical knowledge is not true education, rather life-centered education is helpful for self-knowledge.

8. Formation: Not only academic and curriculum education but also special type of foundation training is required to know thy self. Now-a-days there are various seminars, workshops and programs for this purpose. So through proper foundation training we will be easily able to know and recognize ourselves deeper. The deeper we know our selves, the better we will know our selves and the more mature we will be.

9. Review of Life: By review of life we understand interpreting the meaning of life in the light of values. It means realizing the good and bad of each of the events and incidents of our life and after that taking a decision for the rest of our future life.

10. Writing a Diary or Journal: Many people have the good habit of writing a diary or journal. At the end of each day or at a convenient time they write down their life's good thoughts or words. It is a helpful means through which we can read our words and experiences of the past and thus we can know who we were and who we have become. This is also a helpful way of knowing the self.

11. Making a list of one's own strengths and weaknesses: Through reflection and by the help of others if we make lists of our own strengths and weaknesses we can know ourselves deeper.

Task: On one side of a sheet of paper write down your own strengths and talents and on the other side write down your weaknesses. Now share with the friend sitting beside you. Ask your friend’s comments on your lists.

Individual Difference

By individual differences we mean person-to-person differences. All human beings are born with the same kind of body structure. Yet each person's personality is different from the personalities of all others. This difference is reflected through his appearance, structure, behaviour, thinking, ideas, virtues, talents, intelligence, ways of expression, likes and dislikes, etc. Man to man these differences are called, in short, individual differences. Because of individual differences man becomes unique. Because of his unique characteristics man became the best of all creations of God. Without individual differences men would have become like commodities produced in factories. Our individual differences prove that we are unique creations of God. We will discuss this topic a little bit more elaborately.

Characteristics of Individual Differences

Difference of Physical Appearance: One amazing fact of the world is that here there is nobody like anybody else. Children who are born from the same mother's womb, even if they are twins, are different from each other. They may look almost the same, still they are different from each other. The first characteristic of individual differences is the difference of their physical structure and appearance.

Identity: Every individual has his own identity. He has his own name, address, career, parents, relatives and race. His individual difference is revealed through these. Two students in the same class may have the same name, but they are made different by different roll numbers. Through his identity man expresses his individual differences.

Different Personality: Man's fundamental difference is seen even from the viewpoint of his personality. Psychologists classify personality types based on some fundamental characteristics. Yet there are as many personality types in this world as the number of individuals. His personality is formed by his environment, background and life experience. There can be similarity between two person's characters, yet they are different individuals.

Own Qualities: Every human being has his own set of human qualities, intelligence, talents and efficiencies. Some people may have the same type of talents, yet their human qualities are different from each other. For example, in one classroom there may be five girls who know how to sing, ten boys who know how to play cricket, yet their human qualities are different from each other.

It may be seen that among those five girls one is kindhearted and one of them has the power of understanding. Of the ten boys one is honest, one is generous, one is sympathetic and the like. In short, there will always be differences. Man becomes unique for his own qualities.

Personal Likes, Dislikes and Tastes: There are differences owing to one's likes, dislikes and tastes. Because of this also individuals are different from each other. This difference is recognizable in various ways. For example, they are different in selection of their dress, food, life-mate, friend, environment, color, etc.

Difference of Values: Value differences of human being cause a great difference in individual characteristics of a person. Every human beings has his own set of values or beliefs, which influence his behaviour. An individual's free personality is built on the basis of this. Jesus Christ, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Archbishop Ganguly- in short, all great people of the world became unique because of their own set of values.

Personal Freedom: Immediately after being born from his mother's womb every human being becomes a free man because of his existence. Being separated from his mother he becomes a unique person. From that very moment he has an attitude of freedom. The reason is that God has given every human being a wonderful gift, freedom. This freedom makes man unique. By using freedom man takes his own decisions and engages himself either in good or in bad activities.

Own Contribution : Every man is born on earth to make special contributions. This is his unique contribution. No one can replace another. Man can make his own contribution only, not anybody else's. A human beings, either great or small, can make his own contribution only. St. Teresa, the Little Flower of Jesus, through her very small works made many contributions and thus became a great saint. On the other hand Mother Teresa has given service to the whole world and thus she also became a great saint. Rabindranath Tagore will be remembered always for his creative literary works. We are also called to make special contributions. Through this we will become unique persons.From being an ordinary person we will become extraordinary.

Selection of Career: In order to live our life and for earning some income we all must choose a profession. By choosing a profession and living the life of that profession we manifest our individual differences. Laborer, farmer, driver,

doctor, nurse, artist, actor, leader, director, teacher-all, through living their professional life become different and unique persons.

Religious Faith: Because of our own religious faith we also become persons of unique personality. In every religion there are great personalities who, because of their faith, established their own individual differences. We, being men of different faiths, are called to follow the examples of these great men and thus manifest our own individual differences. We can emphatically say this that there is so much of beauty and variety because of individual differences. If there were no differences from person to person or in other words if we all became the same kind of persons, then what would the world be like? Our differences and variety cause us to be attractive to each other.

Result of Individual Differences: Individual differences have given men variety in their lives and in the same way it is our challenge too. Individual differences have two kinds of results: constructive and destructive.

Positive Results	Negative Results
• Variety has come into this world because of differences. The beauty of man is also manifested in the individual differences. • Demand is fulfilled because of varieties and differences. Because of varieties and professional differences we are able to serve each other. • We realize that we can fulfill each other, for example–We cannot or have no ability to do everything. Variety helps us to fulfill a role as mutual helpers. • Unity comes from variety and we become enrich. Then we can coordinate between all people.	• At times it becomes very difficult to accept differences. • Variety and differences cause conflict and opposition. • Differences cause misunderstanding. • When we do not acknowledge each other' differences we expect others to become like ourselves and expect much from them. This increases our frustration. Sometimes our hopes may be shattered. • If all the differences are not coordinated then the result will be separation. • Failure to diagnose the individual differences will make us devalue an individual.

Man's individual differences can be explained very well through the example of the rainbow. There is no similarity between the seven colors of the rainbow. But the rainbow needs those seven colors. A rainbow is never made with one color only. Only then our society will be mobile, progressive and effective when there will be people with a variety of natures. The present world is not only giving this basic difference recognition but also giving priority to different nations, races, religions and colors. The world now strongly believes that in variety there is unity. For this reason we will accept these differences of individuals with respect. We will see this difference as strength and not as weakness. If we can do this then we will have a beautiful world like a garden full of colorful, fragrant, and various kinds of flowers.

Task: In which areas do you consider yourself different from others? Why? Discuss this in your group.

Relationship with the people of the society

Though unique, we do not live alone; rather we live in a family, in a society. We live together with many people. With people we exchange our thoughts and feelings; we share with them our feelings of joy and sorrow and we build a relationship with them. With the people of the society we celebrate our joys. We stand beside each other during crises. We see this eagerness and tendency of building friendship with others from the very beginning of the world. Actually this idea of having relationship with the people of the society came from God. In our life of faith we see the presence of the Holy Trinity. There is one God, but three persons- Father, Son and the Spirit. There is the society of the three persons. These three persons are related to each other. Our relationship with other people is built up based on this Trinity. Besides, the Church is the gathering of the faithful. A special characteristic is manifested in this social bond.

The need of relationship

a. Keeping relationship with the people is a basic need. The reason is that we cannot live alone. Our life is dependent on one another. Alone, I am never complete. My completeness needs the help of other people of the society. On the other hand I help others to be completed.

b. The center of our life is the society. We share our joys and sorrow, festivity with the people of the society. It is the people of the society that stand beside us during our moments of crisis.

c. It is the society where social institutions like hospitals, banks, educational institutions, bazaar, etc. are built. We receive service from these institutions. These institutions become effective when there is a fruitful relationship between them. We can live happily in the society. We can fulfill our day to day needs.

d. We can fully develop our life, excellence, talents and personality in the society. With our virtues, efficiencies, skill, education in short with everything that we earn, we serve the people of the society and receive the service from them. For this reason social relationship is important.

e. By living with good relationship we can fully express our personality through the society. Our achieved education and efficiencies can be fully expressed through our relationship and living together with others in the society.

f. In our Christian life the society as well as the Church is the symbol of the presence of Christ. He is the head of the Church. So we must remain united with the Church. To remain united with the society means to remain united with Christ. Through this we remain alive and are fruitful.

Reasons of bad relationship

We all want to build relationships and keep them alive. Yet sometimes because of various reasons our relationship deteriorates and becomes broken. Relationship can be broken for the following reasons:

a. Misunderstanding;
b. Social pressure and injustice;
c. Factionalism and quarrel;
d. Deterioration of values;
e. Misuse of power;
f. Exploitation and oppression;
g. Man to man and man and woman discrimination;
h. Using the society for personal interests:

i. Lack of patience and forgiveness;
j. Lack of cooperation and sharing.

Means to maintain good relationship

a. Seeing the society as a reflection of Christ and feeling the presence of Christ there.
b. Keep in mind that Christ Himself makes us united with others; let God work in our life.
c. Respect for the people of the society and accept them with their individual differences; consider man and woman, rich and poor equally.
d. Always cooperate with the people constructively and have an attitude of compassion.
e. Not to consider the society or its institutions as the means of fulfilling one's own interest; rather give priority to the society's interest.
f. Have mutual patience.
g. If needed, have an attitude of sacrifice.
h. Reconcile and rebuild the relationship without delay when it is broken for any reason.
i. Justice is a must in order to maintain good relationship; maintain social equality and establish justice.
j. Accept your own and others' freedom.
k. Consider relationship as a great value of life and maintain it because of values.

Our birth and growing up- both are in the society. Life without society cannot be imagined. Being born in the world Christ Himself spent His life in the society. He was born in a Jewish society, grew up there and also died and spent his working life in that society.

He obeyed the social rules and later brought changes in them. He served people of that society. He is our Messiah or Leader in building relationship. He mixed with people of all classes and respected them duly. He chose twelve disciples and built up a good relationship with them. Thus he taught us how to build relationship with the people. He forgave his enemies and thus showed us the way how through forgiveness we can keep up our relationship with others.

Task: What do you do in order to maintain relationship with others? What efficiencies are needed to maintain relationship? Share your thoughts with others in the small group.

Self Dedication in Service

Our life is for others, not for our own. A Bengli poet said, "Flower does not bloom for its own, bloom the flower of your heart for others". We can realize this truth when we look at the universe and all the creations. Flower gives pleasure to all by giving away its Beaty and fragrance. Animals, birds, fruits and crops also sacrifice themselves for others as food. We live by inhaling air.

By knowing individualism we have known about our quality, energy and limitation. All our qualities, energies and talents are for praising God and for serving people. Our every quality is to serve others. By serving we give ourselves to others. We become successful by dedicating ourselves to others as the candle and incense burns themselves to give light and fragrance. To dedicate ourselves to serve others is a special vocation for every one of us. It is also a free decision of us. Jesus presented a great example of service before us by washing the disciples' feet. He ordered us to love each other as He loved us.

Our way of offering ourselves for the service of others

We have only one life. We have received this as a gift from God. He wants that what we have received without price should be given away without price. He also wants us to offer our lives in the work of love and service. We have to remember the following points in order to offer our life:

1. Humbly always keep in mind that our life is a gift of God; freely I will decide to sacrifice this for the service of others.

2. Recognize and admit the qualities, talents and strengths that I have and then find out ways and means to offer them for the service of others.

3. Wherever and in whatever condition I stay, I have to look for ways to serve others.

4. Discern the call of my life and respond accordingly.

5. Find out what God wants from me. Live my life according to the plan of God.

6. Always work not looking for my self interest and material benefit.
7. Keep my life of service always bright.
8. Service is my human, social, moral and religious duty, in short, my Christian responsibility. I am bound to serve. I serve God through serving the people.

Bright Examples of Service

From the history of the world we can very easily find out the names of some persons who sacrificed their whole life for the service of others. Some names can be mentioned here: Jesus Christ, Mother Teresa, Florence Nightingale, Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, and so on. They were engaged in various kinds of service for the benefit of human beings.

Fields of Service

Family: Our life begins in family and our first place of service is the family. For this reason it is essential that we begin to exercise our quality of service in the family. We become inspired in the work of service by serving our parents, brothers and sisters and others in the family. In the family we learn to serve others.

Society: Family is a part of the society. We learn to serve by serving neighbours and society. Thus we learn to serve others in the broader sphere of the society. The inspiration that we receive from the family is applied in the society.

Social and religious institutions: Gradually we extend our service in the institutions which are situated in the society. For example, any welfare institutions, club, union and so on.

Hospitals and charitable health service centers: We can serve people as doctors, nurses or health workers. We can also go to see patients or elderly persons in hospitals or houses, we can spend some time with them and console them; we can also talk to the depressed people to bring back hope in their minds.

Educational institutions: Education is a great work, because through education we can remove ignorance. People become cultured. Through education we can give a special service to the society.

Sewing and handicrafts: By teaching people sewing and handicrafts we can contribute in eradicating poverty and ensuring economic security. In greater field we can serve people by expanding big industries for their employment.

Own job: We have our own field of work. By remaining sincere in whatever work we do, we can serve, people. Perhaps I am an officer, a banker, a housewife, a farmer, a day laborer or a student. I can serve the best from my own position.

Church: The best way of giving service can be making contribution in Church work. It is noticeable that many people offer their lives for church work. Through priestly and religious life many have sacrificed their lives for the service of the church. Because of their love of God these dedicated people sacrifice their lives and serve people, by preaching and helping the distressed human beings. Through their life of service the Church becomes living.

In the modern time man has become more selfish than before. Personal gain or loss is much more important to him than any other thing. For this reason he thinks of himself and wants to live only for himself. Sacrificing life or doing charitable work for others is diminishing gradually. This attitude is a big challenge for those who want to sacrifice their life for the service of others. But if it goes on this way we will become devoid of Christian values. Our moral and human responsibilities will be desponded. Therefore, we must think very seriously how we can offer our lives, the special gifts of God for the service of others meaningfully.

Task: 1. What service centers do you see in your society? Make a list of them. What are the people doing there? How are they serving people through those centers? Discuss this in your group and then prepare a poster.

Task: 2. Group Work : Visit any social organization and write a report on it to present in the class.

Christ's Self-sacrifice

Christ came to this world so that man can receive life in full. He served numerous people. He freed them from diseases, took the side of the poor and the powerless. He loved people selflessly and told them about the unlimited love of God. He taught man to call God Father. In order to save man from the curse of sin he sacrificed his life on the cross. Thus he gave all men the right to become children of God.

Some dimensions of Jesus' Self-Sacrifice are discussed below:

1. **The child Jesus was offered in the temple:** According to the Jewish tradition a male child after forty days of birth was offered in the temple. Therefore, accordingly, Mary and Joseph offered the child Jesus in the temple. Thus Jesus was offered from the very beginning of his life. In His infancy His parents offered Him to God.

2. **The child Jesus engaged in his Father's work:** Jesus's parents went to the temple of Jerusalem to take part in the Passover Feast. They took twelve-year old Jesus along. At that age Jesus already knew that he would have to be busy in his Father's duty. That is why he remained in the temple while his parents left for their village. His parents thought that He was lost and they began to look for him and after three days they found him in the temple, busy in talking to the scribes and elders. At last the parents found him and he went back to Nazareth to stay with the parents.

3. **Being tempted by Satan:** Before beginning his public preaching Jesus went to the desert and there he prayed, meditated and fasted for forty days. At that time Satan tempted him in various ways. He continued to pray even during his temptation. At the same time he offered himself to the Father. By the strength of the Father he overcame all the temptations. He accepted the will of the Father fully because he offered himself to the Father totally. Thus he prepared himself for the service of God's people.

4. **Public work of Jesus:** After reaching a certain time Jesus began his public work. He loved the people wholeheartedly. He served the people with his whole strength. He healed people from their illnesses and diseases. He freed them from the hand of Sin. He took the side of the poor and powerless people and gave hope to the hopeless people.

5. **Giving total self through bread and wine:** Before his death Jesus gave his own body and blood for us during His last supper as sacrament. Thus he has established the Sacrament of the Eucharist. He totally offered himself for us. In history there is no other such example.

6. **Establishing the example of service:** During the Last Supper Jesus established an example of humble service. He himself washed the feet of his disciples. Through this event he made the disciples understand that he came to this world not to be served but to serve. He became man in order to offer himself totally for the service of the people. At the same time he gave us a command that we also should serve one another like him; so that we offer our life for the people.

7. **Establishing Sacraments:** Through establishing seven sacraments (according to Protestant faith, two sacraments) Jesus offered himself for us. He did this so that we can receive life in full; so that we receive divine blessing in all conditions of our life. The sacraments are some special means through which Jesus is offering himself for us continuously.

8. **In the Garden of Gethsemane totally surrendering to the enemies:** Jesus could have avoided the death on the cross, if he wanted. He even prayed to the Father saying: "Father, if you will, take this cup of suffering away from me. Not my will, however, but your will be done" (LUKE 22:42). Thus he fulfilled the Father's will until the end of his life on earth. He accepted all sufferings in order to free mankind from the slavery of sin.

9. **Being sentenced by Pontius Pilate:** He accepted the mockery or false trial of Pontius Pilate. Jesus was given the most shameful death penalty-death on a cross. He accepted even that for the salvation of man.

10. **Death on a cross:** He suffered terribly on the cross and then he died. He accepted this suffering willingly because through this he brought salvation to this world. He sacrificed his whole self for the sake of human beings. He humbled himself and remained obedient to the Father until his death on a cross. He said, "There is no greater love than offering one's life for his friend."

11. Appearing to the disciples and promising to send the Spirit: He died on the cross, but He overcame death and after death he rose again. He sacrificed his life fully and thus he brought life to us. After ressurection and before ascension He promised that he would send the Holy Spirit to us. He fulfilled his promise by sending the Spirit on Pentecost day.

As the head of the Church Jesus is with us always. Every time we receive communion we receive Jesus. He comes to our hearts and gives us his life. He also gives us life through the words that we read from the Bible.

Task: How does Christ's self-sacrifice inspire you to sacrifice your life? Share this in the small group.

Sample Question

Multiple Choice Questions

1. What is education?

a. Charitable work b. Humanitarian work

c. Service work d. Good work

2. How do we receive Jesus?

a. Through Word

b Through living life

c. Through Sacraments

d. Through Eucharist

Read the following Paragraph and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.

With plenty of hard work Moni established a nursery school. There she appointed some poor people and thus helped them to stand on their own feet.

3. What was Moni's field of service?
   a. Person b. Family
   c. Society d. Church

4. Moni, through her service
   i. Eradicates poverty
   ii. Gives financial security
   iii. Serves human beings

Which one is correct?

a. i and ii b. ii and iii
c. i and iii d. i, ii and iii

Creative Questions

1. Prodip established himself through family education as well as formal education. One day while passing by a road he pushed an old man and threw him on the road. Being an educated young man how could Prodip behave in such a way? He had a neighbour called Pronoy who thought of telling Prodip to correct his bad behaviour. One day, when Prodip was in a good mood, Pronoy told Prodip very softly about his rough behaviour. At this Prodip realized that his behaviour with that old man was not appropriate.

a. What is the first step of knowing the self?
b. Why is one person completely different from another?
c. Which approach of Pronoy helped Prodip to be changed? Explain.
d. Do you think Prodip needs to have self-evaluation in order to be a free human being? Analyze.

2. Trina and Trisha are twin sisters. Their external appearance, skin colour, height, way of speaking-all are identical. Intellectually also both are almost equal. In various ways Trisha helps poor students. She has a good reputation like obedience to her parents, cultural experience and so on. On the other hand Trina is lazy, non-attentive toward others, more attentive toward her own benefits, etc.

a. What is real education?
b. What is the necessity of keeping a relationship with human beings?
c. What is the difference between Trina and Trisha called? Explain.
d. The difference existing between Trina and Trisha has both positive and negative effects—evaluate.

Short Questions

1. Explain two characteristics of individual differences
2. Describe in short the life of a saint that you know.
3. Mention three effects of individual differences.
4. Explain the importance of man-to-man relationship.
5. What is meant by self-sacrifice in service work?

Chapter Three

My Freedom and My Society

God created man and woman, and provided that they live together in society with others. We see varieties in God's creation: various animals, elements, flowers, trees, birds. Not only are there varieties in creation; in living beings there is also community in each category. We see flock of birds, cattle, trees, flowers and so many like these in God's creation. There is unity and harmony in nature too. Human beings are also created to live in harmony in their own society. A person is born into a family, and live in a family. People live in their human society to have companionship with one another. To live in society one has to respect the rights of others. Every human being is created in God's image; all have their own dignity and innate rights. Therefore, it is everyone's duty and obligation to respect the rights and dignity of all other people.

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- compare loneliness and friendship;
- understand the need to build relationships with others;
- relate the teachings of the Holy Bible regarding freedom in our life;
- evaluate the life of good people as a Christian;
- take initiative to make friendship with others and
- be respectful to the freedom of others.

Loneliness and Friendship

Loneliness is a very painful feeling. Loneliness is an experience in which a person stays or feels alone due to lack of companionship, and usually due to lack of friendship. This experience of loneliness is very personal, and the loneliness of one person is different from that of others. Loneliness also can be seen as a social longing when a lonely person feels the need to make social relationship with others. When human strength and dynamism prevail peacefully in one or more groups it is called friendship. To live a meaningful and happy life and to survive in the society. People make joyous bond with others and it is called friendship. Children learn how to make friendship with others in their own families. Building on that experience they are able to make friendships

outside in the society. Gradually their world of friendships grows broader and deeper, as they make friendship with people of other faiths, colors, cultures and nations. As they gain friends, and as they feel at ease and happy with them, they seldom have reason to experience loneliness.

If we discuss the comparison between loneliness and friendship then we will see- Loneliness tends to lead to indifference in our work and life. But friendship can bring support and encouragement. Loneliness can bring pain, suffering and gloom; while friendship promotes happiness, peace and joy. Lonely persons try to be happy by avoiding contact with or interference from others, but fail to find joy. They cannot fulfill their own personal needs; neither can they be aware of needs in the lives of others. Friends provide a means to get help when in need and it involves people to develop kindness by offering to share in the problems and needs of others. Lack of friendship creates loneliness, failure, aimlessness. Life can seem to be worthless, meaningless and aimless. But friendship helps making life beautiful and meaningful; it gives opportunity for generosity and sharing. A lonely person feels that something is lacking in life; while friends bring activity, happiness and gratefulness.

Task: Discuss in small groups the characteristics of friendship and loneliness and share with others.

Need to make Friendship

It is a basic innate human desire for all people live in society. For their innate specialty people feel that they can attain real humanity by interacting with others. So the desire to have the experience of friendship is very strong in the hearts of all people. They can achieve great things when they share their responsibilities with others and work together. Loneliness brings sorrow.We need friendship to avoid loneliness and aloofness. We can find happiness and peace through sharing, cooperating and making friendship with others. People can do many great things while working together with others.

It is not easy to gain good relationship, unity and friendship. We neither can keep these in containers nor can use it later according to our own preferences. A society is formed by love, sharing active participation and caring. Sharing and love produce friendship, harmony and cultures in Bangladesh and throughout Asia. In this milieu, the experience of people are formed often by other religion

and culture. There are always many good and liberal people in every religion. They work together; help each other; and exchange their thoughts and opinions. Thus relationships grow among them.

Task: Arrange a debate on the topic: "Friendship is the best way to happiness in life." The audience will be the judge. You can ask opinions from others on the debate.

Teaching of the Holy Bible about Freedom

In of Genesis the Holy Bible tells about the origin of human beings, and the source of the Chosen nation. The first two chapters of the Book of Genesis describe that God created man, with freedom to enjoy life in friend-ship with God and with all of His creation. But Adam chose to disobey God, and he was then separated from God and put in conflict with other humans. Genesis chapters 5 and 6 tell of man' s rebellion against God and against other human beings. In Chapter nine, even though man had gone against Him, God made a covenant with all humanity and His creation promising that God will certainly save His people. Yet man rejected the invitation of God and remained unfaithful to Him, in conflict with other people and untrue to his own self.

The Holy Bible speaks of two kinds of freedom: political freedom from foreign dominion or slavery; and internal: freedom from slavery of sins. The political freedom of the people of Israel from the bondage of slavery in Egypt is recorded for us in the Old Testament Exodus story. Again the prophets dealt with political freedom for the Israelites in exile in distant Babylon. The New Testament dealt with freedom or salvation from the slavery of sin. Jesus was born in this world to set us free from our sins. Some passages from the New Testament:

John 8: 31-36: "Jesus said to those who believed in Him:"If you obey my teaching, you are really my disciples; you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." "We are descendants of Abraham," they answered, "and we have never been anybody's slaves. What do you mean, then, by saying, 'You will be free'?" Jesus said to them, "I am telling you the truth: everyone who sins is a slave of sin. A slave does not belong to a family permanently, but a son belongs there for ever. If the Son sets you free, then you will be really free."

Romans 8: 15: For the Spirit of God has given you does not make you slaves and cause you to be afraid; instead, the Spirit makes you God's children, and by the Spirit's power we cry out to God, "Abba! my Father!"

Galatians 5: 13: "As for you, my brothers, you were called to be free. But do not let this freedom become an excuse for letting your physical desires control you. Instead, let love make you serve one another."

1 Peter 2: 16-1 7: "Live as free people; do not, however, use your freedom to cover up any evil, but live as God's slaves. Respect everyone, love your fellowbelievers, fear God, and respect the Emperor."

The Holy Bible teaches us that we are children of God, and that we are born being free. God wants that we no longer remain under any dominion, but live as free people in the society.

Exemplary Lives of Persons That Inspire Us

Many people who had extraordinary faith provide us with wonderful models to guide our own lives. We briefly introduce two of them here. They were human beings like us; but they are respected as saints today because of their strong faith and love. We love them as models of deeply committed lives of faith and love.

1. Saint Paul

Saint Paul is a person of extraordinary faith and zeal. He was born at Cilicia in Tarsus City, (in what is now part of Turkey). His name was 'Saul', but it was changed to "Paul" at the time of his conversion. His parents were Jewish from the tribe of Benjamin, but were also citizens of the Roman Empire. Probably he was born after Jesus. His parents sent him from Tarsus to Jerusalem to study fundamentalist Jewish religion; and law. He studied there under reputed teacher Gamaliel. He was a fanatic Jew. Saul was a very good orator and had special training in apology. He returned from Jerusalem to Tarsus before Jesus began His public life.

Paul returned to Palestine after the death of Jesus. He was very zealous in his fundamentalist religion; he strongly opposed the Christians and wanted to destroy them. He was present when St. Stephen was martyred in Jerusalem. He was a young man and was deadly anti-Christian. Once he went to the emperor

for his permission to arrest the Christians and bring them to Damascus, in Syria. But along the way to Damascus he saw Jesus and the great change of his life took place there. The Acts of the Apostles here describes this miraculous event and his conversion.

(Acts 9: 1-19): "In the meantime Saul kept up his violent threats of murder against the followers of the Lord. He went to the High Priest and asked for letters of introduction to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he should find there any followers of the Way of the Lord, he would be able to arrest them, both men and women, and bring them back to Jerusalem.

As Saul was coming near the city of Damascus, suddenly a light from the sky flashed round him. He felt to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul! Why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" he asked. "I am Jesus, whom you persecute," the voice said. "But get up and go into the city, where you will be told what you must do."

The men who were travelling with Saul had stopped, not saying a word; they heard the voice but could not see anyone. Saul got up from the ground and opened his eyes, but could not see a thing. So they took him by the hand and led him into Damascus. For three days he was not able to see. There was a Christian in Damascus named Ananias. He had a vision in which the Lord said to him, "Ananias!" "Here I am, Lord," he answered. The Lord said to him, "Get ready and go to Straight Street, and at the house of Judas ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. He is praying, and in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and placing his hands on him so that he might see again. Ananias answered, "Lord, many people have told me about this man and about all the terrible things he has done to your people in Jerusalem. And he has come to Damascus with authority from the chief priests to arrest all who worship you." The Lord said to him, "Go, because I have chosen him to serve me, to make my name known to Gentiles and kings and to the people of Israel. And I myself will show him all that he must suffer for my sake."

So Ananias went, entered the house where Saul was, and placed his hands on him."Brother Saul," he said, "the Lord has sent me, Jesus himself who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here. He sent me here so that you might see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." At once something like fish scales

fell from Saul's eyes, and he was able to see again. He stood up and was baptized; and took the name Paul.

His power of preaching was increasing day by day. He introduced Jesus as savior outside the Jewish world. The jews at Damascus wanted to kill him. The Jews at Damascus wanted to kill him. The disciples sent him to Jerusalem there he met Peter and the other elders of the church. After that his long preaching life started. At first he went to Tarsus, his birth place and started to preach. From there he went to Antioch with Bernabas. After the council of Jerusalem with Peter he returned to Antioch and started his three missionary journeys. His first mission was form Cyprus to Pamphylia, Pisidia, lycaonia and Asia Minor. He founded churches in Pisidia- Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe. After the council in Jerusalem Paul took Silas, Timothy and Luke with him for his second mission. This time he preached in Philippi,Thessalonica, Beroea, Athens and Corinth. In his third mission Paul stayed in Ephesus for three years and preached in different places from there. He was planning for another mission to Rome and Spain from Jerusalem. HIs plan was not fulfilled because the Jewish torture. He was arrested in Caesarea and put in jail for two years. When he was set free from Roman Prison house he started for Spain. He was imprisoned second time in Rome and finally he was beheaded in the year 67. As a result of his preaching the people of Antioch is called the first Christian. He introduced Jesus to the different cast outside of Jerusalem.

We know about his strong Christian faith from his letters written to various churches at various times. The church and the Christians will ever remember his contribution and will try to follow his many examples. The Catholic Church each year celebrates the Conversion of Saint Paul on 25 January and his feast day with Saint Peter on 29 June. But in the protestant church the feast of Saint Peter is celebrated on 29 June and the Saint paul on 30 June.

2. Saint Maria Goretti

Saint Maria Goretti is one of the young Saints of the Church. She was declared a Saint at a young age. She became a martyr to safeguard her purity and personal freedom. She was born on October 16, 1890 in Italy. Her father was Luigi Goretti and mother was Assunta Carlini. She was the third out of six children. Her sisters were named Teresa and Ersilia; her brothers were Angelo, Sandrino, and Mariano. By the time she was six, her family had become so

poor that they were forced to give up their farm and work for other farmers. Her father became very sick from malaria and died when Maria was just nine. While her brothers, mother, and sister worked in the fields, Maria would keep the house clean cook, sew and watch her infant sister. It was a hard life, but the family shared a deep love. They had deep love for each other and faith in God.

A young boy named Alessandro and his father Giovanni Serenelli lived next door to them. Alessandro knew that everyday when Maria's mother, sister and brothers went to work Maria stayed home with her little sister. Alessandro would come by and check on Maria. He liked Maria. As day passed by he became passionate toward Maria. She understood that and tried to keep a distance from Alessandro. He used to look at Maria with lust. One day he proposed to Maria to have sexual relation with him. Maria tried to make him understand that it was not right. Another day, Maria was sewing alone. Her little sister was sleeping beside her. Alessandro Serenelli came in and threatened her with death if she did not do as he said; he was intending to sexually assault her. She would not submit, however, protesting that what he wanted to do was a mortal sin and warning Alessandro that he would go to hell. She desperately fought to stop Alessandro from abusing her. She kept screaming saying that it is a sin and God does not want it. But Alessandro would not listen. He wanted to abuse Maria. She told him she would rather die than submit to him.
When Alessandro could not manage Maria any more he repeatedly stabbed her and ran away leaving the injured Maria. Maria's little sister Teresa awoke by the noise and started crying. Hearing the shouting and crying, Maria's Mother and Alessandro's father came in the house and found Maria senseless and bleeding. They quickly took her to the nearest hospital. Immediately the doctors tried to operate on her, but her injuries were beyond the doctors' help. Halfway through the surgery, Maria woke up. She insisted that it should stay that way. The following day, twenty hours after the attack, having expressed forgiveness for her murderer and stating that she wanted to have him in Heaven with her, Maria died of her injuries.

Alessandro Serenelli was captured shortly after Maria's death and was sentenced to 30 years in prison. He confessed that he had stabbed Maria, but he did not tarnish Maria's virginity. While in prison he gradually had a conversion of heart with the

help of a bishop. One night he dreamt that Maria gave him lilies, which burned immediately in his hands. After his release, Alessandro visited Maria's mother, who was still living, and begged her forgiveness. She forgave him, saying that if Maria had forgiven him on her deathbed then she could not do less, and they attended Mass together the next day, receiving Holy Communion side by side. In 1950, Pius XII canonized Maria Goretti as a saint. Since then the feast of Saint Maria Goretti has been celebrated every year on July 6. Alessandro attended Maria's canonization and prayed every day to Maria Goretti referring her as "my little saint." Alessandro later became a lay brother of the Order of Friars Minor Capuchin.

3. St. Therese, "the little flower"

Therese, 'the little flower' was the last of nine children of Louis and Zelie Martin. She was born on January 2, 1873, in Alencon, France. Her mother died when she was 4 years old. Her father brought them to Lisieux. Motherless Therese needed much love and care. As a result, her father and sisters babied young Therese. She had a spirit that wanted everything. At the age of 14, on Christmas Eve in 1886, Therese had a conversion that transformed her life. From then on, her powerful energy and sensitive spirit were turned toward love, instead of keeping herself happy. At 15, she entered the Carmelite convent in Lisieux to give her whole life to God. She took the religious name Sister Therese of the Child Jesus. Living a hidden, simple life of prayer in Carmelite Congragation, she was gifted with great intimacy with God. She was sick most of the time from her childhood. She became sick even in the monastery life.

Therese, in her autobiography, described her life as a "little way of love." In the Monastery, she offered her regular personal and communal work, prayer and all big and small things to God. She lived each day with an unshakable confidence in God's love. "What matters in life," she wrote, "is not great deeds, but great love." She believed that just as a child becomes enamored with what is before her, we should also have a childlike focus and totally attentive love. Therese lived and taught a spirituality of attending to everyone and everything well and with love. Therese's spirituality is of doing the ordinary, with extraordinary love.

Therese saw the seasons as reflecting the seasons of God's love affair with us. She loved flowers and saw herself as the "little flower of Jesus," who gave glory to God by just being her beautiful little self among all the other flowers in God's garden. Because of this beautiful analogy, the title "little flower" remained with St. Therese.

Pope Pius XI canonized her on May 17, 1925. In 1997, on the hundred-death anniversary, Pope John Paul II declared St. Therese a Doctor of the Church. "My mission - to make God loved - will begin after my death," she said. "I will spend my time in heaven doing good on earth. I will let fall a shower of roses."

4. Saint Maximilian Kolbe

Maximilian Kolbe was a Polish Franciscan priest. On 14 August 1941, he volunteered to sacrifice his life in place of a soldier in a concentration camp in Germany. He became famous for this great act of generosity. Blessed Pope John Paul II called him "a martyr of love" on 10 October, 1982 and the patron saint of our modern time.

Maximilian was born in 1894 in Poland, which was then under Russian control. In 1907 both Maximilian and his elder brother decided to join the Franciscan Order. They secretly crossed the border into Austria-Hungary to join the Franciscan Order seminary at the city of Lwow, and studied for the priesthood. In 1918, he was ordained to priesthood, and then came back to serve in Poland, which had recently been freed from Russia and had again become an independent country. During 1930-1936, he spent time as a missionary in Japan, and established a monastery there. He then returned to Poland.

During World War II, Germany conquered Poland and were arresting and killing all Jewish people there. Fr. Maximilian gave shelter to 2000 Jews in his monastery in order to hide them from the persecution from the German On 17 February, 1941 he was arrested by German Gestapo, along with the Jews whom he was hiding, and put into a concentration camp in Germany. In July of that year one prisoner escaped from the camp, in response to this the German soldiers set aside ten prisoners and would kill them; they did this so that no

other prisoner would dare to flee. One of the ten selected prisoners was crying very loudly thinking of how his family would survive when he would die. Maximilian thought that since he was a priest and had no family of his own, his condition was less crucial than that of this man who had a wife and children. Fr. Maximilian substituted himself for that man and accepted the death penalty in place of him. He came forward to stand in his place. The ten prisoners were kept in a separate room without food and drink so that they would die a severe death of starvation. He alone was still alive after three weeks, then was killed by a lethal injection by the German captors.

Task: Look at the pictures of some persons who were strong in Christian faith. Now prepare a list of their charisms and talents; then present it to the others.

Things to do Today:

Open your eyes, open your mind.

When you open your mind, you also open your heart.

When you open your heart, you live with dignity.

When you live with dignity, you share divine life.

When you share divine life, you build a society of love.

When you build a society of love, you enter the eternal life.

When you enter the eternal life, then nothing can do any harm to you.

When nothing can do any harm to you, then you will live forever,

You can do this even now, at this very moment. (collected from Once Asia, p.57)

Sample Question

Multiple Choice Questions

1. What do we need to overcome loneliness and friendlessness?

a. Forgiveness b. Friendship
c. Faith d. Love

2. According to Jesus how will the faithful Jews become appropriate disciples?

a. By knowing the truth b. Being slave of Jesus
c. Being faithful to the word of Jesus d. Being active in all the tasks

Read the following Paragraph and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.

Sunil mixes with wicked people while his own cousin Anil is a moralist. Anil despises Sunil. For this reason Sunil gatheres some miscreants and together they attack Anil and punish him. Anil, being confined to hospital forgives Sunil.

3. Anil's character is similar to whose character in the textbook?

a. St. Peter b. St. Stephen
c. St. Maria Goretti d. St. Paul

4. Sunil received from Anil

i. Help
ii. Forgiveness
iii. Love

Which one is corect ?

a. i b. ii
c. i and ii d. i, ii and iii

Creative Questions

1. Kona and Bina-two are classmates. Besides her studies Kona keeps friendly relationship with other students, respects her teachers very much, and takes part in many extra-curricular activities. Above all, Kona is very much known to all for her good behaviousrs. On the other hand Bina is also a brilliant student, but she does not keep friendly relationship with other students, does not share her stories of happiness and sorrows with others and does not look happy. As a result she gets sick many times. (a) Every human being is created in whose image?

(a) In whose image is every human being created?

(b) Why is making friend important? Explain.

(c) Describe from the viewpoint of the lesson—what kind of life Kona lives.

(d) Because of her characteristics what consequences might Bina have? Give your opinion.

2. Jyoti and Romen worked in a firm. Jyoti was older than Romen. Even though he was younger than Jyoti, Romen's efficiency and competency were greater than that of Jyoti's. The General Manager's post in their office was empty. The authorities appointed Romen in that post. Jyoti could not accept this decision. Instead of helping Romen, Jyoti got involved in spreading scandalous things about Romen. Suddenly Jyoti got sick and got hospitalized. Romen went to see Jyoti in the hospital and took care of him. Romen's action influenced Jyoti. He made Romen his friend.

a. Where was St. Paul born?

b. Why did St. Paul want to destroy the Christians?

c. Which side of St. Paul has been manifested in the behaviour of Jyoti? Explain.

d. It seems Jyoti is acting as a representative of Jesus—do you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your opinion.

Short Questions

1. What do you understand by loneliness?
2. Why is it necessary to maintain friendship?
3. Describe friendship.
4. What do you understand by freedom?
5. Why is it necessary to respect others' freedom?
6. What is meant by purity?
7. What is the importance of purity in personal life?

Chapter Four

Growing in Freedom

Human beings are social beings; they are not expected to live alone. For various purposes no person can live alone for a long time. He has to live in a society. Living with others in society should be a source of joy and satisfaction, not a burden. It is one of the important aspects of human nature. They bloom their possibilities by interaction, exchanging, nursing, emotional exchange and dialogue. Thus he answers to the call to be a human being. In society each person shares his or her many gifts with others, in that way the whole society progresses. That is the wonderful plan of God. This social aspect of our lives is one of the important aspects of being human.

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- explain about our responsibility to the society;
- evaluate the necessity of being mature in order to be able to make our contribution to society;
- Explain the positive imfluence of living our life with Christian values of freedom on the society
- inspired to be faithful to this social responsibility and attain christian maturity.

Responsibility to the society

Society is a particular community of people. It is above personal interests. The community is formed by the members. There are two aspects of human society. They are visible and spiritual aspects. The visible aspect is our gathering or living together, sharing activities, helping one another in time of need, physical and moral support.

The spiritual aspect is to save the society by preparing its members on the basis of past and for the future. Through society people are established by what they inherit and by special spiritual qualities that display their uniqueness and gradually they grow up into good persons. They are loyal to the society where they belong to and devote themselves for the welfare of all. Society protects us and gives us security as we are its members. We need to obey the norms of the society. At the same time it is our duty to improve the society.

From the story of Jonathon Livingstone Seagull by Richard Bach we can have an idea how to grow up in personal freedom while living in the society with others.

The story is like this: there was a seagull named Jonathon Livingstone. He tried to learn many ways of flying which were new and different. Thus his life was improved. None of his companions ever thought of being able to fly differently from what all the other seagulls did. So this seagull made others astonished. Jonathon wanted to share his knowledge and skill with others. But no one wanted to learn from him or follow him; they even said that Jonathon was crazy. In this way Jonathon felt discouraged and insulted.

Most of the seagulls used to learn flying just to survive. They would go from the shore and out over the sea nearby in order to seek food, and again come back to shore. They learned only the few techniques of flying that were necessary to do this, but learned no more. They were happy with this. They said that they needed to collect food to live, after that they should not do anything in vain. Collection of food was their main aim. But the outlook of Jonathon was higher than that. It was not the main work for Jonathon to look for food. His interest was to fly in the vast sky. He loved freedom. But he could understand that the others did not like what he was doing.

"One day the captain of the seagulls said at the top to his voice, "Jonathon come forward and stand in the middle of all". To stand in the middle of all can be either very respectful or very shameful. But why was Jonathon called to do that? Again the captain shouted, "Jonathon you did what is most shameful in the sight of all, so come and stand in the middle of all the seagulls."

Jonathon got frightened. Out of fear his knees were shaking and his wings fell loosely down at his sides. The voice of the captain made echoes in his ears. Jonathan thought. "What did I do that I have to be ashamed of? Actually they did not understand the intention of my activity. They misunderstood me."

A third time the leader shouted: "Because of your indifference you must be shamed in front of all. You have shamed the dignity of the family of seagulls." Jonathon was thinking, "Why should I have to stand in their midst and be

shamed? May be I shall be thrown out from the society, or may be will be sent far away to any of the islands."

The leader said, "There is no mercy for the one who breaks the rules of our society. We do not know much about life, it is not even possible for us to know this. We only know that in this world we live until death by eating and eating."

Nobody spoke up loudly in the council of seagulls. But today Jonathon shouted loudly?"I am being punished because of my indifference? What wrong have I done? Brethren, tell me, who in our society acts with responsibility? The one who has found a higher aim in life, is he not being responsible? For thousands of years we have been only flying low and looking for fish. But today we have found something greater to do in our lives. We can learn something new, can discover how to fly freely into the sky, and twist, turn and dive, and in this way we become free seagulls. Is it not for us a matter of great pride and joy? I humbly request you, give me one chance; I shall show you what I have found." But by that time the seagulls had lost their patience. They all cried aloud "From now you are no longer our friend. You are unknown to the society of seagulls." Then they closed their ears so that they might not hear what Jonathon was trying to tell them. They went away from Jonathon.

Task: Discuss in groups: What did Jonathon want to do in his life? How did the leader of the seagulls and his companions behave with him? What was the influence of their behavior in the life of Jonathon? What was the idea of Jonathon about responsibility? Tell your opinion about the personal faith and freedom of Jonathon.

Now we shall see another example which shows how people can use their freedom and responsibility. Martin Luther King is a very famous leader in America, who was himself a Negro, and who fought for the rights of the Negros in America. In his own words he here tells of a disturbing experience in his life.

"It happened near the end of the month of January. I worked very hard all day, then came back home and went to bed at midnight. My wife, Coretta, was already asleep. Before I fell into deep sleep my telephone rang, and I answered

it. The person speaking on the phone said: 'You have gone too far, spoken too much, you lead the negroes to make demands and cause disturbance. By the end of this week you will be repaid for attacking our society.'

After receiving that threatening phone call, I could not sleep at all. I felt so afraid and helpless. I left my bed and walked back and forth inside the room, then went to the kitchen and made a cup of coffee. Putting the cup on the table I became totally involved in deep thought about how I could come out from this fearful situation. I felt that I had no hope; I could understand that I had no power to deal with this. To whom could I turn to for help? Finally I realized then what I must do. I decided to tell everything to God. I put my head on the table and prayed. I can remember what I prayed. Even now, after many years, I can remember so well what I said in my prayer. I told God that "I always stood by what is right and just. " I spoke out to the people, I told them that their situation is unjust, and they must protest and make this known to all. From my speech they got hope and encouragement. Now they are looking to me for leadership. At this crucial time if I go in front of them and they see me to be weak and unworthy, they will lose hope, all their enthusiasm will be lost. They depend on me. Alone I do not have the power and strength need. I depend on You to give me the power I need to face this challenge." After praying I experienced the power of God in me. I never experienced God before like this time.

Task: 1. In the light of the experience of Martin Luther King, try to think of an event in your life when you too experienced God's power.

Task: 2. In the same way discuss in groups of how, in your locality or society, the people are deprived and unwanted. Discuss also what would be your role in these situations.

Becoming a mature person

It is inevitable to have the society for the people to fulfill their vocation. To achieve this goal people must respect values which control physical desire and inclination internally and spiritually. There is an attachment between the individual man and human society. By spirituality they share their knowledge through the light of truth, fulfill their rights and complete their responsibilities and they become interested to search spiritual worth. They gain the ability to

enjoy the beauty and pure happiness. Mature persons become eager to express their religious faith and cultural traditions to others. In the same way they desire to learn from others about their accomplishments. The manifestation of the spirituality of a matured person influences not only his personal life but also his religious, social, political, economical life that means his whole life.

There is an inseparable relationship between the individual man and human society. So when a person grows in spirituality and morality, this benefits him, and should benefit the society. The precondition of changing society is change in ourselves first. To become responsible to ourselves and the society we must evaluate our attitudes and behavior, then must choose, hold on to what is good and reject what is bad both for ourselves and the society. Freedom and responsibility go together. Together both of these contribute to the welfare of ourselves and the society.

To become responsible we need awareness, we have to know or understand the society and the world we live in. We must know the people in the society we live in We should know their hopes, problems and anxieties. To be responsible is not just to know all this, but to discuss and decide what initiatives we can take for them. Now let us read an excerpt from a book on awareness:

Awareness has always been very important for us to gain more than ever before. In the present world this awareness is about the danger of our greed for advanced technology and wealth. In addition we need to be aware of our growing opportunities. We have to think how we can use these opportunities for the welfare of us and for the world without making any harm to the environment.

The present will determine the future. We can not realize whether we attained success or not unless we pass the coming ten years. So we should be alert and perform our duties with joy to face the reality. Thus we may see success one day.

Every human being has some good qualities, such as- self sacrifice, sensitivity, courage and creativity. By blooming these qualities we can conquer environmental pollution, discrimination, poverty etc. Also we must ensure that-

a. All children must have the chance to attend school.
b. The schools must provide quality education.
c. Every effort must be made so that people live in harmony.
d. Politics must serve the needs of the people
e. Cultures must be respected and promoted.
f. Business affairs must proceed with honesty and justice.
g. All of our efforts must lead to the establishment of peace.

Task: How can students today face these challenges noted above? Discuss this in groups and, using posters, present it to the class.

Christ is our Model

A man can be responsible only when he is free. He must be able to make choices In order to act responsibly. With our free will to choose to accept responsibility We respond to God and people with open heart. We see this example in Jesus. He was always faithful to the Father, and always acted only according to His will. Jesus did everything to make the Heavenly Father happy and worked for welfare of mankind. We find this in the John's Gospel chapter 8 verses 21-30. Jesus said, "I always do what pleases Him." To them who believed in Him Jesus said: "If you make my word your home, you will indeed be my disciples; you will come to know the truth and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32)

To be appeared in the image of God and to be transformed in the image of His only Son are the special vocation for mankind. It is revealed in our personal life because we are called to enter into Divine life. It is the general call for all nankind. "For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God". (Rom 8: 19)

The freedom is practised in relationship among people.Created by God every human being has right to be free, to be accepted as responsible persons along with the duty to love and respect each other. Ethically and religiously it is an unavoidable demand of the dignified people to enjoy the right of freedom. "You shall love the lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself." (Luke 10:27)

Growing in liberty means to become responsible which means to become conscious about the world, society and neighbours. We will have to be conscious of our neighbours' hopes, aspirations, expectations, problems and sufferings. It does not mean only to deliver lectures about the poor, rather to do something for them. By reading the following part from the holy Bible we will learn clearly about the teaching of Christ in becoming responsible persons by growing in liberty.

“When the Son of Man will come in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.”

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."

"Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and cloth you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?"

"The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

Then he will say to those on his left hand, “Go away from me with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you never gave me food, I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink, I was a stranger and you never made me welcome, lacking clothes and you never clothed me, sick and in prison and you never visited me. Then it will be their turn to ask, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?'

"He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'

"Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life." (Mathew 25:31-46)

Task: Make a list of our responsibilities. Discuss in groups the advantage of accepting and choosing responsibilities, and the disadvantages of not doing our responsibilities properly.

Sample Question

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Human society consists of ?

a. Men b. Individuals

c. Educated d. Women

2. We shall be faithful to our responsibilities, because we want to be:

a. real disciples of Jesus b. established in the society

c. gain favor of the elders d. win friends

Read the following Paragraph and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.

Apu's parents were very poor. Yet he wanted to become a doctor. He studied hard, and also worked part time to earn money to pay his expenses. With great effort and struggle he succeeded to pass college, got admitted into a medical

college and finally became doctor. He served faithfully as a doctor, and also did many social works. He established a free dispensary, school for poor children and a night school. All who know of him have respect for Apu.

3. What kind of person is Apu?

a. Mature b. Aware of the society

c. Exemplary d. Obedient

4. As a result of Apu:

i. Society will be developed

ii. Others will be inspired

iii. Rate of education will rise high

Which one is correct?

a. i b. ii

c. i and ii d. i, ii, and iii

Creative questions

1. Mr. Bivash is the Member of the city council named Sundorpur. He reads the Bible and prays every day. He goes to church regularly. He loves his city very much and has worked very hard to improve the city. Along with his council he has established schools, constructed roads, a dispensary, rehabilitation for the poor, and a handicraft institute for the people. He bravely solves problems that occur in the city. He thinks that God has given him these responsibilities. That is why he does everything responsibly.

a. How many aspects of society are there?

b. How is freedom practics ?

c. In the works of Bivash which aspects of Christian life are most evident? Explain.

d. "By the activities of Bivash one day people will see development". Evaluate this statement.

2. There was a slum beside the house Shafin. Some of children his same age lived there. Shafin got sad seeing the poor life style of those children. He asked his mother, "They live so poorly. I have a lot of nice clothes and toys, but why don't they have? I live in a beautiful house, why don't they have? I would like to give them some of my clothes and toys." His mother said, "That is a good idea." Shafin wrapped some of his clothes and toys with colorful papers. He invited them at his house, fed them good food and offered them those gifts. Those friends were very happy.

a. What happens in the mutual relationship of people?

b. How can we respond to the call to be human?

c. Which aspects of Christian values do you see in the attitude of Shafin - Explain.

d. “The relationship between Shafin and his friends shows growth in freedom” - Evaluate the verse.

Short Questions

1. Explain what it means to have responsibility towards the society.
2. How do we become mature by doing our responsibilities?
3. How can we be aware of the need of the society?
4. What lesson do you find from the story of the seagull? Explain.
5. What do you learn from the episode of the life of Martin Luther King?

Chapter Five

Freedom And Obedience

We have come to know that man is a social being and he cannot live alone. He is a member of a society, and through relationship with others he attains fulfillment in his life. Every society has its rules and regulations. In other words, every society has the authority to govern itself. Every human society has to give authority to some responsible people to protect its institutions and social structure. Every human being has to reach the level of a certain growth, development and maturity in order to obtain fulfillment. It is only possible in a society where people are loyal to obedience through following some rules and regulations.

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- achieve the competence to explain the meaning of freedom and obedience as personal and social values;
- attain the skill to explain the notion of authority;
- attain the skill to explain the importance of loyalty;
- achieve the competence to explain the attitude of Jesus towards obedience and
- achieve the ability to show loyalty to our authority.

Freedom and Obedience

Man is a rational being. Through his relationship with God a person attains the ability to sustain his personality and it is necessary in order to make him a perfect man. Man is unique, and at the same time he is related to others. He is at the same time an 'I' and a 'we'. We can comprehend the meaning and relationship of freedom and obedience only when we are able to see a person unite these two things in our understanding. At present, when we are stressing the freedom of a person, we find it difficult to properly judge together freedom and maturity. Freedom and obedience are closely related. We cannot think of the existence of the one without the other. One becomes invalid without the other. In other words, freedom without obedience is not freedom at all, and obedience without

obedience without freedom is not true obedience. Freedom and obedience have the same objective and they move parallelly. God created human beings in His own image. He has given freedom to them, as well as power, so that man may know Him and love Him. Jesus said, "Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in My love. If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love" (John 15:9-10).

Obedience was one of the important qualities of Jesus Christ. But many do not want to consider obedience as a quality. If all or most people would misuse their obedience there would be a huge chaos in the society. People in authority must respect the freedom of the ordinary people; and must protect their welfare. Proper usage of authority or leadership ensures our security and lets our freedom blossom.

George Washington was the first president of America. This great man was obedient to his parents. At the age of 15 he had arranged to go for studies at an excellent school in Europe, where his brother was studying, and had made all the preparations for crossing the Atlantic Ocean.He had ordered his people to put his necessary things into the ship. As he was preparing to leave he went to see his mother. She was not happy thinking that her son had to struggle a lot to acquire education, he was only 15 years old. She felt heart-broken at the time of her son was about to depart. She was anxious that this little boy had to leave home and cross the hos¬tile Atlantic Ocean, but at the same time she did not want to stop him. At the time of farewell, the son saw tears in her mother' eyes, and eventually he gave up the decision of going so far away for studies and said, "I don't want to break the heart of my mother by leaving her and going across the ocean for studies."The emotional mother embraced him and said, "My boy, I bless you that someday you will become a great person. This is the reason that George Washington remained at home and received his education from private teachers. George's loyalty towards his mother was one of the qualities in this great president. George Washington was the first, and one of the most praiseworthy presidents in the history of America. He is the only person who, after his death, was declared "General of the Armies of the U.S.A", (4 July, 1976).

Authority

The responsibility and power that is given to lead a group, society, institution, country or nation is called authority. And the person to whom this power is given is called authority. This power and authority is given so that they may lead their subordinates along the right path, give assurance to fulfill their rights, protect the rules and regulations and work for their development and upbringing. Proper governing does not mean only performing responsibilities and fulfilling the rights of people entrusted to them, but it also includes making relationships and establishing justice and brotherhood. The way a human body is directed by its brain, likewise a family, social or religious institution and a nation are governed by their leaders. In a family, the father and mother guide the family. In each society there is a leader: a parish priest in a parish, a prime minister or a president in a country, the Pope in our Catholic Church. They hold the supreme power and provide the leadership. To help them perform their responsibilities there can be a governing body or a council.

Each person in a family, society or nation is expected to follow its rules and regulations so that the society can function properly and in peace, prosperity and success. But if we look at the world today, or even look at our country, what do we see? Why do we face indiscipline, strikes and unsteadiness? Sometimes these happen as a last resort to seek rights. But other times we cannot find suitable reasons for such action. Some people in the society do not accept leadership; instead they oppose leaders and consider obedience as a weakness and as an interference on freedom.

In the Gospel we find that Jesus taught us to serve by keeping the authority free from misuse and limitation. In this sense authority is the power to sacrifice one's life for others and this power helps a person to grow up into an individual existence. We see two incidents in the Bible:

"A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the least, and the one who rules like the one who serves." (Luke 22:24-26)

In Mark 10:35-45 we see: "Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do for us whatever we ask." He asked, "What do you want me to do for you?". They replied, "In your glory let one of us sit at your right and the other at your left." Jesus said. "You don't know what you are asking, Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?" "We can," they answered. Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared." When the other ten heard about this, they became indignant with James and John. Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. But it is not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Sister Marian Teresa, a sister of the Congregation of Holy Cross, served many years as Principal of Holy Cross College in Dhaka. She was a dedicated person, and, even though she spent many years as principal of this reputed college she was not proud. Instead, she acted and lived humbly. She was prudent in doing her responsibilities as college Principal, and maintained a good relationship with the people of every level, rich and poor. People were happy with her behavior and leadership. She never hurt anyone with rude behavior. Because of her hard work, sincerity and leadership that college acquired honours and fame as an excellent college. In spite of all this, she did not boast about the accomplishment of the college or feel self-gratification due to her own contribution. She knew and understood that she received her responsibility from her society and was carrying it out on their behalf. Throughout her life she depended on God and led her life according to His guidance. Even though she was a powerful principal, through hard work she reached to great height in a situation in which many other person would be tempted to become proud and demanding but she did not because of her humility.

Obedience to Authority

Obedience to Authority is a part of freedom. This obedience comes from our free will. If it does not come easily from our hearts then we will not have true peace. Out of our free will we are loyal to the masters of the family, to our father and mother. Likewise, out of our free will we are loyal to the leaders of our society, religion and country. If every person in a family, every student in an institution, member in a society, citizen in a country is loyal to the leaders then there will prevail peace and unity. Then leaders and authorities of that institution will be able to lead everyone towards prosperity, growth and success.

The importance of loyalty at different stages in the society, and the consequences of not doing so are presented below with some examples.

Situation	Importance of Obedience	Result of Disobedience
Family	Loyalty is necessary to Parents, elders and others in order to maintain good relationship, discipline, peace and happiness.	Misunderstanding, sorrow, conflict and an intolerable situation in a family in the absence of obedience.
Traveling on the streets and highways	It is necessary to follow the traffic rules. Security is assured only if everyone follows the traffic lights. Passersby can move without hesitation. In our country, the rule is to move on the left side of the road. Everyone can reach his destination safely if rules are maintained.	Accidents occur in our country very often due to not following the traffic rules. Countless innocent people lose their lives. Many suffer losing their beloved ones. Many families are on the brink of destruction due to their loss in traffic accidents.
Educational Institutions	It is the duty of every student to maintain discipline in the school campus and classroom, to strive to acquire knowledge and to actively participate in all the activities.	If all students do not attend class every day, those who miss fall behind the others, cannot learn properly, and cause difficulty for the rest of the class . Disorderliness appears everywhere if rules are not followed.

Example: Shobuj is a meritorious student of Class nine. He studies regularly. He always listens to his teachers and he is very attentive. He comes to school on time, participates in the assembly, starts his day duly. He is serious about being regular in the school. He always acts according to the instructions of the teachers and school, such as coming to school on time, participating in the assembly, wearing the uniform of the school, not carrying a mobile phone and anything unexpected. He thinks these rules are necessary for a disciplined life. So, he adheres by these rules in order to make his life meaningful. He never goes astray and does not get carried away by the influence of unruly students. His parents and teachers play a big role in his life, Shobuj helps to make it so meaningful. The instructions and orders of his parents and the teaching of his teachers bring good results into his life. Thus he is acceptable and imitable as an example to everyone. The school authority cares for him. The teachers are optimistic about him. The authorities of the school gives him some responsibilities, and he tries to perform those responsibilities with humility and enthusiasm. His good attitude reflects in his actions. His obedience is exemplary to the school authorities and a matter of pride.

Exercise: Answer the questions individually:

a. Do you like the example of Shobuj described above? Why?

b. What is your attitude towards authority?

c. Do you take distance from authorities or fear them? Why?

d. Do you feel secure in front of them?

f. If authorities understand you and are kind and impartial to you then what will be your attitude towards them?

Jesus and Obedience

In the Second Chapter we learned the notion and teaching of Jesus on Authority. Now we shall see the attitude of Jesus towards obedience. We see many examples of obedience in the life of Jesus. After the birth of Jesus, Mother Mary and His foster father Joseph brought him up with great care. They felt anxious when at the age of 12, Jesus got lost in the temple of Jerusalem. They searched for him in great panic. They were sure that they would find him among the relatives. But no, he was not among them. They could not even think that Jesus

would get lost. Then where had Jesus gone without informing His parents? After everything His parents returned to Jerusalem searching for Him. They found Him among the scholars. There Jesus was discussing about the words of God.

He was asking questions like a scholar. Many were surprised at the way he was answering their questions. His parents were surprised to find him in the temple. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you." He replied "Why were you searching for me? Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?" But they did not understand what he was saying to them. Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. There the golden days of His life passed by.

The example of Jesus' obedience is worthy of imitating. He was obedient to "His Father" throughout His whole life. In the Gospel of St. John we witness the obedience of Jesus "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work" (John 4:34). "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He and that I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him" (John 8:28-29). Jesus tried to fulfill the desires of His Father till His death. He was in agony at the garden of Gethsemane, thinking about His coming death. He said: "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." (Matthew: 26:39-42)

From Saint Paul's letters to the Philippians we come to know the true nature of Jesus' obedience and what it demands from us: "In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself as nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:5-11).

Task: Regarding Obedience compare between your attitude and the attitude of Jesus.

Sample Question

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Which one of the following is related to Freedom?
   a. Respect b. Devotion
   c. Humility d. Obedience

2. Why did Jacob and John, the two sons of Zebedee, want to sit on both sides of Jesus?
   a. For power b. Out of obedience
   c. Because of belief d. To serve

Read the following Paragraph and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.

Chayan is a son very beloved to his parents. He always listens and gives importance to what his parents tell him. He gets up early in the morning, studies hard and takes part in daily prayers. This is why his parents feel secure in giving him various responsibilities in the family.

3. What type of nature is found in Chayan?
   a. Domineering b. Obedient
   c. Authoritative d. Friendly

4. Because of Chayan's behavior and attitude situation that may arise in his family:
   i. Strained relations
   ii. Beautiful relationship
   iii. Joy

Which one is correct?
   a. i b. i & ii
   b. ii & iii d. i, ii & iii

Creative Questions

1. Hridoy and Uday are two children of their parents. They are very persevering. Hridoy listens to his parents, respects his elders and never indulges in conflict. But Uday, in spite of being intelligent, never listens to his elders and parents; instead he mingles with the troublesome boys. Both of them want to study in Dhaka. Knowing their interest their mother said, 'It was ever our will to let you study in Dhaka, but the expense for you will not leave enough for the study of your younger brothers and sisters. Listening to his mother, Hridoy took admission in a village college. But Uday insisted on going to Dhaka to study.

a. Who got angry with James and John?

b. Why should the one who wants to be great become a servant to everyone?

c. Which story influenced Hridoy to decide to study at the village college? Explain.

d. Do you see proper use of freedom in Uday's behaviour? Give your opinion.

2. Pabitra is a student of Class nine who is very humble, gentle and meritorious. Because of his qualities the class teacher appoints him the class monitor. After getting the responsibility he consults the Headmaster about the problems of the class and tries to help solve them. He tries to render service if any student becomes sick. He tries to maintain discipline in the classroom if someone makes chaos. One of his classmates, Pritom, wants to become the class monitor. Since he can not become so, he breaks the rules of the class, shouts aloud in the absence of teachers. He goes out without permission and roams around. He often tells lies and does many unexpected things.

a. What do the gentile kings do to their subjects?

b. Why should the elders become like that of young?

c. Which kind of authority works in Pabitra? – Explain.

d. Do you think this kind of behavior of Pritom is reasonable in order to be obedient to the authority? Give reasons for your opinion.

Short Questions

1. What do you understand by freedom?
2. Why are obedience and freedom closely related?
3. What is authority?
4. Why do we need to be loyal to our authorities?
5. Why should we follow the obedience of Jesus?

Chapter Six

Trusted Friend

We have received many special gifts from God. Friends and friendship are among the best of all. Jesus said, "There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends". From the very words of Jesus we can understand the value of friendship and its significance. In the Old Testament God called Abraham a friend. Abraham too called God a friend. After Jesus came into this world and took on human form, He chose his disciples to be his companions, which signifies the greater meaning of choosing a good friend. A true friend is more precious than Gold and Jewels. Friendship is very important in our life. Thus, we need to know the deeper meaning of friendship. If we have a clear idea about friendship then our life will be better and more meaningful.

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- explain who is a true friend;
- evaluate the importance of true friendship;
- distinguish between a good friend and a bad friend;
- analyze the significance of a trustworthy friend and
- be encouraged to make true friends.

Friendship

Life is beautiful. Friendship makes life more beautiful. Friendship keeps loneliness away. One of the most beautiful, joyful and attractive words in this world is friendship. The word "friend" gives us a feeling of happiness. The word makes us remember someone whom I trust, upon whom I can rely, with whom I love to spend time, for whom I am ready to do anything, and I know he or she is also ready to do anything for me. I love my friend and I know that he or she loves me too. Friendship can be defined as a very close relationship between two persons. In this relationship there is an attitude of love, cordiality, caring, affection, well wishing, acceptance, cooperation, sacrifice. Deep love and intimacy between men is called friendship. Friend is the relative of soul. Friendship is a relationship of hearts, which is present between people even if there is no blood relationship.

Who is our true friend

We are the gift of our parents' love. Our relationship first grows with our parents, brothers, sisters and relatives. Then slowly we build up relationships with other people. As we grow, we begin to understand that we have a unique relationship with various people: children, youth or old persons, it true for everyone. From family to playground, roads, educational institution, office, social function anywhere we may find someone who is like me in nature and interests. Then slowly, when we get to know each other, we may become friends. Depending on different personalities, age, occupations, educational qualifications, geographical distance, all these may be factors for friendship, or even may not be a factor at all. It is very difficult to understand who will become whose good friend. Usually people make friends with their peers, classmates, colleagues, neighbors or relatives. Friendship is a relationship of hearts. In this modern world, there are many ways for communication and social networking. Using the facilities of the modern technologies like internet and face book people are making friends from all around the world. Some are being cheated too. Then who is a true friend? There are some qualities of a good friend. If someone has these qualities, then we realize that person is a good friend.

Love and Affection: We were born from love. Our birth was for to love human beings. We exchange our love and affection through friendship. For this reason Jesus said “I do not call you servants but I call you friends.” Love is the greatest power of friendship. If there is love we can accept a man and it does not matter what kind of man he is.

Sympathy: A true friend has sympathy for his friend. No matter what happens, he always stands by his friend and feels his sorrow. Sympathy for friend is one of the most important qualities of a true friend.

Well wisher: He is my true friend who always wishes me the best and wants me to prosper. A true friend never wishes harm or the downfall of his friend. A true friend at any condition wishes me the best.

Trust: Trust is the heart of friendship. Mutual trust and sincerity are the foundation, and on this foundation the other qualities of friendship flourish. A true friend is a like a special gift in life. Friendship is more precious than gold and jewels. We can share almost everything with our friends.

Sacrifice and Support: A true friend will make great sacrifice for the other. Jesus is the truest friend we could ever have. He loved us so much that he offered his life on the cross for our salvation. A friend always supports his friends. But we should remember that a true friend never supports his friend's wrong doings.

Helping mind and attitude of Sharing: A friend in need is a friend indeed. A true friend shares his friend's joys and sorrows. In any need he stretches his helping hand for his friend.

Acceptance: As human beings we all are unique. We all have different characteristics. With this uniqueness we become the other's friend. We accept this uniqueness of our friends. We acknowledge the beauty of our friendship and accept him/her as friend as he/she is. We feel comfort at this.

Freedom: Friendship does not create any border around the friends; rather friendship lets them grow in freedom. Thus freedom helps them to become closer and more trustworthy. So they can grow in freedom and help one another to become better human beings.

Task: Why do you think your close friend is a true friend? Write down his or her qualities.

Importance of True Friendship

We are friendly to many. But not all are close friends. He is my close friend whom I really trust. We may have a lot of friends in our lives, but very few are true friends. If i get one or two true friends in my entire life, then I am lucky. If we look at the life of Jesus, we can easily understand this. One of his own disciples, Judas, betrayed him. Even St.Peter denied him three times. Later he felt extremely sorry, repented and he was faithful to Jesus all his life. He received martyrdom for his Christian faith. Jesus Christ is the true friend of all. He loved us so much that he offered his life for us.

True Friendship: (Ben Sirach 6:5-17)

In the Old Testament we find the importance of a true friend.

Pleasant speech multiplies friends,
and a gracious tongue multiplies courtesies.
Let those who are friendly with you be many,
but let your advisers be one in a thousand.

When you gain friends,
gain them through testing, and do not trust them hastily.
For there are friends who are such when it suits them,
but they will not stand by you in time of trouble.
And there are friends who change into enemies,
and tell of the quarrel to your disgrace.
And there are friends who sit at your table,
but they will not stand by you in time of trouble.
When you are prosperous, they become your second self,
and lord it over your servants;
but if you are brought low,
they turn against you, and hide themselves from you.
Keep away from your enemies,
and be on guard with your friends.
Faithful friends are a sturdy shelter:
whoever finds one has found a treasure.
Faithful friends are beyond price;
no amount can balance their worth.
Faithful friends are life-saving medicine;
and those who fear the Lord will find them.
Those who fear the Lord direct their friendship aright,
for as they are, so are their neighbors also.

Essential truths about a true friend :

- makes a person's life meaningful
- helps a person grow
- is a blessing and lovable
- gets proper guidance from a true friend
- reliable and trustworthy
- is a life mirror, helps to discover inner self
- helps to uncover the mask that we wear, in order to be genuine
- is always there for his friend, no matter what happens

A reason why we all need a true friend in our life, is that a lonely life without a friend, is terrible, and it feels hopeless and meaningless.

Task: 1. How does your true friend help you?

Task: 2. If you want to be somebody's true friend, what kind of person do you need to be?

Good Friends and Bad Friends

There is a proverb in Bangla, (Iron floats in the water of bad company.) "Bad company corrupts good character." What seems to be impossible alone, with someone else becomes possible. Under normal circumstances iron cannot float in the water. But a boat or ship is made with Iron in such a design that it floats in water. It is true for friendship. When someone comes in touch with good friends, he may be transformed and become a good person. Likewise bad company corrupts good character. That is why we have to be very careful when we choose friends. We need to find out who will be a good friend. Read the following account of how friends can influence each other.

Rupen, Keya, Dutti, Sabrina, Aikka, Shammo and Akkash were students of class nine. They were classmates and good friends. They went school together, played together, studyed together and together did many things. Keya, Dutti and Sabrina helped each other with their studies. Rupen and Keya were very close friends. Rupen had some family problem. He spoke very freely with Keya and used to listen to her because he trusted Keya very much and could rely on her. They always tried their best to help each other. Akkash was very friendly with everyone except Rupen. He did not like Rupen at all. He used to criticize Rupen all the time, but Rupen never reacted. One day Akkash invited Rupen to go to a place with him. He took Rupen to a secret place and tried to tempt him to smoke weed.

Akkash told him, 'If you smoke weed you will forget all your sorrows'. Rupen did not accept this bad advice, and he refused to smoke weed. Akkash criticized Rupen and told him to keep quiet about this effort of his to tempt him to smoke weed. He said, 'Don't tell anyone'. After that incident, Akkash tried to avoid the others. Rupen came to know of another incident of Akkash giving bad advice, that Akkash had told Aikka and Shammo to steal money from their houses. But they did not act according to that bad advice. One day they heard that Akkash ran away from his house after stealing some money.

Let us know the characteristics of a good friend and a bad friend:

Good Friend	Bad Friend
Trustworthy	Cannot be trusted
Generous	Selfish
Well wisher	Opportunitist
Attentive listener	Does not listen to his friend
Mature	Immature
Sympathetic and helpful	Jealous
Unconditional Love	Self centered Love
Freedom of friendship	Conservative and competitive attitude
Respects the other' s attitudes	Thinks everybody should be like him
Good counselor	Put others down

Task: Write down the names of two of your good friends and their good qualities.

Life in the richness of Faith

In the history of mankind friendship is so important in the experience of trust. Friendship of people for one another is found in the earliest days. The relationship of people with God began with trust and a healthy friendship. Trust is a foundation of life together. Because of God's love He created mankind. He wanted that all people should always love him, depend on him and have faith in him. God is always honest towards his people, but many times the people forgot this and abandoned Him. Even then God remained ever faithful to them. He tried to make people understand that all should live in harmony and trust, and thus they can live happy lives. In the Holy Bible, we see many such incidents of the Christian faith.

1. In the book of I-Samuel chapter -20, we see the beautiful story of the friendship of David and Jonathan. When King Saul tried to kill David, Jonathan saved David from his father's wrath. He did it against his father's will. Such a beautiful story of friendship is this that it enriched both of their lives.

Task: Read 1- Samuel Chapter 20 and prepare a small skit.

2. In the Gospel of Matthew 11:28-30 Jesus said-

"Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls. Yes my yoke is easy and my burden light." Jesus invites us to be his friends. If we become his friends, he will fill our lives with tenderness, love, sympathy, kindness friendship, peace and care. If we become His friends we will be enriched.

3. John 13:23 "One of the disciples whom Jesus loved, was reclining next to him." Jesus loved all his disciples and trusted them. He loved their company. John was closer to Jesus than the other disciples. John knew that very well. That is why his Gospel is very meaningful where he presented Jesus the way he experienced him. It was his personal experience of trust and love. This is why they could become more intimate.

4. John 15:12-15: My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you."

5. In the Old Testament Ecclesiasticus or Ben Sirach 6:5-17 we get a clear description of friendship. "A true friend is more precious than gold and jewels." A true friend enriches our lives.

Who is the true friend of our lives? Who can give us a prosperous and a strong life? He is Jesus. He gave new life to St. John, St. Peter, Lazarus, Mary Magdalene and the Samarian woman. Jesus has all the qualities of a true friend. Our other friends may deceive us, but Jesus is ever faithful. He never leaves us when we are in trouble. Saints and all faithful people experienced His friendship in their lives. That is why they loved Jesus with all their heart and soul. For example: St. Paul, St. Teresa the Little Flower, Mother Teresa, St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, St. Catherine of Siena and St. Maria Goretti. Jesus is always with us. He loves us. He makes us free.

He understands our sorrows, joys and loneliness. Sometimes we don't understand that. Sometimes we don't consider Jesus as our good friend. We need to realize that He is our true friend and he laid down his life for us. Trust in Jesus will make our lives better and happier.

Task: How is your relationship with Jesus? What do you do to make a deeper relationship with Jesus? Discuss this in a Group and share with each other.

Sample Question

Multiple Choice Questions

1. What can we overcome by true friendship?

a. Loneliness b. Insufficiency in life
c. Helplessness d. Tension

2. Why does Jesus call us friends?

a. For good relationship b. For heartiness
c. For the society d. For love

Read the following Paragraph and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.

Shrea and Oishee are good friends. They study together. But when Oishee makes a brilliant result in the examinations, Shrea becomes very Jealous. Aishe realized that Shrea is jealous, but never misbehaves with Shrea for this and keeps the same friendly relationship with her.

3. What quality of friendship is lacking in Shrea?

a. Sympathy b. Well-wishing
c. Acceptance d. Affection

4. Relationship between Shrea and Oishee is of:

i. Hearty
ii. Co-operative
iii. Intimate

Which one is correct?

a. i & ii b. ii & iii
c. i & iii d. i, ii & iii

Creative Questions

1. Bimal was the only son of his wealthy parents. After finishing school, he got admitted into college. He made friends with some boys there. Since Bimal was very rich, the others made him their leader in order to take advantage of his money. One of his friends, Shishir, came to know about their intention, he told everything to Bimal and warned him not to mingle with them anymore. Later Shishir gave him company and helped him in his studies.

   a. With what has the true friend been compared?

   b. How would you define friendship?

   c. What kind of friend was Shishir to Bimal? Explain.

   d. Evaluate the outcome of Shishir and Bimal's friendship.

2. Tanoy, Shohel, Chancle, Protima, and Ovi were students of class seven. They studied together in school. Shohel was weak in studies, so he started avoiding his friends. He made friendship with some bad boys and became addicted to drugs. Ovi noticed the changes in Shohel., so he would go often to his house after school to help him. Ovi spent a lot of time and worked hard to bring him back to a normal life. He also helped him to understand his lessons and study well. He encouraged Shohel very much to live a good life.

   a. What is the purpose of human life?

   b. Explain the role of freedom in making friendship.

   c. What kind of friend Ovi is to Shohel? Describe.

   d. Shohel is influenced by good and bad friends. Evaluate on the basis of this chapter.

Short Questions

1. Who is our truest friend?
2. Write down the importance of true friendship.
3. Write 3 characteristics of a good friend and 3 of a bad friend.
4. In the Gospel of Matthew 12:28-30 what did Jesus say?
5. Find out some of the qualities of your friend.

Chapter Seven

Man and Woman

Who are we? We can give our identification, telling our name and family. But basically we are human beings created by God in His own image. Furthermore we are either woman or man, different from each other but equal, with equal value and rights. In our relations with each other it is our duty to have the attitude of love and respect to each and every person.

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- describe reasons of humans being created by God as woman and man;
- explain healthy relationship between woman and man;
- explain the equality of woman and man;
- analyze teaching on love according to Apostle Paul and
- have mutual respectful between woman and man.

God's Creation of Man and Woman

Almighty God created everything. He Himself is love, and He created all things out of His love, doing so with deep care. After creating all other things, He created human beings as are named in the Bible story in Genesis as Adam and Hoba (Eve). Through creation of human beings, the mysterious era of woman and man began.

History of human creation

After creating everything suitable on earth for human beings, God created the first man Adam in His own image and likeness, and kept him in the Garden of Eden. "Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner'. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh, and the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then Adam said in delight, 'This is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called woman, for out of man this one was taken'."

Man and Woman by God's plan

It was God's own plan and will to create human beings as woman and man. The two are distinct selves as woman and man, yet there is total equality as human beings. The fact is good that there are two sexes, woman and man, this happened by the will of God. The most important thing about the human beings is that they are created in the image of God. God is the beginning and He is the end. He was

always present, He is present now and He will be present forever. God created each human being with an immortal soul. The holy, just and loving God has given us the same holiness, justification and love. God created human beings as His highest creation, and appointed them to rule over all creation. Also, as there is complete unity and equality among the three Persons, God created human beings distinctly as woman and man, but to live in unity and equality.

Before creating human beings, all that He had created was not complete. Nothing else in creation could observe things as human beings can, because they were not created in the image of God. By creating human beings His creation was complete, to His total satisfaction, since God gave His own image and likeness to human beings.

In the beginning God created one man and one woman. This was a symbol of God's intention that a man will have one wife, and a woman will have one husband, both of them created in the image of God. Therefore they shall both inherit equal rights. God created human beings on "the sixth day" after creating all other creation. They have no power over this creation, only God creates. But human beings are created in the image of God, in which He gave them responsibility to look after His creation.

Task: Discuss in pairs about your feeling as God’s creation as man and woman.

Healthy relationship of Man and Woman

Relationship is the exchange of feelings. It is very common that one will share his or her feelings with another. Healthy relationship helps us to share feelings in a modest way. A good and healthy relationship helps us to go closer to one another.

We know that man is a social being. To live in a social atmosphere is his nature. Everyone hopes that there will be a healthy relationship with everyone in the society. But when this relationship is between two of opposite sex, many experience fear and anxiety. This is seen more in conservative societies. We should build a good mentality regarding such anxiety; we should understand that this arrangement in creation has come directly from God, so it is good.

Woman and man are created by the same God. We have shown before that woman and man have been created for one another. Though they are equal to one another as man and woman, they are distinct in physical and emotional stature. This distinction is apparent in their need, willingness, and judgment to build a healthy relationship between each other, woman and man. These things influence their behavior; therefore we must be aware of them.

In general a healthy relationship between woman and man requires that they respect one another, be fully aware of their common humanity, understand each others differences and needs, stand side by side as brother and sister, show a friendly attitude toward each other, control their physical pleasures, express sympathy or empathy and thus to come closer to each other by sharing feelings. If these attitudes between man and woman are lacking then there is no healthy relationship. Then the relationship seeks only physical pleasure. Human beings then use one another as material objects, only to fulfill their own desires. Therefore their humanity disappears or deteriorates, and an imbalanced sexual desire arises. Doubt, selfishness, break of family and disrespect for one another appear and morality declines, so that person, family, and society suffer. This is not at all acceptable in our lives as human beings.

Task: Now we shall fill up the blank table below. If necessary we may increase the rows of the table.

The contribution of Woman and Man to build a healthy relationship:	
The Contribution of Woman	***The Contribution of Man***

Relationship of Man and Woman in Family Life/Conjugal Life

Healthy conjugal life of a woman and a man means a relationship of love between husband and wife in their marital life. After creating man God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone'. Therefore, creating a woman similar to man He began a holy life of husband and wife. They come closer in the need of their hearts and offer life to each other. For the believers of Christ this is a holy sacrament giving grace from God. Taking the responsibility of love they involve themselves in the work of God. Therefore, this relationship is holy. It is the responsibility of a Christian husband and wife to keep this relationship honoured and holy.

Task: There can be a debate competition selecting good speakers from the class on the theme, “It is the utmost duty of man to build a healthy relationship between man and woman.” Those who will not perform can be the listeners, and at the same time can share their opinions at the end.

Equality of Man and Woman

We have learned before that God has created human beings in His own image and likeness as woman and man. Through this He has given self respect and honour to every person. In these matters there cannot be distinction between man and woman. They are equal in respect and honour. We realize that there are some kinds of differentiation in physical structure, mental reflection, thinking and emotions. This uniqueness has made the creation more beautiful, it has made human beings helpers and complimentary for one another.

We are all distinct and unique as human beings with our own characteristics. We are unique in reflection and thinking power. Whether being man or woman is one aspect of one's identity, but neither one is higher in position because of this. Likewise according to the love that God has for each of us there is no classification between intelligent or unintelligent, higher or lower classes, woman and man. By honour or respect we, man and woman are equal as human beings.

The Idea of Male and Female Inequality

Many people claim that since God created Eve from the rib of Adam so in the world women are inferior to men. Men who use such an argument claim authority, influence and power over women. This is not a just attitude. Another unjust situation is a male dominating social system. Due to this a particular class of men in our country always uses women for their needs and attempts to keep them under their control; they keep them in one corner of the house. In a developing country like Bangladesh, this holds back efforts to give women their proper respect and rights; day after day women are suppressed by a lot of rules and regulations.

Fill in the blanks: Discrimination: (If necessary you can increase the columns of the table).

Examples of discrimination between man and woman	**Means to prevent these discriminations**
1.	**1.**
2.	**2.**
3.	**3.**
4.	**4.**
5.	**5.**

Teaching of St. Paul about Love

The Lord Jesus Christ has come to this world in order to reveal and spread the love of God to all humankind. During His lifetime Jesus loved the poor and wealthy, high and low classes, intelligent and unintelligent people and brought them close to Him. He did not love only those who loved Him. He also loved His enemies, forgave them and stood by their side in time of their need. By loving others, He called us to love.

What is love?

St. Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, gave us a clear picture of love.

We can be big donors, a highly educated person, or we can speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but according to St. Paul if we do not have love, then we have nothing. That means we have no value if we do not love. St. Paul

describes qualities of love:

"If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so to be burned, but do not have love, I gain nothing" (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

According to St. Paul there cannot be impatience, rudeness, jealousy, boastfulness in love. He says:

"Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable of resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things" (1 Corinthians 13:4-7).

St. Paul speaks of three cardinal virtues. These virtues are faith, hope, and love. These are the cardinal virtues, because we have received these virtues or gifts from God according to our need. Love is the main virtue among these three. He says:

"Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. And faith, hope and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love" (1 Corinthians 13:8-10).

We can speak a lot about love. Many give their opinion in different ways. But it is not enough to speak about or describe love. The main thing about love is to feel it with the heart and express it in action. Love is pure. There should be no argument in it. But the love which has no argument, which brings us closer to one another, which thinks for others and wishes others well that is real love. Love makes human beings great.

Teaching of Jesus on the Conversion of Sinful Human Beings

A Sinful Woman Forgiven (Luke 7:36-50)

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to eat with him, and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house,

brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment. Now when the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would have known who and what sort of woman this is who is touching him, for she is a sinner." And Jesus answering said to him, "Simon, I have something to say to you." And he answered, "Say on Master."

"A certain moneylender had two debtors. One owed five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. When they could not pay, he cancelled the debt on both. Now which of them will love him more?" Simon answered, "The one, I suppose, for whom he cancelled the larger debt." And he said to him, "You have judged rightly." Then turning toward the woman he said to Simon, "Do you see this woman? I entered your house; you gave me no water for my feet, but she has wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You gave me no kiss, but from the time I came in she has not ceased to kiss me feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she has anointed my feet with ointment. Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven-for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little." And he said to her, "Your sins are forgiven " Then those who were at table with him began to say among [a] themselves, "Who is this, who even forgives sins?" And he said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

From the above quotation we come to know that everyone knew that the woman was a sinner. Though Jusus knew if she touched him, people would say ill of him but he did not say anything. The woman touched his feet, and he said to the woman, "Your sin has been forgiven!" Do you think Jesus was unnatural? Why did Jusus not treat her like others? What is my feeling toward this kind of people? Am I being proud of my good qualities and holiness? Which group do I belong to- Jesus or the Pharisees? Only those who are repentent are forgiven. We all can be forgiven by Jesus.

Task: Now discuss in groups, how we shall create a healthy relationship of love according to the teaching of Christ.

Sample Question

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Whom did God make with the rib of Adam?

a. Mary b. Jesus

c. Eve d. Cain and Abel

2. It is not good for man to be alone, because:

i. He needs a companion

ii. He needs help

iii. He needs to sacrifice

Which one is correct?

a. i b. i and ii

c. i & iii d. i, ii & iii

Read the following Paragraph and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.

Apurbo lives abroad. Often he talks to his wife Bithy over the phone. He loves his wife so much that he comes home from abroad to live for short times.

3. What is revealed through the conversation between Apurbo and his wife?

a. rude attitude b. conscious relationship

c. sharing of feelings d. sociality

4. What type of characteristic appears in Apurbo and his wife?

a. simplicity b. artistic efficiency

c. good relationship d. respect and honor

Creative Questions

1. Arun and Runa love each other. They feel for each other. They meet and talk every day. They talk about their future. They are having a very good love affair. Therefore, Arun wants Runa very closely for his deep love. Runa also has a deep love for Arun. Runa has grown up with the teaching of religion in her family. Therefore, she is able to make Arun understand about the holy relationship of love.

a. On which day did God create man?

b. Why did God create man in His own image?

c. What kind of relationship appears between Arun and Runa? Explain.

d. If Arun does not accept the religion and family teaching of Runa, what may happen to their relationship? Analyze.

2. Joly and Tuly were neighbors and friends. They go everywhere together.They are committed to each other and always tried to stand by each other in their need. Because Tuly's poor family could not afford to support her studies. Joly often supported her to continue her studies. One day when the two were out on the street, they were caught by hijackers. They forced Joly to give up her gold necklace. At the moment, without standing beside Joly, Tuly ran off to escape the danger.

a. How many theologeical virtues does St. Paul talk about?

b. Why is Love the greatest among faith, hope and love?

c. Which aspect of love has been revealed in the nature of Joly?

d. What will happen to Tuly if she does not change her attitude? Give reasons for your opinion.

Short Questions

1. Why did God create human beings as woman and man?
2. Why is it necessary to keep a healthy relationship between woman and man?
3. What does equality of woman and man mean?
4. What is the teaching of St. Paul about love?
6. Why it is necessary for woman and man to be respectful to each other?

Chapter Eight
Freedom and Vocation

God has sent us to the world with a special goal. God has a plan for the universe. We are part of the same universe, and He has a plan also for each ofus. What is it? Each must discover what that responsibility is for him or her. By learning about the vocations of various other people, talking with elders, praying and meditating we can try to discover our vocations in life and answer the call. Thus we will find happiness.

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- explain the significance of vocation;
- explain the meaning of God's call for us to be free;
- explain how I can achieve freedom by following my vocation in life;
- analyze the relationship between vocation and life;
- explain the commitment to my self vocation and
- be a free person who is listening to God's call.

Importance of my Life Vocation

Once a little girl asked her mother whether she would grow up to be happy and free. Her mother replied that future can not be seen. It is impossible to be certain about the future. But the more a person becomes aware about his vocation in life, the more he or she becomes free. To discover one's vocation is very important for everyone. Each person is given vocation which is unique for him or her and different from the vocations given to others. We have to discover that vocation and listen to that call. As a Christian our first call is to the vocation of freedom.

To gain a happy life a person needs a dream. If we have a hope and dream about the future we need to be responsible to move or to reach to that destination. Everyone has the responsibility to build his or her own future, and to live and act according to that plan or goal. Then the life of everybody can be happy and beautiful.

There are two kinds of ideas regarding future. Some people say that there is no future. They think that the present is the most important in life and want to experience the present with full strength. They give importance most on becoming happy now rather than looking forward to an uncertain and gloomy future. Some have hopes or dreams which are not attainable due to the reality of their circumstances. For an example, a bright student had a dream to become an engineer, but he had to work, leaving school because of his family's poverty. Now he works in a motor garage.

Then some think that if everything will happen only according to God's plan, then we don't have freedom to choose the future. What will happen in future in our life that will happen according to God's plan? What do all those ideas tell us? Do we have the freedom to discover our vocation?

Task: What is your idea on the future? Do you have future dream? Write in the paper and share with one another.

The Call to Be Free

To discover and choose our vocation is not the ultimate object of life. Our vocation is fully related with the areas and the conditions of life through which we are influenced.

For example, the father of Anil, who earns very little salary, wastes a large amount of his monthly income through drinking alcohol. Because of this he cannot provide for the family well, and the expense of Anil's study. Anil is a very bright student. He has a great desire to become a doctor. But because of the reality of the family, he had to discontinue school and find a job. After working a few years he continued both study and work together. Thus finishing his Masters he got a position and became manager in his Office. As a result he can manage the living expense of his mother and the study cost of his younger brother.

In this case, how much freedom did Anil have to choose the vocation of life? How did he fulfill his unfulfilled desire? Could he have chosen another way? What would have been the result then?

In fact, there is no ultimate limit or end for the exercise of man's freedom. Freedom is related with the history, surroundings, continuing reality, culture of the society and family, cultures, habits, development and the present situation.

What is Freedom?

According to Bangla etymology the word "Freedom" comes from two words, "Self and "belong". So freedom means that a person has control of his own decisions and actions. When a person or a country is able to control his or its own decisions and actions, then it is called a free man or a free country. On the other hand, if the person or a country is restricted from conducting itself according to its own choice, then that person or country is not free; and is enslaved to the control of others.

Freedom is a birth right of every human being; it is his fundamental need. It is a universal value which is decreed for all people in the whole world. This freedom is sought by persons of all ages from child to old. The baby with the mother wants to wave its hands and legs freely; when he grows day by day he wants to move and roll, walk and run from one place to another place; When his freedom is lost or disturbed, he becomes exited and cries. A married woman wants to live her conjugal life with husband and children. When it is disturbed by the father-in-law, mother-in-law or others, they build a new house in another place. Even when old parents realize that their freedom is restricted by their son or daughter-in-law, they might decide to stay separately from their children. Many old parents cannot accept their son' s and daughter-in-law's authority upon them.

Here below are some life stories about freedom and when a person is free. Life-

Story 1

When I was a student of class six, in the new class and environment I was very timid. I could not make decisions or do any work on my own initiative. After doing a task I expected that people would praise me. When I would not get appreciation I would be sad. One day the headmistress called me to meet her in her office.

I could not understand why she called me in. I thought, "Did I do anything wrong?" Did I hurt her or anybody by my behaviour in the school? I could not find an answer. So I was prepared mentally to get a scolding from her. What a wonder that after I entered full of fear into her office room, she was happy and praised me. She even gave a report about me to take to my parents. Wow! I felt very secure then. I could not believe it. Thanking her I left her office room. What a wonderful feeling I had! I wished to jump with joy! Now I am free from fear and worry. I am free.

Life-Story 2

I was a student of class seven. Once I became sick, and my condition was so bad that I had to stop going to school and could no longer play cricket with friends. Cricket was my favorite game. I had to follow the doctor's directions all the time. I became weak and could not walk well. As a result I also suffered mentally. Finally, by the grace of God, I started to be healed gradually. I remember that first day after my full healing I went to school, and I could play cricket with my friends. That day I enjoy a lot. I was free from bodie sickness! I was free from the rules and regulation of the doctor! I was free!

Vocation and human Life: One of the vocations of human is to become like God the Creator. Because God created every human being according to His own image and likeness (Gen. 1 :26). Therefore man's first and highest vocation is to be the image or portrait of God and to be like Him who is honoured very much. As the Creator is beautiful, pure, holy, loving and peaceful, the vocation of every human being is to try to be like that, and to grow and to live in such a way with dignity that reflects that gift of God.

The New Testament of the Holy Bible reminds people of their calling. The Gospel of the Mathew records the words of Jesus in which He says, "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Jesus reminds us that becoming like God is the greatest call of every human's life. Jesus proclaimed for man to become as God and maintain the image of His divinity through His three mission works of preaching, teaching and healing.

The universal poet Rabindranath Tagore wrote about that great call of life in his song,:

"Wonderful your word
That brings freedom to my body and heart"

He also wrote that to have freedom, salvation and perfection for all people we have to portray the full image of our creator bodily, mentally and spiritually. Human beings, no matter which nation, religion or class they belong to, are all called to be free. The same call applies to us all, since ours is the same Creator, and He is the greatest, true, beautiful, loving and peaceful God.

Our loving God never pressures anyone to accept that call. Instead He invites us so that we may freely and willingly say yes to that divine call. Because the success and fulfillment of human life depend on the response to this divine call the birth and life of a person is meaningless and fertile if he/she does not respond to this call and does not want to be like God.

Listen to the Call

God created every human being giving him the gift of freedom. Because God Himself is free, He belongs to no one else. He created every one giving His own image and similarity. In the Scripture Book of Genesis first chapter, verse 26, God says: "Come, let us create man in the image and likeness of God." So we are created free human beings according to the great plan of God.
There is the real joy and expression of humanity in freedom. Freedom inspires and forms human beings for expressing themselves. It makes it possible for the human personality to gain greatness and glory. But freedom also makes it possible for humans to fall into a life of indiscipline and meaninglessness. The blooming of beauty of life is hindered and damaged. What is true for an individual person is also true for an institution, society or nation.

Man has deep hunger and expectation for freedom, because no one wants to live without it. People of all ages, babies to aged persons, all want freedom. When their freedom of living is challenged, restricted or denied, people struggle or fight to regain it. This can happen between husband and wife, parents and children, authorities and employees, even between nations.

There is a great joy in experiencing freedom. Man wants to live in freedom and feel it with the fullness of life. This joy of freedom makes him cheerful and inspires to create something beautiful. Freedom encourages him to live wonderfully, and this brings praise and glory into his life, gives him gifts of satisfaction and respect. But the absence of freedom destroys the zeal and will to work, it reduces the spirit and liveliness of life, hinders spontaneity and makes life unhappy and dry.

Freedom provides an atmosphere and incentive for responsibility. The person who is responsible for his every works, writings and words becomes more thoughtful. He has to judge how helpful or harmful for self and others is his work, speech and writing. Therefore freedom is related with others. A truly free person is always dedicated to help others. He keeps away those things which are harmful to do, to say or to write from his thought and activity.

Freedom is always beautiful and holy. God keeps its holiness, keeping Himself free and independent. God is always helpful; He always helps others. Any kind of harmful acts to anyone else destroys the beauty and holiness of freedom, because a basic teaching of freedom is to protect the welfare of self and others. Doing anything ugly and harmful can never be freedom. And that right is not given to anyone.

Real freedom provides an atmosphere for creativeness. It is like a river or stream which flows in a zigzag direction. There is beauty of nature in the flowing of such a river or stream. As the river or stream makes more beautiful and plentiful the land where it flows, in the same way freedom opens opportunities for creativeness in man. When freedom is restricted, creativeness is harmed, and the flowering of the human personality is disturbed. Then the life of man becomes like that of a slave.

Task: Some important pictures should be exhibited in the class regarding listening to the call of God. The meaning of a call or vocation will be explained, and what it means to remain open-minded, free, placing no obstacles to trying to understand the call of God. From the discussion with the class prepare a list of characteristics of being a person of real freedom.

Freedom and Commitment

Independence or Freedom can appear in various ways as related with other subjects. Some aspect of independent and free person are considered below.

1. Freedom and My Personality

It comes from the inner part of the heart to become a free and independent person. I want to grow as I am; I want to grow in my own name and identity. I want to grow with my likes and dislikes, tastes, strengths and ability. I do not want to get lost in a crowd of many people. I want to be established in my identity, selfness and in my own self-respect. I want to be accepted as I am, not what others want me to be.

2. Freedom and Love

There is a basic relationship between freedom and love. I have freedom to choose whom I wish to mingle with or love. I might feel attraction for someone in my heart and I try to build friendship with him or her. I do not build a relationship with those who do not attract me, through i love them as human beings and fellow children of god . On the other hand, those whom I love intimately, those who love me dearly, their closeness gives me joy, I treasure their presence and strong feeling for me and choose to spend as much time with them as I can give. I consider their opinion about me seriously.

3. Freedom and Responsibility

Freedom does not mean that I do whatever I wish whenever I wish to do so. Freedom requires conformity with customs, rules and regulations. For example, if a policeman says, "Walk on the footpath", "Cross the road by over bridge" or "Obey the traffic signals", these are ordinary rules we must follow. There are many more rules, regulations, customs and procedures in the family, society and in the church. For example, "Do this", "Do that". I have to follow them to have discipline and avoid accidents or conflicts. Irresponsible freedom causes chaos. Without responsibility freedom is valueless.

4. Freedom is free from evil

Injustice and crime go on uncontrollably everywhere in Bangladesh. There is an abundance of stealing, robbery, fighting, bribes, dowry, torturing women and children, family quarrels and marriage separation. This affects the country, socety, and is present even in myself. Sometimes I hurt others by using bad words, harsh speech, getting angry, stealing, telling lies, disobeying my parents and elders and doing other bad things. I have to ask myself how I can free myself from the slavery of all those faults and become a truly free person.

5. The Source of Freedom and Independence is God

Seeing so much evil and violence in the country and the world the situation seems to be hopeless. I also get frustrated in my unsuccessful efforts to overcome my own evils. How can I improve? Who will help to free me? I firmly believe that it is only God Who can save me from all kinds of evils. So I depend on Him, He is my power and source of freedom. He has come as Jesus to save me and all human beings from sin and all evils and to make us free.

6. Freedom and Jesus Christ

Jesus came into this world to show us how to become free and to direct our lives onto the road to God. The person who lives in His truth becomes a man of freedom. So Jesus says: "If you obey my word, you are truly my disciples; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free." (John: 8:31-32). Yes, as a Christian I want to live in the truth of Jesus and be a man of freedom, as He is. The path of truth, which is shown by Him, is the real way of freedom and independence.

Many have died for freedom or independence. Jesus Himself died saving men from evil. Many great men died in the struggle for gaining freedom or independence. To make the people, society and state free from evil and injustice, the great leader of India Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King of America and many others sacrificed their lives. To gain freedom from evil, we must sacrifice many things.

Task: Write a life history of a person who is living his life in real freedom and listening to the call of God.

Jusus gave the responsibility to Saint Peter to look after His sheep. Reading the lines of John 21: 15-17 try to understand the meaning of it.

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of John, do you love me more than others do?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Feed my lambs." He said to him a second time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." He said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of John, do you love me?" Peter was grived because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" and he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep."

Underline the sentence: Do you love me? Now close your eyes. Imagine that, Jusus is coming to you and asking the same question to you: Do you love me? What will you answer?

Jesus said to Peter, "Look after my sheep." If Jusus gives you the same responsibility, would you do that? Why is Jusus calling you?

Task: Divide into small groups and share what Jusus asked you to do.

Sample Question

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Etymologically from how many words do the word ‘ freedom’ come?

a. two b. three

c. four d. five

2. Absence of freedom -

a. destroys the zeal of work

b. invades the speed of life

c. makes life boring

Read the following Paragraph and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.

The goal of Raju is to become a doctor after completing his study. He will dedicate himself to serve the people. Therefore he is very attentive in his study. He studies every day so that he may get good result and prepare well to become a competent doctor.

3. For what reason is Raju so attentive in his study?

a. obedience
b. responsibility
c. vocation of life
d. faithfulness

4. The result of this habit of Raju may be to

a. get established in life
b. fulfill his dream for the future
c. achieve a happy and beautiful life

Which one is correct?

a. i
b. i & ii
c. ii & iii
d. i, ii & iii

Creative Questions

1. The teacher gave responsibility to Milon and Rubel, instructing them to control the discipline of the classroom, clean the classroom, call in the teachers, do class tasks, collect papers of the home task and return them. Milon very carefully does these works given to him. But Rubel, even though is bright, does not do his duties properly and punctually.

a. What is man's greatest hunger and demand?
b. How is freedom polluted?
c. Which way does Milon achieve freedom in his response to the teacher's instructions?

2. Both father and mother of Mita are employees. Mita is the elder among her brother and herself. She loves her younger brother very much. She is always taking care her brother. She feeds him timely, makes him go to sleep and helps him to study. They have good relationship with one another.
   a. What has deep relationship to do with freedom?
   b. What do you understand about irresponsible freedom in an undisciplined life?
   c. Which characteristic of achieving freedom is expressed in Mita?
   d. Give your opinion about Mita, whether her qualities are enough or not.

Short Questions

1. What do you understand by vocation or call of life?
2. Explain the importance of a vocation of life.
3. Explain about achieving freedom by responding to the call of life.
4. What is the relationship between vocation and life?
5. How does a man become free by listening to the call of God?

Chapter Nine
In Front of the Father

Many youth today think; "What is the benefit of prayer? Praying is a waste of time." During prayer we often recite something again and again. Some youth do not like this, and are not interested to pray and go to church. Some even ask, "Does God really Exit? Is there any heaven and hell?" Yuri Gagarin was the first person to travel around the earth in a satellite. After he completed that historic journey, he thought that science can do everything without the influence of God, and even said "There is no God". Many youth try to avoid going for prayer in the church, instead they like to gossip with friends and love to travel here and there. But if they think deeply they must ask; "Where is the source of life?" "Who created us?" "Where will we go?" "Where will we find our Creator?" "How will we see our Creator God?" And we achieve God in prayer. Faithful prayer brings us closer to God and make us one with god

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- know what prayer is;
- recognize the presence of God in prayer;
- learn how to hear God's voice in prayer;
- learn a methods of prayer and
- be inspired to do regular prayer.

What is prayer?

The simplest meaning of prayer is asking, requesting, entreating, begging, applying or supplication. And that is the meaning of one type of prayer to God, asking, begging or even demanding something from Him. For our daily needs, and especially in time of great need, we turn to Him and ask for His blessing and favor. But there are other aspects of prayer and other types of prayer which are much greater than simply requesting favors from Him. If we only ask, request or beg from Him then we are like beggars who have no relationship with the person he begs from. A beggar begs from others in order to survive. Whenever he gets he becomes happy, and when he does not get he is disappointed. If our relationship with God is that of being beggars, then God gain no honor or glory from us. But in true prayer we not only ask, but we give too.

The main meaning of prayer is having and building a good relationship with God. He is present before us and we are present befor Him. God is with us in our daily lives. On the other hand, prayer is living in God, staying in His presences or feeling his presence in our lives. It is conversation, talking and listening, expressing our love for one another. The best word to describe it is intimacy with Him. We are dear children of God and not beggars. Through prayer we form and deepen an intimate relationship with God. We praise Him, thank Him and express our gratitude to Him. We can also tell Him our needs, our concerns, and leave it up to His mercy as to what He does in return

Importance of prayer

Some may ask, what is the benefit of prayer? They can also ask; what is the benefit of food? Or why do people eat? The answer to these two questions is the same; we eat in order to survive, without the energy we get from food our body cannot live, so that is why we eat. We pray in order to survive, without the energy we get from God our spirit cannot survive, so that is why we pray.

People can eat different kinds of food according to various needs of their human bodies. But human life is not only confined to the body, there are also mind, heart and soul. The food we eat is required to keep the body alive and healthy, but that food does not give life to the mind, heart and soul. Many people who get plenty of food are still unhappy, have no smile on their faces, feel tension, lack peace and hope. Some of them steal, take bribes, and get involved in other evil works. Man can not live by food alone. only food does not give happiness.

God is our real food who gives life to our body, mind and soul. Jesus said "Man does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matthew: 4:4). God created us in His image and likeness. He wants to share with us. Through our prayers we enter into God's midst and allow God to come in our midst.

Without prayer no one is able to live spiritually. Prayer is a source of strength, a powerhouse. Faithful prayer unites us with God's life. A man is dead without prayer. Those who do not believe in God do not call Him, do not pray to Him, sooner or later they will be unhappy and frustrated. By living immorally they bring disgrace to their lives. On the other hand prayer makes human life beautiful and holy. A prayerful life brings closeness to God, makes a man good and holy, a saint.

Prayer is a presence of the living God

Prayer brings consciousness about the presence of God. We are present in front of God, and God is always present in our midst even though we do not feel God's presence in us. The presence of God with me is like breathing in and out. We cannot live without oxygen. We continually breathe in oxygen. But we are not always aware of it; rather we unconsciously take it in.

Even though we are not always aware of its presence, still we know that without inhaling oxygen we will die within a few minutes. When fishes are out of water, they want to jump back into the water to stay alive. But when they were in the water, they did not realize the importance or necessity of water.

In the same way we are living in an atmosphere of divine grace. We are alive because of divine grace. But we are not always aware of its presence. When we enter into prayer and sit in silence then we realize God's loving presence within us. God is our infinite life-sea. All of us, the poor, rich, sinners, pious, all are alive by the Divine Grace. His grace is the water that gives us life. Fishes cannot live out of water similarly we cannot live without God. Through prayer we feel the

presence of God, come to Him and feel His love, peace and holiness. The person who feels His presence more in prayer and medication, he feels His holiness, love, peace and joy.

We hear God's voice through prayer

In 1948, Mother Teresa was traveling by train to Darjeeling, in the Himalaya Mountains in Northern India. While traveling she was praying, and she heard a voice telling her,"Give up everything". She heard this voice several times, Yes this was God's voice. God instructed her to give up the Loreto congregation, and to go where the journey is unknown. His call is like that to Abraham, who gave up his own country, in order to go to settle to a completely new country, to start a new nation. Such a journey, a spiritual journey, was taken by Abraham and Mother Teresa, as well as by so many people in history who heard the voice of God and responded.

One day St. Peter went up on the roof to pray. While he was praying he saw a strange vision. He saw the heaven opened and something like a large sheet coming down, being lowered to the ground by its four comers. In it were all kinds of four footed creatures and reptiles and birds of the air. Then he heard a voice saying, "Get up Peter; kill and eat" (Acts 10: 10-16). Jews are not allowed to eat such things. But God told him to do it, God's voice and command were clear. In this God revealed that Jesus is not only for the Jews, but also for those whom Jesus considered to be unclean. Jesus came for people of all races and backgrounds, for all humans. Jesus is the Savior for all; not only for the Jews.

How God speaks to me:

We hear God’s message in various ways:

1. We hear God’s voice while sitting in meditation – prayer in His presence.
2. We hear God’s voice while reading the Gospel.
3. We hear God’s voice when my conscience advises me to remain honest.
4. God speaks to us by elders and honest friends. Whenever we listen to their suggestions and words we hear God’s voice.

5. God speaks in various events. For example, if anybody has an accident, if the house of a family burns down, for these people I feel sympathy and love, and I want to do something to help them. This is God's voice suggesting to me.
6. God speaks to us through Church authorities; by Pope, Bishop, Priest, catechist, brothers and sisters. God speaks specially when interpreting or explaining words of Jesus and giving good advice. Jesus says, he who has ears, let him hear; this means God continually speaks to us. If we wish to hear God's message, we must listen.

Kinds of Prayer

There are many kinds of prayer. We can say different kinds of prayer according to the place, time and situation.

1. Prayer of admiration: We make a prayer after having deep meditation on God's creation and His greatness. In the first part of the Lord's Prayer Jesus praises His Father for his greatness and love. There are many prayers of praise of God in the Psalms of the Holy Bible, we read Psalms 100,111, 113, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149,450.

(An appropriate hymn of praise can be sung)

2. Prayer of gratitude and thanksgiving: We have the infinite love of God. We express our heartfelt gratitude and thanksgiving prayer to God for His grace and blessings. We thank and extend our gratitude for healing us from sickness, for saving us from the danger, for making it possible to pass exams for getting good jobs.

There are many prayers of gratitude and thanks giving to God in the Psalm of the Holy Bible. We read Psalm 138.

I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart; before the angels I sing your praise;

I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness; for you have exalted your name and your word above everything.

On the day I called, you answered me; you increased my strength of soul.

All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O LORD, for they have heard the words of your mouth. They shall sing of the ways of the LORD, for great is the glory of the LORD.

For though the LORD is high, he regards the lowly; but the haughty He perceives from far away.

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies you stretch our hand, and your right hand delivers me.

The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.

3. Prayer of asking or petition: There are no limits to prayers of petition. We ask for everything that is important to us for our concern for others. We humbly express our requests to God, to overcome sickness, save us from the danger, get successful results, a good job, good health, and a bright future. In second part of the Lord's Prayer Jesus himself taught us to ask God for our daily needs.

Some people ask why we request God for what we need, since He already knows everything that we need. Of course He knows all that we need. But our prayer, our humble asking, is an expression of our faith in His power and infinite goodness. Jesus himself says; "Ask and it will be given to you; search, and you will find; knock and the door will be opened for you. For everyone who asks receives, and everyone who searches finds, and for everyone who knocks, will have the door opened (Matthew: 7:7-8)

4. Prayer of repentance: We are weak human beings. So we make mistakes; consciously or unconsciously, willingly or unwillingly. We fail to maintain always our loving relationship with God and man. Hence for our many mistakes we repent or express our regret. An ideal prayer of repentance is found in Psalm 51 in the Holy Bible. We read it all together;

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love;

According to your abundant mercy

Blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.

Against you, you alone, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, that you might be justified when you speak and blameless when you pass judgement.

You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities.

Let us meditate together

Prayer is our inner food and drink which meet up our appetite and thirst. Prayer brings us peace and Joy. All the peace and joy come from God. Prayer helps us to take us close to God. We see His face and hear the voice of God through prayer.

Task: Let us sit for silent meditation for five minutes and feel the presence of God.

Sample Question

Multiple choice questions

1. Which psalm tells about repentance?

a. psalm - 51 b. psalm - 138
c. psalm -148 d. psalm - 150

2. Why is prayer an inner food?

i. to quench life ‘s appetite and thirst.
ii. to bring peace
iii. to make a joyful heart.

Which one is correct?

a. i & ii b. ii & iii
c. i & iii, d. i, ii & iii.

Read the following Paragraph and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.

Everyday a beggar begs money from Anal. He told the beggar; instead of begging, pray to God and do some work. Do that and you will see that your mind will be very good and you will have a happy life. So the beggar calls God everyday and does his work. Somehow he found peace in his mind.

3. What importance of life did the beggar realize?

a. Happiness b. Wealth
c. Honor d. Prayer

4. Because of his own work the beggar will receive:

a. Comfortable life b. Holy life
c. Luxurious life

Which one is correct?

a. i & ii b. ii & iii
c. i & iii d. i, ii & iii

Creative Questions

1.

Scene 1

Anna got A+ in SSC exam. All members of the family of Anna were happy. They organized thanksgiving prayer service. They were so happy that they invited all the poor people to a meal. Being united with the family members of Anna all the people invited began to praise God for Anna's success in exam.

Scene 2

Without telling anybody Mousumi took away a pen from one of her classmates' bag. The class teacher came to know about it. The teacher could not identify the main culprit. So he punished all the students. Mousumi remained quiet. She felt sorry for all but could not admit the truth. She continued to feel guilty and begged pardon from God.

a. Mother Teresa was member of which religious order first?

b. Why do we pray?

c. Mousumi's prayer is similar to which prayer of your text book? Explain.

d. Compare and contrast the prayers of Anna and Mousumi.

2.

Friend 1: How are your studies going on?

Friend 2: Somewhat good. I hope to do better in my next exam.

Friend 1: OK my friend, how do you remember all that you study? I always forget the things I study.

Friend 2: In the beginning of my studies I always pray to God and read a chapter from the Holy Bible. Then I begin my studies.

Friend 1: Is that true! I have never prayed before my studies. I just go to my study table and start my studies.

Friend 2: Friend, you can follow my process. Pray and read from the Bible everyday before your studies. You will see, you will be more attentive and you will be able to remember the things that you study. If you do so, you will remember during exam all and will be able to write them well.

a. Who saw strange scenery during prayer on the roof?
b. What is the fruit of faithful prayer?
c. On whose power is the second friend dependent? on the lesson.
d. Compare and contrast the attitudes of the two friends.

Short Questions

1. How do we hear voice of God during prayer?
2. Prayer is to live in the presence of God. Define.
3. What do you understand by prayer of admiration?
4. Why is prayer important in our life?
5. How does God speak to us?

Chapter Ten

Healing the Sick World

Everybody in this world sometime becomes sick. Nobody expects sickness, yet it comes to all. Sickness can make our lives sometimes troublesome, sometimes very difficult, or sometimes it creates serious problems, even death. It spoils our happiness, peace and control of our minds. It results in unhappiness, annoyance, impatience, friendless and loneliness. Prolonged serious sickness creates deep frustration and disappointment. It disturbs our concentration and causes desperation. Therefore, all persons want healing;v they want liberation from sadness and desperation caused by sickness. They want healthy, happy, joyful and peaceful lives.

It is not only human beings that get sick, also the earth and its environment get sick or polluted; all are affected; animals, the atmosphere, air, weather, rivers, oceans, all nature. This sickness is not only physical; human beings together with the entire world suffer internally from moral, social, economic, and environmental sickness. The internal sickness is more distressing than physical sickness. When human beings are internally sick, the earth along with them becomes sick. The world needs healing as human beings do. Human beings need healing for a peaceful and joyful life; in the same way, a healthy world is essential for a beautiful and peaceful world.

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- explain the notion of sin;
- describe the brokenness of this earth;
- describe the healing power of Jesus Christ;
- describe the importance of the sacrament of reconciliation;
- be inspired to avoid sins and
- be motivated for the sacrament of reconciliation.

Sin

Sin is the downfall or destruction of all that is good and beautiful, of the spiritual, ethical, social, economic, environmental and cultural values of humans of the world and its synonymes are badness or sickness. God is the absolute Beauty. He has created the world and everything excellently. But sin stained both humans and the whole world and everything of the beautiful world was defiled. The beautiful and holy world which was created by God becomes a sick and defiled broken-world because of the sins of human beings.

Task: Share in small groups, some examples of the sick and disintederted world

What is Sin or Evil?

Many people think of sin only as breaking or disregarding rules and regulations prescribed by religions. The Jews had a list of 613 laws in the Book of Leviticus, and considered it sin to break any of these laws. Many Christians have this same legalistic idea of sin, and want to guide their lives mainly by trying to obey the Ten Commandments given to Moses by God. Seven of these Commandments tell us what NOT to do: 'do not murder;' 'do not steal;' do not tell lies;' etc. This legalistic type of morality considers sin as doing something bad or wrong, breaking the law.

Jesus gave only two commandments. He made POSITIVE what was presented negatively in the Old Testament. Jesus said: "The most important one is this,' ... Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' The second most important commandment is this: "Love your neighbor as you love yourself' (Mark 12:30-31; see also Matthew 22:37-39; Luke 10:25-28).

Therefore according to the law of Jesus sin or vice is not to keep the relationship of love with God and others or to destroy it or break it. According to the teaching of the Old Testament sin is to do bad work, not to love someone, or to break the love relationship. On the other hand, sin or vice is not to do good work. Here Jesus went beyond the Old Testament and gave a new idea and teaching about sin or vice.

For example, according to the Old Testament teaching, the priest and the Levite in the Good Samaritan story did not commit any sin; rather they fulfilled their religious duties. They passed the injured man and continued down the road. They probably had religious duties to perform someplace and would consider it sinful to neglect them. But Jesus explained clearly that it would be sinful to neglect that person who greatly needed assistance. What the Samaritan man did for the

injured man, as Jesus proclaimed, "That you did for Me. "Matthew 25:31-46. According to the teaching of Jesus sin is not to do the work of love and not to love others. What the Samaritan man did is a real virtuous deed. He nursed the injured man with great love.

According to the Gospal of Matthew (25:31-46) to love others especially the insignificant and neglected people is a deed of virtue. On the other hand, to refuse to love or to neglect others is sin-which gives pain to God.

In the Gospal of Luke 15:11-32 Jesus gave a clear conception about sin. To refuse to love anybody or to refuse to accept anybody is called sin what the elder son did. He did not want to love his repented brother and even he did not want to accept him as his own brother. The renowned theologian of South India, D. S. Amalorpavadas taught that: "Sin is weakening or rupture of relationship. It is a refusal of God and others. It is selfishness, 'self-fullness', unwillingness to give, withdrawal of self. According to a famous theologian Bernard Haring "Sin is also alienation from oneself; loss of self-respect, it spells disintegration, frustration and disturbance in one's relationship with others. At the time of birth people were given the inner quality to create good relationship with God, neighbour and the world and unite with them." (Bernard Haring, The Entry of Sin, p.59). According to Hearing, sin is to refuse relating with others, or to show no interest to make relationship with others

Consequences of Sin

In the third chapter of the Book of Genesis we find that Adam and Eve were punished and were driven out from the Garden of Eden because they became disobedient to God's command and committed sin against Him. During the time of Noah people became crooked and engaged themselves in sinful acts; so God punished them; He did not rescue them from the great flood (Genesis ch.7). Again, we find in the Second Book of the Kings that Israelites the chosen people of God were defeated by their enemies when they rejected God and worshiped pagan gods. We can cite many examples from the Holy Bible in which we can find that people were punished by God because of their sins.

A War-Stricken Bangladesh

A foreign volunteer came to Bangladesh with a group of students to offer volunteer service to the people. The group came to a village tormented by war. They saw broken and burned buildings, houses, hospitals, broken roads, the whole village and the fields seemed to be empty, there were hardly any people. They also saw many wounded people, widowed women, and unmarried mothers, orphan children without parents, without either father or mother. There was a clear sign of holocaust of humans everywhere in the country. There were sadness, pain, suffering, deprivation, poverty, all created by hatred, anger and lust of some people.

This volunteer-worker, some students and some workers of volunteer agencies stood beside these suffering people. They went from house to house to see practically what happened and what they could do. They started making new houses for those whose houses were burned in the war; opened temporary clinics to care for the wounded people; and dug tube wells for the villagers. They started schools for children; they also provided help to the farmers.

Gradually, there was a change in the whole village. Hope was arising amidst hopelessness and sufferings. The clear sign of changes became more visible. People were getting healthy; they were more decent in their dress, and they felt interested in education. Consequently, many children started going to school with nice dress and school-kits. A smile was visible in every face in the village; their minds and hearts were filled with a new spirit.

The Wounded World

We can see similar pictures throughout the world:

- rapid growth of population and population-explosion
- 80% of the world population are poor
- millions of people go hungry without any food, or with very little food
- hundreds and thousands of people are in prisons
- increase of injustice and exploitation
- huge gap and discrimination between the rich and the poor
- domination of the rich nations over the poor nations
- misleading and indoctrinating influence and effects of mass media

- lucrative arms business of the rich and powerful nations
- increase of corruption everywhere
- selfish political games
- environmental pollution
- the endangered earth

We can see that evils have encompassed us in our individual life, community life, social life and global life. The individuals, society, state, and the world, none of them are free from the influence of evils. How can we be liberated from these evils or sins and live a sound and healthy life? We have to know what sin and evil are, why evil exists, and where it comes from or how it is born.

Sinful Picture of the World

War means sin. War begins because of the sins of one or another. Many human beings and animals die in war; many homes, goods, wealth, institutions, roads, bridges and trees are destroyed. War causes economic depression, famine and many social problems. One and a half crore people died only in the Second World War. Because of the atom bomb blasts by the USA thousands of people were killed in Japan's Hiroshima and Nagasaki, numerous were crippled and many were affected by poisonous radiation from the bombs.

Besides, because of some people's unbridled greed for wealth billions of people are losing their property; unemployment is increasing; numerous people are living an inhuman condition in the slums and footpaths; the number of poor people is increasing dreadfully. Poverty is forcing hundreds of thousands of women and children to become prostitutes. Millions of people are becoming victims of the powerful and rich people's persecution. Because of immoral propaganda of the media and media culture, immoral lives as illegal sexual relationships, separation in the family, illegitimate children, helpless and abandoned old parents, abortion, human trafficking, etc. are increasing. Man's abuse of nature is increasing. This is causing floods, landslides, death of rivers, poisoning of river and sea waters, extinction of many kinds of animals and plants; green lands are turning into deserts. All this is becoming severe.

Jesus Christ the Healer

A guilty feeling rises in us when we commit any sin. This feeling must arise in a healthy conscience. But he who has stifled his conscience will not have such feelings of guilt or remorse, even if he or she commits hundreds of sins. Our life's ultimate goal is union with God. Because of sin man has deviated from his desired goal and takes himself away from love of God. At the same time he separates himself from his own heart, from others and from all creation.

Our great God never sends weak sinners away from Him. The Holy Bible teaches us that the compassionate and loving God Himself extends His hand to rescue the weak sinners. When after committing sin Adam and Eve took distance from God and hid themselves, then God Himself looked for them. He promised them that He would send a Savior to save them from their captive life. God sent His son Jesus as that promised Savior. Jesus Christ the Savior suffered and then died on the cross. Thus he exterminated the power of sin; he brought fallen man to God (Ephesians 2:16). St. John mentions in the beginning of his Gospel that, Jesus comes to man's darkness of sin in order to illumine his life. The light shines in the darkness of sin so that whoever believes in him may not be deprived, rather will receive eternal life.

Jesus is the bridge between God and man. He has come to this world to reconcile man with God, to rescue man from his broken and poor condition and heal him and thus unite the whole human race and the whole of creation with God. In His public preaching life Jesus preached, taught and healed. In these He manifested His great love and boundless kindness to the poor and the sinners. Jesus Christ Himself has fought against all evils and through the power of His death on the cross He defeated the power of sin. By healing the sick Jesus revealed that He wants to heal man's body, mind and soul so that man can become God the Father's children. Sickness makes man weak and slowly brings death to him. God the Father sent His Son Jesus so that He makes man free from all slavery to sinfulness and gives him fullness of life. Jesus says, "I have come in order that you might have life-life in all its fullness" (John 10:10).

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

In Bangla the word “repair” means mending or rectify. For this reason in all the churches sacraments are available to heal up from all kinds of sickness or evils of body, mind and soul. Jesus has shared His power to reconcile and power to heal with His apostles (LUKE 9:1-2, 6). He has been distributing His salvatory and healing works through the sacraments of the churches.

We receive forgiveness of our sins through repentance and the sacrament of confession. We receive healing through the sacrament of anointing of the sick. Through the Eucharist Jesus has given us Himself as the food of eternal life, so that we can live a healthy life in body, mind and spirit and remain vigorous. Through the Eucharist and the Church that He has founded, He has given His word, body and blood as food for the hungry and thirsty man to satiate his hunger and thirst and give him eternal life.

Sample Question

Multiple Choice Questions

1 What of human life does sickness destroy?

a. Loneliness b. Single-mindedness

c. Sharing d. Heartiness

2. Man separates himself from all creation:

i. Because of sin

ii. Because of weakness

iii. Because of violence

Which one is correct?

a. i b. ii

c. i & ii d. i & iii

Read the following Paragraph and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.

While playing together Jim and Jerry found a wrist watch. Jim quickly put the watch in his pocket. Jerry said, 'It is not good to take someone else's thing. You better leave it.'

3. Jerry is asking Jim to keep away from what kind of sin?

a. Stealing b. Greed
c. Envy d. Telling lies

4. The ruin that is taking place because of Jim's sin is:

a. Physical b. Social
c. Moral c. Economic

Creative Questions

1.Simon was a son of very poor parents. He had nothing but the house left behind by his parents. He borrowed money in order to cultivate the land of his neighboring landlord Mr. Ranjan. This cunning landlord took Simon's fingerprint on a blank paper, as he was not educated. Thus he lost even what he owned, the house. Simon could not understand it. One day the landlord came and told him, 'Leave this house right now. This is my house. "Why shall I leave my own house?" Saimon said. The landlord replied, 'Here you see this paper-you have given me this house.' At that moment Simon recalled about the fingerprint that he had given in order to take money.

a. What is sin?
b. Why did Jesus the healer come to this world?
c. What is revealed by the action of Mr. Ranjan?
d. What can be the consequences of the action of Mr. Ranjan? Analyze this in the light of the textbook.

2. Dina is brilliant, but restless. There is a hidden deception in her restlessness. In the name of playing mischievous tricks she tells lies and thus ruins her relationship with others. She even tells lies about the parish priest. Her classmates tell all these to the priest and ask him to cancel her church-membership. The priest calls Dina to him, puts his hand on her head and advises her not to tell lies any more. He also read the Bible texts for her and tells her of God's great love and boundless mercy. He advises her to pray so that Jesus gives her power of understanding. The priest forgives her and shows her the way of living a new life.

a. What do you mean by Sacrament?
b. What is the meaning of Eucharist? Explain.
c. Who inspired the priest to call Dina close to him? Describe.
d. Do you think that being inspired by the priest Dina received eternal life? Evaluate.

Short Questions

1. What do you understand by sin? Explain.
2. How because of sin the world is being damaged? Explain.
3. Explain what can be the consequences of sin.
4. How can one be free from committing sin?
5. How does God give us strength during our weakness?

Chapter Eleven

The Silent Voice of Conscience

God created human beings giving them body, mind and soul. At the same time He gave each person a sound conscience which is God's voice. A person who takes care of his/her conscience has a good and sound conscience. And the one who has a good and sound conscience can hear God's voice more clearly. Conscience is the core of human heart and the temple of God. That person lives there with God in silence intimately; God's voice sounds and resounds there. There the conscience reveals clearly God's commandments, which are full of love for God and for human beings. Our God is a living God; He dwells in our hearts and reveals his Word to us. He speaks to us in silence in our every day-life in and through various events, activities, thoughts and actions.

We need a sound and healthy conscience in order to hear the voice of God. He never shouts; rather He speaks in a very low and clear voice. A good and healthy conscience listens to that voice silently. His voice speaks, tells us clearly what is right and what is not, what is just and what is unjust. Our conscience is the voice of God.

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- explain the meaning of values;
- discover the source of values;
- Learn ways to form conscience;
- explain how to have mature conscience;
- discover bad effects of drugs and ways to get rid of them;
- explain the Gospel values;
- listen to the voice of conscience and
- live life according to Gospel values.

The meaning of Values

Value is defined as Something makes something desirable, attractive,worthy of approval, admiration etc; which inspire feelings, judgments or attitudes of esteem (Sarcamentum Mundi, Vol.6, p 1331, 1975). So it is very necessary to have values for every human being in his/her life.

Human life is meaningless without values. No one respects a valueless person; without values one becomes like a common animal. A person who has good values in life and lives life accordingly is loved and respected by all.

Values help a person to form one's moral character, which is helpful for one's moral judgment and helps the person to live accordingly.

Values and Conscience

Values and conscience are related to each other. Both of them affect one another. A person who has good and standard values also has a good conscience. In other words, a person who has a good and pure conscience also has good and high values in life. For example, a person who values holiness, sincerity, and politeness has a good and sound conscience. In other words, one who has a good conscience values holiness, sincerity, and loving relationship as the guiding force in his/her life.

On the contrary, we cannot expect a good conscience from a person who does not have good and high values in life. In other words, one who does not have good and sound conscience has distorted and indecent values in life. For example we can mention that those who are born and live in an unhealthy atmosphere, where there exists fighting, scolding, many other crimes, from tthem we cannot expect politeness, sincerity, and good behavior. In such atmosphere many do not consider an evil act as evil.

Now consider two examples, one of people of good conscience and one of bad conscience; of those who have good and high values in life, and of those who do not.

Example 1

Mr. Sujan and his wife Teresa have been living a happy conjugal life with their two sons and two daughters. They have a good reputation in the village as good Christians. They have good relationship with everybody in the village. They pray together every day in the evening and go to Church on Sundays. One of the sons have become a Priest and a daughter become a Sister. They have offered their lives for mankind. The other children will be established after completing their studies. Many people say that this is a model family.

Example 2

Tony's fight began with a family regarding a love affair. At one moment Tony brought his friends and started beating the members of the girl's family. Police arrested him and put him in jail. Many times the villagers complained to the police against Tony. The police were very aware about Tony. His parents were poor and the atmosphere of the family was not good at all. His parents used to fight for many reasons; they used to behave rough with their children and neighbors, and would scold them. They seldom went to Church or pray at home in the evening. Many times the father came home late night and scolded his wife and children and misbehaved with them. The villagers said: "What is the future of this family?" Thus we can see that people having values behave good. But people without values behave bad.

Task: Discuss in small groups the sources, reasons, signs and consequences of good conscience and of bad conscience.

Sources of Moral Values

Sources of our moral values can be separated into two groups: sources within (subjective sources) and sources outside (objective sources).

A. Sources within (Subjective Sources)

God created us in His own image and likeness. In the Book of Genesis God said: "Let us make man in our own image and likeness"(Genesis 1: 26). Fr. Bernard Hearing wrote in his theology book: "We are good in the depth of our being and created for the good. Only because 'our eye is made for the light' can it see the light of goodness. Only because we are created for love, Eternal Love itself, are we challenged by the force of love in the good and inflamed by it. This natural affinity of ours for the good (ultimately for God) can be disturbed by habits of sin, so that spiritually we become partially blind. But the seed of the good is not destroyed. It still remains in our nature, and the warmth of divine love, like rays from the sun can quicken it with life." (B. Hearing, the Law of Christ, Vol. I, 1969, p 131-132)

B. Sources outside (Objective Sources)

These are mainly two, namely, the community in which we live, and divine revelation. Man cannot live alone. He lives in a family, in a society. So he is influenced by the prevalent and traditional values of his family and society. Example- he respects the elders, follows the law and order of the family and society, lives peacefully with others etc. On the other hand everybody follows his/her religion or any belief. Religious education or Divine commands help the people to build the ethical and human values.

How do we form or develop conscience?

It is discussed earlier that moral values and conscience are related to each other and affect each other. As moral values are developed in two ways, conscience is also developed in two ways: by internal values and external values. From these two kinds of values we see two kinds of conscience: internal conscience and external conscience.

A. Internal conscience

God shared His goodness and beauty with every human being (Genesis 3:26). For this reason every person can recognize moral values; can judge what is good and what is bad; what we ought to do and what ought not to do. He/she can make a decision according to his/her conscience and proceed to act. The more God-fearing and upright a person is the more beautiful is his/her conscience. Here we can mention the example of King Solomon as a model (1 Kings 3:4-14).

B. External conscience (Influence from Outside)

As with values, our conscience is also influenced and affected by those of others. One's family, society, religion, country, local and foreign cultural values and moral standard, affect the formation of conscience. Practice of religion in family and society, love to God and mankind influence a lot to the formation of one's conscience. On the other hand, negative influences of one's family, society, country and culture of the world hamper the formation of a good and fair conscience. For example, female fetuses are aborted without objection due to

negative attitude to women. In some countries abortion is legalized. In China millions of babies are aborted because of the one-child policy. Prostitution, though sinful, is legalized in almost all countries. Today many do not consider these sinful acts as sins. Both positive and negative influences from outside have tremendous effect on the formation of our conscience.

Personal Conscience

It is said that “everybody is responsible for his/her work.” Question may arise in accepting this statement. When a matured person does any work by his/her own decision he/she becomes responsible for that work. But sometimes some people do not do any work by their free will. May be because of the order or command of his/her authority or elders or to please any one he/she does the work. So we cannot fully blame this person.

Sometimes children do so many works by obeying the orders of their parents and elders. To maintain the rules and regulations or out of fear for punishment, children do many works in the school. As they grow up it becomes necessary for them to build good conscience according to values they learn from family and school. When a person always works according to the older of others or follow the rules then he/she can never gain maturity in his/her life. The matured person works freely and by his/her personal decision. So he/she is responsible for his/her good or bad deeds.

During the World war-II , Eichmann, the notorious man is blamed for killing millions of Jews. After the war when he was brought to trial as a war criminal, he defended himself saying that he only obeyed the orders of the higher authorities. During 1971 the Pakistani soldiers killed millions of Bangladeshi people, raped so many women, and burned hundreds of thousands houses. If questioned why they did so, they surely would claim that they were only obeying orders of their authorities.

Another extreme is moral autonomy. That is as if to say, "I am in charge of myself." As soon as my control system breaks down; I take the attitude of doing only what I want to do or what I think I have to do. This sort of feeling and conscience can isolate one from others. In this situation knowledge experience,

expectation, feeling, liking-disliking of the people of a society is totally ignored. In this world none of us is ‘alone’. We live and grow up in closeness and companionship with others.

Here we present an example. College student Dip gave up his studies before completing his course. When his friends asked him why, he said he was just fed up. Dip started to gossip with friends and slowly became addicted to drugs. Stealing money and precious things from house became a habit with him. His father-mother did not take any fruitful step to bring Dip from wrong track from his childhood. Several times police sent him to jail and all the time his parents bailed him out. It is a life-long practice. It goes on from childhood till death. These attitudes noted above lead to a faulty formation of one's conscience.

The following two topics are very important for growing up towards maturity.

Growing towards Maturity

To grow towards maturity is a life-long journey. It is a life long practice. It goes on from childhood till death. Through personal and communitarian reflection we come to a deeper understanding of our own position with regard to the values we hold. We come to realize that we belong to a society, the thought patterns of which we have been following since our childhood. Present world has become a family and a society. It is changing rapidly. As a result every day we are facing new challenges. We need to awaken our conscience to face these new challenges and problems in this changing world.

Growth is a Combined Work of Individuals and Society

An individual and society are closely connected. There are birth-life-death in a society. Man grows up in a society and his conscience and values are acknowledged. Since man and society are in continual growth it is necessary to re-assess our values. If we live only by our own conscience then we disregard our society; on the other hand; if we just follow the conscience our society, we have nothing of our own. Therefore, one has to discern the good values of the society and accept them as his or her own. For example, there are many good things and bad things in media and the internet. An individual has to choose which values are good for his/her personal growth and maturity. Only then a person can lead his/her life to the right path.

AIDS, Smoking and Drug-Addiction

Our values are like rail lines. As rail lines help the driver to guide the train in the right direction, in the same way our good values lead us to the right path of our life. But the one who does not have good values in life easily gets lost by evil. This type of person can be spoiled by a bad company and can get addicted by any bad habit. That person might also have HIV, and can easily become a source of transferring it to others. Therefore, it is necessary for young people to be aware of this and to have some understanding of HIV and AIDS, and of smoking and drug = addiction and their bad and alarming effects in our life. We can avoid those bad things in our life when we are aware of them.

Dangerous AIDS and HIV

Today AIDS is known as a very dangerous disease which kills many lives. It is a cause of so much panic and epidemic. Its widespread presence, especially in Africa, causes great concern for WHO (The World Health Organization) and for the whole world. In Bangladesh too, the number of AIDS and HIV victims are alarmingly increasing.

AIDS and HIV come from few English terms taking the first letter of these words:
AIDS = Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HIV = Human Immunodeficiency Virus

AIDS and HIV are mentioned side by side. HIV so readily infects a person, but it does not display symptoms, which means the person is not aware that he or she has gotten the virus. And with any careless act it will easily be given to another person. But HIV also can very easily develop into AIDS. A person who gets AIDS loses the resistant power to fight against even the simplest of infections, and remains in a very precarious situation just trying to maintain his or her health and life.

Social Attitude Towards the AIDS

Due to ignorance and lack of proper knowledge about AIDS, many people are falsely condemned for having contacted that infection. The reason for that unjust judgment is that a major source of the transmission of HIV is sexual relations or

sharing of needles in the use of narcotics. So many look at AIDS victims with fear and hatred. From the religious and moral point of view AIDS is seen as a mortal sin and collapse of moral values; AIDS victims are considered as 'sinners.' As a result, an AIDS victim becomes an object of hatred, is abandoned by the society and cannot live a normal life any more. Though living, he or she is dead, has no honor, no dignity, no welcome to attend a public ceremony such as a wedding or any other social celebration.

How to Face AIDS and HIV

Today the medical experts and religious leaders are strongly proposing a method to face AIDS. They propose ABC method as the best force to face AIDS and HIV:

A = Abstain/Avoid: For unmarried youth: to abstain or avoid sex without mar riage.
For married people: to avoid sex with anybody other that the life-partner.

B = Be faithful: For unmarried youth: to be faithful to sanctity and holiness of life.
For married people: to be faithful to the life-partner.

C = Change of behavior: to change bad habits to live a holy life that leads to Christian freedom.

In Preventing AIDS we have to remember that only the physical relationship does not spread this disese. AIDS can be spread if anybody uses the used syringe, takes blood from the AIDS patient, being born of AIDS affected mother, breast feeding from AIDS affected mothers, transplanting the limbs of AIDS patient also spread the disease. So we must be cautious about it.

Life spoiled by Drug-addiction

My son has destroyed our family", said Bilash's mother as she was crying. While I wanted to know what happened to her she said in reply: "My son was a very good boy from childhood. There was no complaint against him; we felt so proud of him. We had many dreams. But now all our dreams are gone; for last two years we have been suffering badly because of him. He got addicted to drugs with some of his friends. He has taken money from me many times telling me lies. His father was angry with me for this. I used to believe my son, as I love him very much. I discovered many things were getting lost from my house: a watch, cell phone, money, rice, and what not."

Small Beginning of Drug-addiction

One day Suman came to the field with his friends. They went to the corner of the field, and one of them brought out cigarettes and all began to smoke. Suman's friends gave him one and he started to smoke. Gradually he was feeling very relaxed, and he liked the feeling. Thus he became addicted to heroin. Consequently, what happened with him was what was sure to happen: Suman stopped his studies; things were getting lost from his house, and it became his habit to tell lies. The villagers began to hate him. Finally he was taken away for treatment at a Healing Centre.

Consequences of Drug-addiction

Today there are hundreds and thousands of youth, children, adults are spoiling thier life by drug-addiction. We can see the following consequences of drug-addiction:

1. habit of telling lies
2. stealing
3. disobedience and misbehavior with parents and others
4. absence in family prayer and Sunday Masses
5. moral degradation

Say "NO" to Drugs

Today many parents, like the parents of Bilash and Suman, are crying with tears for their beloved sons or daughters. All the parents want happy and beautiful lives for their children. It is their desire and prayer that their children will be established in life, and will bring a good name and honor for their families. Like their parents, all the youth have to see the same dream and to live life accordingly. Every youth should take an oath to make life beautiful, to say "NO! No drugs at all." Let this be their vow.

Gospel Values in Our Life

The Gospel values are the criteria and model for every Christian. Jesus Himself taught these values and commanded His disciples to teach them to others: "Go, then, to all nations everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you" (Matt 28:19-20).

The Gospel values are the guiding force and foundation of our good moral life and beautiful life. Therefore, every Christian has to read the Gospels, reflect on them and live life accordingly. Jesus wants us to make His values of life as our own and to live our lives according to these values. Only His values of life will lead us to the truth and salvation. Jesus said: "I am the way; I am the truth; I am the life" (John 14:6).

Prayer

We have to pray to God every day for a right and sound conscience. With similar words of king Solomon we can pray:

Loving Lord, grant me wisdom that I may know clearly the difference between good and bad, and lead my life to the right path every day.

Sample Question

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Our conscience is called

a. our core of heart
b. our perseverance
c. our hidden talent
d. our integrity

2. A person of too much freedom

a. makes no sacrifice
b. is broken easily
c. seldom cares for others' opinion
d. criticizes others

Read the following Paragraph and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.

Romesh is a pious man but has no job for many days. He does not pray each day with his wife and children. He does not have a job. Being jobless his mind is not in peace. He returns home late every night. Because of his neglect for the family, his wife and children no longer love him. Finally, he changes his behavior. One day he gets a good job.

1. What forced Romesh to change his life?

a. Poverty b. Conscience
c. Feelings d. Emotions

2. What would have happened if Romesh had not changed his life?

a. Degradation of values
b. Losing integrity
c. Increase of social accountability

Which one is correct?

a. i b. ii
c. i & ii d. i & iii

Creative Questions

1.

Scene -1

Family of Abraham and Teresa. Their family is a true Christian family. They have a good relationship with the villagers. They go to Church on Sundays and every evening. They give good education to their children. They help the poor people of their village.

Scene -2

Bidhan and Promilla had a love marriage. Yet after few days they started fighting. Many times they fought over small things. Consequently, they did not have peace and they doubted each other. Bidhan beat his wife due to the misunderstanding between them.

a. What has deep relation of their life with values?
b. Why do human beings need values in life?
c. What are the values that led Abraham and Teresa to live a happy life ? Explain
d. Do you see any harmony between the minds of Bidhan and his wife ? give your opinions.

2. Payel was a nice boy from his childhood. His parents were proud of him. When he was a student of class nine, his parents observed that Payel made company with bad friends and he made a bad result in school too. He returned home late at night, sometimes being drunk. His parents tried very hard to bring him back to a good life but totally failed. Finally, he became a drug-addict; he was infected by a complicated disease and thus his life was spoiled.

a. How is AIDS known today?

b. Why is an AIDS-victim hated by society?

c. How can Payel correct his life?

d. What steps can Payel take to come back to good life?

Short Questions

1. What do you understand by value?
2. What do you understand by the internal source of conscience?
3. How can you form conscience?
4. What is AIDS?
5. Why should you say "NO" to drug-addiction?

Chapter Twelve

Severe Pain of the Heart

There is a saying, "Life is not a bed of roses". Besides their joyous moments in life, all will have to face hard challenges, afflictions and suffering. In our world we have day and night, light and darkness. So too there exist in our lives happiness and sorrow, joy and suffering. Beginning with Adam and Eve, in the lives recorded in history of the great men and women such as the prophets, founders of religion, and the saints, we see there is no man or woman who did not experience suffering, sorrows, pain, anxiety or conflict. They all accepted suffering and endured it as part of their human experience, and as an obstacle to overcome in their effort to do something great for others. There is another proverb: “No pains, no gains.”

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- describe various kinds of pain or suffering;
- have a positive attitude regarding pain and suffering;
- describe the teaching of the Holy Bible on pain and suffering;
- have a positive attitude regarding pain and suffering and
- be ready to bear pain and suffering.

Kinds of Pain

Different kinds of pain in human life can be listed as follows:

a. Physical pain: Suffering from diseases, long time illness, tiredness, malnutrition, labour pain, hard work, death agony, etc.

b. Mental Suffering: Mental and physical pains have some similarites. Often mental suffering is more painful than the physical pain. Feelings of anxiety, frustration, hopelessness, loneliness, rejection, misunderstanding, negative and destructive criticism, are some causes of mental pain.

c. Pain of Heart: Lack of Joy, restlessness, lack of love,lack of acceptance,lack of friendship, being unable to tell another one's inner suffering, all these create pain of the heart. The suffering of the poor is usually due to their poverty and inability to provide basic needs for themselves and their families, while the rich suffer from tension and anxiety from managing their wealth, and from unfulfilled expectation.

d. Pain or anxiety for our World: Negative events and interaction of the people cause mental suffering and give pain in the heart. Mismanagement in the society, country and world create mental suffering. This includes such things as dire poverty, unemployment, epidemics, war, earthquakes, tidel bore, famine, economic crisis, etc. All these conflicts and crises cause mental suffering and anxiety for all humanity.

The story of a young woman

I am the only son of my fairly wealthy parents. Never did I feel any need for anything. Whatever I needed or wanted they supplied for me. Ours was a good Christian family, but I did not like to practise religion, to go church and pray. I did not love God. I used to try to forget God, to not believe in Him. But as much as I tried to forget Him, it seemed to me that God still sought a place in my heart. I can't explain clearly, but I am suffering extremely from mental and spiritual pain. Oh! What a suffering it is! Is there any kind of treatment that shall free me from this pain?

Task: 1. From what kind of pain is the young woman suffering: physical, mental, spiritual or worldly?
Task: 2. Can you describe a true story of a person who suffers a lot?
Task: 3. When you see people are suffering, what kind of feelings do you feel? Discuss these three questions in your group.

Are pain and suffering essential?

For hundreds and thousands of years doctors and scientists have been trying to reduce suffering and pain of human life. But still they could not do it. In many fields, science has made such extraordinary progress, sending a person to the moon, a vehicle to Mars, and other planets. The pain and suffering of human beings of the world is still not reduced any way. If we observe deeply we find pain-suffering-anxiety continue in human life in this world.

Seeing this suffering some may raise the question of how can we call God loving and merciful father? Especially when we see the suffering of innocent people, hungry children crying for food, innocent people are being killed in war. This is not easy to answer. Centuries ago in the Old Testament the book of Job dealt with the same question. Job suffered immensely from all kinds of physical and mental afflictions or pains. His friends questioned: why do the just and innocent people suffer? No one but God can answer this. The suffering of human life is mysterious. It can be said for certain that people who are believers or atheist, religious or not religious, all will experience sorrow, suffering, and agony.

Causes of pain or suffering

Why does suffering come in the life of the religious people? It is not possible for anyone to give the correct answer to this question, but still we can find a few answers of some of the causes of suffering.

1. Laws of nature: There are pains and sufferings in the law of nature hidden for mankind. People suffer by natural calamities like earthquakes, cyclones, floods, tidel bores etc. Besides, people become old and die which give pain to people and make them cry. By the amazing discoveries of science people could overcome many sufferings but they could not conquer some painfull bad things.

2. Human created suffering: Many sufferings and pains in human life are created by the activity of people: negligence, ignorance, selfishness, excessive demands various kinds of sins and weakness. Road accidents are the causes of recklessness and ignorance. Murder, adultery, war, diseases and immature death occuring beacause of adulterated and dirty food, poverty, want etc.

Task: If you know someone who is suffering for his sickness or any reason, please share it with your partner,.

The positive side of pain or suffering

Jony is a handicapped boy. Feeling helpless and disappointed, he considered committing suicide. Fortunately he changed his attitude and turned to God. At first he prayed to God for a cure. But he was not healed, and remained disappointed.

Many of his friends prayed that he regain normal life. They also gave good advice and suggestion to Jony. After a long time of disappointment, Jony thanked and praised God for his physical disability. He found that God had a nice plan regarding him. Jony learned how to write and draw pictures by mouth instead of with his hands. Now wonderful pictures of Jony are on Greetings Cards, Christmas Cards etc. and they are displayed in shops for sell. He also noticed that on the back side of the pictures there was the trademark "Jony-PTL" that means "Praise The Lord".

We see the physical disability that was very painful for Jony has now become a source of joy and praising the Lord.

From the perspective of Jony's life, consider how we can express a positive attitude toward our sufferings. We can learn it from St. Peter. He said, "My dear friends", do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice in so far as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his glory is revealed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of God is resting on you. But let none of you suffer as a murderer, a thief, a criminal, or even as a mischief maker. Yet if any of you suffers as a Christian, do not consider it a disgrace, but glorify God because you bear His name. For the time has come for judgment to begin with the household

of God; if it begins with us, what will be the end for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinners? Therefore, let those suffering in accordance with God's will entrust themselves to a faithful Creator, while continuing to do good" (I Peter 4: 12-19).

From these words of St. Peter, we have to keep four things in our mind:

1. To be delighted: we have to see ourselves as another Christ because through Jesus, the Son of God, we have become the children of God. To remain as the children of God we are suffering along with Jesus. Now we can understand why the disciples of Jesus would feel pleased while they were persecuted because of Jesus. Bearing the persecutions and sufferings in their lives, they would participate in the suffering of Jesus.

2. Glory comes after suffering: As gold is tested by fire, we are refined through our sufferings or pains. These sufferings make us fit as the children of God, and through sufferings we can participate in the glory of Christ our Lord. That's why the poet says: why are you, seeing thorns, afraid of collecting lotus?

3. Keep in mind your self-identity: God Himself lives in us. St. Paul says, "Our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit". So, when we suffer, God lives in us and sees our sufferings. That's why there is no need to worry for our sufferings.

4. Surrender to God: When we are able to feel that God Himself lives in us, we don't depend on ourselves but rely on and trust in God. Relying on God we can say that He will supply strength and inspire us for doing good deeds continuously.

Teachings of the Holy Bible on Sufferings

We notice that in the Holy Bible suffering is considered differently in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. A brief description is given below:

A. Suffering in the Old Testament

Suffering is seen in a very negative way in the Old Testament, it is considered as a curse and disgrace. If someone would suffer, it would be regarded as the result of his or her sin. When Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, for whose sin is the man

suffering?"He was expressing the Old Testament attitude toward suffering. Jesus answered him, "Not for any sin, but for the glorification of God this man is suffering."

Though people showed their sympathy towards a suffering man, suffering was regarded as bad thing (sin). The writer of the Psalms wrote that after considering suffering of the world, "A wicked person would say, 'There is no God in the universe"' (Ps.10:14). On the other hand some of them used to think that even God doesn't know the reason of their sufferings (Ps. 73: 11)

When Job was suffering severely, his wife suggested him "You curse your God" (Job 2:9). The same attitude was expressed by Job's friends who represented the view point of the Old Testament regarding suffering on that period.

The people of the Old Testament looked for reasons behind each suffering. They believed either that there is natural power, or that the evil things are in the world to cause suffering.

B. Suffering in the New Testament

Jesus Himself assumes our pains and agonies, and shows a very different attitude of looking toward sufferings. Being God He became a man of flesh and blood and accepted all kinds of human limitations except sin. Thus St. Paul says, "Though He was in the form of God, He didn't regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death- even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:7-8). As a man like us, Jesus had dreams and desires, expectations that he wanted to fulfill. Like us, He was hungry, thirsty, tired, suffered failure and faced challenges and hostility. Jesus experienced not only his own sufferings, he also was sympathetic to the sufferings of others. Whenever Jesus saw someone in pain or distress, he was filled with love and mercy and would cure or console the person. (Matthew 9:36; 14:14, 15:32; LUKE 7:13; John 11:33-37)

Jesus' victory over pain and suffering

During his ministry Jesus preached about the kingdom of God, healed various kinds of sick people, gave life to the dead and performed many other miracles. Above all, by his rising from the dead he proved that he is the Son of God whom God the Father sent into this world (Matthew 11:4-5). This was the indication of His final victory. He conquered the world. He defeated diseases, pains, sufferings, death. He achieved salvation for the mankind through miserable crucifixion. He is the greatest Hero and Saviour of mankind. He told his disciples that in His Holy Name they could perform all kinds of healing. The same power of Jesus is present in the Holy Church and in her sacramental activities.

Jesus Blessed the Suffering One: It is true that Jesus does not remove our sufferings or death, but He gives us the courage and strength to face them. He says, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted" (Mt. 5:4). Jesus does not remove the tears of the mournful one, but he wipes them away while walking with him in his daily life (L 7: 14). It is a joyful sign that God is with the mournful or suffering one that we see in the book of Revelation, "He will wipe every tear from their eyes" (Revelation 21:4).

Sorrows and suffering can be a blessing for us, since they prepare us for the great glory and joy of the kingdom of God.

Sample Question

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Which one is mental suffering among the followings?

a. Absence of tranquility
b. Tiredness
c. Frustration
d. Unemployment

2. Who was resurrected?

a. Laser
b. Virgin Mary
c. Joseph
d. Jesus

Read the following Paragraph and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.

Badal is a rich man. He has sufficient money and wealth. Yet he cheats others and gains money in illegal ways. Doing this he possesses more than one home, car and plenty of wealth. Yet he wishes to be more fashionable, rich and to spend a more luxurious life. He is totally unable to accept any kind of harms and sufferings.

3. What kind of suffering is in Badal?

a. Man created
b. God created
c. Created by the Nature
d. miraculous

4. The cause of Badal's suffering:

i. Excessive demand
ii. Illusion for wealth
iii. Attitude of sacrifice

Which one is correct?

a. i & ii
b ii & iii
c. i & iii
d i, ii & iii

Creative Questions

1. George is a devoted faithful person. He has been physically, mentally and spiritually very strong.. Since he is sincere in his responsibility, he tries to be friendly with all, as well as to avoid all kinds of conflict. He usually does not get sick. But he has learned that he has become diabetic. He knows that this weakening disease will remain with him till his death. He acceptes this discouraging news with faith in God. Trusting in God and being grateful for all his blessings, he accepts this with good attitude. He knows that through sufferings God expresses His love towards mankind.

a. As a man who has suffered most among human beings?
b. Why is suffering essential for all? Explain your answer.
c. Explain George's attitude toward sorrows and sufferings.
d. The attitude of George is the mirror image of Peter's lesson. Explain this..

2. Mr. Raju is an industrialist. He appoints some abnormal employee to work along with the normal employees at his factory. The gatekeeper, who was appointed by Mr. Raju, is physically very weak. Most of the time he sleeps sitting in front of the gate. Since he can not do his duty properly, he has to digest his colleagues rebuke. The telephone operator remains silent most of the time; he seems to be worried of something. If people ask him some thing, he replies to them with very few words. Since he is not attentive in his duty, others don't get sufficient co-operation

a. How the suffering is seen in the Old Testament?
b. Why have the saints endured their sufferings?
c. What kinds of pain is in the gatekeeper ? Explain.
d. 'The teachings of Jesus about suffering can change the attitude of the telephone operator'. Evaluate the statement

Short Questions

1. What do you knwo about worldly sufferings?
2. Why is suffering essential in human life?
3. What is a natural catastrophe?
4. What was the point of view of the New Testament upon suffering?
5. Why can sorrow and suffering be a blessing for us?

Chapter Thirteen

Violence and Peace

When we look at the world today, almost everywhere their exists war, violence, enmity and riots. It appears that no group can tolerate any other group. People become famous by leading revolts, many gain by deceiving others. It is almost the same story for so many. The condition of our own country is not any diffrent. Every day we get news in the mass media of vengeful acts of killing, burning, destroying and demolishing. We learn of these violent acts and become terrified, and deeply saddened on behalf of the innocent victims. Considering all this we feel insecure. We want to get free from this. We want peace or consolation.

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- describe different kinds of violence;
- describe harmful consequences of violence;
- describe the notion of violence;
- avoid violence and
- play an important role to establish peace.

Violence

Task: Some contemporary pictures of violence would be presented. They should be analyzed by the group, then they can answer the following questions.

a. What do you see in the pictures?
b. What is your feeling after looking at them?
c. Can violence bring solutions to all or any problems?
d. Who should do what in this context?

Violence is extremely dangerous. It is opposite to a progressive and prosperous world. It is a perverted form of love. In general, that which is not legal or not done lawfully is called violence.

Violence is that action which is done to damage or injure life and property by force, strength, and power. Violence is a brutal action in which there is inhumanity, immorality, hatred, impurity, hypocrisy, deception and anything in order to gain ones own goals without regard for the rights or claims of the other. In short, violence is the death of human interaction, and of humanity itself.

To destroy, and even to enjoy doing this, is very much a part of the human habit. As a result people become indulged with immoral and illegal activities. When any family, society, nation or country is corrupted with fighting or anarchy, the rights of people are subdued, and the means to protest are few, then people resort to force. Again, if there is lack of patience and tolerance, that creates restlessness in our relationships with others, it can turn into violence. Violence causes harm to the person, society at large and the nation. No person, society, or country can ever desire violence.

From the spiritual point of view violence springs from a death of love. When love in a person is dead or does not work, then an inhuman nature affects him or her. Then the people hate the beautiful creative form of the Creator and the inhuman form is unveiled. After all, because of the effects of an inhuman behavior entire societies can become endangered.

Again, violence doesn't mean only bodily torture. Threatening, blackmailing, refusal of siving ones due or rights are also considered violence. Physical torture and punishment deny human dignity. This causes us to suffer from inferiority complex in various situations.

Task: Where do we see violence in practical life? Show their causes and effects.		
Violence	**Causes**	**Effects**

Evil Consequences of violence

Everywhere in this world violence exists. Even those who carry out violence know that no one could ever bring progress into this world through violence. Rather, through violence, mental, physical and spiritual harm results. This becomes almost like a contagious disease. If it starts in any family, society and nation, very soon they are thrown into turmoil gradually and it expands and its power increase. As a result it affects family, society or country terribly. If we consider in detail the evil consequences of violence in a society, this will help us to comprehend the endangering consequences.

Task: We would discuss the pictures from different newspapers and documentaries. By doing this we would explain various evil consequences of violence.

Evil Effects of Violence on a Family

The family is the basic unit of the society. The human journey begins in the family. And a family suffers immense harm when it is afflicted by violence. For this reason mistrust with each other, breaking of relationship etc. occur in the family. As a result quarrelling, fighting, scuffling etc. are seen. Sometimes people have to lay down their lives.

Evil Effects of Violence on Society

For violence the harmful consequences of family affects the society. So it ruins the social unity and harmonious relationship. Grouping starts in small societies. Chaos starts from it. Religious and social values are ruined. As a result unsocial activity increases and it hampers social development and progress.

Evil Effects of Violence on State

The harmful effects of violence in family and society are felt also by the state. When violence spreads in the state, rules and regulations of the state are weakened; corruption is increased, economy of the state is hampered. Assets worth crores and crores are damaged by meeting, rally, breaking, burning, bombing, kidnapping, throwing of acid, rape, killing etc.

Violence and Love

The opposite of violence is non-violence. More broadly stated that means love. If we follow non-violence we love even our enemy. Then we treat everyone equally.

Friends and enemies should be treated equally. This is what Jesus commanded when He told us to love our enemies. Jesus did not merely command it, but he himself also practised it. At the garden of Gethsemane when the soldiers came to arrest Jesus with swords, then Peter with his knife cut off the ear of a soldier. Then Jesus said those who use swords will die by them. There is a saying, violence gives birth to violence. This is why Jesus spoke of love, because the greatest gift of all gifts is love. This love makes man courageous and enthusiastic. This love can win over all. Only love can stop violence and it can save the family, society and the country from the evil effects of violence.

Role of leaders in establishing peace

All levels of people in the society desire peace. So in order to live a peaceful life we make many kinds of efforts. Important powers and responsibilities are given to leaders and teachers in the society. The teacher must educate students. Soldiers and police are given responsibility to protect the country. Non-government officers and others do their duty. All of them work for peace. Some people die for peace. Pope John Paul II strongly called everyone to stop the violence. He requested all people of the nation to stand against violence, with the theme of the world peace day "Not Violence, We want peace".

What is Peace?

Primarily peace is free from feelings of fear-a kind of mental peaceful situation. Mental peace of the people of the society extends everywhere. Peace is a kind of atmosphere in which unity prevails. So it is the feeling of absence of disorder, war, jealousy, anger, quarrelling, guilty feeling etc. It is such a situation where there is unity, serenity, freedom to think and act without disruption or compulsion. It creates the feeling of responsibility of the citizen, feeling to serve, justice and feeling of friendship. So it is the best medium of the growth of humanity.

Jesus is named the Prince of Peace, since He has come to offer peace to mankind. After his resurrection He appeared to His apostles, and His first words to them were, "Peace Be with you". We can become the people of peace by following the way of Christ and by receiving His peace.

Role of Students in Establishing Peace

The role of the students is very important in establishing peace in our society. The life of a student is a preparation for future involvement in building the society. At this level a student does much to decide his future, since the activity and attitudes he experiences will form him for future involvement. But students face challenges and temptations that can lead them astray. This will lead to loss of peace of mind. Factors which play the fundamental role in establishing peace are: personal values, social values, moral values and spiritual values. So, student must gain values to establish peace in family, society and state. This will lead to building a peaceful society and country. Besides gaining human values, the following factors are also important in establishing peace.

To be United in Protesting Corruption

Almost everywhere in this world corruption is prevalent. Corruption is a major obstacle to progress and peace of the country. Remove corruption students must stand against corruption, in order to build strong attitudes and begin effective activity to resist corruption. So peace will prevail in the society and in the country. Students are the future of the nation. Therefore, by meetings, seminars, protests, they will be able to play a positive role to prevent corruption.

Avoiding intoxicating Drugs

Many students spoil their lives and future by taking drugs. This is the time for formation and growth, to understand good and evil properly so as to take proper decisions for life, Students must say "No to any kind" of intoxication and drugs, and to strongly encourage others in the same attitude.

Optimistic World View

Student life is the time to grow and blossom. There is need for a positive attitude in everything. Basically, instead of being critical about most things and uncooperative, they should judge people and movements favorably, try to determine what is good, and follow such leadership with enthusiasm.

Creativity

During Student life one can even make the impossible possible and discover new things. Therefore, this is the best time to show ones creativity.

Punctuality

Punctuality is also very important to establish peace. During student life if students have the sense of punctuality they will be able to arrange their life perfectly and beautifully. As a result there will be discipline in them.

Self Confidence

Self confidence means to trust own self and trust in own abilities. The contribution of self-confidence is unparalleled to enrich human character. So this is the best time to develop self confidence.

Justice

Justice is to give what one deserves. Justice protects human rights. So students must prepare themselves to stand for justice in all aspects of life. Peace will come if justice is established.

Friendship

Friendship is a loving commitment or taking responsibility between two persons. It depends on mutual love and respect. Friendship unites people; this is a very helpful means to establish peace.

All the points we discussed here are the virtues which are the means of establishing peace. The students can play an important role to bring peace by practising all those means of establishing peace mentioned before. Peace is a criterion for happiness. And our role is very important in bringing peace. Therefore it is the responsibility of each and every one of us to stand for peace.

Task: Enlist all that you can do for bringing peace into your family, village, school etc.

Sample Question

Multiple Choice Questions

1. Which is the opposite of violence?

a. Praise b. Love
c. Peace d. Justice

2. What role can the students play in bringing peace?

a. Through games b. Through reading books
c. Through justice d. Through meetings and demonstrations

See the picture below and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.



What does the picture reveal?

a. Violence b. Tolerance
c. Non-violence d. Teaching instruction

Through the action of the picture:

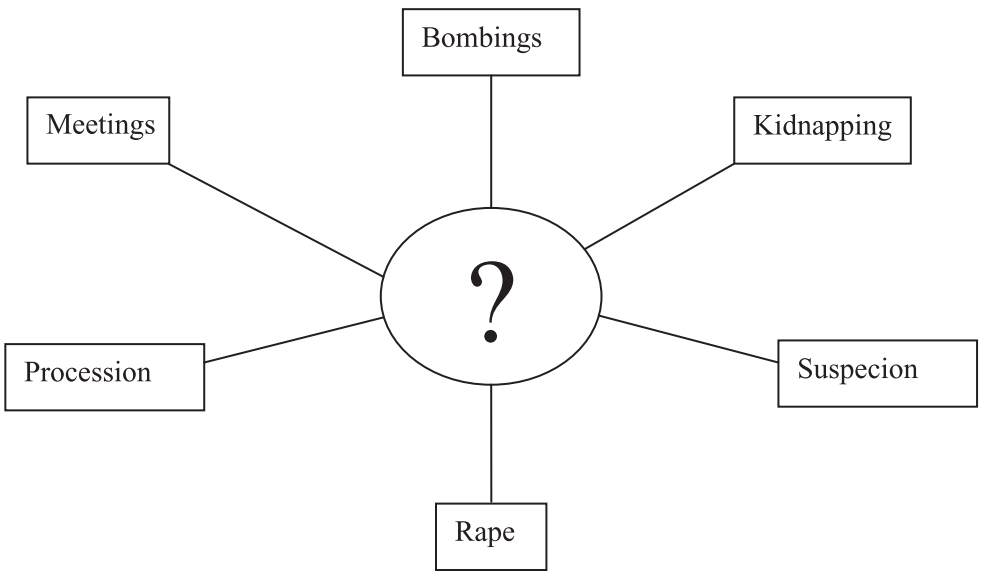
i. Human values will be depreciated ii Corruption will increase
iii. Participation will increase

Which one is correct?

a. i b. ii
c. i & ii d. ii & iii

Creative Questions

1.



a. What is peace?

b. What does it mean by Justice? Explain.

c. What should be in the place of the "?" mark in the stimulus- explain.

d. Love is only means to come out of from the information given in the stem Evaluate .

2. Annadpur High School is a model for all other schools. It is run well of the head master. Students have good reputations. Apart from this the school has a beautiful garden which creates a nice atmosphere. The students help one another, and they also help the poor. The teachers are also happy with the performance of the students. Everyone in the school lives as one family.

a. What is violence from a religious point of view?

b. What does it mean by Justice? Explain.

c. What prevails in the school mentioned in the stem. Explain.

d. What role can the students and the teachers play to create the same atmosphere as mentioned in the stem? Evaluate.

Short Questions

1. What do you understand by violence? Explain.
2. What is peace?
3. Write the roles of the students in establishing peace.
4. How can we overcome violence through love?
5. What is creativity? Explain.

Chapter Fourteen

We Want a Changed World

Looking at the reality of the present world it is not difficult to imagine that our society is full of unsocial activities. It seems man's conscience is no more free; it has become subjugated. His conscience does not prohibit him from doing injustices. Eating and drinking have become greater to him than religious practices. Man has become more attracted to the materialistic world than to spirituality. As a result anarchy, injustice and disorder are spreading everywhere. We want to change this world and construct a healthy and beautiful world. If we the students become changed, only then will the world also be changed.

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- describe the unwanted unjust picture of the society;
- explain the bad results of the violent movement employed to change society;
- explain Christ's way that is employed in order to change society and
- avoid violence, accept Christ's way to bring change in our society.

A Portrait of Social Injustice

There was a prominent businessman called Tilak. One morning as usual he went walking. There was a dustbin near a five-star hotel. A woman wearing a torn and patched sari, carrying a two year old baby boy on her lap, was sitting by that place and eating the thrown-away food from that dustbin. A dog also came and started eating the left-over food in the same dustbin. Seeing this scene early in the morning Tilak's conscience was moved.

Task: Make small groups of five. Discuss the above-mentioned incident in your group:

- How did you feel after reading the incident?
- Who is responsible for this?
- How can you describe the human and emotional issues of this incident?
- From your experience you may share some more incidents of this kind with other members of the group. After listening to the stories of each friend you may analyze them. According to you what can be the root causes of these inhuman and unjust situations? After analyzing the pictures of the society write down some points in a poster and set it in a place so that all others can read them.

The portrait of the present society is dreadful. Poverty, over-population, different kinds of fear, superstitions, drug addiction, hypocrisy, hatred, theft, robbery, selfishness all these are spread all over the country.

Rabindranath Tagore, in his poem "Dui Bigha Jami," has shown how a king has taken away a piece of land from one of his poor subjects. The king did not think of the poor man's life. Two lines of Tagore's poem go like this:

In this world he wants more and more who already has plenty, The hand of the king steals all the poor people's property.

In this worldly pleasure-seeking world man is constantly going after worldly pleasures. He who already has plenty, wants more. An unquenched thirst always lures him to get more and more. And so a small piece of poor man's land could not be protected from the king's greed. He needed even the last resort of the poor man.

Our country has sufficient wealth for all, but mal-distribution is the problem. More than almost 80% of the people are living beyond the poverty line. They are occupying only 20% of the wealth. On the other hand 20% people are occupying more than 80% of the wealth. Some people are enjoying a huge amount of wealth and on the other hand many are begging after losing their last penny. The rich are becoming richer and on the other hand the poor are becoming poorer. Thus the oppression of the mighty over the weak is constantly going on. The rich think they are mighty everywhere-they have all the power and wealth. They live a luxurious life and ignore the poor. As a result, poverty is becoming acute.

Today man is running after a dream of becoming like a king. With unquenched desire, all are running towards their unknown destinations. Because of this desire he is forgetting his own brothers and sisters, relatives and neighbours. He is becoming self-centered and selfish. Constantly he is seeking his own happiness and prosperity. He does not hesitate to follow unjust and dishonest means. As a result we see dispute, jealousy, fighting, scuffling, robbing, raping, killing, etc.

There is a discrepancy in the social structure. The structure allows some people to enjoy all kinds of opportunities, and some others are deprived. Class distinction, racism, color distinction, differences of religions-all these are

creating disputes, which at times turn into war. An attitude of communalism is taking away the democratic rights of the people. Corruption is spreading everywhere in the society.

Theft, robbery, terrorism, militancy, war, imperialism and bomber attitude are taking over the whole world. At night women and children are unable to move on the streets alone. Nobody is safe on the road today. At any time a hijacking might take place and they may lose their money, cell phone, hand bag and other valuables. Anyone might be kidnapped and then be forced to disappear forever. The wayward people are dangerous.They are teasing young girls and women.

The problem of succession of once property has become serious. The family members are getting involved in court cases, even for a minor issue. Professional killers are being hired to kill one's own brothers. Girls are being burned with acid. Many are being raped, even in front of their husbands or parents. Boy friends are cutting their girl friends to pieces. Housing is one of the major problems today.

Task: Make a list of the unjust acts in the society. Find out their reasons and bad effects. Write them on a poster and hang it in a suitable place for all to see.

Bad Effects of Violence

Once a Hindu man came to Mahatma Gandhi and told him that he was going to hell. Gandhi enquired, why? The man said, after the British left India, a Muslim had killed his son in the Hindu-Muslim war. Being angry he also killed a son of that Muslim. On hearing this, Gandhi said, now you go, look for a Muslim boy that has lost his parents in the war; bring him to your house and adopt him, raise him as a Muslim. The man was satisfied with the non-violent advice of Gandhi and went home with peace in his mind.

In order to eradicate injustice, corruption, terrorism and to establish peace in the society many people take various steps. Some people may try peacefully and some others may use violence. In history there are many instances of this kind. We might have heard or read about the French Revolution. It began happened in 1789. This

took place in order to stop unjust activities in France, to protect the poor from the hands of the rich, to be free from religious rules and regulations, to full fill the laborers' justified demand. Besides France, this kind of movement began in the whole of Europe-America. There were many advantages of this, as there were many disadvantages as well. Many people had to lose their valuable lives. This was leading many nations toward a world war. There were two world wars, one after another. We must have heard of the destruction that took place during the Second World War in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We know how two great cities were destroyed by atom bombs and how many people came to be burnt alive.

In many nations and countries many revolutions and wars took place in order to free people from their slavery, to diminish class distinction, to stop quarrels between races, to stop the oppression of the powerful on the powerless and so on. Many wars took place in the past between two countries or two nations or two religions.

We still remember the wars that took place in China, Vietnam, Yugoslavia, Africa, Libya, Egypt, Middle East, Afghanistan, Iran Iraq and Kuwait. Revolutions took place in South America and various countries in East Asia. Those revolutions took place in order to eradicate poverty, fanaticism, blind faith and old-fashioned politics and to gain human freedom. People lost their lives in those wars and revolutions, and much wealth and property was destroyed. It will not be possible to compensate the damage that was done. The evil consequences of these wars are much more than their positive effects. We know peace cannot be established with violence.

Mahatma Gandhi is the bright example of non-violence in this subcontinent. He freed India from the hand of the British by non-violence. Through his non-violence he not only helped to win independence but also conquered many people's hearts. Although dead, he is still living.

Task: Act out in your group the story of the First Book of Kings Chapter 21 on Naboth’s Vineyard.

Christ's Path in a Changing Society

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your friends, hate your enemies'. But now I tell you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may become the sons of your Father in heaven" (Mtthew 5:43). In the past people were told to love their friends and hate their enemies, perhaps to keep crime suppressed. The reason is that in the society of that period much oppression and many injustices used to take place.

We have got an idea of an unjust society through acting out the story of Naboth's Vineyard. In those days, in order to be free from all these injustices, very hard rules were imposed on the people. One such law was that if anyone did any harm to someone else, then the harmed person could do the same amount of harm to his enemy. For example, if during a quarrel, party A has damaged an eye of party B, then the verdict will be that party B will come and damage an eye of party A. At that time this law was imposed on the people so that before doing any harm to another person people may think that the same amount of harm might be done to him also. The law was never applied literally but a judge imposed a fine equal to the damage. Even with the existence of such a law society could not be free from crime, torture and injustice.

In the law of the past there was no mention of forgiveness and love. Because of this, enmity increased and dispute between two parties increased and lasted for ages. In this situation Jesus, our Saviour, came to this world. He did not abolish or do away with the old laws, rather gave them fullness. First of all he called people to change their mind saying: "This is the time of fulfillment; the kingdom of God is at hand. Change your ways and believe the Good News" (Mark 1: 15).

Jesus did not begin the movement of change of heart all of a sudden. The reason is that if anything gets started suddenly, it does not last. This gives rise to different questions in people's minds about the revolutionary leader. Jesus was not like that. He fully prepared himself for the movement. In order to prepare himself he went to the desert 40 days before he began to preach publicly. In the solitude on the mountain he prayed day and night alone. He prepared himself through prayer, meditation, fasting, etc. He himself was not a sinner, yet he received baptism from John the Baptizer. He manifested his chastity and holiness to the public. Being God he humbled himself so that he can call others to be humble.

He went to the temple and read that particular part where it was written about himself (Luke 4: 18-19). He has come to free the oppressed; to give new sight to the blind. His words came true when the people heard it from the mouth of Jesus (Luke 4: 21). Thus he revealed himself to the people and then began his work of salvation. He has come to save the poor, destitute, persecuted, neglected, hated, and the unwanted.
Jesus challenged the laws which were excessive. He protested against the immoral practices, persecutions, injustices of the society. He chased away the businessmen from the temple. He reprimanded those who were engaged in religious business. To his disciples he said that they were not supposed to fast as long as the bridegroom was with them, i.e. they were called to experience peace and salvation in the presence of Christ. He told them that his coming to this world was for the salvation of mankind. Those who would believe in him would be saved and would live for ever.

Jesus announced that the poor are blessed and the kingdom of God is theirs. He has come to this world to show the way of the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the poor who will walk in that path before everybody else. He said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for the one who is rich to enter the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 19:23). He also said, "Healthy people don't need a doctor, but sick people do" (Mk 2: 17). He became the friend of the poor and on the other hand he brought those closer who were sick, crippled, possessed, and so on.

He went from place to place and preached the Kingdom of God. He went to the houses of the poor and the sinners; he ate and drank with them. He considered them as his friends .. He used to tell them: "There is no greater love than this, to give one's life for his friends; and you are my friends if you do what I command you. I shall not call you servants any more, because a servant does not know what his master is about. Instead I call you friends, since I have made known to you everything I learned from my Father" (Jn 15: 13-15). Jesus did not teach these lessons in words only, but he has shown them in his own life. He sacrificed his life on the cross and thus he has proved his love for us.

Jesus spoke about developing a relationship between the rich and the poor. At the same time he wanted us to give value and importance to each human being. His call to us: "Love one another as I have loved you." He did not come to be served, but to serve. He said that those who want to be great must be the servant of all (Luke 22:26). If we want the respected seats in the front we must first be seated in the last seat. Saying these words Jesus wanted to teach us that we do not make ourselves great; that we give more importance to others than to ourselves; that we do not think ourselves the best in everything, rather that we give opportunity to others first, that we think of others and serve others, that we make ourselves humble. Jesus was God. "Though being divine in nature, he did not claim in fact equality with God, but emptied himself, taking on the nature of a servant, made in human likeness, and in his appearance found as a man. He humbled himself by being obedient to death, death on the cross' (Philippians 2:6-8)

Jesus taught about our conscience and values, through which he formed a movement of building a new world. His movement was much different from others'. His teaching was capable of turning the whole world. His teaching changed the society, because his movement was a movement of truth, beauty, forgiveness, service, and love. He did not have to fight to make his movement successful, rather he revealed the love of the Father for man and the world; for this love he sacrificed his life. He showed us the way of self-sacrifice.

The Lord Jesus wanted that we follow his way. His way is of faith, poverty, love, forgiveness, friendship, modesty, service, holiness, and above all of self-sacrifice. He said, he who will offer his life for the Kingdom of Heaven will receive it back a hundredfold. He wants that we change not only our mind, but also our heart. For this we need self-sacrifice, dialogue, reconciliation, unity and love. It is the duty of all Christians to walk in the path of Christ. At the same time, as an honest and brave soldier of Christ we should eradicate immorality and injustice and work to build a peaceful society. Only then there will be a world of truth, beauty, orderliness and happiness.

Task: 1. If possible show the movie “Jesus Christ Superstar”. By this the students will see Jesus in the midst of the poor.

Task: 2. Make a list of your suggestion by which following christ's teachings we can change the world.

Sample Question

Multiple Choice Questions

1. With what word did Jesus address the poor?

a. Kind
b. Poor
c. Afflicted
d. Blessed

2. Why was Jesus born?

a. To do away with the old laws
b. To change the old laws
c. To give fullness to the old laws
d. To glorify God

Read the following Paragraph and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.

An influential person of the society Mr. James always tries to develop his area. He always takes care of the poor and goes to visit them. In the last pre Christmas programme he was asked to take food before all others. But he did not do that. First he saw if others got food sufficiently. After all had eaten, then he came to take his meal.

3. What kind of attitude is manifested in James?

i. Meek
ii. Humble
iii. Self-sacrifice

Which one is correct?

a. i
b. i and ii
c. ii and iii
d. i, ii and iii

4. What can be the effect of the behaviour of Mr. James?

a. Establishing peace
b. Pride
c. Grabbing power
d. Self-conceit

Creative Questions

1. Jiban and Sujan read in the same class. But they did not talk to each other, did not stay together, and did not help each other in their work. One day two of them had a hot discussion on a very simple matter. At one point it turned into beating each other. After a few days suddenly Sujan got a message that Jiban had an accident and was now confined to a hospital. Sujan ran to visit Jiban in the hospital. Seeing Sujan beside him Jiban became very happy.

a. What did Jesus manifest for man by giving his life on the cross?

b. Why was it not possible to eradicate injustice from the society?

c. What teaching of Jesus influenced Sujan? Explain.

d. What kind of change can Sujan bring in the society? Evaluate.

2. Shatabdi studies by staying in a hostel. Every morning he goes to the Church and at the same time obeys all the rules and regulations of the hostel. One morning, while going to the Church, she saw that the hostel cook was suffering from fever. She gave her medicine and took care of her. Gradually the cook got well.

a. What did Jesus teach going from place to place?

b. Write about the bad effects of violence.

c. What teaching of Christ on changing society was manifested in Shatabdi? Explain.

d. Following of Jesus' path has been manifested in Shatabdi's behaviour. Interpret the statement.

Short Questions

1. Cite three injustices of the society and show their evil effects.
2. Explain the evil effects of violent movements of changing society.
3. Christ's path is one in bringing change in the society—Explain.
4. How can we bring change in the world by following Christ's teaching?
5. Mahatma Gandhi by his non-violence not only triumphed over country but also overcame many people's hearts—Explain the statement.

Chapter Fifteen

Our Way to Freedom

Everyone has some goals in life. With these goals of life he leads his life forward. Many get diverted from their goal but most people succeed in reaching their goals. The life of those who cannot reach their goal becomes meaningless. But the life of those who succeed in reaching the goal of life becomes meaningful. As Christians our ultimate goal is to gain eternal life and live a happy life in heaven. The only mediator through whom we can be eternally happy is Jesus Christ. Lord Jesus is our way to freedom and fullness of life. Because he is the way, the truth and the life. If we go through him we can experience the taste of eternal life and be eternally happy in the presence of God.

After studying this chapter, we will be able to–

- describe the desire of attaining a meaningful goal of life;
- explain the reason of not always succeding in finding a meaningful life;
- explain the point—the path that Christ showed is our path and
- live our life on Christ's path.

In Search of a Meaningful Goal

As children grow up, the parents teach them words and language. They teach them nursery rhymes and songs, buy them children's books, teach them how to draw pictures and then send them to school. What is behind all this? Why do we go to school and study? In the beginning we went to school because it was our parents who sent us. Later we took part in different exams. Why did we do those? We might have done those things in order to make better results and get a better place in the classroom. Now, being in this high school class how shall we explain that? Why do we go to school, study, and write exams? Why do we select science, commerce or humanities group? We ourselves need to think about these and find out their answers.

Martin Luther King Jr. of the United States of America said that he who does not have a goal in life, should not have right to live. Each human being must have a goal in life. He should live his life according to that goal. Without a goal life does not proceed well. If the goal is not decided in time, life becomes meaningless. As a result the person can be depressed.

Therefore, every one of us must decide what our goal of life should be. We need to ask ourselves: What is life? What is the purpose of this life? Who am I? Who I am for? What am I doing now and what do I have to do in the future? If life is a reality then what is truer than my life? What is death? Why do people die? When I leave this world what shall I leave behind? Where shall I go after my death? etc. When answers to all these questions are clear to us then it will be easier for us to fix a goal of life and lead our life accordingly.

Prokash, a young man, has just finished his college studies. He is a very brilliant student and his results were excellent. Reaching this point of his life he is hesitating-where to go now! What shall he study! From his childhood he had a desire to become a medical doctor. On the other hand his older brother is a doctor. He likes his brother's profession. But what decision will he take for himself? He is unable to make a clear decision.

One evening while Prokash was wandering in the playground someone from behind put his hand on his shoulder. Turning back he saw the Principal of his college! He took this opportunity and expressed the cause of his restlessness. Prokash accepted his Principal's advice and took steps accordingly. Today he is a very famous doctor in a hospital.

In order to reach life's goal people spend time so that they can increase their competency and efficiency and at the same time can form their character and conscience. It is very important to form well our character and conscience. For this reason one must exercise knowledge and work very hard. People look for that which is appropriate for reaching their goal; they seek to reach that however hard it may be. For this reason people go to school, study attain knowledge, sit for exam, and seek to know the unknown.

When man faces any impediment to the way of seeking, he starts to find a way of overcoming it. He finds no peace in mind sees no light, until he gets out it. He does not seem to have any meaning in life. He looks for and goes to more experienced, competent and efficient persons for advice or help. He perhaps goes to a family, educational institution or a teacher or an experienced person. Thus everyone looks for a meaningful goal in life.

Task: 1. Write down you own desire or goal of life.

Task: 2. What desire do you see, the gratification of which brings lasting happiness and joy in life?

Reason for Failure to Attain Perfection

Answers to all questions cannot be found in many cases of life. All searches are not successful. All problems also cannot be solved. Many times in our life we face failure. In those cases we cannot reach our goals. Failures come in personal, family, institutional and even state life. When we attain success, we rejoice in it. At that time our minds become full of joy. Immediately after that we seek success in another field.

Sometimes the smiles from our face fade away. Tears come into our eyes. We do not feel good. Frustration and even depression come to our life. At times we do not realize the causes of our failures. We might be able to find out the failures' reasons if we ask ourselves the following questions: Was our goal right? Did we proceed according to the goals? Have our character and conscience been formed properly? Did we listen to our conscience? Did we decide the correct goal at the appropriate moment? Above all, did we depend on almighty God or depend on our own strengths and capabilities?

Jesus told a young man, "If you wish to be perfect, go and sell all that you possess and give the money to the poor and you will become the owner of a treasure in Heaven. Then come back and follow me. On hearing this answer, the young man went away sad for he was a man of great wealth" (Mt. 19:21-22). Jesus wants full surrender from those whom he calls for perfection. This young man in the gospel had a very strong impediment on his way to attaining perfection and that was his excessive attraction for wealth. Secondly, as a rich man in the society he had a great social respect. Therefore, losing his wealth meant for him losing his respect as well. This fear was the impediment on his way to attaining perfection. He asked for advice, but he did not have the attitude of following the advice. Therefore we see that the big impediment on our way of perfection can be our selfishness and individualism.

Selfish and individualistic people get involved in different unsocial activities in order to fulfill their self-interest. Failure comes to their lives because of such kind of actions. They cannot proceed very far on the way to perfection. Thus they cannot find the right direction of life.

Task: Satisfying what kind of desires give birth to positive happiness and satisfying what kind of desires give birth to negative happiness or side effects? Write them in two separate columns.

Path Shown by Christ

The way to attain perfection that Christ showed is the best way.

Once, two girls were interviewed. One of them was a garment factory worker and the other was a college student. Both were asked the same question separately. The question was: "Do you believe that God exists?" Both answered: 'yes'. The next question to them was: "What does God look like?" The garment factory worker girl did not have much interest in it. With that situation of mind she answered: "It is likely that you will not be satisfied with my response, but I think God has created human beings as subjects of a game." On the other hand the college girl took some time to think and then replied: "I think God is great; He has created this universe and man very beautifully."

The garment worker girl was the child of a broken family- separated. On the other hand the college girl was from a rich and noble family- in the realm of her parents, friends and teachers' love. What is the reason for the difference between these two girls' answers? The reason is we are all influenced by our environment. We are influenced by the family in which we are born and in the realities in which we grow up. Our thinking, intelligence and dreams are led by our environment.

Like these two girls we also see everything in the light of our personal experience of frustration or happiness. The reason is that these feelings are so strong in us that the feelings can influence our thinking and thus our viewpoints can be changed.

We have to remember, we must not allow ourselves to be led by our emotions. In reality we see there is no businessman who invests his money in a certain institution only because he likes that particular institution. In the same way there is no doctor who would like to do surgery on a patient only because his feelings are good at that moment.

In truth we all are somehow led by the realities. We must not be led only by our thoughts and feelings. The same fact is true for the above-mentioned business or medical treatment fields. That means like them we also must not be influenced by our feelings, rather we should go with our realities.

In fact we will not be successful and happy and will not attain perfection either unless we find out truth and reality of events and incidents. All of our successes and failures, prosperity and downfall, bright or dark future - depend on us. The way we seek the truth, by that way will we be led in life.

Depending on long experience psychiatrist Carl Young once said, "Of all the persons ... whom I have treated, there was not one whose main problem was not religious and the solution, in every case, had to be religious."

Why did this prominent psychiatrist put religion in the central place of attaining health? The reason is very clear. What subjects of discussion are placed in the bottom place of each person's heart? They are about life, death, good and bad experiences, love and hatred, suffering and so on. Satisfactory answers to these questions can come from religion. The problems that become impediments on the way to gain a healthy life, cannot be solved only by psychiatry. Man needs to reach a deeper level for that. That means he has to enter into his heart and being there he has to ask for answers from the religious point of view. He will surely get answers.

Religion gives us power to understand one thing - that the changing situations around us are various signs. These signs help us to get answers to "Why""How" questions. These want to tell us about God and his plan.

Another prominent psychologist of the world is Victor Frankle. He was born in Vienna of Austria on 26th March 1905 and died on 2nd September 1997. During the World War II he was caught by the Germans and greatly suffered in a Nazi Concentration Camp. He said that to him imprisoned life was like a hell in the world. The prisoners were tortured very ruthlessly. Day after day they had to starve. Thus they became very weak. The weakest ones were taken every day and thrown into the gas oven. There, inside the burning oven, they were finished; they just became smoke-nothing else remained. Frankle said that it is not only

the physically healthy ones who were saved from the ruthless tortures, rather those who had a passion to live were saved. This kind of people did not lose their health and as a result did not have to be thrown into a gas oven. After he got out of the concentration camp he wrote a book on psychiatry called "Logo therapy."invented this therapy completely out of his own experience. Through this therapy the mental patients were asked to set a purpose of life. With that purpose they were able to follow the rest of the therapy process. He used to say: if you get the answer to your "why" question you will certainly get an answer to your "how"question as well.

God is the basis and deep reality of all life and truth. He wants to help us find the real situation of all things. For this he has taken different means. Whatever we see and experience every day are not only earthly; rather those remind us of the presence of God.

The greatest sign is Jesus Christ who came to this earth and explained to us the meaning of everyday signs. Thus, showing us the way and guiding us on that way he gave us opportunity to go to the Father.

To us as Christians the most important truth is that God is our loving Father. He invited us to become his children. When we respond to this call in our pure heart then we can find the deepest meaning of life. How can we know the Father? First we have to find out about him and only then we can love him.

Through our forefathers in the olden days God has revealed to us an important truth of life:

"God has spoken in the past to our fathers through the prophets, in many different ways, although never completely; but in our time he has spoken definitely to us through his Son. He is the one God appointed heir of all things, since through him he unfolded the stages of the world" (Heb 1: 1-2).

Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth and the life"(John 14:6). Jesus answers all the questions that rise in our mind and thus he shows us the way to the Father. He has given the proof in his own life. This way is the way of love, love of God and

love of man. He Himself first walked in this way. He went through death and rose again, As a human being he attained perfection, became a worthy Son of the Father. If we follow in his footsteps, in whatever crossroad we might reach, he will show us the proper way, because he is the real way and life.

Task 1: How meaningful are the answers to life-centered questions, which you get from religion? Write them down and share with the members in the group.

Task 2: A young boy dropped out of school and now he smokes and wanders here and there. Together with others in the small group make a plan to bring this boy back to school.

Sample Question

Multiple Choice Questions

1. How is the life of those who do not succeed in reaching their goal?

a. Incomplete b. Effective

c. Disorderly d. Meaningless

2. Impediments on the way of perfection can be —

i. Selfishness

ii. Individualism

iii. Poverty

Which one is correct?

a. i b. i & ii

c. ii & iii d. i, ii & iii

Read the following Paragraph and answer the questions no. 3 and 4.

Sajal and Ranjan live side by side in the same village. Sajal is affluent but Ranjan is comparatively less affluent. Sajal has by force occupied a piece of land that belonged to Ranjan and made a house for him. Ranjan approached the union council chairman for justice. But Sajal, coming to know of this, sent some valuable gifts to the chairman. The chairman played some tricks and in the meeting approved the argument for Ranjan.

3. What is manifested in the conduct of the chairman?

a. Honesty b. Selfishness
c. Corruption d. Nepotism

4. What can be the consequence of such conduct of the chairman?

i. Betterment of relationship
ii. Anarchy
iii. Disorderliness

Which one is correct?

a. i b. i and ii
c. ii and iii d. i, ii and iii

Creative Questions

1. Shima is studying. Her parents want their daughter one day to be a medical doctor. But Shima is not attentive to her studies at all. Her parents always tell her to be attentive. They tell her that if she wants to make a very good result she must study attentively. Shima did not pay attention to her parents' warnings. She was very indifferent. As a result she made a very poor result in her exams. Because of her poor results she could not take part in the admission test of medical college. Not only that, later she could not get admitted in any good educational institution.

a. Which way is the best to attain perfection?

b. What do you mean by Logo therapy?

c. What is the reason for Shima's failure? Explain.

d. Analyze what Shima needs to do in order to be successful in life.

Short Questions

1. What do people do in order to reach their goal?
2. As Christians what should our ultimate goal be? Explain.
3. Christ's way is our way — explain.
4. Explain why it is not possible always to attain meaningful life.
5. Write how you will lead your life in the way of Christ.

The End

2026 Academic Year

Classes Nine and Ten : Christian Religion

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