



INTRODUCTION

In my life before Jesus, I trained as a ballerina. At four years old, little aspiring ballerinas learn how to do plies, tendues, degages, and other exercises at the barre to develop their bodies and skill. Later in life, when a ballerina attains the professional level, she is at the barre every day doing plies, tendues, degages and the same exercises that the four year olds are doing. The exercises that develop the ballerina's body and skills are the same no matter what level of performance the dancer has attained.

When the Lord told me to put together this curriculum, He reminded me of my ballet days. In the Lord, we never grow too mature for the basics. No matter how established we think we are spiritually, even the most advanced follower of Christ can learn and grow from refreshing and restoring diligent practice of the essential elements of the faith. At any stage of spiritual life, it is important that we not just KNOW what Jesus taught but that we DO it... and keep doing it consistently...until He returns.

*Matthew 7:24: Therefore everyone who **hears these words of mine and puts them into practice** is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.*

Therefore, in the six units of this course, we will dig into six essential elements of the Christian life, both in knowing what Jesus taught and also putting it into practice through spiritual exercises. The units are:

- 1) The Gospel of Jesus Christ:** There is no other foundation for our faith. We must know and believe who Jesus is and what He did for us.
- 2) The Holy Spirit:** One of the primary reasons Jesus came was so that He could put His Spirit inside of us to guide us into God's will and ways. We are His sheep and we can hear His voice!
- 3) Community of God:** The Biblical design for community is for believers to be a royal priesthood and holy Kingdom. We have to learn to love one another as Christ loved us to make this a reality.
- 4) Miracles:** God is still working miracles today. We have to believe God to work miracles for us as we walk with Him and understand the authority He has given us in Christ to work miracles according to His will.
- 5) Suffering & Persecution:** Jesus made it clear that those who truly follow Him will suffer and be persecuted for doing so. When we understand what suffering for righteousness entails and what kind of suffering is not from God, we are better equipped to respond correctly in our trials.
- 6) Christlikeness & Commission:** God's desire is for us to be like Jesus. Jesus gave us the great commission to make disciples. Our aim is spiritual maturity so that God's will is fulfilled in our lives.

My hope is to lay a solid foundation for you in each of these elements to give you a strong faith which will not be shaken by trials and tests. This course was designed to be taken again and again as we grow. We attain maturity through becoming like a child so, we never grow too big for the basics!

May you be richly blessed as you grow in your knowledge of Him!