

NEW BELIEVERS STUDY

Written by Pastor Paul LeBoutillier

This is a Bible study for those just starting out in their walk with the Lord. It could also be beneficial for anyone wanting to revisit the foundational elements of your faith.

This study is divided into individual sections, with passages you will need to look up in your Bible. Take your time and look them all up.

Knowing your Bible

The first thing we need to do is to become familiar with the books of the Bible, which is made up of two sections — the **Old Testament** and the **New Testament**. The Old Testament has 39 books, while the New Testament has 27. Below is a list of the books that you can refer to when looking up passages throughout this study.

Old Testament:

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Genesis | 20. Proverbs |
| 2. Exodus | 21. Ecclesiastes |
| 3. Leviticus | 22. Song of Solomon |
| 4. Numbers | 23. Isaiah |
| 5. Deuteronomy | 24. Jeremiah |
| 6. Joshua | 25. Lamentations |
| 7. Judges | 26. Ezekiel |
| 8. Ruth | 27. Daniel |
| 9. 1 Samuel | 28. Hosea |
| 10. 2 Samuel | 29. Joel |
| 11. 1 Kings | 30. Amos |
| 12. 2 Kings | 31. Obadiah |
| 13. 1 Chronicles | 32. Jonah |
| 14. 2 Chronicles | 33. Micah |
| 15. Ezra | 34. Nahum |
| 16. Nehemiah | 35. Habakkuk |
| 17. Esther | 36. Zephaniah |
| 18. Job | 37. Haggai |
| 19. Psalms | 38. Zechariah |
| | 39. Malachi |

New Testament:

1. Matthew
2. Mark
3. Luke
4. John
5. Acts
6. Romans
7. 1 Corinthians
8. 2 Corinthians
9. Galatians
10. Ephesians
11. Philippians
12. Colossians
- 13.1 Thessalonians

- 14.2 Thessalonians
 - 15.1 Timothy
 - 16.2 Timothy
 17. Titus
 18. Philemon
 19. Hebrews
 20. James
 - 21.1 Peter
 - 22.2 Peter
 - 23.1 John
 - 24.2 John
 - 25.3 John
 26. Jude
 27. Revelation
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We're going to be asking and finding answers to **eight critical questions** in this study. They are:

1. **Who is God and what is He like?**
2. **Who is Jesus?**
3. **Who or what is the Holy Spirit?**
4. **What is sin and how does it affect us?**
5. **How did God deal with our sin and why was it necessary for Jesus to die?**
6. **What must we do in order to be saved?**
7. **What is water baptism?**
8. **What is worship?**

Let's get started...

Section 1: Who is God and What is He like?

A.W. Tozer wrote:

...what comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us.

— *A.W. Tozer, Knowledge of the Holy*

It's interesting that the Bible never sets out to prove the existence of God. His existence is assumed from the very start. The Scriptures declare that, to know that God exists, all you have to do is to look around at all He has made. In fact, the evidence is *so profound* that the Bible refers to any man who

refuses to acknowledge the existence of God as a “fool.” (Read Psalm 14:1)

When we think about what God is like, we must be very careful not to assume He is simply a bigger and stronger version of us. The Lord even rebukes anyone who might entertain such an idea by saying, "...you thought that I was one like yourself." Psalm 50:21. Even though we are created in His image, He is nothing like us in His essential nature.

So, let's deal with the question: **WHO IS GOD?**

When we compile information scattered throughout the Bible, we see a lot about God. Read the following passages and write down what you learn about Who God is.

• Isaiah 44:6-8 • _____

• Colossians 1:16, Psalm 90:2 and 1 Chronicles 29:11 • _____

• Psalm 102:25-27 • _____

• Isaiah 43:10 • _____

Next, **what is God like?** (Read the following passages and write down the description of God in each.)

• Psalm 119:68 • God is _____

• Romans 8:37-39 • God is _____

• 2 Peter 3:9 • God is _____

• Psalm 130:3-4 • God is _____

• Psalm 103:10-12 • God is _____

• Psalm 33:4 • God is _____

Something to think about:

What is one specific thing you believe to be most important for you to hang onto concerning Who God is and what He is like?

Section 2: Who is Jesus?

Some people believe that Jesus was a great spiritual leader. Others consider Him a great teacher or prophet. But Who did Jesus claim to be and what does the Bible say about Him? Read the following passages and record your answers.

- **John 1:1-2 and verse 14.**

In the passage above, John speaks of Jesus prior to His earthly birth. He refers to Jesus as “the Word.” List below John’s description of “the Word.”

- **Isaiah 7:14**

The passage from Isaiah was written 700 years before Jesus was born and yet it speaks of His birth. Based on this passage, complete these statements:

the _____ shall conceive and bear a son

and shall call his name _____.

Now read **Matthew 1:18–23**, which speaks of the birth of Jesus. Notice that Matthew quotes the passage that you read from Isaiah. He also gives you the meaning of the name, **Immanuel**. What does that name mean?

What are your conclusions about Who Jesus is, based on the verses you read in Isaiah 7 and Matthew 1? (Write them below.)

There are three very important things the Bible teaches about Jesus. Read the passages listed and, on the corresponding lines below, write out what these passages tell you about Jesus.

1. **Colossians 1:16** 2.

John 10:30

3. **John 14:6**

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Section 3: Who or What is the Holy Spirit?

The Star Wars movies were centered around “the force”, which was said to surround and control all things. Many people view the Holy Spirit in this same way — as an impersonal force that is used by God. But is that what the Bible says? In this section, we will investigate what Scripture teaches us about the Holy Spirit.

Psalms 139:7-8 • Write out what this passage tells you about the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 2:11 • What does the Apostle Paul tell us that the Holy Spirit knows?

Therefore, is the Holy Spirit an impersonal force like gravity or wind? Read **Acts 5:3-4**.

Peter accused Ananias of doing something to the Holy Spirit. What was it? _____

In **verse 4**, Peter said to Ananias: “You have not lied to man but to _____.”

Based on what we see in Acts 5:3-4, we conclude that:

- The Holy Spirit is a Person (This is because He can be lied to. It is impossible to lie to a force like gravity or wind).
- The Holy Spirit is called “God”.

Section 4: What is Sin and How does it Affect us?

The literal definition of sin means *to miss the mark*. And the mark is God's standard of righteousness, which we've all missed.

But, when you say the word "**sin**", most people assume we're talking about an action — in other words, something that someone has done, such as lying, or stealing. But sometimes, the Bible speaks of sin as a condition — something we've inherited from our first parents.

The devastation caused by sin is immense and it can be found everywhere — in our corrupted speech, in our broken relationships, our hurtful actions and even in our broken, physical bodies. Sin's influence is universal.

Read **Psalm 14:2-3** and **Romans 3:23**.

What common message do these passages convey?

Read **Isaiah 59:1-2**.

What does this passage tell us about how our sin has affected our relationship with God?

Read **Romans 6:23**.

This passage speaks of the "wages" or consequences of sin. What are they? _____

This is what is commonly referred to as: the **BAD NEWS!**

Section 5: How did God Deal with our Sin and Why was it Necessary for Jesus to Die?

Read **Galatians 4:4-5**. This passage tells us that God sent His Son to do something. What was it?

Look up the word **redeem** in a dictionary and write the definition below:

Read **Mark 10:45**. What did Jesus say that He came to do?

The word **ransom** means: a sum of money or other payment demanded or paid for the release of a prisoner.

But Jesus didn't ransom us with money. Read **1 Peter 1:18-19**. How did Jesus ransom us from death?

Something to think about

Have you ever thought about why God couldn't just forgive us? I mean, why did Jesus have to give His life in order for us to be forgiven? The answer is in a passage you've already looked up — **Romans 6:23** which says: "...the wages of sin is death..." God is perfectly just, which means He cannot overlook sin. It is impossible for a Holy God to sweep sin under the rug. It *must* be punished. God's predicament was finding a way to satisfy the demands of His own justice and righteousness against all who had sinned while, at the same time, finding a way to express His tender mercy and love toward all lost sinners.

"Moved by the Perfection of his holy love, God in Christ substituted himself for us sinners. That is the heart of the Cross of Christ." —John. R.W. Stott *The Cross of Christ* p.167

"...when we are united to Christ a mysterious exchange takes place: he took our curse, so that we may receive his blessing; he became sin with our sin, so that we may become righteous with his righteousness." —John. R.W. Stott *The Cross of Christ* p.148

Section 6: What must We do In Order to be Saved?

Read **John 3:16**.

The verse above is about God's love. According to this verse, what did God's love motivate Him to do?

This verse also shows us what we must do in order to be saved. What does it reveal?

In our modern society, the word "believe" means simply to acknowledge that something exists or is true. We might say, "I believe that man once walked on the moon." We acknowledge that belief but, in the end, it really doesn't have a significant effect on our lives.

In the same way, someone might say, "I believe in Jesus" and they are simply acknowledging that a man named Jesus once existed. But other than that, they have no real personal connection to Him.

In the Bible, the word “believe” carries a deeper meaning. It means to entrust yourself to someone and to have faith in them. When the Bible says we must “believe” in order to be saved, it is speaking of placing our confidence in the death of Jesus on the Cross on our behalf.

Read **John 1:12**.

John uses the word *believe*, and then he uses a word to help us understand the *action* of believing in Jesus. What is that word?

Why is this an action word? What action does it describe?

How would you respond to someone who told you they are trying to be good so they can go to Heaven? Read **Romans 3:20**. How does this verse answer the person who is trying to be good enough to earn their way to Heaven?

Now read **Ephesians 2:8-9**. How does this verse speak to the person who is trying to be good enough to go to Heaven?

Section 7: What is Water Baptism?

Water baptism is a wonderful declaration by a believer of their newfound faith, but there is also some confusion about it as well. There are 5 things you need to know about water baptism.

1. It was God’s idea

Read **Matthew 28:19**. List all the things in this passage that believers are supposed to do as they carry the Gospel to others.

2. Baptism doesn't save you

Some people have been taught that getting baptized in water is required to be saved. That's incorrect. Baptism is something we do AFTER we get saved.

Read **Ephesians 2:8-9**.

In this passage Paul writes that our salvation is a "_____ from God."

What does the word "gift" imply? _____

3. Baptism is an act of obedience

Read **Acts 2:37-38**.

Water baptism is a public declaration of your allegiance to Jesus as the Christ and commitment to Him as Lord.

4. Baptism identifies you with Christ

Read **Romans 6:3**.

Have you ever wondered why Jesus allowed Himself to be baptized by John? That seems strange since we know that John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. Jesus didn't have anything to repent of since He was sinless. But Jesus came to IDENTIFY with sinful mankind. That is why He submitted to the waters of baptism.

Christian baptism is different from the baptism of John, but our reason for doing it is similar, in that we are also identifying with Jesus in His death, burial and resurrection. In the passage above, the Apostle Paul speaks of being baptized into the death of Jesus.

5. Baptism is a symbol of new life

Read **Romans 6:4**.

Just as baptism identifies us with Christ in His death, in the same way, it also identifies us with His resurrection, which will take place when Jesus returns for His Church — something the Bible calls our "blessed hope." (Titus 2;13)

The resurrection from death is a future event, but in terms of the way we live, it is also a word that describes the new way we live our lives. Jesus has raised us from our former way of living and shown us a new way to live and act. So, in a very real sense, we can enjoy a resurrection from our old sinful ways even today!

You might be wondering, who should be baptized in water? We've already seen the answer to that question in Matthew 28:19. Look at it again. Who does Jesus tell us should be baptized?

Section 8: What is Worship, the Church, Giving, and Serving?

God created us to worship Him and yet, believers struggle to define worship. Thankfully, the Apostle Paul helps us out. Read **Romans 12:1**

What does the Bible call our spiritual worship?

What does it mean to offer ourselves to God?

Christians tend to think that singing songs, clapping or raising their hands is what defines worship. But those are just expressions of worship — not worship itself. True worship is offering ourselves to God daily. The Apostle Paul calls this “a living sacrifice.”

Why do you think offering ourselves to God is referred to as a sacrifice?

The Church

What 4 things did the early believer's commit themselves to? 1) _____, 2) _____,
3) _____ 4) _____

Read Ephesians 2:20

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-13; 27

Giving (Tithing) - comes from Hebrew and means “a tenth”

Genesis 14:19-20 Started with Abraham (pre-Law)

Malachi 3:8-12 “test Me in this”

2 Corinthians 9:6-8 “cheerful giver”

Leviticus 27:30 (required in the Law)

Matthew 23:23 Jesus required it

Serving

Romans 12:1-2

Matthew 20:26-28

Philippians 2:3-8

Colossians 3:23-24

1 Peter 4:10-11

Mark 10:42-45

That's it! You've completed this first short study of the basics. But there's a lot more to learn. I want to encourage you to be in the Word every day. Pray before you start reading and ask the Lord to open your heart and give you understanding. He is faithful and will enable you to lay hold of the wonderful truths of His Word. Never stop pressing in on Jesus!