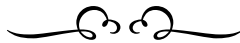


A landscape photograph of a dirt road leading to a tree at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow and lens flare. The sky is filled with soft, wispy clouds. The road is dark and textured, leading the eye towards a single, large tree in the distance. The foreground is dominated by tall, golden grasses on the left side of the road.

Christian BASICS

THE PATH to ETERNAL LIFE

BY EDWIN D. ROELS



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Foreword

This study course is the first in a series of courses which provide a relatively simple but comprehensive presentation of the Bible's teaching on a number of important subjects. This course, entitled CHRISTIAN BASICS, presents a summary of such basic Christian doctrines as the Bible, God, Creation, Sin, Jesus Christ, Salvation, the Holy Spirit, Prayer, Living as a Christian, Marriage and the Family, Suffering and Persecution, and The Future.

Each Lesson consists of a series of questions followed by answers based on a number of Scripture passages. All the answers have been written from an evangelical perspective, but they have also been written with the realization that sincere believers may differ somewhat in their understanding of certain topics such as baptism, the second coming of Christ, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and others. Students and teachers who study or teach this course are therefore given "room" to pursue their own understanding of these specific topics.

Each Lesson also provides a series of questions to assist students in their study. The first set of questions consists of True/False statements, the second provides Multiple Choice questions, and the third set provides questions for personal study, group discussion, or personal reflection.

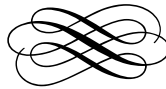
The other courses which are currently available in this study series are TALKING TO GOD (a study of the Bible's teachings on Prayer), WALKING WITH GOD (a study of the Ten Commandments and other teachings on how to live a life that

pleases the Lord), and IT'S ALL BY GRACE (a study of the Bible's teachings on the gift of salvation). The Lessons in these courses also provide many additional Scripture references as well as an additional series of questions which are specifically relevant for the main subjects studied in that Lesson.

Students who wish to receive formal academic credit for their study of this course are able to get a certificate of completion by studying with the Christian Leaders Institute (CLI) on the Internet. CLI provides diplomas for thousands of students around the world who complete a prescribed series of courses. CLI is recognized by various academic institutions in the United States and beyond and provides all of its services to students without cost!

May the Lord richly bless you as you study His Word, so that you may live a life of joyful obedience in your personal walk with God and also become a great blessing to many others in His name.

In Christ's joyful service,
Edwin D. Roels



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LESSON 1

THE BIBLE

Introduction

Most people in the world believe there is a “Higher Power” of some kind who is far greater than any person on earth. People have different ideas, however, as to who or what this “Higher Power” is. Some people do not believe in a personal God at all. Others believe that there are hundreds or even millions of gods. The Bible, however, teaches that there is only one true God and that he alone is worthy of our worship and our praise.

But you may ask, “Why should I trust what the Bible says?” That’s a fair question! It may not be possible to “prove” to you that the Bible is truly the Word of God, but there are some very good reasons why millions of people do believe that it is. Among those reasons are the following.

Reasons to Believe that the Bible is the Word of God

- (1) No other book in the entire world is as old, as trustworthy and as comprehensive as the Bible is in teaching us about God, ourselves, and the future. The Bible begins with the story of the creation of the world and ends with the promise of a new world where there will be no sin, no sickness, no suffering and no death. In between the accounts of the world’s wonderful beginning and its glorious future, the Bible gives us the history of man’s life on earth, including his fall into sin and his salvation from sin. It also tells us about many of the marvelous works of God throughout the course of human history.
- (2) The writers of the Bible taught and believed that their writings were inspired by God. Jesus Christ, who is honored and trusted by more people than anyone who has ever lived on this earth, also believed and taught that the Bible is truly the Word of God.

- (3) The Bible provides answers to many of our sincere questions about God, our world and ourselves which we cannot find anywhere else. Neither nature nor history nor philosophy nor any other book provides the answers which our minds and hearts are looking for.
- (4) The Bible not only teaches us what is right and what is wrong in the sight of God, it also teaches us how we can gain the power to do what is right and overcome what is wrong.
- (5) The Bible has many prophecies concerning individuals, nations, and specific events. Many of these prophecies have already been fulfilled exactly as they were foretold. Since many of the Bible's prophecies have already been fulfilled in the past, we can also trust what it teaches about the future.
- (6) The Bible contains sixty-six different "books" or "documents" which were written over a period of 1500 years by forty different men who lived on three different continents. However, each part of the Bible, when properly understood, agrees with all the other parts.
- (7) Scholars have carefully studied archeological findings and other historical materials which confirm the accuracy of the Bible's teachings about geography and history. Though the Bible is very old, it is clearly a very trustworthy book in everything it records.
- (8) We have more ancient copies of the Bible (or parts of the Bible) than any other book that has ever been written. We can have complete confidence that the Bible we have today is essentially unchanged from the time it was first written. There is no other ancient book like it.
- (9) The Bible has been the most influential book in the history of the world. It was the first book ever printed. It has been translated into more languages than any other book. It has been distributed more widely than any other book. And God has preserved it from every attempt of people to destroy it.
- (10) Millions of people have been dramatically changed for good through reading, studying, and believing what the Bible teaches. The Bible does not simply give us information about things that happened in the past. It gives us guidelines for living in the present and provides us with encouragement and hope regarding the future. It teaches us how we can find forgiveness, happiness and peace in our present life

and shows us the way to an eternal life of glory, delight and joy in the presence of the one true God who created us and loves us.



QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BIBLE

1. Where did the Bible come from?

Every book of the Bible has a human author, but God himself was the ultimate author. According to 2 Timothy 3:16, the Bible is “God-breathed.” This means that God supernaturally “breathed out” his message through the persons who wrote the Bible. Sometimes God spoke to the writers directly. Sometimes he dictated things to them. At other times he helped them to search out the truth so that they could share it with others. And at all times he guided them in such a way that they wrote down in their own personal styles the things he wanted them to write.

Scripture References

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness.”

2 Timothy 3:16

“For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.” 2 Peter 1:21

See also: Exodus 19:7; 20:1-19; 24:4; Joshua 24:26-27; 1 Kings 2:1-3; Jeremiah 36:1-2; Acts 28:23-25; Romans 16:25-26; Hebrews 1:1; 2 Peter 3:1-2.

2. What can we gain by studying the Bible?

- (a) The Bible teaches us many important truths that we cannot learn anywhere else.
- (b) The Bible teaches us how to live in a way that honors and pleases God.
- (c) The Bible promises us many wonderful blessings if we follow its teachings.
- (d) The Bible teaches us how we may have an everlasting life full of joy and peace after we die.

Scripture References

“It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” Matthew 4:4

“I have stored up your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.” Psalm 119:11

“The rules of the LORD are true. . . . More to be desired are they than gold; . . . in keeping them there is great reward.” Psalm 19:9-11

“Blessed is the man . . . whose delight is in the law of the LORD. . . . He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.” Psalm 1:1-3

See also: Psalm 19:7-11; Psalm 119: 41-45; 50-52; 89-93; 97-100; Proverbs 6:23; 22:21; Matthew 13:23; Luke 11:28.

3. Can we trust what the Bible says?

Yes! God’s Word is true in every way and all its promises will be fulfilled.

Scripture References

“All his precepts are trustworthy; they are established for ever and ever.” Psalm 111:7-8

“The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever.” Psalm 119:160

See also: 2 Samuel 22:31; Psalm 12:6; 19:7-9; 119:142, 151; Acts 1:16.

4. What did Jesus teach about the Bible?

When Jesus lived on earth, the New Testament had not yet been written. However, he quoted from the Old Testament, recognized it as the true Word of God, taught that it was completely trustworthy, and said that all its prophecies would surely be fulfilled.

Jesus said:

“Your Word is truth.” John 17:17

“Until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.” Matthew 5:18

“Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he [Jesus] interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.” Luke 24:27

See also: Matthew 5:17; Luke 24:25-27; John 2:22; 5:39.

5. Since the Bible was written many years ago, can it still be of help to us today?

Absolutely! The Bible is a living book which speaks to the hearts of people in every age, in every place and in every situation. Its truths continue to be a guide, an inspiration, a comfort, and a challenge to people around the world.

Scripture References

“For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.”

Hebrews 4:12

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

2 Timothy 3:16-17

“Forever, O LORD, your word is firmly fixed in the heavens.”

Psalms 119:89

See also: Isaiah 40:8; 59:21; Mark 13:31; Luke 16:17; 1 Peter 1:24-25; Jude 3.

6. How can the Bible be a guide for us?

The Bible teaches us what is right and what is wrong in the sight of God. It also gives us important moral guidelines for every area of life—marriage, family, work, education, recreation, leisure, business, politics, and personal relationships. Though the Bible does not deal with every possible situation that may arise, it does give us general principles which can be helpful throughout our entire lives no matter where we live or what we are doing.

Scripture References

“How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word.” Psalm 119:9

“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.” Psalm 119:105

See also: Deuteronomy 31:10-12; Psalm 119:24-40, 159; Proverbs 6:20-23; Isaiah 2:3.

7. What are some of the other ways the Bible can help us in our everyday life?

The Bible provides us with comfort in times of sorrow, encouragement in times of special need, hope in times of distress, inspiration in times of personal challenge, peace in times of turmoil, and assurance of God’s loving presence at all times.

Scripture References

“The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart.” Psalm 19:8

“Great peace have those who love your law; nothing can make them stumble.” Psalm 119:165

“I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have given me life.”
Psalm 119:93

“Whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.” Romans 15:4

See also: Psalm 19:7; 119:1-16; 32, 45, 50; James 1:25; 1 Peter 2:2; Revelation 1:3.

8. What is the greatest benefit we can receive from reading and studying the Bible?

The greatest benefit we can receive through studying and believing the Bible is finding the way to eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ. All other blessings we receive in this life may be temporary, but the life we receive through faith in Jesus is eternal and glorious.

Scripture References

“From childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.” 2 Timothy 3:15

“These are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”
John 20:31

See also: 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Ephesians 1:1-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15; 2 Timothy 3:15; James 1:18, 21.



LESSON 1 – TEST QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE

Circle T or F.

1. T F Though the Bible was written down by human beings, it is truly the Word of God.
2. T F God does not care if non-Christians worship many gods, but he doesn't want Christians to do so.
3. T F God wants us to make pictures and idols to represent him so that people can understand him better.
4. T F The Bible is the oldest and most trustworthy book to teach us about God, ourselves, and the future.
5. T F The writers of the Bible made up many stories which are interesting to read but are not true.
6. T F Many prophecies in the Bible have already been fulfilled.
7. T F God inspired and guided the writers of the Bible so that they wrote what he wanted them to write.
8. T F The Bible says: "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."
9. T F The Bible is far too complicated for most people to get any benefit from reading it by themselves.
10. T F We can get many benefits from reading the Bible even if we don't understand it perfectly.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Choose which of the three statements is correct. Circle A or B or C.

1. A. The God of the Bible is one of many gods that are worthy of worship and honor and praise.
B. The God of the Bible is the only true God.
C. There are many true Gods who rule over different parts of the world.

2.
 - A. The Bible was written over a period of about 1500 years by forty different writers.
 - B. The Bible was written over a period of 12 years by a group of 15 religious leaders.
 - C. We do not know who wrote the Bible.
3.
 - A. Jesus Christ wrote the first four books of the New Testament.
 - B. Jesus Christ wrote the entire New Testament.
 - C. Jesus Christ did not write any part of the Bible.
4.
 - A. God dictated the entire Bible word for word.
 - B. God guided all the writers in such a way that they wrote what he wanted them to write.
 - C. God had no part at all in the writing of the Bible.
5.
 - A. The Bible is too old to be of much value for people living today.
 - B. The Bible is useful and relevant for people in every age and in every place.
 - C. The Bible is of little value for scholars and people who are highly educated.
6.
 - A. Jesus Christ had very high regard for the Old Testament and taught that it was the true word of God.
 - B. Jesus Christ introduced a totally new religion that had little to do with the Old Testament.
 - C. Jesus Christ told people to ignore everything that had been written before he came into the world.
7.
 - A. The Bible contains many prophecies regarding the future which will probably never be fulfilled.
 - B. All the prophecies in the Bible have already been fulfilled or will be fulfilled in the future.
 - C. The Bible does not contain any prophecies concerning the future.
8.
 - A. The Bible has been translated into more languages than any other book.
 - B. The Bible should not be translated into the languages of people who might not understand it.
 - C. The Bible would lose much of its value if people translated it into another language.

9.
 - A. The Bible's teachings about history and geography are very accurate.
 - B. The Bible's teachings about "spiritual things" are true, but its teachings about history and geography are not.
 - C. The Bible's teachings about most things are neither helpful nor accurate.
10.
 - A. The greatest benefit we can receive from studying the Bible is learning how to get along with others.
 - B. The greatest benefit we can receive from studying the Bible is learning how we can find eternal life through Jesus.
 - C. The greatest benefit we can receive from studying the Bible is learning how we can earn a good living.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What difference would it make in your life if you did not have a Bible?
2. Why is it important that we can trust what the Bible says?
3. In what ways does the Old Testament help us understand the New Testament?
4. Are the words of Jesus which are recorded in the Bible more important than other parts of the Bible?
5. What is meant when we say that the Bible presents "progressive" revelation from God?
6. Since the Bible is a very old book, shouldn't we look to "newer" books for better and more accurate information about God and the world?
7. What do you feel are some of the strongest reasons for believing what the Bible says?
8. Is it confusing or is it helpful to have more than one translation of the Bible in your language?
9. What is the best way to respond to people who believe and teach that the Bible has been changed and corrupted over the years?
10. What are some of the most fruitful ways to study the Bible and learn what it teaches?

LESSON 2

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT GOD

Introduction

For many people the word “God” does not mean very much. They do not know who God is or what he has done. They do not know whether there is only one God or many gods—or whether there is any God at all. They may have some general ideas about God and may even use his name in their ordinary conversation, but they definitely do not know him. And they aren’t at all sure that it is even possible to know anything about him. They are not terrified by his awesome holiness, they are not afraid of his perfect justice, and they are not comforted by his gracious promises. They have no idea whether or not God knows any more about them than they know about him. And they have no idea how to find out. Whether God truly exists or not, he definitely does not have a significant place in their present life or in their plans for the future.

In this Lesson you will learn some of the things the Bible teaches us about the one true God. Whether or not you believe what the Bible says, you will at least learn what the Bible teaches.

1. Who is God?

God is the Creator of the world and the source of all life.

Scripture References

“The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth . . . gives to all mankind life and breath and everything.” Acts 17:24-25

“You are the LORD, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you.” Nehemiah 9:6

See also: Genesis 1:1-31; Psalm 33:6; 89:11-13; 102:25-27; 146:6; Isaiah 42:5; 44:24; 45:12; Zechariah 12:1; Revelation 10:5-6.

2. How many true Gods are there?

There are millions of so-called “gods” in the world, but there is only one true God who is worthy of our worship and praise.

Scripture References

God said, *“I am the LORD, and there is no other; besides me there is no God.”* Isaiah 45:5

“Thus says the LORD . . . the LORD of hosts: ‘I am the first and I am the last; besides me there is no god.’” Isaiah 44:6

“Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me. I, I am the LORD, and besides me there is no savior.” Isaiah 43:10-11

See also: Deuteronomy 4:35; 32:39; 2 Samuel 7:22; 1 Kings 8:23; 1 Chronicles 17:20; Psalm 86:10; 1 Corinthians 8:4-6.

3. How has God made himself known to us?

God has made himself known to people in many ways. One of the ways he has revealed himself to people around the world is through his work of creation.

Scripture References

“The heavens declare the glory of God and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.” Psalm 19:1-4

“His invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.” Romans 1:20

See also: Job 36:22-33; 37:2-34; Isaiah 40:5-14, 21-31; Psalm 97:1-6; Acts 14:15-17.

4. Is there any other way in which God has made himself known to us?

Yes. God frequently spoke to prophets and others so that they would know his will for their lives. He also provided them with comfort, encouragement, guidance, and other information that he wanted them to have. Those who received messages from God often wrote them down so that others could also benefit from them. Many of those written messages were collected together in The Bible.

Scripture References

“Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets.” Hebrews 1:1

Jesus said, *“Everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.’ Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.”* Luke 24:44-45

Jesus said, *“The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”* John 14:26

See also: Exodus 3:1-6, 14; 6:1-8; Isaiah 1:2-3, 15-20; Jeremiah 1:4-19; Zephaniah 1:1-9; James 5:10; 1 Peter 1:10-11; 2 Peter 3:2.

5. How has God revealed himself to us most clearly?

God revealed himself most clearly and fully in his Son, Jesus Christ.

Scripture References

“In these last days he [God] has spoken to us by his Son.”
Hebrews 1:2

“No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father’s side, he has made him known.” John 1:18

“[Jesus] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.” Colossians 1:15

See also: Matthew 3:17; Mark 1:1; John 1:1-2; 32-34; 17:1-5, 24-25; Colossians 1:13-16; 2:9; 2 Peter 1:16-18; 1 John 4:14-15; Revelation 22:12-13.

6. What does the Bible teach us about the holiness of God?

God himself is perfectly holy, free from imperfections or faults of any kind in his Person and in his dealings with others. Because of his own

holiness, he also requires and demands that we also must be holy. Further, his holiness requires that all actions, thoughts, and words which are not holy must be punished in one way or another.

Scripture References

“Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!” Isaiah 6:3

“Exalt the LORD . . . for the LORD our God is holy!” Psalm 99:9

“There is none holy like the LORD.” 1 Samuel 2:2

See also: Exodus 15:11; 1 Samuel 2:2; 6:20; Psalm 22:3; Ezekiel 39:7; Revelation 4:8, 6:10, 15:4.

7. What does the Bible teach about the goodness and grace of God?

God gives us both material and spiritual blessings in abundance. All that we receive from him is given to us because of his kindness and grace and not because of anything we merit or deserve.

Scripture References

“Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle’s.” Psalm 103:2-5

“The LORD is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made. . . . The LORD upholds all who are falling and raises up all who are bowed down. . . . He fulfills the desire of those who fear him; he also hears their cry and saves them.” Psalm 145:9, 14, 19

“He did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.” Acts 14:17

See also: Deuteronomy 7:7-8; Psalm 34:8; 65:9-13; 68:19; 145:1-21; Nahum 1:7; Matthew 5:43-48; Luke 6:32-35; Romans 2:4; 1 Corinthians 1:4-9.

8. Does God forgive the sins of those who truly repent?

Yes. Though God himself is perfectly holy and wants us to live holy and obedient lives, he is also slow to anger, merciful, and forgiving. When we are genuinely sorry for our sins and ask him to forgive us, he graciously does so.

Scripture References

“The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.” Psalm 103:8-12

“You, O LORD, are a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness.” Psalm 86:15

“Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression? . . . He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love.” Micah 7:18

See also: Exodus 34:6; Numbers 14:18; Psalm 32:1-5; 65:3; Jeremiah 3:12; 31:34; 33:8; 36:3; 50:20; Ephesians 1:5-8; 2:4-5; 2 Peter 3:9.

9. Does God forgive those who do not love him or trust him or repent of their sins?

No. God is a God of mercy and love, but he is also a God of justice and holiness and will punish those who do not repent of their sins.

Scripture References

“The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness, keeping steadfast love for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, but who will by no means clear the guilty.” Exodus 34:6-7

“Because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed.” Romans 2:5

“For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.” Ephesians 5:5-6

See also: Proverbs 11:21; 16:5; Jeremiah 17:9-10; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Peter 2:4-19; 3:3-7; Revelation 21:7-8.

10. What does the Bible teach about the love of God?

Though God must punish the sins of those who do not truly repent, his love is far greater than we can measure or even imagine.

Scripture References

“For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love for those who fear him.” Psalm 103:11

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

“For you, O LORD, are good and forgiving, abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon you.” Psalm 86:5

“God is love.” 1 John 4:8

See also: Exodus 15:13, 26; Deuteronomy 7:7-9; 2 Chronicles 7:6; Psalm 33:5; 57:9-10; Jeremiah 31:3; Luke 15:11-24; Romans 5:8; Ephesians 2:4-5; 1 John 3:1; 4:8-12, 15-19.

11. Was there ever a time when God did not exist?

No. Though we cannot understand the eternity of God, the Bible clearly teaches that God did not have a beginning and he will never have an end. He is from everlasting to everlasting.

Scripture References

“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.” Psalm 90:2

“The LORD is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.” Isaiah 40:28

“To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.” 1 Timothy 1:17

See also: Deuteronomy 33:27; Psalm 41:13, 93:2, 102:24, 135:13, 145:13, Isaiah 57:15; Jeremiah 10:10; Daniel 4:34; 1 Timothy 6:15-16; Revelation 10:6.

12. Is it possible for us to see God?

No. At times God did assume a physical form which made him visible to people he was talking to, but he is an eternal spiritual being that cannot be seen by human eyes.

Scripture References

“God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth.” John 4:24

“No one has ever seen God. . . .” 1 John 4:12

“[God] dwells in unapproachable light, whom no one has ever seen or can see.” 1 Timothy 6:16

See also: Exodus 33:19-20; John 1:18; 5:37; 6:46; Romans 1:20; 1 Timothy 1:17.

13. Is God’s power limited in any way?

No. God is all powerful and is able to do whatever he chooses to do. This attribute of God is referred to as his “omnipotence.”

Scripture References

“Whatever the LORD pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps.” Psalm 135:6

“Our God is in the heavens; he does all that he pleases.” Psalm 115:3

“Nothing will be impossible with God.” Luke 1:37

See also: Genesis 18:14; Jeremiah 32:17, 27; Matthew 3:9; 19:26; 26:53; Mark 10:27; Romans 1:20; Ephesians 1:19.

14. Is God able to be in more than one place at the same time?

Yes. God is always present everywhere. This is something we cannot fully comprehend, but the Bible makes it very clear that there is no place where we can hide from God or flee from God. This attribute of God is called his “omnipresence.”

Scripture References

“Where shall I go from your Spirit? Or where shall I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there! If I make my bed in Sheol, you are there!” Psalm 139:7-8

“The eyes of the LORD are in every place, keeping watch on the evil and the good.” Proverbs 15:3

“‘Can a man hide himself in secret places so that I cannot see him?’ declares the LORD. ‘Do I not fill heaven and earth?’” Jeremiah 23:24

See also: Deuteronomy 4:39; 1 Kings 8:27; Psalm 139:5-12.

15. Is there anything that God does not know?

No. God knows everything about everyone everywhere. He not only knows what we say and do but he also knows our thoughts and desires. He knows the past as well as the future. There is absolutely nothing hidden from God. This attribute of God is called his “omniscience.”

Scripture References

“O LORD, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O LORD, you know it altogether.” Psalm 139:1-4

“God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything.”
1 John 3:20

“No creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.” Hebrews 4:13

See also: Job 21:22; 28:24; 34:21; Psalm 33:13-15; 44:20-21; 139:1-6, 12-16; 147:5; Isaiah 40:27-28; Jeremiah 23:24; Matthew 10:29-30; Romans 11:33.

16. Does God rule over the entire world or only part of it?

God is the sovereign Lord who rules over the entire world. Though there are many human rulers who exercise authority over parts of the world, God has ultimate authority over every person, every ruler, every kingdom and every nation. He has always been Lord over all and he always will be.

Scripture References

“The LORD is God in heaven above and on the earth beneath; there is no other.” Deuteronomy 4:39

“Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty, for all that is in the heavens and in the earth is yours. Yours is the kingdom, O LORD, and you are exalted as head above all.” 1 Chronicles 29:11

“For the LORD, the Most High, is to be feared, a great king over all the earth.” Psalm 47:2

See also: 2 Kings 19:15; 1 Chronicles 29:10-13; 2 Chronicles 20:6; Psalm 67:1-7; 68:32-35; 83:18; 95:1-5; 103:19; 135:5-6; 145:1-13; Isaiah 12:4-5; 37:16; Malachi 1:11.

17. May we make images or pictures of God to help us worship him?

No. God does not want us to make idols of any kind. No idol can begin to represent the eternal and invisible God or help us worship God in the way he wants us to worship him. Idols always lead people away from God and never draw them closer to him.

Scripture References

“You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.” Exodus 20:4

“Being then God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man.” Acts 17:29

See also: Leviticus 26:1; Deuteronomy 7:24-25; Isaiah 40:18-20; Jeremiah 10:3-11; Ezekiel 7:20-21; Romans 1:21-23.

18. Is it possible for us to understand everything about God?

No. Though we are made in the image of God and in some ways are like God, God is a spiritual and eternal being who is far greater than we will ever be able to understand. We should therefore not reject or deny things the Bible teaches about God simply because they are beyond our human understanding.

Scripture References

“Can you find out the deep things of God? Can you find out the limit of the Almighty? It is higher than heaven . . . Deeper than Sheol . . . Its measure is longer than the earth and broader than the sea.” Job 11:7-9

“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:9

“Oh the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and how inscrutable his ways! ‘For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his

*counselor?’ ‘Or who has given a gift to him that he might be repaid?’
For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be
glory forever. Amen.” Romans 11:33-36*

See also: Deuteronomy 29:29; Job 5:9; Ecclesiastes 8:16-17;
Isaiah 40:27-31; Daniel 4:34-35; 1 Corinthians 2:16.



LESSON 2 – TEST QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE

Circle T or F.

1. T F God is the Creator of the world.
2. T F God does not have either a beginning or an end.
3. T F God is so holy that he will never forgive anyone who deliberately sins against him.
4. T F God is so gracious that he will always forgive everyone whether they repent or not.
5. T F God rules over the entire world and there is no one greater than he is.
6. T F God does not care if we worship idols as long as the idols represent himself.
7. T F God is very powerful and can do whatever he chooses to do.
8. T F God is always present everywhere, so we cannot hide from God.
9. T F God knows everything that people do but he does not know what they think.
10. T F God is so much greater than we are that we can never understand him fully.



MULTIPLE CHOICE

Choose which of the three statements is correct. Circle A or B or C.

1. A. The world came into existence purely by chance.
B. No one knows how the world came into existence.
C. God created the world in the beginning and continues to watch over it and care for it.
2. A. God revealed many things about himself through his work of creation.
B. God revealed everything we need to know about him through his work of creation.
C. God revealed nothing about himself through his creation.
3. A. The God of the Bible is the only true God who has ever existed.
B. The God of the Bible won a great victory over other gods, so he is now the only God left.
C. The God of the Bible is the greatest of all gods living today.
4. A. The Bible does not teach us anything more than we can learn from a study of nature and history.
B. The Bible teaches us many things about God which we could never learn anywhere else.
C. The Bible teaches us very little about God since it is a very old book and cannot be trusted.
5. A. God revealed himself most fully in the creation of human beings who were made in his image.
B. God revealed himself most clearly and fully in his Son, Jesus Christ.
C. God reveals himself most fully in the birth of every new child that is born.
6. A. God is limited in what he can do because of the power of evil spirits in the world.
B. God is limited in what he can do because of the power of so many evil people in the world.
C. God is not limited in what he can do by anything or anyone at any time.

7.
 - A. God will never bless anyone who does not love and serve him.
 - B. God often blesses people in many ways even if they do not love and serve him.
 - C. God blesses everyone with exactly the same blessings.
8.
 - A. God will forgive people who truly repent of their sins, but he will not do this more than once or twice.
 - B. God will forgive people only if they didn't realize that they were breaking one of his laws.
 - C. God will forgive people over and over if they truly repent and trust in Jesus as their Savior.
9.
 - A. The Bible says that "God is love."
 - B. The Bible says that "God is mercy."
 - C. The Bible says that "God is power."
10.
 - A. God is a spirit and is invisible to human eyes.
 - B. God is clearly visible to those who have enough faith to see him.
 - C. God has both a body and a spirit and we can see his body but not his spirit.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the most important things we should believe about God?
2. Can we fully understand everything the Bible teaches about God?
3. Why is it significant that there is only one true God?
4. What would your life be like if there were no God?
5. What would your life be like if there was a God but you did not know him personally?
6. Why is it wrong to make idols or images of God?
7. What are some of the things people can learn about God if they do not have a Bible or someone to teach them?
8. What can you learn about God from the Bible that you cannot learn in any other way?
9. If you had only 20 minutes to teach someone about God, what are some of the things you would talk about?
10. What are some of the truths about God which are most important to you personally?

LESSON 3

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT THE ORIGIN OF OUR WORLD

Introduction

Many people wonder about the origin of our world. They ask: “Where did everything come from? How did the universe get started? Was there someone who made this beautiful and complex world? Or did everything just happen by chance?”

Today many people believe that everything in our world came about simply by chance. They teach that all that exists in the world came into being through a long, slow process of mindless evolution. There was no one to start the process and no one to guide it. Things just happened! Animals and people and flowers and trees and mountains and hills and everything that exists made their entrance into the world with no purpose and no future. But if that is true, then we human beings are also simply an “accident” with no real purpose in the present and no meaningful hope for the future. We live for a few years, then we die and are forgotten.

But that’s not what happened. Human beings didn’t gradually make their appearance in the world without any purpose or direction. They were created by a powerful, loving, and eternal God. They were created as intelligent beings who had the potential of enjoying a wonderful and joyful life with other human beings and also with their Creator. God even created them in his own image, so they could know him and love him and serve him. God also gave them the privilege and the task of ruling over the rest of his beautiful creation so that everything would serve the purpose for which God created it. And if they continued to love and serve him, they would live forever in peace and joy and harmony with the God who created them.

However, the world today is obviously no longer a world of perfect harmony and unending delight. Beautiful flowers wilt and die and streams and rivers overflow or dry up. Hurricanes, floods and storms bring terrible destruction. People get sick and die. Nation rises up against nation and people hurt and kill one another. Tensions and strife abound. Misery is found everywhere.

Many people also wonder why there are so many good and beautiful things in our world while, at the same time, there are also many things that are neither good nor beautiful. Did the world start out good and then become bad? Or did it start out bad and then gradually get better? Or were there both good and bad things from the very beginning?

In this lesson you will read the Bible's answers to those questions.

1. Where did our universe come from?

God created the entire universe out of nothing by his almighty power.

Scripture References

"In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." Genesis 1:1

"By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible."
Hebrews 11:3

"[God] created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it." Revelation 10:6

See also: Genesis 1:1-31; Psalm 146:6; Nehemiah 9:5-6; Isaiah 45:12; 48:13; Acts 4:24; 17:24; Revelation 4:11; 10:6.

2. What was the earth like in the very beginning?

Before God formed the earth into a beautiful place for man to live, the earth was formless, dark and empty.

Scripture Reference

"The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters." Genesis 1:2

See also: Genesis 1:3-5; Psalm 104:30.

3. How did God create the world?

In Genesis 1 we read repeatedly “And God said,” and things came into being. Other passages in the Bible indicate that the world was fashioned by the “hands” of the Lord. All of these passages teach us that God was the Creator who used his divine power to bring into being a beautiful, wonderful, and incredible universe.

Scripture References

“And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.”
Genesis 1:3

“Of old you [God] laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands.” Psalm 102:25

See also: Psalm 8:3; 95:5; 148:5; Isaiah 42:5; 66:2; Jeremiah 10:12; 27:5.

4. Was the original creation good or bad . . . or mixed?

The world that God created in the beginning was good in every way. After each act of creation recorded in Genesis 1, we read the specific words: “God saw that it was good.” And, at the end of God’s initial creative work, we read that everything God had made was “very good.” Sin had not yet entered the world and the earth was free from corruption, disharmony and decay.

Scripture References

“God saw that it was good.” Genesis 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25

“And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.” Genesis 1:31

5. Where did human beings come from?

After God had prepared the earth as a home for human beings, he made a man and a woman in his image and likeness to “rule” over his creation. Though the man was created before the woman, both man and woman were made in God’s image and both had equal standing in the sight of God.

Scripture References

“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.’ . . . So God created man in his own image, in the

image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”
Genesis 1:26-27

“And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.’” Genesis 1:28

See also: Job 33:4; Psalm 8:4-5; 100:3; Acts 17:24-28.

6. How did God create the first man and the first woman?

God first made a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Later, God took a rib from man’s side and made a woman from the rib.

Scripture References

“Then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.” Genesis 2:7

“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’ . . . So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept 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.”
Genesis 2:18, 21, 22

See also: Genesis 18:27; Job 10:9; 34:15; Psalm 103:14; Ecclesiastes 12:7; 1 Corinthians 11:8-9; 1 Timothy 2:13.

7. What were the names of the first man and the first woman?

The first man was called Adam (which may mean red or ground or human being). Adam named his wife Eve (which may mean life-giver).

Scripture Reference

“The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother of all living.” Genesis 3:20

8. Where did Adam and Eve live?

God placed them in a beautiful garden called the Garden of Eden. No one knows exactly where this was, but it probably was somewhere in the part of the world we know as the Middle East.

Scripture Reference

“And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed.” Genesis 2:8

See also: Isaiah 51:3; Ezekiel 36:35; Joel 2:3.

9. What responsibilities did God give to Adam and Eve?

God told them to be fruitful, to fill the earth, to rule over it, and to take care of it. God provided them with everything necessary—mentally and physically—to do what he had commanded them to do.

Scripture Reference

“And God blessed them. And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.’” Genesis 1:28

See also: Genesis 1:29-30; Genesis 2:15.

10. What “test” did God give to Adam and Eve?

God told Adam and Eve that they might eat from every tree in the Garden of Eden where they were living except for one tree called “the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” God very clearly and very strongly commanded them not to eat of this one tree. This was to be a test of their love for God, their trust in God, and their obedience to God.

Scripture Reference

“And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, ‘You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.’” Genesis 2:16-17

See also: Genesis 1:29-30; Genesis 2:15.

11. Did Adam and Eve obey God’s command?

They did obey at first, but when Satan, an evil spirit, came to them in the form of a serpent, he lied to them, tempted them to eat from the tree, and promised them that if they did eat of it, they would become like God himself. They listened to Satan, believed him, and ate from the tree instead of obeying and trusting God.

Scripture References

“Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, ‘Did God actually say, “You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?”’

Genesis 3:1

“So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.”

Genesis 3:6

See also: Genesis 3:1-7; 2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:13-14.

12. What was the result of their disobedience?

First of all, Adam and Eve immediately died “spiritually.” That is, they “died” in their relationship with God. Things were no longer the same between them and God. They lost their fellowship with God, they lost the joy they previously had in walking and talking with God, and they became afraid of God rather than delighting in being with him. They also became aware of their nakedness for the first time and felt ashamed in God’s presence. Their disobedience also led eventually to their own physical death. Further, the entire world was affected by their sin. There were still many good and beautiful things in the world after they sinned, but for the first time the world became subject to suffering, pain, decay, and death.

Scripture References

“The man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.” Genesis 3:8

“To the woman [God] said, ‘I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.’ And to Adam he said, ‘Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.’” Genesis 3:16-19

13. What does the sin of Adam have to do with us today?

Adam was the representative of the entire human race. When he sinned, everyone was affected by the consequences of his sin. All of us now come into this world with a sinful human nature which is inclined toward evil rather than toward good. The world in which we live is a world filled with suffering, sorrow, pain, decay and death. And no matter how strong and healthy we may be, we know that our lives, too, will end in death. The results of Adam's disobedience and sin are far greater and more significant than Adam could ever have imagined when he gave in to temptation and listened to Satan rather than to God.

Scripture References

"Sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned." Romans 5:12

"The whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now." Romans 8:22

"In Adam all die." 1 Corinthians 15:22

See also: Romans 5:12-18; Ephesians 2:1-3.

14. Does this mean that everyone in the whole world is guilty before God?

Yes. There are no exceptions except for Jesus Christ who was perfectly sinless and was not born with a sinful human nature (1 John 3:5).

Scripture References

"None is righteous, no, not one." Romans 3:10

"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

Romans 3:23

See also: Genesis 6:5; Psalm 53:3; Proverbs 20:9; Isaiah 53:6; 64:6; 1 John 1:8

15. Won't a loving God simply overlook the fact that we are all sinners?

No. Though God is gracious and merciful, he is also holy and just. He cannot and will not let sin go unpunished.

Scripture References

“The LORD is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but he will by no means clear the guilty.” Numbers 14:18

“The LORD is slow to anger and great in power, and the LORD will by no means clear the guilty.” Nahum 1:3

“Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap.” Galatians 6:7

See also: Exodus 34:6-7; Joshua 24:19-20; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-10; Hebrews 2:1-4.

16. Since we are all sinners before God, is there no hope for any of us?

There certainly is! Even before God pronounced judgment on Adam and Eve for what they had done (Genesis 3:16-19), he said that he would eventually defeat the powers of evil and destroy them (Genesis 3:15). Thousands of years of human history passed, however, before Jesus came into our world to pay the penalty for Adam’s sin . . . and also for our own sins.

Scripture References

“The LORD God said to the serpent (Satan), . . . “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”” Genesis 3:14-15

“As a father shows compassion to his children, so the LORD shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.” Psalm 103:13-14

See also: Psalm 78:38-39; 85:2; 86:5, 13; 99:8; 130:3,7; Proverbs 28:13; Ezekiel 33:10-11; John 3:16; Hebrews 8:12; 1 John 1:9.



LESSON 3 – TEST QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE

Circle T or F.

1. T F In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
2. T F God created everything in one moment of time.
3. T F God created human beings before he created anything else.
4. T F God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.
5. T F God created both man and woman in his own image.
6. T F God created both man and woman from the dust of the ground.
7. T F God told Adam and Eve not to eat the fruit from any of the trees in the Garden of Eden.
8. T F Adam and Eve faithfully obeyed the command the Lord had given them.
9. T F Because God is a holy and just God, he cannot let sin go unpunished.
10. T F God promised that someday he himself would defeat the powers of evil and destroy them.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Choose which of the three statements is correct. Circle A or B or C.

1. A. There were many bad things AND good things in the world from the very beginning.
B. All the bad and evil things in the world came about because of man's sin and disobedience.
C. Everything was bad in the beginning but gradually things got better.
2. A. By faith we accept the Bible's teaching that God created the world.
B. We can easily prove that God created the world.
C. Scientists can easily prove that God did not create the world.

3.
 - A. God told Adam and Eve that if they disobeyed him they would die.
 - B. God told Adam and Eve that if they disobeyed him they would get very sick.
 - C. God told Adam and Eve they if they disobeyed him no real harm would result from it.
4.
 - A. Adam and Eve ate some of the forbidden fruit because they were desperately hungry.
 - B. Adam and Eve ate some of the forbidden fruit because they didn't care what God had said.
 - C. Adam and Eve ate some of the forbidden fruit because they were tempted to eat it by an evil spirit.
5.
 - A. When Adam and Eve sinned they became very sick and soon died from their illness.
 - B. When Adam and Eve sinned they immediately died "spiritually."
 - C. When Adam and Eve sinned nothing significant changed at all.
6.
 - A. Because of Adam's sin, every person in the entire world is now born with a sinful human nature.
 - B. Adam's sin was very serious but it has nothing to do with us today.
 - C. God was displeased with Adam's disobedience, but he decided not to punish him for it.
7.
 - A. After Adam and Eve sinned, the world of nature was left totally unchanged.
 - B. The entire world was affected by the sin and disobedience of Adam and Eve.
 - C. When Adam and Eve sinned, God took away everything that was good and beautiful from the earth.
8.
 - A. After Adam and Eve sinned, God banished them from the Garden of Eden.
 - B. After Adam and Eve sinned, they first tried to hide from God but life soon returned to "normal."
 - C. After Adam and Eve sinned, God cut down all the trees in the Garden of Eden.

9.
 - A. God immediately forgave Adam and Eve after they sinned and decided not to punish them.
 - B. God punished Adam and Eve but assured them that their children would not be affected by what they did.
 - C. God punished Adam and Eve with “spiritual death” immediately and with physical death later.
10.
 - A. Because Adam and Eve sinned, God said they would never have a future life of glory and blessing.
 - B. God promised Adam and Eve that he would eventually defeat and destroy the serpent (Satan).
 - C. God punished Adam and Eve and left them without any hope for forgiveness or peace.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What difference would it make in your life if you didn't know or believe that God created the world?
2. How important is it for us to know how old the earth is?
3. How important is it to know exactly how God created the world?
4. God told Adam and Eve to “rule over” the earth and all that he had made (Genesis 1:26 and 28). What are some of the implications of that for our lives today?
5. The Bible teaches that God created both man and woman in his image. What are some of the practical implications of that truth for today?
6. In what way did Adam and Eve “die” when they disobeyed God?
7. Since God is gracious and forgiving, why should we be concerned about obeying him?
8. In what way did Adam's sin affect us today?
9. Do you think it is “fair” that we are all considered guilty in Adam?
10. Does God still rule over the earth today? What do you think the Bible means when it says in 2 Corinthians 4:4 that Satan is the “god of this age/world”?



LESSON 4

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT JESUS CHRIST

Introduction

When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, they became afraid and tried to hide from God. They knew they had disobeyed God and felt ashamed. They no longer wanted to have God in their lives. But God, in his love, sought them out and talked with them.

God told them that they would surely be punished for their disobedience. But he also brought them a message of hope. He assured them that suffering and pain and death would not have the last word in their lives. They would not have to live in despair forever! Someday, God said, the evil one (Satan) who had deceived them would be completely crushed and destroyed. Satan would not have the final victory. God would!

The person who would accomplish this great victory was Jesus Christ. Jesus would not only destroy Satan, but he would also bring forgiveness and peace and restore people to a loving and joyful relationship with God. Adam and Eve did not understand all of this, but God knew exactly what he was going to do in the future.

In this lesson you will learn more about this wonderful person called Jesus.

1. Who is Jesus?

Jesus is the eternal Son of God who came to earth in human form. Before his birth, he existed from eternity as the “Word of God” through whom the world was created.

Scripture References

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . The Word became flesh and dwelt among us.”
John 1:1, 14

“All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.” John 1:3

“By him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible . . . all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together.” Colossians 1:16-17

See also: Matthew 3:16-17; Mark 3:11-12; John 1:1-4, 18, 32-34, 49; 14:10; 17: 24; Romans 1:4; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:3; 1 John 4:9; 5:9.

2. Why did Jesus leave his position in heaven and come to live on the earth?

Jesus willingly and freely left his position in glory so that sinful human beings who trusted in him might find forgiveness for their sins and live with Jesus forever in peace and glory and joy.

Scripture References

“Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God . . . emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.”
Philippians 2:6-8

Jesus said: *“[Father] I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed.”* John 17:4-5

See also: Isaiah 53:2-6; Matthew 19:28; Revelation 5:12.

3. How did Jesus come into our world?

Jesus was born as a human baby to a Jewish virgin named Mary, a young woman in the family line of Abraham and David. Jesus' birth was foretold by the prophet Isaiah who lived about seven hundred years before Jesus was born.

Scripture References

“The virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” Isaiah 7:14

“Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel’ (which means, God with us).” Matthew 1:23

See also: Matthew 1:1-17.

4. How was it possible for Mary to have a child as a virgin?

Mary conceived her child through the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit. Both Mary and her fiancé Joseph were totally surprised by the message of the angel who told them what was going to happen, but in humility and faith they accepted and believed what the angel had told them.

Scripture References

“And Mary said to the angel, ‘How will this be, since I am a virgin?’ And the angel answered her, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.’” Luke 1:34-35

“. . . an angel of the Lord appeared to him [Joseph] in a dream, saying, ‘Joseph son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.’”

Matthew 1:20

See also: Matthew 2:18-25; Luke 1:26-38, 46-49.

5. Where was Jesus born?

Jesus was born in a small town called Bethlehem, a few miles from Jerusalem, in the land of Israel. Because there was no room in the Bethlehem inn when Joseph and Mary came to the city from their home in Nazareth, Jesus was born in a cattle stall. Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem fulfilled another Old Testament prophecy made several hundred years earlier by the prophet Micah.

Scripture Reference

“Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, to be registered with

Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth.” Luke 2:4-6

See also: Micah 5:2; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 2:1-20.

6. Why was he given the name “Jesus”?

Mary and Joseph did not choose this name themselves. The name was given to them by the angel who told them about the child who was going to be born to Mary. The baby would be called Jesus (which means “Savior” or “God Saves”) because he would save his people from their sins.

Scripture References

The angel said to Joseph, “*She [Mary] will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.*”
Matthew 1:21

“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.” 1 Timothy 1:15

See also: Luke 1:31; 19:10; John 1:29, 3:16.

7. Why is Jesus sometimes called Christ or “the Christ”?

“Christ” was originally more of a title than a personal name. The word Christ means “the anointed one.” It has the same meaning as the word “Messiah” in the Old Testament. In Old Testament times, a person was chosen by God for a special role such as a prophet, a priest or a king and was then anointed with oil in a special ceremony. Jesus was the Messiah (the Christ) promised in the Old Testament. He was “anointed” by the Holy Spirit as the greatest Prophet, our only High Priest and our eternal King.

Both in the New Testament and in church history we therefore read about Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ or Christ Jesus. Each of these names is appropriate and many people use one name or the other without giving specific thought to the meaning of each name. Other believers, however, are very careful to use one name rather than another, depending on the specific context in which the name is used.

Scripture References

Someone once said to Jesus, “*I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things.*’

Jesus said to her, 'I who speak to you am he.'" John 4:25-26

Jesus asked his disciples, *"Who do you say that I am?"* Simon Peter replied, *"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."* Matthew 16:15-16

Martha said to Jesus, *"Yes, Lord; I believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, who is coming into the world."* John 11:27

See also: Luke 2:11, 26; 4:41; 24:26; John 1:40-41; 4:25-26; 7:41; 11:25-27; Acts 9:22; 17:2-4; 1 John 5:1.

8. Was Jesus truly as human as we are?

Yes. Jesus had a human nature that was just like ours—except that he was perfectly sinless. Because he was truly human, Jesus was sometimes thirsty, hungry, tired, and in need of sleep. He could also be tempted by Satan (see Matthew 4:1-11). Because he was human, he could not only pay the penalty for our sins, but he can also understand our limitations, sympathize with our weaknesses, and understand when we fall. He also knows and understands our need for guidance, instruction, encouragement, comfort, and rest. He is truly a perfect Savior.

Scripture References

"He [Jesus] had to be made like his brothers in every respect, . . . so that he might make propitiation for the sins of the people." Hebrews 2:17

"Jesus the Son of God . . . has been tempted as we are, yet without sin." Hebrews 4:14-15

See also: Matthew 1:1-16; Luke 2:40; 4:2; 8:22-23; 24:39; Romans 8:3; Philippians 2:7-8; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 4:2.

9. What did Jesus do while he was on the earth?

The Bible tells us very little about the first thirty years of Jesus' life. During most of that time, he apparently lived with his parents and brothers and sisters in the city of Nazareth. Around the age of thirty, he began his public ministry, going through the towns of Israel, teaching and preaching, healing the sick, casting out demons, forgiving sins, raising the dead, and helping those who were in need.

Scripture References

“Jesus went throughout all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction.” Matthew 9:35

“The blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them.” Matthew 11:5

See also: Matthew 4:23; 5:1 through 7:28; 8:28-32; 9:35-36; 14:13-20; 15:29-39; Luke 2:21-24, 39-52; 4:41; 5:12-13; 7:11-17, 36-48; John 8:4-43.

10. How did the people respond to the miracles and teachings of Jesus?

Most of the people were amazed. Many of them eagerly followed Jesus because of his powerful teachings and the wonderful miracles he performed. Others were amazed but were not completely ready to follow him. Some of them knew about Jesus’ family background and wondered where he acquired his knowledge and his abilities. Even so, large numbers of the common people followed Jesus and put their faith in him.

Scripture References

“And they were astonished beyond measure, saying, ‘He has done all things well.’” Mark 7:37

“Now when he [Jesus] was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing.” John 2:23

“Many even of the authorities believed in him, but for fear of the Pharisees they did not confess it, so that they would not be put out of the synagogue.” John 12:42

See also: Matthew 13:54-57; 15:31; 22:22; Mark 2:6-12; 7:36-37; 10:24; Luke 4:22, 36-37; 8:24-25; John 2:22; 4:52-53; 7:30-31; 8:30; 10:40-42; 12:42-43.

11. How did the religious leaders respond to the miracles and teachings of Jesus?

Though some of the religious leaders believed in Jesus, most of them were jealous of his popularity. They were upset because he seemed to

disregard some of their long-held traditions. They were angry because they felt that he challenged their leadership and undermined their authority. And they were especially concerned that he claimed that he had come down from heaven and was truly the Son of God. So they eventually handed Jesus over to Pilate, the Roman governor, to be put to death.

Scripture References

“They said, ‘Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I came down from heaven?’” John 6:42

“The high priest stood up and said [to Jesus] . . . ‘I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God.’ Jesus said to him, ‘You have said so.’” Matthew 26:62-64

“[Pilate] knew that it was out of envy that they had delivered him [Jesus] up.” Matthew 27:18

See also: Matthew 27:15-22; Mark 15:1-5; Luke 5:21; 20:1-2; 23:35-36; John 5:18; 10:20, 33.

12. Did either the Jews or the Roman governor find Jesus worthy of death?

No! The Jewish leaders tried hard to find reasons why Jesus should be put to death, but they couldn't find any. Pilate, the Roman governor, also personally examined Jesus. After the examination, Pilate publicly announced that he found Jesus to be innocent of any wrongdoing.

Scripture References

“The chief priests and the whole Council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward.” Matthew 26:59-60

“Pilate went out again and said to them [the Jews gathered there], ‘See, I am bringing him [Jesus] out to you that you may know that I find no guilt in him.’” John 19:4

See also: Luke 23:1-22; John 19:1-6.

13. Why did Pilate finally decide to put Jesus to death even though he knew Jesus was innocent?

Jesus claimed to be the (spiritual) King of the Jews. The Jewish leaders persuaded Pilate that he would get into deep trouble with the Roman emperor if he let someone go free who claimed to be a “king.” The Jewish leaders made such an uproar that Pilate finally gave in to their demands.

Scripture References

“Pilate sought to release him [Jesus], but the Jews cried out, ‘If you release this man, you are not Caesar’s friend. Everyone who makes himself a king opposes Caesar.’” John 19:12

“So when Pilate saw that he was gaining nothing, but rather that a riot was beginning, he took water and washed his hands before the crowd, saying, ‘I am innocent of this man’s blood; see to it yourselves.’” Matthew 27:24

See also: Mark 15:6-15; Luke 23:22-25; John 19:7-16.

14. How did Jesus die?

The Roman soldiers mocked Jesus, spit on him, beat him, put a crown of thorns on his head, and then led him away to a place called Golgotha where he was crucified.

Scripture References

“Then the soldiers of the governor took Jesus . . . and they gathered the whole battalion before him. And they stripped him and put a scarlet robe on him, and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on his head and put a reed in his right hand. And kneeling before him, they mocked him, saying, ‘Hail, King of the Jews!’ And they spit on him and took the reed and struck him on the head. And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe and put his own clothes on him and led him away to crucify him.” Matthew 27:27-31

“And over his head they put the charge against him, which read, ‘This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.’” Matthew 27:37

“It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun’s light failed. And the

curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, 'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!' And having said this he breathed his last." Luke 23:44-46

See also: Isaiah 53:1-12; Matthew 27:27-56; Mark 15:16-39; Luke 23:26-49; John 19:16-37.

15. What happened to Jesus' body after he died?

Joseph, a "secret" follower of Jesus and a prominent member of the highest Jewish Council, received permission from Pilate to take Jesus' body down from the cross. He and a man named Nicodemus lovingly wrapped the body in a linen cloth, placed it in Joseph's own new tomb, and rolled a big stone in front of the tomb.

Scripture References

"Joseph of Arimathea, who was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus, and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took away his body. Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes . . . So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices" (John 19:38-40) "and laid him in a tomb cut in stone, where no one had ever yet been laid." Luke 23:53

"He [Joseph] rolled a great stone to the entrance to the tomb and went away." Matthew 27:60

See also: Matthew 27:57-65; Mark 15:42-47; Luke 23:50-56; John 19:31-42.

16. Did Jesus' body stay in the grave?

No! After three days Jesus arose from the dead and came out of the tomb in which he had been placed by Joseph and Nicodemus. A violent earthquake took place and an angel came down from heaven, rolled away the stone which had been in front of Jesus' tomb, and sat on it. When some of Jesus' followers came to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus, they saw that the stone was rolled away, the tomb was empty, and an angel was there to tell them what had happened. (Note: The angel did not roll away the stone so that Jesus could get out. He rolled away the stone so that others could see that the tomb was empty.)

Scripture References

“Now after the Sabbath, toward the dawn of the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake, for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was like lightning and his clothing white as snow. And for fear of him the guards trembled and became like dead men. But the angel said to the women, ‘Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here, for he has risen, as he said.’”
Matthew 28:1-6

“God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.” Acts 2:24

“Christ died for our sins . . . was buried . . . was raised on the third day . . . Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time.” 1 Corinthians 15:3-6

See also: Mark 16:1-8; Luke 24:1-12; John 20:1-18; Acts 3:14-15; 10:39-41; 17:2-3.

17. If Jesus was sinless, why did he have to die?

Jesus died in our place. He took on himself the punishment that we deserved. Only Jesus, the perfect and sinless Son of God, could pay the penalty for the sins of others. In his incredible love and grace, Jesus willingly gave his life so that we who put our trust in him will have eternal life in his glorious presence.

Scripture References

“The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 6:23

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

See also: Isaiah 53:5-6; Romans 5:6-11; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Corinthians 5:15; Galatians 1:4, 3:13; Colossians 1:19-20; Hebrews 2:9; 9:28; 1 Peter 1:18-21; 2:24; 3:18; 1 John 3:5; 4:9-10; Revelation 1:5-6; 5:9.

18. What did Jesus do after he arose from the grave?

For forty days he stayed on earth to prove to his followers that he was truly alive and also to give them further instructions. During the forty

days he appeared to his disciples at various times and also appeared on one occasion to a group of more than five hundred people.

Scripture References

“He [Jesus] presented himself alive to them [his disciples] after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.” Acts 1:3

“He appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time.”
1 Corinthians 15:6

“Jesus came and said to them [his disciples], ‘All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.’” Matthew 28:18-20

See also: Mark 16:9-18; Luke 24:13-49; John 20:1-31; 21:1-25; Acts 1:1-8.

19. What did Jesus do after the forty days?

Jesus returned to heaven where he now rules over all things in heaven and on earth.

Scripture References

“So then the Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them [his disciples], was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.”
Mark 16:19

“While he [Jesus] blessed them [his disciples], he parted from them and was carried up into heaven.” Luke 24:51

“[God] raised [Jesus] from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his [Jesus’] feet and gave him as head over all things to the church.”
Ephesians 1:20-22

See also: Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:9-11; Hebrews 9:24-26; 1 Peter 3:22.

20. Is Jesus ever going to come back to earth again?

Yes! Someday Jesus will return to earth and will gather all believers to live with him forever.

Scripture References

Jesus said, “*In my Father’s house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.*” John 14:2-3

“*And while they [the disciples] were gazing into heaven as he [Jesus] went, behold, two men stood by them in white robes, and said . . . ‘This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.’*” Acts 1:10-11

See also: Matthew 16:27; 25:31-33; 26:64; Luke 21:27; Acts 1:10-11; Philippians 3:20-21; Hebrews 9:27-28; 1 Peter 5:4.



LESSON 4 – TEST QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE

Circle T or F.

1. T F When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, they quickly turned to God.
2. T F God told Adam and Eve that there would never again be any hope for them.
3. T F Jesus is the eternal Son of God who came to earth in human form.
4. T F Jesus was born to a Jewish virgin in the city of Bethlehem in the land of Israel.
5. T F The word Christ means “Savior” or “God Saves.”
6. T F Jesus lived his entire life without sinning.
7. T F When Jesus lived on earth everyone loved him.
8. T F Jesus was crucified because of the evil things he had done.
9. T F Immediately after Jesus died he returned to heaven.
10. T F Jesus is coming back to earth again someday.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Choose which of the three statements is correct. Circle A or B or C.

1.
 - A. The Bible teaches that all things were made in the beginning through Jesus, the Son of God.
 - B. The Bible teaches that Jesus, the Son of God, did not exist until about 2000 years ago.
 - C. The Bible does not tell us anything about Jesus' existence before he appeared on earth.
2.
 - A. Jesus came to live on earth because God the Father forced him to do so.
 - B. Jesus willingly left his position in heaven and came to earth as a servant.
 - C. Jesus chose to come to this earth but he did not know that he would be killed by evil men.
3.
 - A. Joseph was the actual father of Jesus, but he and Mary tried to hide this fact from people.
 - B. No one knows who the father of Jesus was.
 - C. Jesus was conceived through the miraculous power of God the Holy Spirit.
4.
 - A. Jesus was given his name because he would save his people from their sins.
 - B. Jesus was given his name because Mary liked that name better than any other.
 - C. Jesus was given his name because he was named after his grandfather.
5.
 - A. When Jesus was on earth he spent most of his time in secret.
 - B. When Jesus was on earth he traveled to many different countries, teaching people about God.
 - C. When Jesus was on earth, he spent almost all of his adult life in the land of Israel.
6.
 - A. Jesus went around teaching, healing the sick, forgiving sinners and performing miracles.
 - B. Jesus always stayed away from crowds, spending most of his time teaching his disciples.
 - C. Jesus spent most of his time with the religious leaders of the day who were eager to learn from him.

7.
 - A. Jesus died a peaceful death surrounded by loved ones and friends.
 - B. Jesus was beaten and tortured and then nailed to a cross where he died.
 - C. Jesus never died but went directly to heaven when he felt it was time to return to his Father.
8.
 - A. Jesus was condemned to death because of some serious crimes he committed.
 - B. Jesus was condemned to death even though he had done absolutely nothing wrong.
 - C. Jesus was condemned to death because he had no power to defeat those who opposed him.
9.
 - A. Jesus died in our place and took on himself the punishment for sin which we deserve.
 - B. Jesus died because he wanted to demonstrate how to face death with courage.
 - C. Jesus died because he was unable to convince a judge that he was innocent.
10.
 - A. After Jesus died he was buried and was never heard from again, though his teachings lived on.
 - B. After Jesus died, his disciples hid his body somewhere and told everyone that Jesus had gone to heaven.
 - C. After Jesus died he arose again from the dead, spent 40 days on earth and returned to his father in heaven.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What did God promise in Genesis 3:15? Do you think Adam and Eve understood what God promised them?
2. What do John 1:1-3 and Colossians 1:16-17 teach us about Jesus?
3. Jesus is not the “son” of his Father in the normal sense of that word. Why then is he called the Son of God?
4. What does Philippians 2:5-7 teach us about Jesus?
5. What does Philippians 2:10-11 teach us about Jesus?
6. What does Isaiah 7:14 teach about the coming Savior?
7. When Jesus was on earth he did many mighty and wonderful miracles. Why did so many people oppose and reject him when he did so many good things?
8. Why do many people reject or oppose Jesus today?
9. Why did a perfect Savior have to die, even though he was totally sinless?
10. If you had only 20 minutes to talk to someone about Jesus, what are some of the things you would say?



LESSON 5

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT SALVATION

Introduction

In Lesson 4 we learned about the wonderful things Jesus Christ said and did while he was on earth. However, you may wonder what all this has to do with **you**. You may be asking: “Did Jesus die in *my* place? Can I find forgiveness for all *my* sins? Can I really be sure that I will live forever with Jesus in glory?”

In this Lesson you will read the Bible’s answer to those questions.

1. What does it mean to be “saved”?

Being saved is not the same as being baptized or joining a church or making a public profession of faith. Being saved involves an inward change in a person’s mind and heart which is brought about by the work of the Holy Spirit in his life. A person who is saved sincerely trusts in Jesus Christ as the one who paid the penalty for his sins and accepts Jesus as the Lord and Master of his life. A saved person is therefore a child of God whose sins have all been forgiven and who has received the gift of eternal life.

Scripture References

“To all who did receive him [Jesus], who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” John 1:12

“The blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7

“God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” 1 John 5:11

See also: 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17-19; Ephesians 1:3-7; Colossians 1:21-23.

2. How can God forgive us without punishing us?

God forgives us because Jesus Christ, the sinless Son of God, took on himself the punishment which we deserved. When we put our trust in Jesus and accept him as our Savior, he becomes our substitute. God accepts Jesus' sacrifice on the cross in our behalf and declares *us* "not guilty."

Scripture References

"He was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed." Isaiah 53:5

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

See also: Luke 19:10; Romans 4:25; Galatians 1:3-4; Ephesians 2:12-14; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 2:14-17; 1 John 4:9-10.

3. Is God actually willing to forgive all our sins?

Yes, every one! There is no sin too great or too serious to be beyond God's forgiving grace if we continue to love and trust him. However, we should remember that God's gracious forgiveness does not always repair the harm that is done because of our sins. The *guilt* of our sin is gone, but the *consequences* of our sin may continue in many different ways.

Scripture References

"Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool." Isaiah 1:18

"As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us." Psalm 103:12

"He [God] will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea." Micah 7:19

See also: Psalm 85:2-3; 103:9-12; Isaiah 43:25; 44:22; Micah 7:18; Acts 13:38-39; Romans 8:1-4; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 2:13-14; 1 John 1:9.

4. What must we do in order to receive this wonderful salvation?

We must humbly repent of our sins and sincerely believe that Jesus died in *our* place. Our faith is not simply a mental belief that Jesus died on the cross for “the sins of the world.” It is a sincere belief that Jesus died specifically for *us*. It also includes a genuine desire to have Jesus take control of our lives and a sincere commitment to please and honor him in all that we do.

Scripture References

The apostle Paul said, “*I declared . . . that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.*” Acts 26:20

“*Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.*” Acts 16:31

See also: Isaiah 55:6-7; Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; Romans 10:9-13; 1 Peter 2:24-26; 2 Peter 3:9.

5. What does it mean to “repent”?

True repentance includes (a) a humble acknowledgment that we have not lived the way God wants us to live, (b) genuine sorrow for dishonoring God and for hurting others through our failures and sins, (c) a genuine desire to stay away from those sins in the future, and (d) a sincere intention to live the rest of our lives the way God wants us to live. We may have to repent over and over again, but our sincere desire and intention is to increasingly do the will of God through the help of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture Reference

“*Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. . . . wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. . . . Hide your face from my sins and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. . . . Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit.*” Psalm 51:1, 7, 9-10, 12

See also: 2 Samuel 24:10; 2 Chronicles 7:14; Psalm 41:4; Proverbs 28:13; Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 1:5; Luke 5:8; 18:9-14.

6. Can't we earn salvation by simply doing our best to live a good life?

No. If we do not truly love Jesus and put our trust in him, even our best works will merit nothing. Salvation is a gift of God's mercy and grace. It is impossible to merit it or earn it. Besides, even if we committed only one sin (which no one does), we would have to pay the penalty for that sin. And, according to the Bible, the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23).

Scripture References

"There is none who does good, not even one." Psalm 53:3

"God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ . . . For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast." Ephesians 2:4-5, 8-9

See also: Psalm 12:1; Proverbs 20:9; Isaiah 53:6; 64:6; Micah 7:2; Romans 1:32; 3:23; 2 Timothy 3:1-4; Titus 3:1-6; 1 John 1:8.

7. Is there another way to be saved if we do not believe in Jesus?

No. Many people have tried to find another way through punishing themselves, showing kindness to others, giving gifts to the poor, making some significant personal sacrifices, serving other gods, or simply "doing the best" they can. But none of these things will erase our sins or give us peace with God.

Scripture References

Jesus said, *"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* John 14:6

"There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." Acts 4:12

See also: John 3:16; 6:35, 67-68; 8:24; Acts 10:43; Romans 7:24-25; 1 Corinthians 2:2; 3:11; 1 Timothy 2:3-6.

8. What does the Bible teach about being "born again"?

No one can be saved unless he is born again. This involves a radical change in our lives which no one can accomplish by himself any more than a person can arrange for his own natural birth.

Scripture References

Jesus said, “*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.*” John 3:3

“To all who did receive him [Jesus], who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.” John 1:12-13;

See also: Ezekiel 36:26-27; John 3:3-18; 1 Peter 1:20-23.

9. What does it mean to be born again?

To be born again is to receive a new, inner spiritual life through the Holy Spirit. When that happens, the believer becomes “a new creation” in Christ and a child of God.

Scripture References

“If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come!” 2 Corinthians 5:17

“He saved us . . . by the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit.” Titus 3:5

See also: John 1:12-13; Titus 3:3-8; 1 John 5:1-2.

10. Why is it necessary for someone to be born again in order to enter the kingdom of heaven?

Without the new birth, we are all spiritually dead, born under the sentence of death and deserving of God’s punishment. Unless we are spiritually changed in our hearts and minds through the work of the Holy Spirit, we remain under the sentence of death.

Scripture References

“Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.” Psalm 51:5

“You were dead in the trespasses and sins in which you once walked, following the course of this world . . . We all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.” Ephesians 2:1-3

See also: Luke 15:21-24; Romans 8:6-8; Colossians 2:13; James 4:7-10; Revelation 3:1.

11. What great blessings are given to everyone who is born again?

Everyone who sincerely repents of his sins and trusts in Jesus as Savior becomes a child of God. He receives the gift of eternal life and is no longer under the sentence of death because of his sins. He also is given a genuine desire to live for God in a way that pleases and honors him.

Scripture References

Jesus said, *“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.”* John 5:24

“To all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.” John 1:12

See also: Luke 18:29-30; John 3:15, 36; 4:13-14; 6:47; 20:30-31; Romans 6:20-23; Galatians 6:8; 1 John 5:11-13.

12. What is eternal life and when does it begin?

Eternal life involves a new relationship between a believer and God. It is a relationship of love, joy, and peace that begins the moment someone believes in Jesus and will never end.

Scripture References

“This is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” John 17:3

“I saw a new heaven and a new earth . . . And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” Revelation 21:1-4

See also: John 10:28-29; 17:20-24; 1 John 5:11-14; Jude 20-21.

13. If we believe in Christ, is it important for us to confess our faith publicly and also to be baptized?

Yes. Public confession of our faith in Jesus and water baptism are both very important. However, there may be times when a person chooses

not to make a public profession of faith or to be baptized immediately. This might be true, for example, when a public profession of faith or public baptism would unnecessarily alienate family or friends whom the new convert is trying to reach with the Gospel. Though we should never be ashamed of our Christian faith or our relationship to Jesus, there are times or situations when new believers may have to be prudent in choosing a time and place for their baptism.

Scripture References

Jesus said, *“Everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.”* Matthew 10:32-33

“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.” Acts 2:38

“When they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” Acts 8:12

See also: Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 8:38; Luke 12:8-9; Acts 9:18; 10:47-48; 16:14-15, 18:8; 19:4-5; 22:16; Romans 10:9-10.

14. Can we be absolutely sure that we are saved for eternity?

Yes. God’s promises are sure, so we never have to doubt them. Even when we fail at times to live the way God wants us to live or fail to live as we ourselves want to live, we may be sure that God will continue to love us and forgive us when we truly put our trust in Jesus.

Scripture References

“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.” 1 John 5:13

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

“For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:38-39

See also: John 6:47; Romans 8:16-17; Philippians 1:6;

1 Thessalonians 1:4-7; 2 Timothy 1:12; 4:7-8, 18; Hebrews 6:17-19; 10:19-23;
2 Peter 1:10-11; 1 John 3:2; 5:13.



LESSON 5 – TEST QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE

Circle T or F.

1. T F When someone is “saved,” his sins are forgiven and he receives the gift of eternal life.
2. T F When Jesus died on the cross, he died in our place and took on himself all the punishment we deserved.
3. T F God will not forgive all our sins until we prove that we are serious by living a holy life.
4. T F People who do not love and trust Jesus can be saved by doing their best to do what is right in God’s sight.
5. T F If we are not “born again,” we cannot see the Kingdom of God.
6. T F Jesus said, “No one comes to the Father except through me.”
7. T F After we are saved, it is important for us to confess our faith publicly.
8. T F It is comforting to be baptized, but it really doesn’t matter if we are baptized or not.
9. T F No one can be really sure that he is saved until after he dies.
10. T F Nothing in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God if we continue to trust in Jesus



MULTIPLE CHOICE

Choose which of the three statements is correct. Circle A or B or C.

1. A. To all who believed in his [Jesus'] name, he gave the right to become children of God.
B. To all who lived a good life in the sight of God, he gave the right to become children of God.
C. To all who faithfully gave gifts to the poor, God gave the right to become children of God.
2. A. God so loved the world that he simply overlooked the sins of most people because he felt sorry for them.
B. God so loved the world that he promised to grant salvation to all sincerely who to do what is right.
C. God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him will have eternal life.
3. A. God hopes that all people everywhere will repent.
B. God commands all people everywhere to repent.
C. God will forgive everyone whether or not they repent.
4. A. True repentance means that we feel bad that we did some wrong things and wish we hadn't done them.
B. True repentance means we are sincerely sorry for offending God by not living live the way he wants us to.
C. True repentance means that we feel sorry that we hurt other people through what we did.
5. A. No one can do what is truly good in God's sight unless he is "born again."
B. Most people are good at heart even though everyone fails once in a while.
C. Only those who obey God perfectly can be saved.
6. A. We become sinful in God's sight when we begin to follow the example of others who disobey him.
B. We are not regarded as sinners until we are old enough to understand God's laws.
C. We are born with a sinful human and are sinful from the time we are conceived.

7.
 - A. Salvation is based on how sincere we are in our faith—whatever that happens to be.
 - B. Salvation is found only through Jesus, so we must put our faith in him.
 - C. Salvation is not based on faith at all, but depends solely on how we treat others in this life.
8.
 - A. If we are truly saved through faith in Jesus, it will not matter very much how we live.
 - B. If we are truly saved, it should make a big difference in how we live on this earth.
 - C. If we are truly saved, we will focus on our future life in heaven and won't be concerned about life on earth.
9.
 - A. Many believers in New Testament times were not baptized because they felt it was not very important.
 - B. No one will be saved without being baptized.
 - C. In New Testament times, new converts were normally baptized after they made a confession of faith in Jesus.
10.
 - A. We may be sure of our salvation if we sincerely repent of our sins and trust in Jesus as our Savior.
 - B. No one in this present life should claim that he knows for sure that he is saved.
 - C. We will not know until the Day of Judgment whether or not we are truly saved.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to be “saved”?
2. What must a person do in order to be saved?
3. Can a person be saved without knowing it? Can a person think he is saved without really being saved?
4. What is meant by “substitutionary atonement”?
5. If someone does not believe in Jesus, is there some other way he can be saved? If not, why not? If there is another way, what is it?
6. What does it mean to be “spiritually dead”? Are all people spiritually dead unless they are born again?
7. Can a person be “born again” more than once?
8. What is meant by “eternal life”? Does this refer simply to the “length” of life or does it refer to something more than this?
9. Can a person be saved without being baptized? Can a person be baptized without being saved? Why is baptism important?
10. Is it possible to be absolutely sure of our salvation? If not, why not? If so, how can we get this assurance.



LESSON 6

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

Introduction

Before Jesus left his disciples, he promised that he would send the Holy Spirit to them when he returned to heaven. The Holy Spirit would come to them, live within them, and help them live the kind of life Jesus wanted them to live. He would also serve as their counselor and guide, bringing to their minds everything Jesus had taught them while he was on earth.

Through the Holy Spirit, the disciples and all other believers would be able to produce spiritual fruit that would glorify God. The Spirit would purify their motives, fill them with joy and help them to be all that Christ taught them to be. The Holy Spirit would also enable them to witness to others with such power that many people would be attracted to Christ and to the fellowship of believers.

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is God, just as the Father is God and the Son is God. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament make frequent references to the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament he is usually referred to simply as the Spirit of God while in the New Testament he is often referred to as “the Holy Spirit.” Christians refer to the Holy Spirit as the “third person” of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Scripture References

“And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold,

a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased." Matthew 3:16-17

"The Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God. . . . no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God."
1 Corinthians 2:10-11

See also: Genesis 1:2; Job 33:4; Psalm 104:30; Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Galatians 4:6.

2. Does this mean that there are three separate Gods called the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit?

No. The Bible repeatedly emphasizes that there is only one true God. However, the Bible also teaches that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. Believers therefore refer to the one true God as the Holy Trinity (Tri-Unity or three-in-one). Though we cannot fully understand this teaching, we accept it as a truth which God has made known to us in the Bible. When we honor and worship the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, we are worshipping the one true God.

Scripture References

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one."
Deuteronomy 6:4

Paul wrote: *"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."*
2 Corinthians 13:14

See also: Psalm 86:10; Isaiah 44:6; John 10:30; 15:26; 17:20-23; Romans 8:9.

3. Is the Holy Spirit a divine Person or simply a spiritual influence?

The Holy Spirit is a divine "person" as the Father and the Son are. The Holy Spirit thinks, loves, feels and acts. He also comforts us, prays for us, hears our prayers, teaches us, guides us, purifies us and lives within us.

Scripture References

Jesus said, *"The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you."* John 14:26

“The Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand.” Acts 1:16

“When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth.” John 16:13

See also: Luke 4:14; 12:12; John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-15; Acts 5:3-4; 8:29; 13:2; Romans 8:6, 11; 15:30; 1 Corinthians 2:4; Ephesians 4:30.

4. When do we first read about the Holy Spirit in the Bible?

We first read about the Holy Spirit in the second verse of the Bible. The Holy Spirit was involved in the creation of the world and continues to be involved in the creation of all new life in the world.

Scripture References

“The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.” Genesis 1:2

“When you send forth your Spirit, they are created, and you renew the face of the ground.” Psalm 104:30

5. What is the role of the Holy Spirit in our spiritual life?

The Holy Spirit is the creator and source of spiritual life just as he is the source of natural life. He produces spiritual fruit in us, leads us into the truth, gives us victory over temptation, comforts us in times of sadness and sorrow, encourages us in times of weakness, assures us of forgiveness when we sincerely confess our sins, empowers us to be faithful witnesses to Jesus, and helps us to become more like our Savior.

Scripture References

Jesus said, *“Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”* John 3:5-6

Jesus said, *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses.”* Acts 1:8

“They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.” Acts 4:31

See also: Acts 2:38; 4:8; 9:31; 13:2-4; 15:8, 28; 16:6; Romans 8:13-16, 26;

1 Corinthians 2:4, 12-14; 2 Corinthians 3:3; Titus 3:5; Ephesians 3:16;
1 Peter 1:2; 1 John 3:24.

6. How can we receive the Holy Spirit into our own hearts and lives?

We must repent of our sins, trust in Jesus for forgiveness, and ask our Father in heaven to give us the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Scripture References

“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” Acts 2:38

“If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” Luke 11:13

See also: Acts 5:32; 8:14-17, 10:44; 19:2-6.

7. What kind of spiritual fruit does the Holy Spirit produce in the lives of believers?

The Holy Spirit enables us to produce spiritual fruit that glorifies God and blesses others. Without the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and lives, we would never be able to become the kind of people God wants us to be.

Scripture References

“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.” Galatians 5:22-23

“Those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. . . . to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace.”
Romans 8:5-6

See also: Romans 5:5; 8:11, 23; 2 Corinthians 3: 3; Galatians 5:25;
Ephesians 4:30-32; Colossians 3:12-17; 2 Timothy 1:14; 1 Peter 1:2;
1 John 4:13-16.

8. How does the Holy Spirit help us resist and overcome temptation?

When we humbly follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, we are able to be victorious over temptations of every kind. The Holy Spirit actually lives within us, helping us to focus on things that are pleasing to God

and enabling us to resist the temptations of our flesh. The Holy Spirit may also bring to our minds truths that we have forgotten. He helps us to remember that we belong to God and that we are not our own masters. And he creates a renewed desire in our hearts to live for the Savior who died for us.

Scripture References

“Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.”
Galatians 5:16

“Those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit.” Romans 8:5

See also: John 14:15-17, 26; 16:13; Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 10:12-13; 1 John 3:24.

9. Is it possible for believers to disobey the Holy Spirit and lose the blessing and joy of living for Christ?

Yes, at least temporarily. When we deliberately choose to sin, we grieve the Holy Spirit and lose the peace and joy he gives us when we obey him. But if we have truly been born again, the Spirit will bring us back to the way of life after we have wandered away from it.

Scripture References

“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” Ephesians 4:30

“Do not quench the Spirit.” 1 Thessalonians 5:19

The apostle Paul wrote concerning a former fellow worker, *“Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me.”* 2 Timothy 4:10

See also: Isaiah 63:10; Matthew 12:31-32; Mark 3:29; Acts 7:51-53; Romans 1:18-25; 1 Timothy 1:18-19; Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:26-31.

10. How does the Holy Spirit help us in our prayer life?

The Holy Spirit not only helps us to pray but he also prays for us.

Scripture References

“The Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us.” Romans 8:26

“Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication.”

Ephesians 6:18

See also: Romans 8:13-16; 27; Jude 20.

11. What are some of the spiritual gifts which the Holy Spirit gives to believers?

The Holy Spirit gives a wonderful variety of gifts to believers. He distributes these gifts to believers in a way and at a time that he himself chooses.

Scripture References

“There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. . . . To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge . . . to another faith . . . to another gifts of healing . . . to another the working of miracles . . . to another prophecy . . . to another the ability to distinguish between spirits . . . to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.”

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them. . . .” Romans 12:6

See also: Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31; Ephesians 4:7-8; 11-16.

12. Is the Holy Spirit concerned about the unity of believers?

Very definitely. The unity of the church is of great importance for the spiritual growth of believers and also for their witness to the unbelieving world.

Scripture References

Jesus prayed: *“[May they] all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. . . . I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me.”* John 17:21, 23

“(Be) eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace . . . until we all attain to the unity of the faith . . . and mature manhood.” Ephesians 4:3, 13

See also: Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 1:10; 10:17; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 3:4-6; Philippians 1:27; 4:2; 1 Peter 3:8.

13. Why should we always follow the leading of the Holy Spirit and use our bodies to honor and glorify God?

Our bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit who lives within us. We are not our own masters. We belong to God!

Scripture References

“Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” 1 Corinthians 3:16

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.” 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

See also: John 14:15-17; Romans 8:5-17; 14:7-8; 2 Corinthians 6: 14-17; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:5.

14. What promise is given to believers concerning the future resurrection of their bodies?

When Jesus returns to earth again, our earthly bodies will be raised as new glorious bodies that will never die. (See also Lesson Eleven for a more extensive discussion on this and related subjects.)

Scripture References

“If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.”
Romans 8:11

“When the perishable puts on the imperishable, and the mortal puts on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written: ‘Death is swallowed up in victory.’” 1 Corinthians 15:54

See also: John 14:3; Romans 8:16-18; Colossians 3:4; 2 Timothy 2:10; 1 Peter 5:1.

15. Can we be sure that we are truly saved?

Yes. When we trust in Jesus as our Savior and seek to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit assures us that we are children of God.

Scripture References

“All who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. . . . The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.”

Romans 8:14-16

“I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.” 1 John 5:13

See also: Job 19:25-27; Isaiah 26:3-4; 2 Corinthians 6:16-18;
1 Thessalonians 1:4-5; 5:9-11; 2 Timothy 1:12; 4:6-8; Hebrews 10:22;
1 John 3:24; 5:9-12.



LESSON 6 – TEST QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE

Circle **T** or **F**.

1. T F The Holy Spirit is God, just as the Father and the Son are God.
2. T F The Bible teaches that there are three separate Gods called the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
3. T F The Holy Spirit is a “person” who thinks and loves and feels and acts.
4. T F The Holy Spirit is the source of both natural life and spiritual life.
5. T F We do not read about the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament part of the Bible.
6. T F We must faithfully study the Bible and do everything it says before we can receive the Holy Spirit.
7. T F When we follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, we can be victorious over temptation.
8. T F It is impossible for true believers to disobey God or lose the joy and blessing of living for Christ.
9. T F If we are truly saved, the Holy Spirit lives in us and our bodies become a temple in which He dwells.
10. T F The Holy Spirit not only helps us to pray but He also prays for us.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Choose which of the three statements is correct. Circle A or B or C.

1. A. The Bible teaches that there is only true God who exists as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
B. The Bible teaches that there are three Gods and the Father is the greatest of the three.
C. The Bible teaches that there are three Gods and they are all equal in power and authority
2. A. The first time we read about the Holy Spirit in the Bible is when Jesus was born.
B. The first time we read about the Holy Spirit in the Bible is at the time of Jesus' resurrection.
C. The first time we read about the Holy Spirit in the Bible is at the time of creation.
3. A. Jesus said, "Go and make disciples . . . baptizing them in the name of the Father . . . Son . . .and Holy Spirit."
B. Jesus said, "Go and make disciples . . . baptizing them in my name."
C. Jesus said, "Go and make disciples . . . baptizing them in the name of God."
4. A. Since we are all sinful, it is impossible for anyone to live a life that glorifies God.
B. Only pastors and other leaders can live a life that glorifies God.
C. The Holy Spirit enables all believers to produce spiritual fruit that glorifies God.
5. THE BIBLE TEACHES: "If you know how to give good gifts to your children:
A. How much more will your Father in heaven give riches and honor to those who ask him!"
B. How much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"
C. How much more will your Father in heaven give power and glory to those who ask him!"

6.
 - A. The Bible teaches: “God has poured out great wisdom into our lives by the Holy Spirit.”
 - B. The Bible teaches: “God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.”
 - C. The Bible teaches: “God has poured out great riches into our lives by the Holy Spirit.”
7.
 - A. The Bible teaches: “Live by the Spirit and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.”
 - B. The Bible teaches: “Live by the Spirit, and you will never be sick or oppressed.”
 - C. The Bible teaches: “Live by the Spirit and you will be free from trials and sorrows.”
8.
 - A. The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to all believers as he (the Holy Spirit) chooses.
 - B. The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to believers as they (believers) choose.
 - C. The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts only to those who hold leadership positions in the church.
9.
 - A. Believers’ hearts and minds belong to God, but they may do with their bodies whatever they choose.
 - B. Believers’ bodies belong to God and must be used in a way that honors and glorifies him.
 - C. Believers’ bodies belong to God, but he is only concerned about what they do with their minds and spirits.
10.
 - A. When we sincerely follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit assures us that we are children of God.
 - B. We should never say that we know for sure that we are children of God.
 - C. If we truly love God, it doesn’t really matter whether or not we have assurance of our salvation.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who is the Holy Spirit?
2. Since the Bible never uses the word “Trinity,” why do Christians use that word when referring to God?
3. What difference would it make if we believed that the Holy Spirit was simply some kind of divine “influence”?
4. According to the Bible, what are some of the things which the Holy Spirit does?
5. How can we receive the fullness of the Spirit’s blessings in our lives?
6. What are some of the special gifts which the Holy Spirit gives to believers? (See 1 Corinthians 12:4-11.)
7. Do all Christians have the same spiritual gifts? Will the Holy Spirit give us whatever special gifts we ask for?
8. What “fruit” is referred to in Galatians 5:23? Do all faithful believers bear the same fruit? If not, why not?
9. Is the church of today truly “united”? How should we pursue the unity that Ephesians 4:3, 4 and 13 refer to?
10. What are some of the practical implications of the fact that the Holy Spirit lives within us?



LESSON 7

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT LIVING AS A CHRISTIAN

Introduction

Many people are eager to accept the salvation that Jesus gives. However, they often have questions about living as a Christian. Some wonder whether they will be able to live a Christian life. Others aren't sure that they are willing to do all that Jesus might ask of them. Still others are afraid that Christianity will take all the joy out of their lives.

What does it mean to live as a Christian? Can anyone really live a life that is pleasing to God? Does Christianity really take all the joy out of life?

Before trying to answer those questions, it is important for us to reflect on Jesus' own life. Jesus' life was never easy! He had no home of his own, he had very few personal possessions, and he likely had no personal means of transportation (such as a donkey on which to ride). He was often rejected, misunderstood, ridiculed, falsely accused, and mistreated. Even though he performed many wonderful miracles of healing, fed multitudes of people when they were hungry, showed love and compassion to the poor, showed grace to people that others ignored and forgave people whom others condemned, there were still many people who hated and despised him and tried to find fault with him. Most of the members of his own family misunderstood him. One of his most trusted followers betrayed him. Another denied that he even knew who Jesus was. And the rest of his inner circle of disciples deserted him when he was confronted by a mob of people in the middle of the night.

If we want to be true followers of Jesus, therefore, we should not expect that our lives will always be easy or pleasant or free from pain. Our blessings will be greater than any we have ever had before, but our challenges and

trials may be greater, too. But whatever our circumstances may be—times of exceptional joy or times of suffering and sorrow, Jesus has promised that he will never leave us or forsake us. He will graciously forgive us when we fail, uphold us when we are weak, comfort us when we are rejected or hurt, and continue to shower us with his mercy, grace, and love.

Read thoughtfully and humbly what the Bible says about both the challenges and the blessings of living as a follower of Jesus.

1. What challenge does Jesus give to those who want to follow him?

Jesus challenges us to give up everything for him—even our lives, if necessary.

Scripture References

Jesus said: *“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it.”* Mark 8:34-35

“Whoever who does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.” Luke 14:27

“Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me.” Matthew 10:37-38

See also: Matthew 16:24-27; Mark 10:17-25; Luke 5:27-28; 14:33; 18:29-30; John 12:26; Galatians 5:24-25; Philippians 3:7-11.

2. What will motivate us to live for Christ?

We can never repay Jesus for all that he has done for us, but when we humbly reflect on his great love and his incredible sacrifice, we should gratefully seek to live every moment in a way that pleases him. When we think about the wonderful home he is preparing for us in glory, it should not be difficult to give up any earthly treasure or pleasure which does not please him or honor him. Jesus is truly a “priceless treasure” and nothing on earth can compare with him. If we truly love him with all our heart, we will not get swept away with the concerns and pleasures of this world.

Scripture References

“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. . . . Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.” Romans 12:1-2

Jesus said: *“If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him.”* John 14:23

See also: John 13:34-35; Romans 6:6-7; 13:12-14 2 Corinthians 7:1; Galatians 5:16; Colossians 3:1-4; 12-17; Hebrews 12:1-3; 1 Peter 1:3-8; 2:11; 4:1-2.

3. Who makes it possible for us to live a Christian life?

God himself does. We are not able to live a consistent Christian life on our own—and, thankfully, we do not have to. God dwells within us through the Holy Spirit who empowers us to live the kind of life that pleases him.

Scripture References

“It is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.” Philippians 2:13

“Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.” Galatians 5:16

“May the God of peace . . . equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.” Hebrews 13:20-21

See also: Psalm 51:10; 143:10; Isaiah 40:31; Ezekiel 36:27; Romans 8:1, 9; 13:14; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Corinthians 4:16; Galatians 5:16; Titus 3:5; 1 John 2:27.

4. How can we show that God is truly at work in our lives?

We should live in such a way that others can see our changed lives. If there is no significant difference between our lives and the lives of those who are not believers, our witness will likely have very little effect. People are much more impressed by how we live than by what

we say. If they are able to see that we have truly been transformed by God's grace and power, they will often be eager to know what has happened in our lives.

Scripture References

Paul wrote: *“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the foremost. But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life.”* 1 Timothy 1:15-16

“The grace of God . . . [trains us] to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age . . . [Jesus Christ] gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.”

Titus 2:11-12, 14

See also: Matthew 5:16; 1 Corinthians 4:11-13, 16; 10:31-33; 11:1; Philippians 3:17-21; 4:8-9; 1 Timothy 4:12; 6:18; Titus 2:6-7; 3:3-8; Hebrews 10:24-25; 1 Peter 2:11-12.

5. Is it important for Christians to show genuine love to one another?

Yes. The two greatest commandments in both the Old Testament and the New Testament are these: Love God above all and love others as yourselves (Matthew 22:37-40). As Jesus himself said, others will know that you are his disciple if you have genuine love for others—even for those who might be considered unlovable. Since God loved us when we ourselves were unlovable, our lives demonstrate what God can do in any life that is committed to him.

Scripture References

“Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. . . . if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.”
1 John 4:11-12

Jesus said: *“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”* John 13:35

See also: John 13:34; 15:9-13; Romans 12:9-10; 1 Corinthians 13:13; Galatians 5:6; Ephesians 5:1-2; Colossians 3:14; 1 John 3:10.

6. What is Christian love like?

Genuine Christian love is self-giving, consistent, helpful, thoughtful, and often sacrificial. It is primarily “love in action” rather than simply love in words or feelings. It is basically a reflection of Christ’s love *for* us and *within* us. Without Christ’s love and the power of the Holy Spirit within us, it would be impossible for us to love others in the way that God commands and that the Bible describes.

Scripture References

“Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends.” John 15:13

“Love does no wrong to a neighbor.” Romans 13:10

“Love covers a multitude of sins.” 1 Peter 4:8

“Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. As for prophecies, they will pass away; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will pass away.” 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

See also: John 15:12-13; Romans 13:8; 1 Corinthians 13:1-3, 13; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:16.

7. What does the Bible teach about worldliness?

“Worldliness” is thinking and living according to the standards and desires of the sinful and unbelieving world rather than living according to the teachings of the Word of God. Those who live by the world’s goals and standards are not living in a way that pleases God. Friendship with the world makes a person an enemy of God.

Scripture References

“Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride in possessions—is not from the Father but is from the world.”

1 John 2:15-16

“The grace of God . . . [trains] us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age.” Titus 2:11-12

“Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.” James 4:4

See also: Luke 21:34; Acts 2:40; Romans 12:1-3; Ephesians 4:17-32; Colossians 3:1-10; 2 Timothy 2:15-16, 22-26.

8. What are some of the specific sins which the Bible warns against?

The Bible warns against sins of every kind—sins of thought, word or deed. Some of the specific sins mentioned in the New Testament include lying, stealing, fighting, bad language, sexual immorality, drunkenness, uncontrolled anger, greed, bitterness . . . and many others.

Scripture References

“Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. . . . Do not let the sun go down on your anger and give no opportunity to the devil. Let the thief no longer steal. . . . Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up. . . . Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God. . . . Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you. . . . Sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place. For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. . . . Do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.” Ephesians 4:25-31; 5:3-5, 17-18

“In the last days . . . people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with deceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.” 2 Timothy 3:1-5

See also: Romans 1:21-32; 13:12-14; 1 Corinthians 6:12-21; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Colossians 3:5-10; 1 Timothy 6:3-5; Hebrews 12:14-16; James 3:1-6; 1 Peter 2:1; 3:10; 4:3

9. Is it possible for us to overcome temptation and live a holy life?

Yes. God provides a way out of each trial and temptation if we sincerely look for it and desire it. But if we do not sincerely look for a “way out” of the temptation, we very likely will not find it.

Scripture References

“No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation, he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.” 1 Corinthians 10:13

“To him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior . . . be glory . . . now and forever. Amen.”
Jude 24-25

See also: Job 2:9-10; Jeremiah 35:5-6; Daniel 1:8; Acts 8:20; Romans 16:20; 1 Corinthians 1:7-9; Ephesians 6:13; 2 Timothy 1:12; 4:18; Hebrews 2:18, James 1:12; 4:7; 2 Peter 2:9; 3:17; Revelation 3:10.

10. Is God willing to forgive us if we fall into sin even after confessing Christ?

Yes. God will graciously forgive us if we sincerely confess our sins and humbly ask him to forgive us. However, that does not mean that we should take our sins lightly. God is indeed gracious and merciful, but our sins and failures grieve the Holy Spirit who lives within us. Our sins also dishonor the name of God and may also diminish the effectiveness of our personal testimony.

Scripture References

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9

“I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,’ and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.” Psalm 32:5

See also: Psalm 51:1-17; 103:8; Proverbs 28:13; Isaiah 43:25; 44:22; 54:7; 55:7; Lamentations 3:22,23; Joel 2:13; Micah 7:18; Matthew 6:14; Acts 13:38; Colossians 3:13.

11. How can we help each other live a Christian life?

We should worship together, encourage one another, pray for each other, and be careful never to tempt one another or lead one another into sin.

Scripture References

“Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.”

Hebrews 10:24-25

“Keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints [believers].” Ephesians 6:18

“Take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.” 1 Corinthians 8:9

See also: Luke 4:16; Romans 12:9; 14:13; 1 Peter 3:8-9; 1 Thessalonians 1:3; 3:12; 2 Thessalonians 1:3; 1 Timothy 6:18; Titus 2:7; 1 Peter 1:22; 2:12; 1 John 2:10.

12. What attitude should we have toward money and possessions?

It is a wonderful blessing to have sufficient funds and resources for daily living. We should be very careful, however, not to put too much emphasis on material things or value them too highly. We should be grateful for all that the Lord entrusts to us, be content with what we have, and not be envious of others who have more than we do. We should also recognize that we are only stewards of the things the Lord has entrusted to us. Everything we call our own really belongs to him. When possible, we should also use our possessions to serve the poor and the homeless in the name of the Lord so that he is glorified while we help to meet the needs of others. And we should also use our financial resources to help spread the good news of the Gospel around the world.

Scripture References

“Both riches and honor come from you [God]. . . . In your hand are power and might, and in your hand it is to make great and give strength to all. And now we thank you, our God, and praise your glorious name.” 1 Chronicles 29:12-13

“You shall remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth.” Deuteronomy 8:18

“If riches increase, set not your heart on them.” Psalm 62:10

See also: Psalm 52:7; Proverbs 27:24; 28:20; Ecclesiastes 5:10, 19; Matthew 6:19; Luke 12:13-21; 16:19-31; 1 Timothy 6:6-10, 17-19; Hebrews 13:5.

13. What does the Bible teach about giving?

We should give generously, regularly, and cheerfully. A special object of our giving should be believers who are in need, though we should also remember the needs of others.

Scripture References

“As we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.” Galatians 6:10

“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.” 2 Corinthians 9:7

See also: Deuteronomy 15:14; 16:17; Nehemiah 8:10; Proverbs 3:9; Isaiah 58:10; Matthew 5:42; 6:3; 19:21; Mark 12:41-43; Luke 6:38; 12:13-21; 12:33; 21:1-4; Acts 20:35; Romans 12:13; 1 Corinthians 16:2; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15; 1 Timothy 6:17-18; 1 John 3:17.

14. What are the results of generous and cheerful giving?

Those who give are blessed, the needs of others are met, and God is honored and praised.

Scripture References

“Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully.” 2 Corinthians 9:6

“The ministry of this service is not only supplying the needs of the saints [believers] but is also overflowing in many thanksgivings to God.” 2 Corinthians 9:12

See also: Proverbs 11:25; 19:17; 22:9; Isaiah 58:10; Malachi 3:10; Matthew 5:16; Luke 6:38; Acts 4:34-35; 2 Corinthians 9:8, 13-14; Galatians 6:9; 1 Timothy 6:17-19.

15. Doesn't living as a Christian take the joy out of life?

Not at all. Living as an obedient Christian in a non-Christian world can certainly be challenging and difficult at times. But the blessings of living for Christ far outweigh any difficulties involved. Not only has Jesus promised that we will live with him forever in glory, but he also promised that our Father in heaven will graciously meet all our needs in our present life. In fact, God often gives us material and physical blessings which go far beyond what we actually need. In addition, he also gives us gifts of love and joy and peace which the world can never give. Even though we may experience trials or difficulties in this life because we are Christians, God promises that whatever suffering and difficulties we experience as believers will eventually turn out for our spiritual and eternal good.

Scripture References

“Though you have not seen him [Jesus], you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory.” 1 Peter 1:8

“According to his great mercy he [God] has caused us to be born again to a living hope . . . to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you.” 1 Peter 1:3-4

“Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.” 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

See also: Matthew 5:11-12; John 6:27; Acts 5:41; Romans 14:17; 2 Corinthians 9:8; Ephesians 1:7; 2:7; Philippians 4:4-13, 19; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 10:34; 11:26; 1 Peter 1:1-9; 4:13.

16. Should believers witness to unbelievers about Jesus Christ?

Definitely. We should be prepared to witness to others whenever possible. However, we should also be wise and humble as we talk to

people who are not yet believers. If we have an attitude of superiority when we talk to them, this will often turn them away from both us and Christ. Also, we must be very careful to make sure that our lives reflect what we profess. If our lives are not consistent with our testimony, our witnessing will usually produce little fruit. We must continually seek to live in the love of Jesus and in the power of the Holy Spirit so that our witness will be meaningful and effective.

Scripture References

“Always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect.” 1 Peter 3:15

“Conduct yourselves wisely toward outsiders; making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person.”
Colossians 4:5-6

See also: Luke 21:12-15; John 15:27; Acts 1:8; 4:33; 5:20-21; 16:16-20; 18:9-10; 22:15; 1 Corinthians 9:22; James 5:20; 2 Timothy 1:8; Titus 2:15.

17. Where can we get the wisdom and power we need to witness effectively to others?

We can receive all the wisdom and power we need from the Holy Spirit.

Scripture References

Jesus said: *“You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses . . . to the end of the earth.”* Acts 1:8

Jesus said: *“The Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.”* John 14:26

See also: Luke 11:13; 12:11-12; 21:12-15; John 16:13; 14:26; Acts 2:1-4; 19:6; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 1 John 2:26-27.

18. What general guidelines should we follow as we seek to live a Christian life?

We should always seek to follow the leading of the Holy Spirit, live lives of thankfulness, love God above all and others as ourselves, do

all things in the name of Jesus, and seek to do all things to the glory of God.

Scripture References

“Whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.” 1 Corinthians 10:31

“Walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.” Galatians 5:16

“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.” 1 Peter 4:10-11

See also: Mark 8:35; John 13:35; 15:8; Romans 13:14; 15:6; 1 Corinthians 6:20; Ephesians 5:20; Colossians 3:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18; 1 John 3:10-11; 3:23-24; 4:7-8.



LESSON 7 – TEST QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE

Circle T or F.

1. T F Jesus taught: “If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.”
2. T F Jesus taught: “If you truly love me, it really doesn’t matter how you live.”
3. T F We should love only those who also love us.
4. T F We should take great care not to get caught up in worldly thinking or living.
5. T F By God’s grace, it is possible to live a life that is truly pleasing to him.
6. T F If we sincerely confess our sins and turn away from them, God will forgive us.
7. T F The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.

8. T F In general, it is easier for a rich person to enter the kingdom of heaven than it is for a poor person.
9. T F God does not care about our attitude in giving as long as we give him at least one tenth of our income.
10. T F Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Choose which of the three statements is correct. Circle A or B or C.

1. A. Jesus taught: "Anyone who loves his son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me."
B. Jesus taught: "Love your family first of all and then also love me."
C. Jesus taught: "Love me above all and do not care what happens to your family."
2. A. Sincere Christians will never be tempted to do what is wrong.
B. Sincere Christians may be tempted to do wrong but they will never fall into sin.
C. Sincere Christians may be tempted to sin but God will provide them with a way to overcome temptation.
3. A. Jesus taught: "All men will know that are you my disciples if you love one another."
B. Jesus taught: "All men will know that you are my disciples if you attend church faithfully."
C. Jesus taught: "All men will know that you are my disciples if you give up your bad habits."
4. A. James taught: "Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world will have many friends."
B. James taught: "Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God."
C. James taught: "Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world will eventually become rich."
5. A. Peter taught: "If people hurt or insult you, simply ignore them."
B. Peter taught: "Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing."
C. Peter taught: "Make every possible effort to treat others as they treat you."

6.
 - A. The Bible teaches: "Let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."
 - B. The Bible teaches: "Let us do good to all people, especially to our own families."
 - C. The Bible teaches: "Let us do good to all people, especially to unbelievers."
7.
 - A. The Bible teaches: "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him."
 - B. The Bible teaches: "We know that in all things God works for the good of everyone."
 - C. The Bible teaches: "We know that God sometimes works for the good of those who love him."
8.
 - A. Some believers are called to witness to others about Jesus, but most believers are not.
 - B. Only those who have a good understanding of the Bible should witness to others about Jesus.
 - C. All believers should be prepared to witness to others about Jesus.
9.
 - A. The Holy Spirit gives us the wisdom and power we need to witness effectively to others.
 - B. Attending church each Sunday will give us the wisdom and power we need to witness effectively to others.
 - C. Giving generously to others will give us the wisdom and power we need to witness effectively to others.
10.
 - A. The Bible teaches: "Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the benefit of others."
 - B. The Bible teaches: "Whatever you do, do it in a way that will make a good impression on others."
 - C. The Bible teaches: "Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Since we are saved by grace and not by our works, what difference does it make how we live?
2. If we are not willing to do give up everything for Jesus (Mark 8:34-35), does that mean we are not really Christians?
3. If others cannot see in our daily walk that we are truly followers of Christ, does that mean that we probably are not true Christians—no matter what we say or believe?
4. What does Paul teach about Christian love in 1 Corinthians 13?
5. What is meant by “worldliness”? Is it possible to be a “worldly Christian?”
6. Will the Lord continue to forgive us even if we commit the same sins over and over again?
7. What does 1 Peter 3:8-9 teach about living a Christian life?
8. What are some of the things the Bible teaches about money and possessions?
9. Why should we witness to others concerning our faith? What should we do in situations where friends or family members absolutely do not want to hear about Jesus?
10. How would you respond to someone who believes that Christianity takes all the fun and joy out of life?



LESSON 8

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT PRAYER

Introduction

One of the great privileges we have as Christians is praying to our Father in heaven. Though God is infinitely greater than we are, we can speak to him at any time about anything. We do not have to make a special reservation to talk to him, we do not have to meet him at a special place, and we do not have to use special words or a special tone of voice when talking to him. All we need is a humble and sincere desire to bring before God the deepest feelings and desires of our hearts. God truly wants us to do that. And he promises to listen when we do!

1. Why should we pray?

The Bible frequently encourages us and even commands us to pray. God has provided prayer as the gateway to a close and precious relationship to himself and has promised to hear and answer our prayers.

Scripture References

“If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14.

“Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.” Colossians 4:2

“Pray without ceasing.” 1 Thessalonians 5:17

See also: 1 Chronicles 16:8-13; Jeremiah 29:13; Hosea 14:1-2; Matthew 26:41; Luke 18:1; 21:36; Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:6-7; James 1:5-7; 5:13-16.

2. How should we pray?

We should pray in the name of Jesus. Praying in the name of Jesus does not mean that we simply “say” the name of Jesus when we pray. Rather, it means that we pray humbly, confidently and expectantly because of what Jesus has done for us. We should pray in faith, trusting God to hear and answer us.

Scripture References

Jesus said, “*Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*” John 14:13

Jesus said: “*Truly, truly I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you . . . Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.*” John 16:23-24

Jesus said, “*Whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive, if you have faith.*” Matthew 21:22

See also: Luke 11:9-10; John 14:13-14; 15:7; 16:24; Acts 3:16; 4:10; Ephesians 5:20.

3. What should we pray about?

We may pray about anything and everything. Though God is infinite and rules over the entire world, he is concerned about even the smallest things in our lives. Even when others might not want to be bothered by our concerns, God is never bothered when we come to him humbly, thought-fully, and sincerely—no matter what may be on our hearts or minds.

Scripture References

“*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*” Philippians 4:6

Jesus said: “*If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.*” John 15:7-8

See also: Matthew 6:6; 18:19; Mark 11:24; Luke 11:9-10; Acts 1:14; James 5:16; 1 John 3:22.

4. When should we pray?

We may pray at any time. It is often helpful to set aside a special time for prayer each day, but we should not restrict our praying to one particular time. God is willing to hear our prayers at any time of day or night. We may pray while walking, driving, resting, working, playing or at any other time. We may pray publicly or we may pray silently when others around us are not even aware that we are praying. There is no time or situation when praying is inappropriate.

Scripture References

“All night he [Jesus] continued in prayer to God.” Luke 6:12

“And rising very early in the morning, while it was still dark, he [Jesus] departed and went out to a desolate place, and there he prayed.” Mark 1:35

“. . . praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication.”
Ephesians 6:18

See also: 1 Chronicles 16:11; Mark 1:35; 6:46-47; Luke 5:16; 6:12; 18:1-8; Acts 1:14; Colossians 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; James 5:13.

5. Where should we pray?

We can pray anywhere and be assured that God hears our prayers wherever we are. However, it is often desirable to have a quiet place where we can pray to God without distractions. Jesus himself went off by himself to quiet places where he could be alone with his Father in heaven.

Scripture References

“He [Daniel] went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God.” Daniel 6:10

“Kneeling down on the beach, we prayed.” Acts 21:5

Jesus said: *“When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret.”* Matthew 6:6

“He [Jesus] would withdraw to desolate places and pray.” Luke 5:16

See also: Matthew 6:6; Luke 6:12; Acts 10:9; 1 Timothy 2:8.

6. Is there a special posture we should have when we pray?

No. We should always be thoughtful, humble, reverent and sincere when we pray, but there is no special posture required in order for us to pray in a way that pleases God. We may bow, kneel, sit, stand, raise our hands, or lie prostrate on the ground when praying. Many people, however, feel that kneeling in prayer is a special sign of sincerity and reverence and therefore usually kneel when they pray in private and often in public as well.

Scripture References

“I . . . fell upon my knees and spread out my hands to the LORD my God . . .” Ezra 9:5-6

“The tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’” Luke 18:13

“[The king] bowed his head with his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD, worshipping the LORD.” 2 Chronicles 20:18

See also: Numbers 20:6; Deuteronomy 9:18; 1 Kings 8:22; 8:54; 2 Chronicles 20:18; Matthew 26:39; Acts 7:60; 9:40; 20:36; 21:5; Ephesians 3:14.

7. Is it appropriate to pray directly to Jesus and to the Holy Spirit as well as to the Father?

Yes. The resurrected and ascended Jesus is reigning as the ruler over the entire universe and is always willing to listen when we pray. The Holy Spirit is our comforter and guide and the one who enables us to live a Christian life. He also hears us when we pray. Though there are very few examples of prayers to Jesus or the Holy Spirit in the Bible, the Christian church has produced a number of hymns of petition or praise which are specifically directed to Jesus or to the Holy Spirit.

Scripture References

“As they were stoning Stephen, he called out, ‘Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.’” Acts 7:59

“Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness . . . the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who

searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints [believers] according to the will of God.” Romans 8:26-27

See also: John 14:14; 15:7; Acts 5:3-5; 9:4-5.

8. Does God hear and answer our prayers?

Absolutely! He hears and answers all the prayers of those who pray according to his will. However, he does not always answer our prayers in the way that we personally would choose or desire. At times his response may be “No” and at other times his response may be “Not now.” Sometimes he gives us something much better than we had asked for, even though we may not immediately understand why it is better. But whatever his answer might be, we may be confident that our prayers are always heard. (See also questions 10 and 11.)

Scripture References

Jesus said, *“If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”* John 15:7

“Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:16

See also: Psalm 65:2; 91:15; Isaiah 58:9; 65:24; Jeremiah 33:1-3; Zechariah 13:9; Matthew 7:7-8; Luke 11:5-13; John 15:7; James 5:16.

9. Are there any specific examples in the Bible of God’s answers to prayer?

Yes. The Bible has many wonderful examples of God’s answers to the prayers of his people. Women who were barren gave birth to children, prisoners were set free, battles were won, protection was provided, water and food were given, wisdom was granted, lives were changed, and many other blessings were experienced in answer to prayer.

Scripture References

Hannah said: *“For this child I prayed, and the LORD has granted me my petition that I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the LORD.”* 1 Samuel 1:27-28

“Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain

on the earth. Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.” James 5:17-18

“So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church. . . . an angel of the Lord stood next to him, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him, saying, ‘Get up quickly.’ And the chains fell off his hands.” Acts 12:5,7

See also: 1 Kings 18:37-39; 2 Kings 19:1-20; 1 Chronicles 5:20-21; Ezra 8:23; Luke 1:13; Acts 4:24-31; 12:1-17.

10. Are there any things that might cause God *not* to answer our prayers in the way we desire?

Yes. Though God is merciful and gracious, there are certain conditions which must usually be met before our prayers will be answered. Among them are humility, sincerity, obedience, faith, right motives, commitment, and a forgiving spirit. If these and other conditions are not met, our prayers may not be answered in the way we desire.

Scripture References

“If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the LORD would not have listened.” Psalm 66:18

“You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions.” James 4:3

“And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.” Hebrews 11:6

“‘And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.’” Mark 11:25

See also: Deuteronomy 1:45; 1 Samuel 14:37; 28:6; Proverbs 1:28; 21:13; 28:9; Isaiah 1:15; 59:2; Jeremiah 29:12-13; Micah 3:4; James 1:6-7; 4:3.

11. Does this mean that our prayers will not be answered unless we are totally free from sin and personal weaknesses?

No. No one is totally free from sin or personal weaknesses. If we repent and ask for forgiveness, we will be restored to a right relationship with God. However, if we deliberately continue to sin without repentance

or genuine sorrow for our sins, God will definitely be displeased with us and our prayers may not be answered.

Scripture References

“Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.” Proverbs 28:13

“When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. . . . I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity. . . . and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found.” Psalm 32:3-6

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. . . . Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.” Psalm 51:10, 13

See also: Deuteronomy 4:20; 2 Chronicles 7:14; 14:4-6; Isaiah 55:7; 58:9; Jeremiah 3:12-13; 29:13; Hosea 10:12; Joel 2:12-13; James 5:16.

12. Are there any other reasons (besides those referred to above) why God might not grant us what we ask for?

Yes. God may not grant what we ask for if our desires or requests are not in accord with his own will or purposes.

Scripture References

To the Christians in Rome Paul wrote: *“Without ceasing I mention you always in my prayers, asking that somehow by God’s will I may now at last succeed in coming to you. . . . I have often intended to come to you (but thus far have been prevented).”* Romans 1:9-13

“And this is the confidence we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.” 1 John 5:14

See also: Exodus 33:18-20; Deuteronomy 3:26; 2 Samuel 12:16-18; Isaiah 55:9; Ezekiel 20:3; Matthew 26:39; Acts 16:6-7; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. James 4:15.

13. Is prayer primarily a matter of asking God for things we want or need?

No! Prayer does include requests or petitions, but it also includes praise, confession, and thanksgiving. If the only time we pray is when

we want or need something from God for ourselves or others, we do not have the kind of fellowship with God which he wants us to have.

Scripture References: CONFESSION

“O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift my face to you, my God, for our iniquities have risen higher than our heads, and our guilt has mounted up to the heavens.” Ezra 9:6

“I [Daniel] turned my face to the Lord God, seeking him by prayer and pleas for mercy with fasting and sackcloth and ashes . . . we have sinned and done wrong and acted wickedly and rebelled, turning aside from your commandments and rules.” Daniel 9:3-5

See also: Psalm 38:4-22; 51:1-17; Luke 5:8; James 5:16.

Scripture References: THANKSGIVING

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” Philippians 4:6

“Pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” 1 Thessalonians 5:17-18

See also: 1 Chronicles 16:8-12; Psalm 42:4; 100:4; Colossians 1:12; 3:17; 1 Timothy 1:12-14; Revelation 11:17.

Scripture References: PRAISE

“Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the LORD, our Maker! For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.” Psalm 95:6-7

“I will bless the LORD at all times; his praise shall continually be in my mouth.” Psalm 34:1

See also: Psalm 35:28; 51:15; 71:8; 146:1-2; Isaiah 12:1; Luke 19:37; Hebrews 13:15.

14. Is it better to pray alone or to pray with others?

It’s important for us to pray frequently when we are alone with God. However, it’s also important for us to pray frequently with others. The Bible has many examples of both individual prayers and the prayers of larger groups of people who join their voices and hearts together in bringing their praise and petitions to the Lord.

Scripture References

“When you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret, will reward you.” Matthew 6:6

“I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.” Matthew 18:19-20

“So Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for him was made to God by the church. . . . many were gathered together and were praying.” Acts 12:5,12

See also: 2 Samuel 7:18; Luke 1:10; 3:21; 9:18; 22:41; John 11:41; Acts 1:14; 4:24; 9:40; 20:36; 21:5.

15. Is it desirable for us to fast when we pray?

Many people fasted in Bible times and many still do so today. Fasting is good if it helps us focus our hearts and minds on God and if it is a genuine sign of reverence, sincerity and humility before God. We should not fast, however, in order to try to earn favor with God. God may “reward” our prayer and fasting, but he grants us his blessing because of his own mercy and grace and not on the basis of our merits.

Scripture References

“I [Ezra] proclaimed a fast there . . . that we might humble ourselves before our God, to seek from him a safe journey for ourselves, our children, and all our goods. . . . So we fasted and implored our God for this, and he listened to our entreaty.”

Ezra 8:21-23

“As soon as I [Nehemiah] heard these words I sat down and wept and mourned for days, and I continued fasting and praying before the God of heaven.” Nehemiah 1:4

“When they [Paul and Barnabas] had appointed elders for them in every church, with prayer and fasting they committed them to the Lord in whom they had believed.” Acts 14:23

See also: Exodus 34:28; Deuteronomy 9:18; 1 Samuel 7:6; 2 Samuel 12:16; Ezra 10:6; Nehemiah 9:1; Daniel 9:3; Psalm 35:13; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 2:37; Acts 13:2-3; 14:23.

16. Does God give us only those things we ask for in prayer?

No. God often grants us far more than we ask, much more than we deserve, and at times even more than we can imagine. Besides, sometimes we are too sick, too tired, or too confused to know what to ask for.

Scripture References

“Now to him [God] who is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus . . . forever and ever.” Ephesians 3:20-21

“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” Matthew 6:33

“Put me to the test,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you a blessing until there is no more need.’” Malachi 3:10

See also: Exodus 23:25; Leviticus 26:5; 1 Kings 3:12-13; Psalm 31:19; 37:4; 81:16; Isaiah 30:23; Amos 9:13; Matthew 19:29; Luke 6:38; Philippians 4:19; 2 Corinthians 9:8.

17. What is meant by “The Lord’s Prayer”?

This is the prayer which Jesus taught his disciples.

Scripture Reference

“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,

and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Matthew 6:9-13

(Some Bible versions also include the following words:

“For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”)

18. Where can we find other very special prayers in the Bible?

Some of the longest and most memorable prayers in the Bible are found in Genesis 18:23-32; 2 Samuel 7:18-29, Psalm 51; 1 Kings 8:22-61; and John 17:1-25.



LESSON 8 – TEST QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE

Circle T or F.

1. T F God permits us to pray to him but he really would rather not be bothered by everyone's prayers.
2. T F We may pray to God about anything and everything.
3. T F Prayer is primarily a matter of asking God for things we need or want.
4. T F We may pray at any time and in any place.
5. T F God will give us only those things which we ask for in prayer.
6. T F Sometimes there are conditions which must be met before God will answer our prayers.
7. T F Sometimes God will not give us what we ask for because he knows that it would not be best for us.
8. T F We should always fold our hands, close our eyes, and kneel down when we pray.
9. T F It is always more effective to pray with others than to pray alone, so we should rarely pray just by ourselves.
10. T F Fasting was appropriate in the times when the Bible was written, but it is not appropriate for us to fast today.

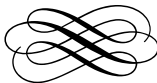


MULTIPLE CHOICE

Choose which of the three statements is correct. Circle A or B or C.

1. A. The Bible teaches us that we should pray only about important things and not about the small things in our life.
B. The Bible teaches us that we may pray to God about anything that is of concern to us, even the smallest things.
C. The Bible teaches us that we should pray for the needs of other people but not about own personal needs.
2. A. When we pray we should use a special tone of voice to show that we are very serious about our praying.
B. When we pray we do not need to use special words but we should be humble and sincere as we speak to God.
C. We should always pray aloud, since God does not hear “silent” prayers.
3. A. Jesus said, “Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do so that you will never be cold, poor, or hungry.”
B. Jesus said, “Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, so that others will know that you are a sincere believer.”
C. Jesus said, “Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do so the Father may be glorified in the Son.”
4. A. We may pray at any time and any place.
B. If we pray any time we feel like praying, we will take prayer too lightly and dishonor God.
C. We should never pray in public places where others can see or hear us.
5. A. Jesus spent very little time in prayer while he was on earth, since there was nothing he needed.
B. Jesus prayed often and sometimes spent a whole night praying to his Father in heaven.
C. Jesus prayed only in the evening when he was alone by himself.
6. A. The Bible teaches that the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.
B. The Bible teaches that prayer is a sign of our trust in God, but we should not expect him to answer us.
C. The Bible teaches that the only prayers that are effective are those offered by special servants of God.

7.
 - A. There are many examples of answered prayer in the New Testament but very few in the Old Testament.
 - B. There are many examples of answered prayer in the Old Testament but very few in the New Testament.
 - C. There are many wonderful examples of answered prayer in both the Old and the New Testament.
8.
 - A. God will always grant whatever we ask for, even if our faith is small and our motives are not right.
 - B. We should never expect God to answer any of our prayers unless we are totally free from sin.
 - C. We should not expect God to answer our prayers if we deliberately live in a way that does not please him.
9.
 - A. The Bible contains many prayers of praise, confession and thanksgiving as well as prayers of petition.
 - B. Most of the prayers in the Bible are prayers of petition or intercession.
 - C. The Old Testament has very few prayers of praise because the people living then did not yet know Jesus.
10.
 - A. God will never answer our prayers with a “No” because he does not want to discourage us.
 - B. God will always give us what we ask for even if it is not good for us.
 - C. God will usually not grant what we ask for if our desires or requests are not in harmony with his will.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is prayer?
2. Does a person have to be a born again believer in order to pray to God? Does a person have to be born again in order to have his or her prayers answered?
3. Is it desirable to have “set times” for prayer? Or is better to pray only when we “feel like” praying so that our prayers will be genuine and sincere?
4. How can we strengthen our prayer life? How can our prayer life strengthen us?
5. What are some reasons why God might not answer our prayers in the way we would like?
6. Is there any value in fasting along with our prayers?
7. What kinds of prayers seem to be offered most often: Prayers of Confession, Praise, Thanksgiving, or Request? How can we develop a good “balance” in our prayer life?
8. What are some benefits of praying alone? What are some benefits of praying with others?
9. Is it desirable for us to share with others God’s answers to our prayers? Should we also share with others when God does not seem to answer our prayers?
10. Is the Lord’s Prayer more important or more sacred than other prayers?



LESSON 9

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY

Introduction

One of the most important areas of Christian living is that of marriage and the family. Even those who do not marry do interact with parents, brothers, sisters and others who are married, so everyone can profit from learning what the Bible teaches about this subject. Marriage customs differ greatly from one place and one time to another, but there are some fundamental truths which are relevant for people everywhere.

Read thoughtfully what the Bible says about the proper relationship between husbands and wives and between parents and their children.

1. Where did the idea of marriage come from?

From God himself. In the beginning God created a male and a female who would come together in a loving relationship and eventually produce sons and daughters.

Scripture References

“God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them. . . . And God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it.’” Genesis 1:27-28

“‘Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?’ So they are no longer two but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let not man separate.’” Matthew 19:4-6

See also: Genesis 2:18-25.

2. **Should everyone seek to be married?**

Not necessarily. The Bible highly commends marriage but also recognizes that some persons choose not to marry for reasons which are acceptable to God.

Scripture References

Paul wrote: *“I wish that all were as I myself am. But each has his own gift from God, one of one kind and one of another. To the unmarried and the widows I say that it is good for them to remain single as I am. But if they cannot exercise self-control, they should marry. For it is better to marry than to burn with passion.”*

1 Corinthians 7:7-9

“I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to please the Lord. But the married man is anxious about worldly things, how to please his wife, and his interests are divided. And the unmarried or betrothed woman is anxious about the things of the Lord, how to be holy in body and spirit. But the married woman is anxious about worldly things, how to please her husband. I say this for your own benefit, not to lay any restraint upon you, but to promote good order and to secure your undivided devotion to the Lord.” 1 Corinthians 7:32-35

See also: Proverbs 12:4; 18:22; 19:14; 31:10-12; 1 Timothy 5:14.

3. **What does the Bible teach about the husband’s role in marriage?**

The husband is the head of the home and should love his wife just as Christ loved the church, his spiritual bride, and sacrificed his life for her.

Scripture References

“The husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church. . . . Husbands love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. . . . Husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.”

Ephesians 5:23, 25, 28

“Husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered.”

1 Peter 3:7

See also: Genesis 2:24; Proverbs 5:18; Ecclesiastes 9:9; Colossians 3:19.

4. What does the Bible teach about the wife's role in marriage?

Wives should love their husbands and submit to them just as believers submit themselves to Christ, their spiritual husband. If husbands love their wives with wholehearted and sacrificial love—as Christ loved the church—it will usually not be difficult for wives to submit to their husbands since they will be confident that their husbands will always be seeking what is truly best for them.

Scripture References

“Wives, submit to your own husbands as to the Lord.” Ephesians 5:22

“Do not let your adorning be external . . . but let your adorning be the hidden person of the heart with the imperishable beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit . . . For this is how the holy women who hoped in God used to adorn themselves, by submitting to their husbands.”

1 Peter 3:3-5

See also: Proverbs 31:10-31; 1 Corinthians 7:3-5; Colossians 3:18; 1 Timothy 3:11; 1 Peter 3:1.

5. How is the relationship between a husband and wife like the relationship between God and his chosen people and like the relationship between Christ and believers?

God referred to himself as the “husband” of the people of Israel. He loved them, blessed them, protected them, made a covenant with them, and gave them special promises. In the New Testament, the church is referred to as the bride of Christ. Christ loved the church, prayed for her, and gave his life for her. This special love and care is a wonderful example of the kind of love husbands should have for their wives.

Scripture References

“Your Maker is your husband . . . the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer.” Isaiah 54:5

“I have loved you with an everlasting love; . . . I was their husband,” declares the LORD.” Jeremiah 31:3, 32

“Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb.”
Revelation 21:9

See also: Isaiah 62:5; Hosea 2:19; Matthew 25:1-10; Revelation 19:7; 21:2.

6. What does the Bible teach about faithfulness to our marriage partners?

Marriage partners should be faithful to each other at all times and in every way.

Scripture References

“Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.” Hebrews 13:4

“Guard yourselves in your spirit, and let none of you be faithless to the wife of your youth.” Malachi 2:15

See also: Proverbs 5:1-23; 6:20-35; 7:1-27; Malachi 2:16; 1 Corinthians 6:15-20.

7. What does the Bible teach about divorce?

God intended from the beginning that marriage should be permanent. In Old Testament times, Moses permitted some people to divorce their wives because of the “hardness of their hearts.” In New Testament times, however, Jesus reminded people that God’s *intention* from the beginning was that marriage was to be a life-long arrangement.

Scripture References

Jesus said: *“Because of your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so. And I say to you: whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another, commits adultery.”* Matthew 19:8-9

“A married woman is bound by law to her husband while he lives, but if her husband dies she is released from the law of marriage. Accordingly, she will be called an adulteress if she lives with another man while her husband is alive. But if her husband dies, she is free from that law, and if she marries another man she is not an adulteress.” Romans 7:2-3

See also: Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 19:3-9; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 16:18; 1 Corinthians 7:10-11.

8. What should a believer do if his or her partner is not a believer?

Believers should not seek a divorce if their unbelieving partners are willing to continue living with them. Believing wives should be submissive to their unbelieving husbands in all things lawful and appropriate and continue to live pure and holy lives.

Scripture References

“If any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she consents to live with him, he should not divorce her. If any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he consents to live with her, she should not divorce him. . . . But if the unbelieving partner separates, let it be so. In such cases the brother or sister is not enslaved.” 1 Corinthians 7:12-15

“Wives, be subject to your own husbands so that even if some do not obey the word, they may be won without a word by the conduct of their wives, when they see your respectful and pure conduct.” 1 Peter 3:1-2

See also: Ezra 9:1-6; 10:12; 10:9-11.

9. What does the Bible teach about having more than one marriage partner?

From the very beginning, God’s intention for marriage was that men should have only one wife and women should have only one husband. Though there were plural marriages in certain Old Testament times, these marriages often led to jealousy or other problems. Jesus and the apostles made it clear that believers should have only one marriage partner and that they should be faithful to each other as long as they both lived.

Scripture References

“Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh.” Genesis 2:24

“He [the king] shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away.” Deuteronomy 17:17

“Each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.” 1 Corinthians 7:2

See also: Genesis 29:31; 30:1; 1 Timothy 3:12; Titus 1:6.

10. What does the Bible teach about the physical (sexual) side of marriage?

Sexual relations within the bonds of marriage are good, desirable, and a gift of God. Both husbands and wives should be very sensitive to the needs and desires of their partners. They should not make unreasonable demands or take advantage of one another or do anything that would hurt their partner either physically or emotionally.

Scripture References

“Enjoy life with the wife whom you love” Ecclesiastes 9:9

“Because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.”
1 Corinthians 7:2

“The husband should give to his wife her conjugal rights, and likewise the wife to her husband. For the wife does not have authority over her own body, but the husband does. Likewise the husband does not have authority over his own body, but the wife does. Do not deprive one another, except perhaps by agreement for a limited time, that you may devote yourselves to prayer; but then come together again, so that Satan may not tempt you because of your lack of self-control.” 1 Corinthians 7:3-5

See also: The Song of Solomon.

11. What does the Bible teach about same-sex marriage?

In both the Old and New Testaments, all homosexual relationships are condemned.

Scripture References

“If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination.” Leviticus 20:13

“Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality . . . will inherit the kingdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

See also: Romans 1:26-28, 32; 2 Corinthians 12:21; 2 Peter 2:6-10; Revelation 21:8.

12. What does the Bible teach about having children?

The Bible regards the birth of children as a great blessing from the Lord.

Scripture References

“Children are a heritage from the LORD, the fruit of the womb a reward. Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one’s youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them!”
Psalm 127:3-5

“Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house; your children will be like olive shoots around your table. Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the LORD.” Psalm 128:3-4

See also: Genesis 25:21; 33:5; 48:9; Joshua 24:3; Psalm 113:9; Proverbs 17:6; Isaiah 8:18; Matthew 19:13-15.

13. What should parents do for their children?

Parents should teach their children, pray for them, discipline them in love, provide for them, and serve as good examples of how Christians should live.

Scripture References

“Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6

“These words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.” Deuteronomy 6:6-7

“Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4

See also: Deuteronomy 6:1-5; 31:12-13; 1 Kings 2:2-4; Proverbs 3:11-12; 13:24; 19:18; 23:13-16.

14. How should children respond to the teaching and discipline of their parents?

Children should obey their parents in all things lawful, accept their loving discipline, and follow their good example. When parents are old and unable to support themselves, children should help support

them. When they do all these things, they will bring joy to their parents. When they don't, the result will be sorrow, loss, distress, and punishment.

Scripture References

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.”
Ephesians 6:1

“Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded.” Deuteronomy 5:16

“The father of the righteous will greatly rejoice; he who fathers a wise son will be glad in him.” Proverbs 23:24

See also: Leviticus 19:3; Deuteronomy 27:16; 1 Samuel 22:3; Proverbs 1:8; 10:1; 6:20; 28:7; Colossians 3:20.

15. How do the deeds of parents affect the lives of their children?

Parents may establish a pattern of life that continues in the lives of their descendants. When children follow the good example of their parents, both they and their parents are blessed by it. When children follow the evil example of parents or grandparents, they may be punished for the failures of their parents and grandparents as well as for their own sins.

Scripture References

“I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments.” Exodus 20:5-6

“[Jehoshaphat] walked in all the way of Asa his father. He did not turn aside from it, doing what was right in the sight of the LORD.”
1 Kings 22:43

“[Ahaziah] did what was evil in the sight of the LORD and walked in the way of his father and in the way of his mother.” 1 Kings 22:52

See also: 1 Kings 9:4-7; 2 Chronicles 17:3-6; 26:4; 34:1-7; Jeremiah 32:18-19; 2 Timothy 1:5; 3:15.

16. What is the most important thing believing parents can do in regard to their children?

Parents should humbly and sincerely determine to serve as an example to their children by walking in the ways of the Lord, teaching their children to walk in the ways of the Lord, and serving the Lord with their entire family.

Scripture References

“For I have chosen him, that he may command his children and his household after him to keep the way of the LORD by doing righteousness and justice, so that the LORD may bring to Abraham what he has promised him.” Genesis 18:19

David said: *“I will ponder the way that is blameless. . . . I will walk with integrity of heart within my house.”* Psalm 101:2

Joshua said: *“As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”* Joshua 24:15

See also: Deuteronomy 20:15-20; Ruth 1:16-18; 1 Kings 18:21; Acts 10:2; Hebrews 11:24-26.



Lesson 9 – TEST QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE

Circle T or F.

1. T F The idea of marriage came from God who created a male and a female in the beginning so that they could live together and have children.
2. T F The Bible teaches that every healthy person should marry, if possible.
3. T F The husband is the head of the home and should love his wife just as Jesus loved his “bride,” the church, and gave his life for her.
4. T F Marriage partners should be faithful to each other except when one of the partners is sick or absent for a long period of time.

5. T F The Bible teaches that believers should seek a divorce as soon as possible if their partner is an unbeliever.
6. T F The Bible condemns all homosexual relationships.
7. T F The Bible teaches that parents should discipline their children in love, teach them, pray for them, provide for them, and be a good example for them.
8. T F Children should love, honor, and obey their parents in all things lawful.
9. T F Both the good deeds and the failures of parents may have a very significant effect on their children for a very long time.
10. T F The most important thing that parents can do for their children is to make sure that they are well-educated and get a good job.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Choose which of the three statements is correct. Circle A or B or C.

THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT:

1. A. Both man and woman were created in the beginning in the image of God.
B. The first man was created in the image of God but the first woman was not.
C. Women have always been inferior to men because God created them that way.
2. A. A wife of noble character is her husband's crown and a prudent wife is from the Lord.
B. Many husbands are of noble character but a prudent wife cannot be found anywhere.
C. Husbands should remember that wives are often scheming and deceitful and cannot always be trusted.
3. A. Husbands are the head of their home and therefore have the right to treat their wives as they please.
B. Husbands should love their wives, be considerate as they live with them, and treat them with respect.
C. Wives have no right to expect anything more from their husbands than food and lodging and protection.

4.
 - A. Christ's love and sacrifice for the church is an example of the kind of love that husbands should have for their wives.
 - B. The relationship between Christ and the church is in no way like the relationship between a husband and his wife.
 - C. Husbands should love their wives but never sacrifice for them in any way.
5.
 - A. Husbands and wives may divorce when both partners believe this is best for each of them.
 - B. There is no time or circumstance when divorce is acceptable in God's sight.
 - C. God intends that marriage will be for life, but if one partner is unfaithful, the faithful partner is permitted (but not required) to seek a divorce.
6.
 - A. Each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.
 - B. Husbands may have as many wives and concubines as they can support, but they should treat them all lovingly and equally.
 - C. Men may have more than one wife if they so desire, but women should never have more than one husband.
7.
 - A. Sexual desires are the result of sin and should be fulfilled only on rare occasions.
 - B. Sexual desires are not wrong but should be fulfilled only when a married couple desires to have children.
 - C. Sexual relations within the bonds of marriage are a gift of God to be enjoyed by both husband and wife whenever they both desire.
8.
 - A. Parents should never discipline their children in any way that might cause them physical or emotional pain.
 - B. Parents should always discipline their children in love and try to help them understand that they genuinely want to do what is best for them.
 - C. Parents should not discipline their children at all, since children will always feel that parents who discipline them do not truly love them.

9.
 - A. Homosexual relationships are permissible when people are more attracted to persons of the same sex than they are to persons of the opposite sex.
 - B. Homosexual relationships are acceptable for men but not for women.
 - C. Homosexual relationships are never approved by God.
10.
 - A. The most important decision believing parents can make is to humbly and sincerely determine to serve the Lord with their entire family.
 - B. The most important decision believing parents can make is to determine how they can best promote the material and professional well-being of each member in their family.
 - C. The most important decision believing parents can make is to determine how they can best uphold the family name and honor in their community

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Does the Bible teach us whether it is better for parents to choose marriage partners for their children or whether it is better for the partners to make this decision themselves? If the Bible does not answer this question, how can we determine what is best?
2. In Matthew 19:4-6 we read that “a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife.” Does this mean that young couples should not live with their parents after they get married?
3. What are some reasons why it might be wise or desirable for a young man or woman to choose not to get married?
4. One of the purposes of marriage is to produce children. Are there any good reasons why Christian couples should or may decide not to have children?
5. Husbands should love their wives as Christ loves the church and gave his life for the church. What should a Christian wife do if her husband does not love her or treat her with kindness, helpfulness and respect? How can Christians strengthen their marriages?
6. Should Christian wives obey their husbands if their husbands tell them to do something which is contrary to the teachings of the Bible?

7. Is divorce ever permissible for believers? Is re-marriage permissible for those who have been divorced on unbiblical grounds?
8. Homosexuality is becoming increasingly common in the world and even in the church. Should the church today accept a homosexual lifestyle as acceptable to God? If not, how should the church deal with homosexual persons who claim to be followers of Christ?
9. Some believers in the Old Testament (such as Abraham, Jacob, and David) had more than one wife and God did not seem to condemn them for that. Are there situations today where the church should regard polygamy as acceptable to God?
10. What are some of the most important things that parents today can and should do for their children?



LESSON 10

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT SUFFERING, TRIALS AND PERSECUTION

Introduction

The Bible tells us that in the life to come true believers will experience unending joy and perfect peace. In our present life, however, we often experience tears and trials, sickness and sadness, suffering and sorrow. Sometimes we suffer simply because we are human beings who live on a sin-cursed earth. At other times our suffering comes because we are faithful followers of Jesus Christ. Whatever happens to us, however, we have the confidence and assurance that Christ will never leave us or forsake us.

1. What does the Bible teach us about the suffering and trials which believers may experience?

Jesus told his followers that they would often face sufferings and trials if they faithfully sought to live for him and follow his example. Paul and other writers also emphasized that faithful believers would often suffer persecution because of their faith. Being a Christian in a hostile environment would not be easy. But persecution would also be an indication that the people being persecuted were faithful and true followers of Christ. And true followers of Jesus would never be forsaken by their Lord.

Scripture References

Jesus said: “*In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*” John 16:33

Jesus said, “*I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. . . . A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you.*” John 15:19-20

Paul wrote: “*All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.*” 2 Timothy 3:12

See also: Matthew 24:9; Luke 21:12, 16-18; John 17:14; Acts 14:22; Romans 5:3-5; 8:35-37; 1 Thessalonians 3:2-4; 2 Timothy 1:8-9; 1 Peter 2:21; Revelation 2:10.

2. Are there any examples of persecution in the New Testament?

Yes, there are many. Church leaders and ordinary church members were often persecuted. Some were killed and many others were beaten or imprisoned. Paul suffered persecution in most of the places where he preached the Gospel, but he remained faithful. And, along with other believers, he continued to rejoice in the Lord and stayed strong in his faith in Jesus.

Scripture References

“*There arose on that day a great persecution against the church in Jerusalem.*” Acts 8:1

“*As servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: by great endurance, in afflictions, hardships, calamities, beatings, imprisonments, riots, labors, sleepless nights, hunger . . . as dying, and behold, we live; as punished, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.*” 2 Corinthians 6:4, 5, 9, 10

See also: Acts 4:3; 5:40; 9:29; 13:50; 14:5; 14:19; 2 Corinthians 4:7-11; 2 Timothy 2:9; 3:11.

3. Doesn't God care that his children suffer persecution?

He certainly does. However, he promises that if we patiently endure suffering for Christ's sake, we will receive special blessings in this life and will receive a great reward in heaven when this life is over.

Scripture References

Jesus said, “*Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven.*” Matthew 5:11-12

“We do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison.” 2 Corinthians 4:16-17

See also: Psalm 34:9; Isaiah 43:2; John 12:26; Romans 8:17-18, 28; Philippians 3:21; Colossians 3:4; 2 Timothy 2:12; Hebrews 10:34; 11:26; 1 Peter 1:6-7; 4:12-13.

4. What are some of the ways in which persecution and trials can be a source of blessing in our present lives?

Trials and suffering for Christ’s sake can help to strengthen our character, increase our joy, confirm our commitment to follow Jesus, increase our patience, prove the genuineness of our faith, teach us to depend on the Lord and not on our own resources, confirm our testimony, and enable us to serve as an example to others. Persecution and trials may cause us sorrow, pain, and suffering, but they can also produce precious spiritual fruit in our lives.

Scripture References

“You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit, so that you became an example to all the believers. . . . your faith in God has gone forth everywhere.” 1 Thessalonians 1:6-8

“I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. . . . And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.” Philippians 1:12, 14

“We do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced . . . We were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God. . . . On him we have set our hope that he will deliver us again.” 2 Corinthians 1:8-10

See also: Acts 5:34; Romans 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 4:11; 16-17; 6:10; 12:9; Hebrews 10:34; 12:11; James 1:2-4.

5. What encouragement does the Bible give to those who suffer persecution?

God will never leave or forsake those who suffer for Christ's sake. He will ultimately work out *all* things for the benefit of those who love him. And those who persevere to the end will inherit a crown of glory.

Scripture References

"[God] has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.' So we can confidently say, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not fear; what can man do to me?'" Hebrews 13:5-6

"I [Paul] was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me." 2 Timothy 1:11-12

"You had compassion on those in prison, and you joyfully accepted the plundering of your property, since you knew that you yourselves had a better possession and an abiding one." Hebrews 10:34

See also: Matthew 5:4, 11-12; Romans 8:28; 8:35-39; 2 Timothy 2:12; Hebrews 11:26; 12:3; 1 Peter 4:13-14; 5:10; Revelation 14:13.

6. What should we do if we suffer trials or persecution because of our faith?

We should commit our lives to the Lord, continue to live a Christian life, and concentrate on the glory to come. Though present trials can be very severe, we should remember that they cannot begin to be compared with the glory that will someday be ours when we are with Christ.

Scripture References

"Let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good." 1 Peter 4:19

"We do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal." 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

“I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.” Romans 8:18

See also: Acts 5:41; 7:55; Romans 8:17; 2 Timothy 1:8-12; 2:10; Hebrews 11:10; 1 Peter 2:19-21; 5:10; Revelation 3:21; 20:1-4; 21:4.

7. What attitude should we have toward those who persecute us?

We should not seek “to get even” with them, but leave revenge to God, trusting that he will do what is just and right. As difficult as it may be, we should love them in Christ, pray for them and seek to do them good. Jesus himself is our example of how we should live among people who oppose us, oppress us, or persecute us. This is something we cannot do in our own strength, but something we can do through the indwelling power of Christ. It is his love that wins a victory—even if we have to die for our faith.

Scripture References

“Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. . . . When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.” 1 Peter 2:21, 23

“Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’ To the contrary, ‘if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink;’ . . . Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” Romans 12:19-21

Jesus said: *“Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.”*
Matthew 5:44-45

See also: Proverbs 20:22; 25:21-22; Matthew 5:39; Luke 6:27, 35; Romans 12:17; 1 Corinthians 4:12-13; 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10; 1 Peter 2:19-24; 3:9.

8. Does God promise that He will always keep believers from illness or injury? Does he promise that he will always heal them miraculously if they are sick, injured, suffering or persecuted?

No. It is true that believers are sometimes miraculously healed when they are sick or injured and are sometimes spared from injury or sickness through the special grace of God. However, that does

not always happen. Both believers and unbelievers often suffer and die from the same diseases and afflictions. And both believers and unbelievers often suffer and die from accidents or in floods or hurricanes or other natural disasters. In addition, in many parts of the world believers also face persecution because of their faith. God does indeed love and protect and care for his children in very special ways, but he does not promise that they will escape all the suffering and trials that others experience.

However, as believers we have the assurance that nothing can happen to us outside the will of God. We also have the promise and assurance that everything that takes place in our lives will ultimately, in some way, turn out for our good.

We should therefore continue to pray that God will keep us from injury and accident and sickness in the confidence that our prayers will often be answered as we desire. However, if we are not spared from these things or if we are not immediately healed, we have the confidence that God will use these unpleasant or painful situations to help us become the kind of persons he wants us to be. And if our sickness or accident or injury ends in death, we know that we will be taken into the glorious presence of our Savior where we will forever be free from sickness, suffering, pain, frustration or disappointment.

Scripture References

“It is good for me that I was afflicted, that I might learn your statutes. . . . I know, O LORD . . . that in faithfulness you have afflicted me.” Psalm 119:71, 75

“For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but later it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it.” Hebrews 12:11

“To keep me from becoming conceited . . . a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me. . . . Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

See also: Job 5:17; Psalm 94:12; 119:67; Proverbs 3:12; John 15:2; Acts 14:22; Romans 5:3-5; 1 Corinthians 11:32; 2 Corinthians 4:17; James 1:2-3.

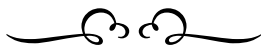


LESSON 10 – TEST QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE

Circle T or F.

1. T F True believers will rarely experience sickness, trials or suffering in this life.
2. T F True believers may actually experience more trials and suffering in this life than unbelievers do.
3. T F The apostle Paul was a wonderful example of freedom from suffering, persecution and illness.
4. T F The Bible teaches that suffering and persecution may lead to our personal and spiritual benefit.
5. T F The Bible teaches that we are blessed if we suffer for righteousness' sake.
6. T F Jesus said that all men will love us if we love him.
7. T F The Bible teaches that God will ultimately work out all things for the benefit of those who love Him.
8. T F The Bible teaches that we should try to get even with those who persecute us.
9. T F God will never leave or forsake those who suffer for Christ's sake.
10. T F God promises that the more faithful we are in living for him, the fewer sufferings and trials we will have.



MULTIPLE CHOICE

Choose which of the three statements is correct. Circle A or B or C.

1. A. If we are suffering from trials or persecution, we obviously are not living in a way that pleases the Lord.
B. If we are suffering from trials or persecution, we may expect that God will deliver us by a special miracle.
C. If we are suffering from sickness, trials or persecution, we should not be surprised but continue to trust God.
2. A. The Bible teaches that no one who lives a life that pleases God will ever be persecuted.
B. The Bible teaches that everyone one who lives a life that pleases God will be persecuted.
C. The Bible teaches that few people who live a life that pleases God will ever be persecuted.
3. A. If we suffer for being a Christian, we should rejoice so that we may be glad when Christ's glory is revealed.
B. If we suffer for being a Christian, we should change our lifestyle so we will not suffer persecution in the future.
C. If we suffer for being a Christian, it may be a sign that we are not trusting and obeying Christ as we should.
4. A. If we suffer for Christ's sake, we will often receive special blessings from God in this life and also in the life to come.
B. If we suffer for Christ's sake, God will usually be quick to send us relief so that his name will be praised.
C. If we suffer for Christ's sake, there will rarely be any special blessing that results from it.
5. A. James wrote that we should count it all joy whenever we meet trials of various kinds.
B. James wrote that we should consider it a punishment from God whenever we face trials.
C. James wrote that we should consider it most unfortunate if we have to suffer trials for Christ's sake.
6. A. When the apostles were persecuted for preaching, they simply stopped preaching for a while.
B. When the apostles were persecuted for preaching, they moved to a different city and began to preach there instead.
C. When the apostles were persecuted for preaching, they rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer for Christ.

7.
 - A. Peter taught that those who suffer according to God's will should stop preaching for a while.
 - B. Peter taught that those who suffer according to God's will should entrust their lives to God and keep doing good.
 - C. Peter taught that those who suffer according to God's will should move to a place where they would not be persecuted.
8.
 - A. When people persecute us for our faith, we should point out to them how foolish and sinful they are.
 - B. When people persecute us for our faith, we should warn them that God will someday severely punish them for it.
 - C. When people persecute us for our faith, we should love them in Christ, pray for them, and seek to do them good.
9.
 - A. True believers will rarely suffer from the diseases and afflictions that affect unbelievers.
 - B. True believers may often suffer from sickness or other problems, but God can use trials to help them serve the Lord more effectively.
 - C. True believers will always be spared from injury or sickness or accident if they faithfully serve the Lord.
10.
 - A. The Apostle Paul wrote: "When I am strong, then I am weak."
 - B. The Apostle Paul wrote: "I thank God that I have always been spared from serious sickness and weakness and trials."
 - C. The Apostle Paul wrote: "When I am weak, then I am strong."



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Is 2 Timothy 3:12 true for every believer everywhere?
2. Can you give any personal examples of being persecuted because you are a Christian?
3. Wouldn't it be much better for us (believers) if we never experienced any suffering or trials or persecution in our lives?
4. Why would anyone think he is offering a service to God if he killed Christians? (See John 16:2)
5. Do you think that those who suffer *persecution* in this life for Christ's sake will receive greater glory and greater reward in heaven? If so, what do you think this "glory" or reward will be like?
6. Do you think that our earthly "trials" will result in greater "rewards" in heaven? If so, do you think the "reward" will depend on how we respond to our trials in this life?
7. Can you think of any specific examples in your own life or in the life of someone you know in which trials and persecution resulted in "spiritual blessings" already in this life?
8. How should we respond to persons who treat us unfairly simply because we are Christians? Can you give any examples of a positive result when you responded "appropriately" to someone who mistreated you?
9. How is your prayer life affected when you pray for healing or freedom from trials and persecution but God does not heal you or keep you from being persecuted?
10. Do you think your life would be more fruitful and more joyful if everything went the way you wanted it to?



LESSON 11

WHAT THE BIBLE TEACHES ABOUT THE FUTURE

Introduction

In this present life, believers often experience persecution, difficulties, suffering, and trials of various kinds. God never promised that it would be any different as long as we are on this earth. However, in the future it will be totally different! God has promised all true believers a glorious future of perfect joy and peace that will never end. This does not mean that our present trials are insignificant, but knowing about our wonderful future with Jesus will help us to be patient and courageous as we look forward to the time when we shall be forever with the Lord.

1. What happens to us when we die as believers in Jesus.

Our earthly bodies die, but our spirits or souls are taken immediately into the presence of Jesus. The Bible does not tell us in detail what life is like for believers between the time of their death and the time of their resurrection, but it does give us the assurance that being with the Lord after death is a greater blessing than anything we have ever experienced here on earth.

Scripture References

“For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. . . . So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. . . . Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.” 2 Corinthians 5:1, 6, 8

Paul wrote: *“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. . . . My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.”*
Philippians 1:21, 23

See also: Psalm 23:6; 49:15; Luke 23:42-43; 2 Timothy 4:6-8;
Revelation 14:13.

2. What happens to our bodies when we die?

Our bodies eventually decay and return to “dust.” They will not become alive again until Christ returns and all those who have died are resurrected.

Scripture References

“By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return.” Genesis 3:19

“Man is going to his eternal home . . . and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the spirit returns to God who gave it.”
Ecclesiastes 12:5, 7

See also: Job 7:6-10; 10:9; Psalm 103:14; Isaiah 40:6-7; 1 Corinthians 15:47; 2 Corinthians 4:7; 1 Peter 1:24.

3. Does death, then, have the final word?

Absolutely not! Christ has conquered death and has given us the assurance that we who trust in him and believe in him will share in his glorious victory over sin, death, and hell.

Scripture References

“As in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive.”
1 Corinthians 15:22

“Our Savior, Jesus Christ . . . abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.” 2 Timothy 1:10

“The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 15:56-57

See also: Isaiah 25:8; 35:1-10; Romans 6:23; 1 Corinthians 15: 22-26; 50-55;
2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Revelation 7:14-17; 21:2-5.

4. When Christ returns to earth, what will happen to our bodies?

Everyone who died will be raised to life again. Some will rise to an eternal life of glory while others will rise to shame and everlasting punishment.

Scripture References

“There will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.” Acts 24:15

“All who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment.” John 5:28-29

See also: Daniel 12:2; John 5:25; 11:25; Acts 24:15;
1 Corinthians 15:54; 2 Corinthians 4:14; 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

5. What will the resurrected bodies of believers be like?

The resurrected bodies of believers will be like the glorious “spiritual” body of Jesus Christ. They will have physical dimensions, just as the body of Jesus does, but they will be far more glorious than their earthly bodies ever were. They will be immortal and imperishable and will never be subject to any of the diseases, weaknesses or problems that our present bodies often experience.

Scripture References

“The Lord Jesus Christ . . . will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body.” Philippians 3:20-21

“What is sown [buried] is perishable; what is raised is imperishable. It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.” 1 Corinthians 15:42-44

See also: 1 Corinthians 15:35-56; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18.

6. When will this all take place?

The resurrection of believers will take place when Jesus comes to earth again. No one knows the exact time when Jesus will return, but we look forward with great anticipation to this awesome day when Christ will be glorified and all who have longed for his appearing will rejoice.

Scripture References

“Stay alert, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come.” Matthew 24:42

“The Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16

See also: Matthew 24:36; Luke 12:40; John 6:40; 1 Corinthians 15:23; Titus 2:13.

7. Will believers be completely surprised when Jesus returns?

No. Though we don't know the exact time when Jesus will return, the Bible gives us various signs that will point to his coming. Those who read and believe what the Bible says will therefore be looking for and expecting Jesus' return and will not be totally surprised when he comes.

Among the signs that point to Jesus' return are some that are fairly common—such as wars, famines, natural disasters, persecution of believers, widespread false teachings and an increase in disobedience and lawlessness. There also are signs which will take place in the political and economic world. Some believers, for example, focus on special events that will take place in the land of Israel and among the Jewish people before Jesus returns.

One very special sign that Jesus highlighted is the preaching of the Gospel to the entire world before he returns. It is very interesting in this regard to note that the Gospel is reaching far more people today than ever before in human history. God has provided us with many new ways to speed the translation, proclamation and distribution of the Scriptures and thousands of faithful people are actively engaged in bringing the message of Christ to the ends of the earth.

In the light of all the things that are happening in the world today, many Christians believe that Christ might return soon. However, whether Jesus returns soon or in the distant future, we should make sure that we are truly living for him now and that we are ready for his return!

Scripture References

“For you yourselves are fully aware that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. . . . But you are not in darkness, brothers, for that day to surprise you like a thief.” 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 4

“And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.” Matthew 24:14

“When you see all these things, you know that he [Jesus] is near, at the very gates.” Matthew 24:33

See also: Matthew 24:5-14; 32-35; 2 Thessalonians 1:10.

8. Who will see Jesus when he comes back to earth again?

Everyone! Though only a few people saw Jesus when he first came to earth as a baby in Bethlehem, every person on earth will see him when he returns to earth in glory.

Scripture References

“Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth . . . will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”

Matthew 24:30-31

“Behold, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him.” Revelation 1:7

See also: Luke 17:24.

9. What will happen to the present universe when Jesus returns?

The universe as we know it will be destroyed and will be replaced by a new heaven and a new earth. The “agent” of destruction will be fire just as the earlier destruction of the world took place through water during the days of Noah.

Scripture References

“By the word of God . . . the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the heavens and

earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.” 2 Peter 3:5-7

“The heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved and . . . will melt as they burn! But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”
2 Peter 3:10-13

See also: Matthew 24:35; Luke 17:26-28; Romans 8:21; Revelation 21:1

10. How should we believers live as we wait for Jesus to return?

We should live lives of holiness, encourage fellow believers, share the Gospel with those who do not have it, live in peace with others, and look forward with eagerness to the day of Christ’s return.

Scripture References

“So then let us not sleep, as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober. . . . having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.”

1 Thessalonians 5:6-8, 11

“What sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God Therefore . . . be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.” 2 Peter 3:11-12, 14

See also: Matthew 24:44; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:58; Colossians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 5:14-23; 1 Timothy 6:14; Titus 2:3; 2 Peter 11-15, 17-18; 1 John 2:28.

11. What will happen to believers who are still living when Christ returns?

They will instantly be changed and will receive glorious and imperishable new bodies. They will then rise along with resurrected believers to meet Christ in the air and will live with him forever in glory.

Scripture References

“Behold! I tell you a mystery. We shall not all sleep [die], but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.” 1 Corinthians 15:51-52

“For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord.”

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

See also: Matthew 16:27; John 14:3; 1 Corinthians 4:5; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 3:4; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:27-28; 1 Peter 5:4; 1 John 3:2.

12. What will Jesus do when he returns to earth?

He will raise to life all those who have died and will judge everyone who has ever lived. Though our salvation is totally by God’s grace, believers will be graciously rewarded for every good work they have done through the indwelling power of God.

Scripture References

“The Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.” Matthew 16:27

“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil.” 2 Corinthians 5:10

See also: John 5:22, 27; Acts 10:42; 17:31-32; Romans 2:16; 6:7-8; Ephesians 6:7-8; 2 Timothy 4:1.

13. What will happen to those who loved and served Jesus in this life?

They will receive the rewards which Jesus grants to those who loved and served him. They will also be welcomed into God’s kingdom of glory where they will spend eternity with Jesus and all other believers in perfect love, joy, and peace.

Scripture References

Jesus said: *“And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, that where I am you may be also.”* John 14:3

“And when the Chief Shepherd [Jesus] appears, you will receive the unfading crown of glory.” 1 Peter 5:4

See also: Matthew 24:45-47; 25:31-40; Revelation 7:9-17.

14. What will happen to those who did not believe and trust in Jesus?

They will also receive bodies of some kind though their bodies will be totally different from the glorious bodies of believers. These bodies will be subject to suffering and pain without relief. They will be cast into the “fires of hell” away from the presence of God and his people. They will continue to exist under the judgment of God and will be eternally lost.

Scripture References

“These [unbelievers] will go away into eternal punishment.”
Matthew 25:46

“They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might.”
2 Thessalonians 1:9

“The Son of Man will send his angels, and they will gather out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all law breakers, and throw them into the fiery furnace. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Matthew 13:41-42

See also: Daniel 12:2; Mark 9:48; John 3:36; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Hebrews 10:29; 2 Peter 2:4, 5, 9; 3:7; Jude 13; Revelation 14:9-11; 20:15; 21:8.

15. What will life be like for believers in the new heaven and new earth?

Life will be glorious beyond anything we can now imagine or describe. However, the Bible itself does not give us many specific details about this new life (probably because we could not fully understand them). Rather, the Bible emphasizes the absence of things which often make our present lives difficult, challenging, frustrating or sorrowful. For example, in the life to come there will be no suffering, no sadness, no sickness, no death and no tears. There will be no darkness, no failures, no weaknesses, no disappointments and no unmet needs. The curse pronounced on the earth after Adam sinned will no longer exist. Life will be perfect in every way. Nothing in our present life can even begin to compare with what our future life will be like. We will live in joy and peace and glory with JESUS in a life that will never end.

Scripture References

“No eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man imagined, what God has prepared for those who love him.” 1 Corinthians 2:9

“They will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.” Revelation 21:3-4

See also: Psalm 17:15; Isaiah 33:17; Matthew 6:20; 13:43; John 17:24; Acts 7:55-56; Romans 8:18-22; 2 Corinthians 4:17; Revelation 7:9; 22:3-5.



LESSON 11 – TEST QUESTIONS

TRUE OR FALSE

Circle T or F.

1. T F When believers die, their spirits or souls are immediately taken into the presence of Jesus.
2. T F The mortal bodies of believers will immediately be changed into new immortal bodies when they die.
3. T F The bodies of both believers and unbelievers will be raised again.
4. T F The resurrected bodies of believers will be far more glorious than their earthly bodies ever were.
5. T F Only believers will see Jesus when he returns to earth.
6. T F No one knows the exact time when Jesus will come back to earth.
7. T F Believers will be completely surprised when Jesus returns.
8. T F Believers who are living at the time Jesus returns will not die.
9. T F Those who do not believe and trust in Jesus will be eternally lost.
10. T F The future life of believers will be more glorious and wonderful than we can imagine or describe.

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Choose which of the three statements is correct. Circle A or B or C.

1.
 - A. The apostle Paul feared death because he was not sure what would happen when he died.
 - B. Paul feared death because he knew that he would likely die a cruel death as the result of persecution.
 - C. Paul did not fear death but looked forward to being with Christ which he believed was far better.
2.
 - A. The Bible teaches that those who die in the Lord are truly blessed.
 - B. The Bible teaches that those who die in the Lord will not be aware of anything until the day of resurrection.
 - C. The Bible doesn't teach us anything about those who die in the Lord.
3.
 - A. The resurrected bodies of believers will be exactly the same as the bodies they had when they lived on earth.
 - B. The resurrected bodies of believers will be spiritual, immortal, and imperishable.
 - C. The resurrected bodies of believers will be like the bodies of the angels.
4.
 - A. When Jesus returns to earth, He will come quietly and only a few people will see him at first.
 - B. When Jesus returns to earth, all believers will see him but unbelievers will not.
 - C. When Jesus returns to earth, there will be a loud trumpet call and every person will see him.
5.
 - A. When Jesus returns to earth, most things on earth will continue as they are now.
 - B. When Jesus returns to earth, believers will be very joyful but unbelievers will not.
 - C. When Jesus returns to earth, both believers and unbelievers will be very happy.

6.
 - A. When Jesus returns, our present earth will be destroyed and there will be a new heaven and a new earth.
 - B. When Jesus returns, our present earth will remain unchanged except that there will be no more decay or death.
 - C. When Jesus returns believers will be taken up to heaven and unbelievers will continue to live on earth.
7.
 - A. Both believers and unbelievers will be totally surprised when Jesus returns to earth.
 - B. Believers will not be totally surprised when Jesus returns because they will be expecting him to come soon.
 - C. Believers are able to figure out the exact day when Jesus will return.
8.
 - A. Believers who are still living when Jesus returns will all die but will be resurrected soon afterwards.
 - B. Believers who are still living when Jesus returns will suddenly be changed and will rise to meet him in the air.
 - C. The Bible does not tell us what will happen to believers who are still living when Jesus returns.
9.
 - A. When Jesus returns, he will judge everyone who ever lived and will reward those who have loved and served him.
 - B. When Jesus returns, he will give everyone one more opportunity to believe in him before the Day of Judgment.
 - C. When Jesus returns, he will judge only those who did not believe in him.
10.
 - A. When Jesus returns to earth, everyone will rejoice in God's mercy and grace and will enjoy eternal life with Jesus.
 - B. When Jesus returns to earth, unbelievers will be separated from God for a while but later will share in the joy of heaven.
 - C. When Jesus returns to earth, believers will live with Jesus forever and unbelievers will be separated from Jesus for ever.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Do you look forward to the Second Coming of Jesus? Why?
2. Will believers get a glorious new body immediately after they die? If so, will this body be different from the body believers will receive at the time of the resurrection?
3. Will everyone receive a “new body” of some kind at the time of the resurrection?
4. What do you think it means that believers will receive a “spiritual” body when Jesus returns?
5. Are we able to determine exactly when Jesus will return? Are we able to determine the approximate time when Jesus will return?
6. How should we as Christians live as we wait for Jesus return to earth? Are there things we should do as well as things we should not do.
7. Christians have different views of the “millennium” (the thousand year reign of Christ described in Revelation 20). What are some of those differences? How important are those differences? What is your own view of the millennium?
8. How do you understand the “final judgment” that the Bible refers to? Will people not know until the “final judgment” whether or not they are saved?
9. Will unbelievers have a “second chance” to believe in Jesus after He returns?
10. What do you think life will be like in the new heaven and the new earth?



YOUR OWN SALVATION

After reading the questions and answers in these Lessons, you may still have some questions about your own personal relationship with Jesus Christ. You may not be sure that your sins have been forgiven. Or you may wonder whether or not you truly are a child of God. Or, perhaps you simply do not know what you should do in order to receive from God the gift of eternal life.

If you sincerely want to commit your life to Christ but are not sure what you should do, we encourage you to humbly and sincerely confess your sins to God, believe with all your heart that Jesus paid the penalty for your sins, and then, in faith, claim for yourself God's promise to grant forgiveness and eternal life to all who truly believe.

In order to help you do this, we invite you to pray sincerely the following prayer—or a similar prayer of your own.

Dear God, I confess that I have often sinned against you and have not lived the way you want me to live. I have done many things which I should not have done and have failed to do the things which I should have done. Please forgive me. I sincerely believe that Jesus died on the cross in my place and that he rose again for my salvation. In faith I accept from you the gifts of forgiveness and eternal life. With all my heart I thank you for these gifts and, with the help of the Holy Spirit, I promise to love and serve you as long as I live. I pray all of this in the name of my precious Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen!

Read again the promises that God gives to all who confess their sins and put their trust in Jesus for forgiveness and eternal life.

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16

“God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.

Whoever has the Son has life;

whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. . . .I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.”

1 John 5:11-13

These are the promises of God. Believe and live forever!



