

In Jesus' Steps

Disciples for Life

Unit 2: Christian Leadership

How to positively influence the attitudes and actions of others for Jesus Christ.

Welcome to the Christian Leadership Bible Study!

You are taking an important step to positively influence the attitudes and actions of others for Jesus Christ. You are embarking on a never-ending journey to make a difference in your community and in our world.

No one is born a leader, but with God's grace, anyone can develop this gift to be used for good. However, leadership is not easy. It takes effort and sacrifice. It takes an *undivided* heart towards the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

With this right heart and motivation, God will provide all that you need, when you need it. But remember, you must trust and follow Christ. Your goal as a Christian leader is to allow Christ to work through you to bring glory to God. We pray God will draw you close and equip you for every good work. Amen.

God be with you now and forevermore!



Executive Director¹

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Lesson One A Leadership Model

Day One

Leadership Defined

Words are interesting concepts. Some words are concrete or physical. For example, if I were to say “banana” and you understood English, you would imagine a yellow, thick-skinned fruit. Other words that denote abstract (*not* concrete or physical) ideas are harder to understand. Think how difficult it is to define happiness, love, and other kinds of emotions or feelings.

Sometimes we have heard words so many times that we think we understand what they mean, but in fact we do not. Then again, we may have been taught incorrectly. Therefore, as Christians it is beneficial to study the real or varied meanings of the words that define our faith. The simple act of clarifying a word’s definition can have a dramatic effect on understanding our walk with the Lord.

Words can also mean different things to different people. Even the name Christian may have different meanings for different people. For example, a Christian may be defined by some people as one who goes to church on Sunday or one who reads the Bible. In this way, Christians may be labeled for what they do rather than for the One they serve.

Believers in Christ were first called Christians in Antioch (Acts 11:26). The Greek word *Christianos* (Χριστιανός) translated “Christian” in English means Christ-follower. Initially, the name Christian may have been given by outsiders for negative or insulting intent.

Definitions: “A *Christian* is an adherent of Christ; one committed to Christ; a follower of Christ.”² An *adherent* is someone who supports a particular party, person, or set of ideas.

When we live up to the real definition of Christian, others will know we are a followers of Jesus. We will seek God’s will and glory. Our behavior, works, and attitudes will always point to the One we are serving rather than to ourselves. Gradually, we will become more interested in serving others rather than ourselves.

Sometimes people call themselves Christians but are excessively (extremely) involved in things for their own benefit or welfare. They are self-absorbed and engrossed in their own happiness, wealth, or activities. Their primary focus is on themselves. Self-absorption is being overly involved with yourself.

² Trent C. Butler, editor, *Holman Bible Dictionary*, (Nashville: Holman Bible Publishers, 1991), 252.

1. Read Philippians 2:5–8. How is being overly concerned with ourselves (self-absorption) contrary (different; opposed) to being a follower of Christ (Christian)?

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: ⁶Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; ⁷rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! Philippians 2:5–8

Jesus was concerned with following God, His Father. Even though Jesus was God, and equal to God, He took on the nature of a human servant. Jesus was not concerned with power, riches, or happiness but only in obeying Father God. In obedience, Jesus became our sacrificial Lamb, taking the sins of the world into His body. Jesus lived a life of self-sacrifice, not self-absorption.

2. Have you been overly concerned with yourself (self-absorbed)? Yes No Maybe (Underline One)

Rachel Saint (1914–1994) was born in Pennsylvania and grew up in a large, devout Christian family. She had seven brothers and no sisters. Rachel was used to hard work and having little material possessions, including food. The family relied on God and many times their prayers centered on His provision of food and other basic needs.³

When Rachel was a teenager, she was introduced to an elderly couple, Mr. and Mrs. Parmalee, who had no children of their own. The wife and Rachel got along so well that Mrs. Parmalee invited her on a trip to Great Britain for her 18th birthday. The Parmalees' net worth was about eighteen million in today's dollars, so they traveled in grand style. Rachel had a fabulous time, although she was concerned about the extravagant amount of money being spent.

On the ship back to the United States, Mrs. Parmalee asked Rachel to be her companion, like a daughter, and she would make Rachel her heir. In other words, Rachel would inherit a vast fortune. They agreed that Rachel would give her answer at the end of the voyage.

It was a hard decision at first, and Rachel could not sleep. Finally, she “admitted to herself that the life of luxury was not for her. Deep in her heart she knew that God had a plan for her life, and it did not include sipping endless cups of tea and chatting idly. No, somehow Rachel knew God was asking her to trust that He would lead her into some great adventure, not an adventure that would make her rich but a great adventure nonetheless.”⁴

³ Janet and Geoff Benge, *Rachel Saint: A Star in the Jungle*, in the series *Christian Heroes: Then & Now* (Seattle: YWAM Publishing, 2005), 18–29.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 29.

3. How was Rachel Saint God-centered and not self-centered?

4. Read 2 Corinthians 10:4–5. What can *you* do to become more God-centered?

The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.
2 Corinthians 10:4–5

Definition: A *stronghold* is a place that is strongly defended to protect it against attack.

In 2 Corinthians 10:4, a stronghold is anything that sets itself up against God, including pride, self-centeredness, selfishness, and self-confidence. Our battle against such things does not end when we become Christians. Instead, we are more engaged in the battle. We strive to think *less* about ourselves and *more* about God and the needs of others.

Sound difficult? It certainly is. Satan and his demons are experts at tempting us into self-defeating thoughts and actions. The good news is that our victor, Jesus, helps us. Guidelines for victory are in 2 Corinthians 10:4–5. The Bible assures us that we have God's power to demolish our egotism (self-importance) and pride. In Christ, we can triumph over our fleshly self-centeredness and become God-centered. We need to pray, obey God's Word, and trust Him.

5. Read 1 Peter 4:16, 19. Why do you think Peter says that if you suffer as a Christian, praise God?

However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name. 1 Peter 4:16

So then, those who suffer according to God's will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good. 1 Peter 4:19

Suffering as a Christian means we are suffering because we are following Jesus. Even though we are walking as Jesus did and helping others, we may go through painful trials and persecutions (mistreatment). We praise God because our identity is in Christ, and we have been found worthy to uphold His holy name by suffering in obedience to His plan and purposes.

God's plan is to make Christ known (Ephesians 3:8–11). He gave His Son as a gift to the world so that none should perish but have eternal life (John 3:16). To fulfill God's plan for us, we must lead others to the knowledge of Christ, the ultimate Leader.

Definition: *Lead* is a verb (action word) with a variety of meanings from various online dictionaries: 1. to show the way by going in advance; 2. to guide or direct; 3. to serve as a route or a channel; 4. to guide the behavior or opinion of; 5. to direct the performance or activities of; to inspire the conduct of; 6. to be at the head of; 7. to be foremost in or among.

In a real sense, all the meanings of the word *lead* apply to Jesus, the preeminent (most excellent) Leader. 1. He showed the way by going in advance; He was born of a woman and lived on earth. He is the firstborn among many brothers (Romans 8:29). 2. He guides and directs Christians in the right course (John 10:14). 3. He is the path of life. He is the way, or channel, to God (John 14:6). 4. He guides us in all truth that affects our behavior and opinions (John 1:17). 5. He directs our works and activities (John 10:16). He inspires us to be pure and holy (1 Peter 2:5). 6. He is the head and at the head of everything (Colossians 1:15–18). 7. He is foremost in and among all men, women, and all angels (Philippians 2:10–11; Revelation 3:14).

As Christians, we have the great privilege of following the Son of God, the utmost (greatest) Leader of all time. In leading others, we receive our instructions from Christ. As we obey Him, we will *lead* by positively influencing the attitudes and actions of others for Jesus Christ.

6. Review the seven ways Jesus leads from the above paragraphs. Write the one that is most meaningful to you and why.

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answer to # 6 with your discipleship team.

Action Step: Pray the following leadership prayer in sincerity:

Lord Jesus, You are an excellent Leader. Everything You do is good. Your ways are far superior to my ways and I long to follow You completely. I pray that You lead me in *every* area of my life. Make me a leader totally identified with You, my Lord. May I lead with a pure heart, giving all the glory to our triune God. Amen.

7. I have prayed the leadership prayer. Yes No (Underline One)

—End Day One—

Day Two
The Model

Building a house, computer system, or any other complex structure does not happen overnight. It is a process. Building takes time to develop and implement. We need the right instructions or directions from the beginning. For example, if we want to build a house, we would *not* use a blueprint⁵ for a car. If we were making lasagna for dinner, we would *not* be following the recipe for a chocolate cake. Whatever we want to make or build, we must start with the right design or plan to assure the proper outcome.

In the same way, we do not become effective Christian leaders in an instant. It takes time to develop and implement a plan of leadership. And like anything else, we need the right instructions from the beginning to end up with the right results.

8. Read John 13:15–16. Who is the model or example for building a Christian leader?

I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.
John 13:15–16 (Jesus is speaking.)

9. Read 2 Timothy 3:16–17. Where do you find the instructions for following the *Model*?

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.
2 Timothy 3:16–17

Yes, Jesus is the model and Scripture (Bible) is the blueprint. However, our model and blueprint are not stagnant or fixed objects. They are living—Jesus is our *living* Lord and our instructions are the *living* Word. Our relationship with both is dynamic and vibrant. Therefore, we begin to build our skills by *actively* following our Model and *actively* studying His words.

Our goal is to become like Jesus. Studying the Bible teaches us that Jesus never sinned; everything He did was right and holy. Jesus was and is the perfect leader and leadership model. But how do we do this? How can we follow in Jesus' steps and become a leader of excellence?

⁵ A blueprint is a detailed plan of action. It is a photographic reproduction, such as of architectural plans or technical drawings, rendered as white lines on a blue background.

Read John 14:26 and 2 Corinthians 3:18 and answer question 10:

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. John 14:26

And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.
2 Corinthians 3:18

10. How can *you* follow Jesus and be a leader of excellence?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answer to # 10 with the other disciples next week.

The Holy Spirit helps us to follow Jesus and become a leader like Him. We are being transformed (changed) into His likeness throughout our lives. It is a long building process; therefore, we need to keep our eyes on the glorious face of Jesus. This is the face that we will look like at the end of our earthly lives.

You might have thought Rachel Saint had made a big mistake. She could have accepted Mrs. Parmelee's generous offer to be her heir and then given the money to the poor and needy. Think of all the good she could have done with such great resources. However, this was not the path God had chosen for her. Rachel was keeping her eyes fixed on Jesus.

God may call someone else to riches to further His kingdom, but this was not His plan for Rachel Saint. The Holy Spirit guided her decision and she gladly embraced it. The night Rachel made her decision she stood alone on the ship's deck wondering how to spare Mrs. Parmelee's feelings. Suddenly she felt herself standing in a jungle clearing, looking at a group of brown-skinned people motioning for her to come.⁶

"Without thinking about it, Rachel fell to her knees and closed her eyes. 'God,' she prayed, 'I will give my whole life to You and go and be a missionary to those brown-skinned people if You want me to.'"⁷

At 18, Rachel was being transformed into the likeness of Christ. She had begun her journey by submitting to God's will for her life. This is God's leadership plan for all of us: "*not my will, but Yours be done*" (Luke 22:42).

⁶ Ibid., 29.

⁷ Ibid.

Action Step: Ask God to speak to you personally through John 12:26 and 1 Peter 2:21:

Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me. John 12:26 (Jesus is speaking.)

To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 1 Peter 2:21

11. What did God say or impress upon you through reading John 12:26 and 1 Peter 2:21?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your action step #11 with the other disciples next week.

Communication with God is pivotal (essential) in your role as a Christian leader. We pray that you are hearing regularly from God (in mind or heart). On the next page are key “Steps to Communication with God” that may be helpful. Feel free to share with others as God leads.

Steps to Communicating with God

1. Prepare to talk with and listen to God. Find a quiet place with no or few distractions. Get your mind and heart in a neutral position. In other words, do not have any predetermined notion of what you want God to say to you. Desire His will and His words to and for you.
2. Focus on God and His attributes. You might also think about Jesus as the risen Lord (Revelation 1:13–16), or think on the majesty of God's throne room, as described in Revelation 4:2–11.
3. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you in your communication with God (Romans 8:26–27; Ephesians 6:18).
4. The Holy Spirit may lead you in thanksgiving, worship, confession, intercession, fellowship, or help for a personal issue. These are all forms of communicating with God, and the Spirit will lead you in all of these at various times. There is no special order. Sometimes you will experience all of them in your time with the LORD. He will also lead you through prayer in the Bible or by another means, as Hannah, Nehemiah, and King David did in the Old Testament (1 Samuel 2:1–10; Nehemiah 1:5–11; Psalm 51) and Jesus did by example in the New Testament (Matthew 6:9–13).
5. Speak from your heart to God and ask Him to speak to you, as the young Samuel did in the Old Testament (1 Samuel 3:10). You might say, "Speak, Lord, your servant is listening." Today God usually speaks by impressing thoughts and ideas in our hearts and minds since Jesus' Spirit lives within believers. Of course, God is God, and He can speak and make His presence known however He desires.
6. Write down what God says to you and obey His instructions immediately. God may stop communicating with us if we are not obedient or fail to follow through with His instructions. What if you are not sure if you heard correctly? Ask yourself, *Was God speaking to me, or were these my own thoughts?* Ask God to separate His words from your own thoughts. Trust and believe that He will answer your prayer. *Remember*, God will not ask you to do anything that goes against the Bible. He will not ask you to hurt or harm yourself or another person (Matthew 22:36–40). Satan and his followers always try to get you to have wrong thoughts. Be on guard.
7. Thank God for the gift of communicating with Him. Be patient in listening and know that He hears you. Keep trusting God even when He seems far away and not communicating with you.

—End Day Two—

Day Three

The Chief Cornerstone

Have you ever built anything? Perhaps you have been on a construction team and helped build a house—or you might remember building something with your toys when you were a child. To build, one must take individual parts and place them together in a systematic way. The outcome will be a product or form that is far more useful than its individual parts. This is not to say that the individual parts cannot be useful for other purposes, but compare a concrete block with a completed house, a single thread with a shirt, or an aluminum panel with an airplane.

After you have your model or plan, you must select the individual parts carefully. They must be compatible for the project. In other words, you must use the materials the blueprint calls for if you want the final product to look like the model.

Would you want to lead a team attempting to build an airplane using concrete blocks? Certainly not! You want to lead a team that is going to do something useful and effective. An aircraft that could not get off the ground would not be beneficial

It is not only important to build with the correct parts, but also to use quality materials. Quality materials will last longer and function properly. With quality materials, the finished project will be more secure and safer to use.

12. What happens if you begin your project with faulty or defective materials?

13. If you have a real-life story of a project that you built with defective materials, share what happened:

14. What would you do if you discovered your building materials were of inferior quality?

Without choosing our building materials properly, we would not only be wasting our time, but the time of others as well. Consider for a moment: Christian work or leadership is about everlasting benefits. It is about building a spiritual product that makes a *forever* difference.

When Rachel Saint returned home from her trip to Great Britain, she began preparing herself for the plan God had for her life. Rachel wanted to know God's word better, so she enrolled at and graduated from *Philadelphia College of Bible*. But when she applied to become a missionary, she was rejected because of a weak back.

Waiting on God's timing, she worked at a local mission and years later took a course in linguistics. Linguistics is the scientific study of language and its structure. This course helped Rachel to listen to and learn native languages.

Rachel began work with Wycliffe Bible Translators as a missionary about 16 years after her vision of native people gesturing for her to come to them. She was having fruitful work among a tribe of South American natives but did not feel these were the same people calling out in her vision.⁸

By now one of her younger brothers, Nate, was serving as a missionary in Ecuador, South America. When she visited him, he told her of a tribe just a few miles away. He said the Aucas "have a reputation for killing all strangers who enter their territory. No one has ever been able to live with them."⁹

Even with this frightening picture, Rachel's spirit was stirred. She believed in her heart that these were the people in her vision. In her prayers she asked God to show her how to reach them with the gospel of Jesus Christ. She could not do it alone; she needed to bring others together for a plan of action.

Leading and building have a lot in common. Leadership is gathering individuals and arranging them together in a way that births a greater purpose and a greater good. Like using the proper materials in a building project, the individuals must also be appropriate for the job.

After getting reassigned to an area near the Aucas, or as they call themselves, Waoranis, Rachel began building or using her leadership skills. First, she needed to find someone who knew the Waorani language. This took some time, but eventually she found a woman named Dayuma, a tribal member who had fled the Waoranis years earlier.¹⁰

In the Luke passage below, Jesus uses "building" as a metaphor.¹¹ Jesus was skilled at using everyday occurrences in the lives of the people to illustrate a spiritual truth. His parables were entertaining, yet extremely meaningful.

⁸ Ibid., 30, 34, 40.

⁹ Ibid., 44.

¹⁰ Ibid., 63.

¹¹ A metaphor is a figure of speech in which a word or phrase denoting one kind of object or idea is used in place of another to suggest a likeness or analogy between them.

Read Luke 6:47–49 and answer questions 15–20:

“As for everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they are like. ⁴⁸They are like a man building a house, who dug down deep and laid the foundation on rock. When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it, because it was well built. ⁴⁹But the one who hears my words and does not put them into practice is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. The moment the torrent struck that house, it collapsed and its destruction was complete.” Luke 6:47–49

15. Jesus gives an example of a person who hears His words and puts them into _____

(v. 47a) and a person who hears His words and does _____ (v.49a) put them into _____ (v.49a)?

16. The person who puts Jesus' words into practice is like a man building a house who laid the foundation on _____ (v. 48a).

17. The person who does *not* put Jesus' words into practice is like a man building a house on the ground without a _____ (v. 49b).

18. When the flood came, what happened to the house built on rock (v. 48c)?

19. When the flood came, what happened to the house built without a foundation (v. 49c)?

20. What is the moral, or point, of Jesus' story?

The point Jesus is making is simply this: We must listen and obey Him. If we only listen to Him but do *not* do what He says, we run the risk of falling apart during trials (Luke 6:47–49) or facing judgment (Matthew 7:26–27). The metaphor of the houses, either standing or falling, also vividly pictures Jesus' authority and the power of His teaching.

The storms of life will come to all, but those who are following Jesus will not be shaken. He will give us the strength and hope to stand firm and make it through our earthly life and into eternity with God. We need to be like the house laid on the rock foundation and do what the Bible commands (Mark 4:20; James 1:22).

In biblical times, people would search for a sturdy cornerstone to use as a foundation for their house or building. The cornerstone was a stone that was laid at the corner of two walls to strengthen and bind them together. The cornerstone is used in the Bible as a symbol (metaphor) for a strong leader.

Read Ephesians 2:19–22 and answer questions 21–22:

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²²And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit. Ephesians 2:19–22

21. Who is the chief cornerstone and our strong leader (v. 20b)?

22. Believers are joined together in Christ as their leader to become a dwelling (home, abode, residence) in which God lives by His _____ (v. 22).

Our goal as a Christian leader is to become—and help others become—a holy dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. Like the temple in the Old Testament, we are to be a living place of worship (adoration, devotion). We are to glorify God and lead others to glorify God. The work, the team members, and the activities may all be different, but the result is the same—to *glorify God*.

Definition: *Glorify* means to give glory, praise, and honor. The Hebrew¹² word for *glory* is *kabod* (כְּבוֹד). It means abundance, weight, burden, and honor. It is used in several ways in the Bible, but when it refers to God it means recognizing His importance (heavy weight) and majesty. *Glorifying* God is recognizing God's holy character, His goodness, and tremendous worth. He is the most excellent, the greatest, and unsurpassed Supreme Being.

23. If there is anything keeping *you* from glorifying God by your total obedience to Jesus Christ, our Cornerstone and Lord, please share with your team.

¹² The Old Testament was originally written in the Hebrew language, and the New Testament in the Greek language.

Action Step: Read 1 Corinthians 3:11–14 and respond to number 24:

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

¹²*If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw,*

¹³*their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. ¹⁴If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward.* 1 Corinthians 3:11–14

24. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to recall any wrong foundation or building block in your own life. Confess (agree with God that you sinned) and repent (turn away) from your wrong actions. Ask God to help you build your life on Jesus Christ and nothing else. Pray that all you build on from this day forward will survive for His glory. I have prayed. Yes No (Underline One)

Accountability: Share your answer #23 with your discipleship team. Optional: share #24 as the Lord leads. Sharing should be an atmosphere of encouragement, prayer, and without judgment.

—End Day Three—

Day Four

Fully God and Fully Human (Part 1)

Rachel Saint laid her foundation and work on Jesus Christ. At age 42 she was patiently learning the Waorani language from Dayuma and sharing God's word with her. She did not know that her brother and four other missionaries had been contacting the Waorani Indians by means of an airplane. We do not know why her brother, Nate, and the others kept it a secret from her, but perhaps it was simply that God had a different plan for Rachel.

The five men had been dropping presents and sometimes food treats from a small plane to the Waoranis. They seemed to be making headway with this savage tribe and decided one day to land in their territory. All five were speared to death. Elisabeth Elliott, wife of Jim Elliot, one of the missionaries, wrote about their story in the book *Through Gates of Splendor*. (Eventually their story became a powerful movie).

When word reached the missionary settlement, Rachel was heartbroken. "Yes, her brother was dead, killed by the very people to whom she had devoted the rest of her life to reaching with the gospel, but Rachel would not look back or second-guess her calling. Something good would come from her brother's death. She had to believe that."¹³

She wrote to her parents, "May God yet give me the privilege of going to these same Indians and translating His precious Word for them and seeing the harvest from the five grains of wheat planted way down on the Curaray River in Auca Soil."¹⁴

25. Why do you think Rachel Saint still wanted to reach the Auca Indians after they had killed her younger brother?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answer #25 with your discipleship team next week.

Rachel laid her foundation on Christ, her chief cornerstone. Jesus' main ministry is about forgiveness. He died on the cross so our sins could be forgiven, and we could be reconciled with God. Rachel was following her Leader in seeking those who needed to repent and be forgiven.

In looking to Christ, our Model and Cornerstone, we must look to Him in the right way. Was Jesus simply a good man? No, He was not just a human person. Jesus was both God and man.

¹³ Bengé, *Rachel Saint: A Star in the Jungle*, 101.

¹⁴ Ibid.

Jesus was completely God and completely human when He was born about 2,000 years ago. He was not part-God and part-man; He was entirely divine and at the same time entirely human. However, prior to Jesus' conception (origin) by the Holy Spirit, He was not human, but He was fully God.

Jesus Is God: . . . *Who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty.* Revelation 1:8b

Read John 1:1–2 and answer questions 26–27:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ²He was with God in the beginning. John 1:1–2

26. Is the Word God (v.1c)? Yes No (Underline One)

27. Who was with God the Father in the beginning (vs. 1–2)?

Read John 1:14 and answer questions 28–29:

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14

28. Who is the Word that became flesh?

29. Who made His dwelling (lived) with people as a human for a time?

Jesus is the Word. Jesus is the Son of God. He became human to die and pay the penalty for our sins.

Consider the meaning of the term *word*. Words symbolize or communicate meaning. Think about it—without God there is no meaning. Without God, there is no humanity or world as we know it. No wonder the Word became identified with God in Old Testament times.

God used words to bring the universe into existence and to make His existence known to humanity (Genesis 1:3). He reveals who He is, what He is like, and how He wants us to live through His words. God wants to be known and, therefore, ensured that His words were recorded and preserved for you, me, and all people. God's words are recorded in the Holy Bible.

God tells us in Isaiah 55:11, *My word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.* God's words and desires are powerful and cannot be thwarted (stopped, frustrated).

When we think or reason, we are using unspoken words. We are using minds God gave us. In addition, God uses our minds, spirits, and hearts to give us understanding (John 3:27; 1 Corinthians 2:10). We do not have the ability to know spiritual things unless God reveals it to us. The Holy Spirit enables us to understand the purpose and spiritual meaning of the Bible.

Some scholars have stated that John used the Greek term *logos* (λόγος), translated *word* in English, so that both the Jews and the Greeks would understand his teaching about Jesus' divinity. The Greeks would understand *word* as the concept of reason or the power of a creating force from one of their gods. In this way, John's message about Jesus would be clear to both Jews and Greeks.

30. Read Hebrews 1:3. Who is the exact representation of God's being? _____.

The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. Hebrew 1:3

Jesus claimed to be God. Recall in Exodus 3:14 when Moses asked for God's name. God said, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'" *I am* in Hebrew is Yahweh (יהוה). In English, Yahweh is translated LORD in the Bible.

31. Read John 8:58. Explain in your own words what Jesus was saying:

"Very truly I tell you," Jesus answered, "before Abraham was born, I am!" John 8:58

Jesus was telling the Jews He existed before Abraham, the father of the Jewish people, was born! Abraham lived about 2,000 years before Jesus was born. In addition, Jesus could have said, "Before Abraham was born, I was." But He wanted to be clear that He was claiming to be God. Therefore, Jesus said He is Yahweh (I AM).

32. Read Colossians 2:9. How much of God lives in Jesus Christ?

For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form . . . Colossians 2:9 (The word *deity* in Christianity refers to our Creator God and Supreme Being.)

Jesus, being God, has the exact same attributes or characteristics as God. How can this be? While on earth, Jesus has two natures, divine and human. Remember that *nature* is the basic quality or character of someone or something. Jesus is one Person with two natures. Each nature is distinct, and they do not merge.

33. Read Matthew 8:27. Who did the winds and waves obey?

The men were amazed and asked, "What kind of man is this? Even the winds and the waves obey him!" Matthew 8:27 (Disciples' reaction when Jesus calmed the storm.)

The Scripture is clear that Jesus worked miracles: He is everywhere (Matthew 18:20), has all authority (Matthew 28:18), power (John 11:43–44), and knows everything (John 21:17). Although Jesus did not make use of all His godly abilities, He still retained (kept) them during His ministry on earth.

Action Step

34. Using Scripture, write in your own words why Jesus Christ is God. Let the Holy Spirit lead you to share this truth with someone. What happened?

Accountability: Be prepared to share your action step #34 within the next couple of weeks.

—End Day Four—

Day Five

Fully God and Fully Human (Part 2)

After the death of her brother and the other missionaries, Rachel Saint continued learning the Waroani language and sharing Bible stories with Dayuma. One day when Dayuma had finished telling one of her friends a Bible story, Dayuma turned to Rachel and said, “If you teach her about God, she will come to love Him. Now she loves Him just a little bit. I will tell her lots, and then she will come to love Him lots. . . .”¹⁵

Dayuma’s faith was growing as was Rachel’s grasp of this native language. They talked about reaching out to Dayuma’s tribe. In the meantime, two Waorani women had escaped from the jungle. A Waorani raiding party had come out of the jungle looking for them and killed a man with twenty-two spears. It is not surprising that the neighboring tribes called them Aucas, which means naked savages.

The Waorani women had made it to safety, so Dayuma was able to get news of her people. The killings and other atrocities had continued. They not only killed people from other tribes, but they continued killing each other.

When Dayuma heard of the death of her older brother, she became depressed, angry, and bitter. She told Rachel that she would not return to the jungle. Rachel’s heart sank. She felt that Dayuma was an integral part of the mission. So, she prayed, seeking direction from the Lord.

One day Rachel said, “Dayuma, what if Jesus Christ has said, ‘I will not go to those horrible people on earth. They are too wicked and sinful, and I cannot be bothered with them. I will stay in heaven with My Holy Father. It is a much better place than down on earth with all of those evil people.’ What would have become of us if the Lord Jesus had said that?”¹⁶

35. If there is anyone or any group of people that you believe is too wicked and sinful and, therefore, you do not want to be bothered with them, explain your answer:

Accountability: Be prepared to share your answer with your team.

Jesus agreed to physically enter our wicked and sinful world as a man. He became like us in every way. Jesus entered a world where He could experience pain, heartache, and death.

¹⁵ Ibid., 112.

¹⁶ Ibid., 127–128.

Jesus Is Human: . . . *He had to be made like them, fully human . . .* Hebrews 2:17

36. Read Luke 1:35 and complete the angel's announcement to Mary.

The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God." Luke 1:35

The angel told the Virgin Mary, "The Holy _____ will come on you, and the _____ of the Most _____ will overshadow you. So the _____ one to be born will be called the _____ of _____.

Definition: The Greek word we translate in English, *overshadow*, is *episkiasei* (ἐπισκιάσει). It means to cast a shadow or to cover. In the Bible *overshadow* refers to the presence of God or His divine activity.

Jesus was not always human, but He has always been God. He has always existed in and with the Godhead: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus is one with the Father and the Holy Spirit and has the same divine essence (substance) with them. This is known as the doctrine of the Trinity, or the triune God.

Definition: *Doctrine*¹⁷ is a principle, rule, or body of beliefs that forms the basis of our faith. *Doctrine* is based on Scripture and passed down through teaching or instruction that is binding on the Christian community.

Definition: The *Trinity* is the Christian doctrine that defines God as an undivided unity expressed in the threefold nature of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Jesus is of one substance (essence) with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Although the actual word *trinity* is *not* in the Bible, it expresses the truth of Scripture regarding our triune God.

Both the trinity and the incarnation are divine mysteries. A divine mystery is something our human minds cannot fully understand about God. This does not mean we give up. We need to seek Scripture and the Holy Spirit's guidance to understand as much as is humanly possible.

Definitions: The word *incarnation* comes from Latin meaning to take on *flesh*. The doctrine of the *incarnation* describes God the Son becoming human while remaining divine (God).

¹⁷ Church doctrine can fluctuate among Protestant and Catholic denominations. Indeed, even among Protestant denominations there are differences of how Scripture is interpreted. However, there are certain tenets of the faith that must be in place for a particular congregation or group of people to be called Christians. The Trinity is one such doctrine, and others include the Fall of Adam and Eve, the virgin birth of Jesus, Jesus being fully God and fully human, His death on the cross to pay for sins, and His resurrection from the dead.

The word *incarnation* is *not* in the Bible either, but it describes one of Christianity's most important doctrines. The word *flesh* is a term used for humanity. *Flesh* is also another word for the body. The *incarnation* states that God the Son became human with an earthly body.

The Bible makes it clear that the Son of God, although divine, was also fully human. In addition to being born of a woman, He experienced hunger (Matthew 4:2), thirst (John 19:28), sorrow (John 11:35), and fatigue (John 4:6). He was even tempted by the devil (Matthew 4:1–11) just like we are.

Read Hebrews 4:15 and answer questions 37–38:

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Hebrews 4:15

Definition: *Tempt* is a verb that means to entice or encourage towards evil. *Temptation* can come from the devil or our own sinful desires.

37. The high priest in Hebrews 4:15 is Jesus. Was He tempted? Yes No (Underline One)

38. If Jesus was tempted, did He sin? Yes No (Underline One)

Read James 1:13–14 and answer questions 39–40:

When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; ¹⁴but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. James 1:13–14

39. Can God be tempted by evil? Yes No (Underline One)

40. Can God tempt anyone to sin or to do wrong? Yes No (Underline One)

Scripture states that Jesus was God and man. It also states that Jesus was tempted and yet God cannot be tempted. How can both statements be true? Both statements are true because Jesus had two natures while on earth.

Jesus Has Two Natures . . . *all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form* . . . Colossians 2:9

The New Testament affirms that Jesus has two natures, human (Matthew 1:1–17) and divine (Colossians 1:19; John 20:28). The natures are separate. Jesus did things as a man, and He also did things as God. His human nature would get tired and hungry, but His divine nature has no need of rest or food. In addition, Jesus, the man, could die; Jesus, the divine, cannot die.

41. Read Mark 13:32. Which of Jesus' natures did *not* know the date of His second coming?

But about that day or hour no one knows, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Mark 13:32 (Jesus is talking about end times, when He will return to the earth.)

God is all-knowing (omniscient); this is one of God's attributes. Jesus has the exact same attributes and, therefore, knows everything. In His divine nature, Jesus knows when He will return to earth. In His human nature, Jesus did not know.

Even though Jesus has two natures, He is still one Person. He is not two separate Persons, but He does have two distinct wills or minds. "The great majority of the church throughout its history has said that Jesus had two wills and centers of consciousness, yet he remained one person. Such a formulation is not impossible, merely a mystery that we do not now fully understand. To adopt any other solution would create a far greater problem: it would require that we give up either the full deity or the full humanity of Christ, and that we cannot do."¹⁸

For example, Jesus sustains all things by his powerful word (Hebrews 1:3) and knows everything. Yet at the same time He was on earth, He grew in wisdom (Luke 2:52). His two natures remained separate and did not merge into a new kind of being. However, we do not know exactly how the two minds and wills worked together.

42. Read Luke 24:50–51. Jesus entered the world with a human body. Is Jesus returning to the Father with a human body (compare Philippians 3:21)? Yes No (Underline One)

*When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them.
⁵¹While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven.* Luke 24:50–51

Jesus returned to heaven with a body that could be seen. It was a human body His disciples could recognize. Of course, Jesus' body has been glorified and is different than when He walked the earth. Believers' bodies will also be transformed and glorified when Jesus returns.

Jesus entered the world to be a stand-in sacrifice for us. He paid the price for our sins by dying on the cross. He was a sinless, perfect, and acceptable substitute. Only God could be perfect and assume the role as the one mediator (go-between) between God and man (1 Timothy 2:5).

Jesus did not inherit Adam's sin nature like we did. He was completely sinless (Hebrews 4:15; 2 Corinthians 5:21). Recall, He was placed in Mary's womb by the power of the Holy Spirit and was always holy (Hebrews 7:26). Jesus, the man, never existed apart from His divine nature.

¹⁸ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 561.

Jesus as God and man was the only one who could fulfill this role. He was the perfect Lamb and substitute for our sins. Jesus took on this job and now will be fully God and fully man forever (Luke 24:39–43; Revelation 1:7–8).

43. Read John 14:23 below. Which of Jesus' natures lives within believers (see 1 John 3:24)?

Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them." John 14:23

Jesus lives in us (Galatians 2:20) by His Spirit, by God's Spirit. He lives in us through His divine nature. Christ's Spirit dwells in our hearts by faith (Ephesians 3:17).

Having God's Spirit within her, Dayuma, realized the importance of taking the gospel to her people. It was a dangerous journey but contact with her people went well. They were surprised she had not been killed and eaten.¹⁹

Rachel was invited to live among Dayuma's people and went to work on translating the Bible into their language. It was challenging, of course. She struggled to find words to describe things they had never seen.

Dayuma explained to the people that Rachel had come to give them "God's Carvings" (cuttings on wood). Since they had no concept of writing on paper, this was a good explanation. Dayuma told them stories about Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection. After 18 months, two of her people believed and decided to love Jesus and take God's trail to heaven.

Eventually, others gave their lives to Jesus—including those who had killed the five missionaries. Rachel's testimony and love for them, considering the murder of her brother, did not go unnoticed. They began to forgive those in their tribe and leave vengeance to the Lord. The murders stopped and their numbers gradually grew from 600 to 2,000.

The Waornai began living up to their name, which translated means, "True People." They began witnessing to other tribes and making a difference in their communities. In 1966, one of the Waoranis was invited, and spoke at the World Congress of Evangelism in Berlin, Germany. He challenged his listeners:

"I say to you, take God's Carvings to all the people in your land. We will go home and take God's message to our downriver enemies. We will say to them, 'Believe in God and His Son

¹⁹ The following material about Saint is gleaned from Janet and Geoff Bengé, *Rachel Saint: A Star in the Jungle*, 145, 161, 166, 170, 171, 207.

Jesus, we live well. We have stopped spearing and choking babies. We live happily with our families.' This we will say and invite them to believe in God and live in peace with us."²⁰

Rachel Saint died on November 11, 1994 and was buried beside the Waornai church, close to her brother, Nate's, gravesite. She gave up material riches, family, security, and comfort to serve Christ. By her obedience to our Lord, one small part of our world is now praising and serving God.

Action Step

44. Pray and ask God who you should tell about Jesus. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in planting seeds or sharing the full gospel of Jesus, born, died, and raised for our sins.

Accountability: Be prepared to share your action step #44 with your team when completed.

Note: Some people *do* have a special anointing or gift for leadership (Romans 12:8). Others may have a special anointing or gift from the Holy Spirit to evangelize (2 Timothy 4:5). There are different gifts from the Holy Spirit, but we are not talking about *spiritual gifts* in this lesson. We are talking about what every Christian is called to do as a follower of Christ. We are all called to share the gospel and influence others in a positive way for Christ. Ponder this—we are either leading people to Christ or away from Christ. There is no middle ground.

—End of Day Five and Lesson One—

Next—Unit 2: Christian Leadership, Lesson 2: Triple Love Poured Out

Christian Leadership Bible Study Lessons:

Lesson 1: A Leadership Model

Lesson 2: Tri-fold Love Poured Out

Lesson 3: Fruit and Leadership

Lesson 4: The Presence of God

Lesson 5: Leading by Example

Lesson 6: The Leader's Fire of Holiness

Lesson 7: Holy Spirit

Lesson 8: Filled with the Holy Spirit

Lesson 9: The Name

Lesson 10: Active Leadership (Part One)

Lesson 11: Active Leadership (Part Two)

Lesson 12: Praying Leader

Lesson 13: Faith of a Leader

Lesson 14: Knowing God's Will

Lesson 15: Spiritual Warfare

Lesson 16: The Tender Heart of a Leader

Lesson 17: The Leader in Worship

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²⁰ Ibid., 189.