

IN THE STEPS OF CHRIST

PRIMARY CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

*The one who says he abides in Him
ought himself to walk
in the same manner as He walked.
(1 John 2:6)*

CHRIST BIBLE CHURCH
CRANBERRY TOWNSHIP, PA

In the Steps of Christ: Primary Christian Doctrine

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Contributors.....	5
Introduction to the Curriculum.....	7
<i>The Importance of Discipleship</i>	
Introduction to the Topic.....	9
<i>The Importance of Doctrine and Theology</i>	
Lesson #1.....	13
<i>The Word of God</i>	
Lesson #2.....	19
<i>The Godhead</i>	
Lesson #3.....	25
<i>Creation and the Fall of Man</i>	
Lesson #4.....	31
<i>Divine Election and Human Responsibility</i>	
Lesson #5.....	37
<i>The Person and Work of Christ</i>	
Lesson #6.....	43
<i>Grace and the Call to Salvation</i>	
Lesson #7.....	51
<i>Saving Faith</i>	

Lesson #8.....	57
<i>Salvation</i>	
Lesson #9.....	63
<i>The Person and Work of Satan</i>	
Lesson #10.....	71
<i>The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit</i>	
Lesson #11.....	77
<i>The Perseverance of the Saints</i>	
Lesson #12.....	83
<i>The Return of Jesus Christ</i>	
Bibliography.....	89

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THE IMPORTANCE OF DISCIPLESHIP

INTRODUCTION TO THE CURRICULUM

The Definition of Discipleship

When most people hear the word *disciple* they immediately think of the twelve disciples of Jesus, the men who were chosen by Christ Himself and were appointed to follow Him and bear fruit (John 15:16). However, these twelve men are certainly not the only disciples of Jesus. For example, in John 6:60-66, “*many of His disciples*” had a difficult time with His teaching about the bread of life (v.61), and “*as a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore*” (v.66). Although the term *disciple* is used many times in the New Testament to refer to the twelve, in the most general sense, a disciple is a follower or student of a teacher. In this respect, *all* Christians are disciples of Jesus Christ!

The term *disciple* is also used as a verb. Here *discipleship* is defined as the process by which believers mentor and assist (i.e. disciple) other believers to greater levels of biblical knowledge and spiritual maturity. As modeled by Christ to His closest twelve disciples, the discipleship process includes teaching as well as living the Christian life together.

The Motivation for and Goal of Discipleship

Some people mistakenly contend that discipleship is something that pertains exclusively to new believers and those who are young in the faith. They correctly maintain that discipleship is based on the Christ’s injunction in the “Great Commission” to “*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you*” (Matthew 28:19-20). They argue that this commission is a call to evangelize, and they are correct in recognizing that the Great Commission begins with evangelism. However, one aspect of “*go therefore and make disciples*” has escaped their attention. A significant part of the discipleship process is “*teaching them to observe all that I commanded you.*” This component of the Great Commission is not limited to new believers and those who are young in the faith; it applies to all believers. Learning to observe all that Christ commanded is a lifelong process. Therefore, discipleship begins at conversion and continues throughout the remainder of one’s life. No Christian ever ceases to be a disciple.

The Great Commission provides the Christian's lifelong motivation and goal in discipleship: learning to observe all that Christ has commanded. The apostle John stated it this way: "*the one who says he abides in Him ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked*" (1 John 2:6).

In the process of learning to obey (i.e. walking with Christ), disciples should eventually become disciplers. Colossians 1:28 lays out the perspective of the discipler: "*We proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.*" In this verse, there are seven keys to discipleship. First, notice that the subject of the sentence is "*we.*" Discipleship is not a "one-man act." It is to be done by every Christian. Second, the verb is "*proclaim.*" Proclamation of truth can be public or private. Regardless of forum, it is to declare or announce. Third, the content of the proclamation is "*Him.*" Everything we proclaim is centered on the Lord Jesus Christ. Fourth, our proclamation takes two forms: "*admonishing*" and "*teaching.*" Teaching refers to doctrinal instruction and the impartation of knowledge. Admonishing, on the other hand, implies personal and practical exhortation and warning. The discipler must both teach the truths of God's Word and admonish his disciple to implement them in his life. Fifth, the objects of the proclamation are "*every man,*" because all believers are to be disciplined. Notice Paul's emphasis on the phrase "*every man*" by repeating it three times in the span of one sentence! Sixth, the extent of discipleship is "*with all wisdom.*" Seventh, the goal of discipleship is "*that we may present every man complete in Christ.*" The idea of the word "*present*" is to place them before God as a pure and spotless offering. Paul uses the Greek word *teleios* to picture the disciple who is "*complete in Christ.*" The connotation here is that the discipler strives to bring the disciple to full maturity in Christ.

It is our prayer that this discipleship curriculum will help you to become more "*complete in Christ*" by proclaiming Him with all wisdom, teaching and admonishing you to walk "*in the steps of Christ.*"

THE IMPORTANCE OF DOCTRINE AND THEOLOGY

INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC

The Definition of Doctrine and Theology

The importance of doctrine and theology cannot be overestimated. Therefore, a proper definition of terms is crucial. *Doctrine* literally means *teaching*. Therefore, a doctrine is anything that is taught. Of course, with that in mind, we understand that both true and false doctrines exist in the world and in the Church. Even the notion that doctrine is not important is itself a doctrine (albeit a false and self-refuting one)!

The term *doctrine* also refers to a collective body of beliefs held by an individual, church, denomination, etc. In other words, all the doctrines (teachings) to which one holds make up his doctrine (body of beliefs). When used in this collective sense, the term *doctrine* is synonymous with the term *theology*, which is an organized body of knowledge and beliefs about God.

An Illustration of Doctrine and Theology

On a beautiful summer day – one to make Northerners forget the endless months of winter snow and inspire beach-bound Californians to migrate north – a young couple scooped up their one-year-old son, packed a picnic lunch, and headed for Sandy River Park in Oregon with another couple. Sometime after arriving, the two men went wading with the baby. Meanwhile the wives arranged the food, glancing from time to time at the men in the river. The man holding the baby stepped into a hole in the riverbed and lost his footing. As he fell, he tried to spare the baby from a sudden dunk by pushing him toward the other man, who, in the confusion of the moment, missed. The mother watched helplessly from shore as her baby vanished into the swift water of the river.

No one dreamed that a day begun with such promise would end in tragedy. It took rescue teams 24 hours to recover the baby's body. However, there would be no recovery for the young mother who lost her baby that day. In one shattering instant, her life was changed forever and she entered the darkest struggle of her life.

Moments like this bring out the theologian in all of us. Regardless of our opinion of doctrine and theology or how carefully we try to avoid it, there is sometimes no escape from it. The moment the word “why” enters our thoughts or crosses our lips, we are doing theology. No

matter what went wrong or how others may have contributed to our suffering, ultimately our struggles lead to God's doorstep.

Beliefs, regardless of what they may be, are arranged according to a person's value system. Whether it is the purpose of life, individual rights, or even God, everyone has beliefs. The question is, "Who or what informs that belief?" It may seem surprising, but everyone has a theology. David Wells correctly states:

Let us not think...that we really have a choice between having a theology and not having one. We all have our theologies, for we all have a way of putting things together in our own minds that, if we are Christian, has a shape that arises from our knowledge of God and his Word. We might not be conscious of the process. Indeed, we frequently are not. But at the very least we will organize our perceptions into some sort of pattern that seems to make sense to us. The question at issue, then, is not whether we will have a theology but whether it will be a good or bad one, whether we will become conscious of our thinking processes or not, and, more particularly, whether we will learn to bring all of our thoughts into obedience to Christ or not.¹

The Case for Doctrine and Theology

The greatest commandment given to man is to love God whole-heartedly (Matthew 22:37). How does one love God without knowing His character and His expectations? The only way to love God is to study and obey His self-revelation – the Bible. When we do so, we find three reasons why theology is important in the eyes of God.

First, theology is important because correct doctrinal beliefs are essential to the relationship between the believer and God. Jesus proclaimed to His disciples that it is of utmost importance to properly know and understand who He is (Matthew 16:13-19). God made it clear that there are certain doctrinal beliefs that are necessary in order to please Him (Hebrews 11:6). In fact, proper doctrine and theology are so important that anyone who rejects it is said to be an antichrist (1 John 4:2-3).

Second, theology is necessary because truth and experience are inseparable. The concept that theology has a deadening effect upon our spiritual life is wrong. In reality, the exact opposite is true. Right belief accurately and meaningfully influences behavior. This is what Jesus meant when He said, "A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce

¹ David F. Wells, *No Place for Truth: Or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology?* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), 3.

good fruit.” (Matthew 7:18; cf. 1 John 3:6-10). Only through the lens of proper Christian theology can we learn how we are to live. A proper understanding and commitment to Scripture is the only way to be “*equipped for every good work*” (2 Timothy 3:17) and motivated to live accordingly (Ephesians 4:1ff; Colossians 3:1ff). J.I. Packer wisely affirmed, “*Disregard the study of God, and you sentence yourself to stumble and blunder through life blindfolded, as it were, with no sense of direction and no understanding of what surrounds you.*”²

Third, sound theology is vital because there are dangerous alternatives and challenges from the world, such as Mormonism, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Eastern religion, Scientology, psychological self-help, etc. Millard Erickson correctly stated, “*...understanding correctly the doctrinal teachings of Christianity is the solution to the confusion created by the myriad of claimants to belief.*”³

Why Study Doctrine and Theology?

Why is it essential to study and understand doctrine and theology? There are four reasons why doing so is critical.

First, to know the God of the universe as far as He may be known, is the noblest aim of the human understanding. To love Him is the most worthy exercise of our affections, and to serve Him is the most honorable and delightful purpose to which we can devote our time and talents. Every human should desire whole-heartedly to ascertain the character of God, to contemplate the display of His attributes in His works, to discover His designs toward man, to learn our duty to Him, the means of enjoying His favor, the hopes which we are authorized to entertain, and the wonderful expedient by which our fallen race is restored to purity and happiness.⁴

Second, the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) instructs believers to evangelize and teach others “*all that I have commanded you.*” This includes all of the Old Testament and New Testament (e.g. 2 Peter 3:1-2).

Third, it is the responsibility of every believer to grow spiritually. According to the apostle Paul, “*we are under obligation*” (Romans 8:12) to live a spiritual life, and we are to see this obligation as a wonderful privilege to “*be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a*

² J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*, (Downers Grove, IL.: InterVarsity Press, 1973), 14-15.

³ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Book House, 1985), 30.

⁴ John Dick, *Lectures on Theology*, (New York, NY.: M. W. Dodd, 1850), 8.

workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15). This is only possible via correct doctrine and theology.

Last, studying theology helps believers become stable and enables them to make better decisions when new questions about doctrine emerge. For example, Paul wrote to the Galatian believers concerning a critical theological point, namely the doctrine of justification through faith alone (Galatians 1:6-10). When our doctrine is sound and we live accordingly, we are able to resist falsehood and grow to maturity in Christ (Ephesians 4:14-15). We also agree that the Word of God is authoritative in all matters of life, such as husband-wife relationships, raising children, handling money, abortion, euthanasia, employer-employee relationships, and so on.

THE WORD OF GOD

LESSON #1

Memory Verse: 2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.

The Holy Scriptures are God's written revelation to man, and thus the sixty-six books of the Bible constitute the Word of God. The writings of both the Old and New Testaments make up the entire message from God to man. They are verbally inspired in all parts and therefore without error as originally given by God. They are altogether sufficient in themselves as our only infallible rule of faith and practice. This lesson will present a brief overview to the Bible.

I. Overview of the Bible

The Bible is a library made up of sixty six individual books. The books were penned by approximately forty different men over the course of 1,500 years (1400 B.C. to A.D. 90). From kings and priests to tax collectors to everyday fishermen, God chose men from every walk of life to write His words. These men lived in several different countries and wrote in three different languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek).

A. The Old Testament (39 books)

1. The Pentateuch (5 books) – The first five books of the Old Testament were written by Moses around 1400 B.C. They are also referred to as “The Law,” “The Torah,” and “The Books of Moses.” List these books below in order.

- a. _____ The book of origins
- b. _____ God's deliverance of His people from Egypt
- c. _____ Priestly laws on holiness and worship
- d. _____ The wilderness wandering
- e. _____ Preparation to enter the Promised Land

2. The Historical Books (12 books) – The historical books were written between 1400 B.C. and 450 B.C. They chronicle the history of Israel from the leadership of Joshua to the Babylonian Exile. List these books below in order. _____

3. The Poetic Books (5 books) – The poetic books describe God’s majesty and goodness in poetry. These books are also referred to as “Wisdom Literature.” List these books below in order.
- a. _____ The affliction and faith of a righteous man
 b. _____ The “songbook” of God’s people
 c. _____ Collection of short sayings of practical wisdom
 d. _____ The meaninglessness of a life without God
 e. _____ The beauty and purity of marital love
4. The Major Prophets (5 books) – The prophetic books convey the message of the prophets: God’s message to men. These five books of prophesy are called the “major prophets” because of their size (i.e. they are much longer than the “minor prophets” in the next section). They were written from approximately 750-550 B.C. List these books below in order. _____

5. The Minor Prophets (12 books) – The twelve books known as the “minor prophets” due to their concise nature, were written from approximately 840-400 B.C. List these books below in order. _____

The sacred Book which we read and obey deserves to unreservedly be called The Bible, since its author is God and it bears the qualities of total truth and complete trustworthiness that also characterize its divine source.¹

¹ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Quick Reference Guide to the Bible*, (Nashville, TN.: W Publishing Group, 2001), xx.

B. The New Testament (27 books)

1. The Historical Books (5 books)

- a. The Gospels (4 books) – The first four books of the New Testament chronicle, the birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. List these books below in order.

(1) _____ The presentation of the Messiah to the Jews

(2) _____ The presentation of God’s Servant to the Romans

(3) _____ The presentation of the perfect man to the Greeks

(4) _____ The presentation of God’s Son to all men

- b. The History of the Early Church (1 book) – This book details the beginning and growth of the Christian church. It is sometimes called “The Acts of the Holy Spirit” or “The Acts of the Apostles.” List it here: _____

2. The Epistles (21 books) – These books were written as letters to individuals or local churches. From doctrine to correction to responsibility to rebuke, they cover every aspect of faith and practice. List them below in order.

a. Paul’s Letters (13 books) _____

b. General Letters (8 books) _____

3. Prophecy (1 book) – The final book of the New Testament (and the Bible) describes the events that make up the culmination of history, such as the return, reign, and glory of Jesus Christ, and the eternal state of man. List it here: _____

II. Christ in the Bible

Scripture was penned over many years by many men from diverse backgrounds, yet it perfectly and harmoniously tells one consistent story: the glory of God in the redemption of man from sin through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Although Jesus was not born as a man until after the entire Old Testament was written, He is the central figure of the Old Testament, just as He is in the New Testament.

A. Christ taught that the _____ spoke of Him (Luke 24:27; John 5:39)

B. Read Acts 8:26-35. Philip told the eunuch that Isaiah 53 was about _____

III. The Character of the Bible

By writing the words, “...for You have exalted above all things Your name and Your Word.” (Psalm 138:2, ESV), the psalmist equated God’s Word with God’s name by placing them both in a category of unequalled exaltation. Essentially, he gave God’s Word the adoration and respect that belong only to God. He did this because God’s Word is a representation of God, because it accurately describes His character. In other words, it only makes sense that words communicate the character of the author who “breathed them.” In this section, we will examine eight of these characteristics.

The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down or necessarily contained in the Holy Scripture.

The 1689 London Baptist Confession of Faith, Chapter 1, Article 6.

A. The Bible is inspired.

1. To be inspired literally means to be “God-breathed”. How much of the Bible did Paul say is inspired in 2 Timothy 3:16? _____
2. Who is the ultimate source of the words of Scripture (Acts 1:16)? _____
3. Since the Bible is God-breathed, the Bible’s words are God’s words. Therefore, we can refer to the Bible as “God’s Word”. According to 1 Thessalonians 2:13, the Bible is not to be received as the word of _____ but as it truly is, the Word of _____

B. The Bible is sacred, holy, righteous, and pure.

1. In 2 Timothy 3:15, Paul refers to the Scriptures as “_____ writings” (NASB).
2. How did Paul describe God’s Word in Romans 1:2 and 7:12? _____

3. What imagery did the Psalmist use in Psalm 12:6 to describe God’s Word? _____

C. The Bible is eternal.

1. What did Jesus say about His words in Matthew 24:35? _____
2. How long does God’s Word stand/endure (Isaiah 40:8; 1 Peter 1:25)? _____

D. The Bible is unchanging.

- To what extent has the Word of God been settled (Psalm 119:89)? _____

E. The Bible is perfect.

1. What attributes and capabilities of the Bible are described in Psalm 19:7-8? _____

2. The Bible is infallible – it is without error in its whole (overall)
 - According to Psalm 119:160, the sum/entirety of God’s Word is _____
3. The Bible is inerrant – it is without error in its parts
 - How many prophecies of Scripture did Peter say are man-made and fallible (2 Peter 1:20-21)? _____

F. The Bible is true.

1. How did Jesus describe the Word of God in John 17:17 and what power does it contain? _____
2. What did the Bereans hold as the standard for truth (Acts 17:11)? _____

G. The Bible is sufficient.

1. Read 2 Timothy 3:15-17 and answer the following questions.
 - a. The Scriptures are sufficient to impart the wisdom that leads to _____
 - b. The Scriptures are inspired by God and _____ for godly living
 - c. How well does the Bible prepare the believer for good works? _____
 - d. How many good works does it prepare the believer for? _____
2. How sufficient is the Bible for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3)? _____

H. The Bible is authoritative.

1. What did Isaiah demand of all people when he delivered God’s words (Isaiah 1:2)?

2. Read Matthew 4:1-11. What three words did Jesus use to refute Satan on three different occasions (vv. 4, 7, 10)? _____
3. According to Psalm 119:89, God’s Word has been _____ in heaven forever. Therefore, it stands forever as our authority.

We affirm that a confession of the full authority, infallibility, and inerrancy of Scripture is vital to a sound understanding of the whole of the Christian faith. We further affirm that such confession should lead to increasing conformity to the image of Christ.

The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy, Article XIX.

IV. Personal Application

A. How did what you have learned change your perspective about God and His Word?

B. How does it make you feel to know that the Old Testament was also written about Jesus Christ? _____

C. How does each of the following impact your life, actions, and attitude?

1. The divine nature and inspiration of the Bible _____

2. The sacredness/holiness/purity of the Bible _____

3. The eternality and unchangeable nature of the Bible _____

4. The perfection, infallibility, and inerrancy of the Bible _____

5. The truth and trustworthiness of the Bible _____

6. The sufficiency and authority of the Bible _____

THE GODHEAD

LESSON #2

Memory Verse: Psalm 19:1-4

The heavens are telling of the glory of God; And their expanse is declaring the work of His hands. Day to day pours forth speech, And night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words; Their voice is not heard. Their line has gone out through all the earth, And their utterances to the end of the world.

A personal and intimate knowledge of God is foundational to the Christian. God has been kind enough to reveal His character and attributes to us in the Scriptures. In this lesson we will examine several of these attributes and refer to others.

I. The Existence and Knowledge of God

A. According to Amos 4:13, does God desire to reveal Himself to His creatures? _____

B. God reveals Himself generally through creation and conscience. This is known as *general revelation*.

1. According to Romans 1:18-20, how did God make the truth evident to mankind (vv.19-20) and what exactly did He make evident? _____

2. Read Psalm 19:1-3 and answer the following questions.

a. What do the heavens and skies declare and proclaim (v.1)? _____

b. How often is this declaration made (v.2) and to whom is it made (v.3)? _____

3. According to Romans 2:14-16, how does God make Himself known through conscience? _____

- C. God reveals Himself specifically through Scripture. This is known as *special revelation*.¹
- D. According to Philippians 3:4-10, how important is it to know God? _____
- _____

*There is only one true God who exists as three co-eternal and co-equal Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Although the Persons of the Godhead are equal in every divine perfection, they execute distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.*²

II. The Triune God

Both the Old and New Testaments state that there is only one God. Yet in other passages of Scripture we read that God refers to Himself in plural form. Other passages suggest that God exists in more than one person. It is important to note that the Bible teaches that all divine attributes are true of all three Persons of the Trinity.

A. There is only one God.

1. What can we learn about the nature of God from Deuteronomy 6:4 and James 2:19?
- _____

2. What did God proclaim about Himself in Psalm 86:10 and Isaiah 44:6-8? _____
- _____

B. God exists in three persons.

1. In Genesis 1:26, God said “Let _____ make man in _____ image.”?

2. What is said about the nature of the Messiah in Psalms 45:6-7 and 110:1? _____
- _____

3. What is said about the nature of Jesus in John 1:1-4, 14? _____
- _____

4. According to Hebrews 1:3, 8 and Colossians 2:9, how is Jesus compared with God the Father? _____
- _____

5. What titles are given to Jesus in Titus 2:13? _____

¹ Please see Lessons #1 and #6 for more details.

² Adapted from Christ Bible Church, “Constitution,”

6. What is said about the nature of the Holy Spirit in Acts 5:3-4? _____

7. How is the Trinity affirmed in the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20)? _____

III. The Omniscience of God – God is all-knowing

God knows everything. Nothing takes Him by surprise. God's knowledge never changes.

What do the following verses say about God's knowledge?

A. Hebrews 4:13 _____

B. Isaiah 46:9-10 _____

C. John 1:44-49 _____

D. John 2:23-25 _____

E. Matthew 11:20-24 _____

IV. The Omnipotence of God – God is all-powerful

God is capable of doing anything He wants, as long as it is consistent with His nature and character. What do the verses below teach about God's ability or inability to do things?

A. Jeremiah 32:17 _____

B. Revelation 1:8 _____

C. Matthew 19:26 _____

D. Job 42:1-2 _____

E. Titus 1:2 _____

F. James 1:13 _____

V. The Omnipresence of God – God is present in His fullness in all places at all times

A. What does Psalm 139:7-12 and Amos 9:2 say about the omnipresence of God? _____

B. What expression did God use in Jeremiah 23:23-24 to describe His omnipresence? _____

VI. The Immutability of God – God does not change

- A. What connection is made in Numbers 23:19 between God fulfilling His promises and changing His mind? _____

- B. What is said about the character of Jesus Christ in Hebrews 13:8? _____

VII. The Holiness of God – God is absolutely pure and set apart

- A. Read Isaiah 6:1-7. What was Isaiah's reaction when confronted with God's holiness? _____

- B. What is said about the character of God in Psalm 92:15? _____

God's mercy means God's goodness toward those in misery and distress. God's grace means God's goodness toward those who deserve only punishment. God's patience means God's goodness in withholding of punishment toward those who sin over a period of time.³

VIII. The Goodness of God – God's grace, mercy, and patience

- A. Read Exodus 34:5-6. What five attributes are listed? _____

- B. What does Psalm 51:1 and 103:8-13 say about God's mercy and compassion? _____

- C. To what extent is God good to His creation (Psalm 145:9)? _____

- D. How does God's grace and mercy relate to salvation (Titus 3:3-7; Ephesians 2:1-10)? _____

³ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 200.

IX. The Justice and Righteousness of God – God does what is right and punishes sin fairly

A. What connection is made between God and His laws in Psalm 119:137? _____

B. What is said about Jesus Christ in Acts 17:31 and Revelation 19:11? _____

Never once has he pardoned an unpunished sin; ... What! say you, were not those in heaven pardoned? Are there not many transgressors pardoned, and do they not escape without punishment? Has he not said, "I have blotted out thy transgressions like a cloud, and like a thick cloud thine iniquities?" Yes, true, most true, and yet my assertion is true also - not one of all those sins that have been pardoned were pardoned without punishment. Do you ask me why and how such a thing as that can be the truth? I point you to yon dreadful sight on Calvary; the punishment which fell not on the forgiven sinner fell there.⁴

X. The Love of God – God is love

A. According to Psalm 103:17 and 1 John 3:1, how expansive is God's love? _____

B. Read 1 John 4:7-11 and answer the following questions.

1. What is the source of love (v.7)? _____

2. How is God described in verses 8 and 16? _____

3. How did God show His love to us (v.9-11)? _____

XI. The Jealousy of God – God is zealous for His own glory

A. On what basis did God forbid the worship of other gods in Exodus 34:14? _____

B. In light of Deut 4:24, 5:8-9 and Isaiah 48:11, what can we say to a person who thinks it is acceptable to pray to an idol? _____

⁴ Charles H. Spurgeon, "Mercy, Omnipotence and Justice," <http://www.biblebb.com/files/spurgeon/0137.htm> (June 21, 1857).

XII. Other Attributes of God – God is...

Spirit (John 4:24)	Infinite (Psalm 145:3)	Personal (Exodus 3:14)
Eternal (Psalm 90:2)	Perfect (Psalm 18:30)	Benevolent (John 3:16)
Free (Psalm 115:3)	Truth (John 14:6)	Genuine (John 17:3)
Trustworthy (Titus 1:2)	Faithful (Psalm 89:2)	Sovereign (Ephesians 1:21)
Majestic (Psalm 104:1)	Self-existent (John 5:26)	Transcendent (Romans 11:33)
Wrathful (Jeremiah 10:10)	Life/Living (Daniel 6:26)	Glorious (1 Chronicles 29:11)

XIII. Personal Application

A. Why do you think it is important to constantly grow in the knowledge of God? What do you do in order to know God better? How often do you study the Scriptures because you want to know God better as opposed to some other reasons (e.g. to be able to prove your point of view to others, to prepare for Sunday school or a Bible study, etc.)? _____

B. Jesus endured tremendous humiliation on the cross. He was beaten up, spit upon, mocked. Yet, instead of destroying His enemies, He exhibited patience, love, and grace. We, on the other hand, sometimes become angry when someone drives too slowly or cuts in line. How can we grow in Christ's likeness in these situations? _____

C. Give some examples of how we can imitate God's attributes in our daily lives (see 1 John 4:12-19; 1 Peter 1:16).

CREATION AND THE FALL OF MAN

LESSON #3

Memory Verse: Romans 5:12

Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.

God created mankind in His image and in perfect relationship with Him. However, the first man and woman sinned by disobeying God. Through this act, known as “the Fall of Man,” Adam and Eve’s nature had become seriously corrupted. Since then, everyone who has lived or will ever live inherits this depraved sin nature and willfully sins against God.

I. The Creation of Man

A. The first man and woman were created by the direct and personal act of God, apart from any evolutionary process. God created them in His own image.

1. Describe how God created the first man and woman (Genesis 2:7, 21-22) _____

2. According to Genesis 1:26-27, God originally made man in His _____ and His _____ .

3. What was man’s character like immediately after creation (Ecclesiastes 7:29)? _____

The fact that man is in the image of God means that man is like God and represents God.¹

¹ Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 442.

B. Humans exist as male and female. God created man and woman, with their peculiar distinctions and drives, in order that they might complete one another and together fulfill His purpose for their existence in this world.

1. What four acts of God are described in Genesis 5:1-2? _____

2. According to Genesis 2:18, what aspect of Adam's existence did God declare "*not good*" and what did He do as a result? _____

3. How is the relationship between Adam and Eve described in Genesis 2:23-25? _____

C. Creation was designed to bring glory to God.

1. Why were all things created and how are they sustained (Isaiah 43:7; Colossians 1:16-17)? _____

2. What is the proper response of God's creation to Him for creating them (Psalm 148:5; Revelation 4:11)? _____

Q1: What is the chief end of man?

A: Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.

Westminster Confession of Faith

II. The Fall of Man

A. Man was *not* created a sinner, but sin entered into the world through man by his conscious and voluntary choice. It was this act of Eve and Adam that resulted in their corruption and the entrance of sin into the world.

1. What was God's command to Adam and Eve in Genesis 2:16-17? What was the consequence for breaking God's command? _____

2. Did Adam and Eve keep God’s command (Genesis 3:6)? _____

B. Sin entered the world through Adam. Death entered the world through sin. Death spread to all men, because “all sinned” in Adam.

1. Since we are born “in Adam,” we are born into sin and the guilt of that sin, even before we think a coherent thought or speak a word. How is this truth conveyed in Psalms 51:5 and 58:3-5? _____

2. Not only are we born guilty before God in a legal sense but we are also born corrupted, with an innate tendency to sin. Read Romans 5:12 and answer the following questions.

a. How did sin enter the world? _____

b. How did death enter the world? _____

c. How many people have sinned since Adam (cf. 3:23)? _____

d. How many people have been condemned since Adam (cf. 5:18)? _____

The simple narrative of the opening seven verses of Genesis chapter 3 describes for us the first act of human disobedience which brought about the curse on all mankind, the fall, the impact of that fall has touched every part of the universe. It is accurate to say that absolutely everything wrong in our world is because of sin. If there were no sin there would be nothing wrong. If there were no sin, everything would be very good. Everything created in the heavens, everything created on the earth would be very good as it was on day six.²

C. Due to our sinfulness, our relationship with God has been broken.

1. How did Isaiah and Paul describe the impact our sin on our relationship with God (Isaiah 59:2; Colossians 1:21)? _____

² John MacArthur, “The Breadth and Depth of Sin,” <http://www.gty.org/Resources/Sermons/90-234> (February 6, 2000).

2. How does John 3:36 and Galatians 3:10 describe the effects of sin? _____

3. Why is it impossible for God to overlook sin (Habakkuk 1:13; Psalm 5:4)? _____

D. Sin is significant in the eyes of God, and it carries an infinitely high price.

1. What is the requirement for entering heaven (Matthew 5:48; Revelation 21:27)? _____

2. According to James 2:10, how many sins is enough to merit a person eternity in hell?

3. What is God's righteous punishment for sin (Matthew 25:46; Romans 5:18, 6:23)?

4. Could anyone possibly make adequate payment for his own sins or those of another (Psalm 49:7-9)? _____

III. The Total Depravity of Fallen Man

Every part of fallen man has been rendered corrupt, and remains so. Total depravity is the extensive ruin of man's nature. Human beings are born sinners because of the sinful nature inherited from Adam. We are born condemned, and our personal actions and choices only serve to affirm our condemnation. We are dead in our sins and trespasses against God's holy law. We are slaves to sin. On our own, we can do nothing that pleases God or has any real spiritual value.

A. Fallen man cannot comprehend or apprehend good.

1. How is the condition of man's mind described in Genesis 6:5? _____

2. According to Ephesians 4:17-18, how enlightened is the understanding of a depraved man? What is the condition of his heart? _____

3. Is it possible for an unsaved, "*natural*" man to receive the things of God (1 Corinthians 2:14)? How do they view the things of the Spirit of God? _____

4. Who has control over the fallen world (1 John 5:19)? _____

5. According to 2 Corinthians 4:3-4, what has Satan done to the minds of unbelievers?
- _____

B. Fallen man cannot have any desire toward good.

1. According to Psalm 10:4, how often does fallen man think about God? _____
2. Proverbs 17:11 and 21:10 says that fallen man only craves and seeks _____
3. Read John 3:19-20 and answer the following questions.
 - a. What do fallen men love (v.19)? _____
 - b. Why do they love it (v.19)? _____
 - c. What do fallen men hate (v.20; see also John 15:18)? _____
 - d. Will fallen men ever come to the light (v.20)? _____
 - e. Who is the light (compare v.17 with v.19)? _____
4. How did Jesus say that a man is limited by his nature (Luke 6:43-45)? _____

5. Without being born again (i.e. regenerated), is it possible to understand and enter the kingdom of heaven (John 3:3, 6:44, 65)? _____
6. Jesus taught that our wills are enslaved by sin. One who is in the chains of slavery is not free. What does John 8:34, 43-44 and Romans 6:16, 20 teach regarding fallen man's slavery to sin? _____

7. According to Romans 3:10-12, what are six things of which every man is guilty before God? _____

C. Fallen man cannot fundamentally do anything to please God.

1. Is it possible for the fallen man to repent and change his own ways (Jeremiah 13:23)? _____

2. Is it possible for fallen man to confess Christ as Lord by his own initiative (1 Corinthians 12:3)? _____
3. How does Isaiah 64:6 describe man's best attempts to please God in the flesh? _____

4. According to Mark 10:26-27 and John 15:4-5, how much is man able to please God on the basis of his own will power? _____

5. Our first birth is only physical. Spiritually, we are stillborn. According to Ephesians 2:1-3, fallen man is spiritually _____ in trespasses and sins (v.1).
6. How is the heart of man described in Ecclesiastes 8:11, 9:3 and Jeremiah 17:9? _____

7. Read Romans 8:7-8 and answer the following questions.
 - a. What kind of attitude does the fallen mind have toward God (v.7)? _____
 - b. How much ability does the fallen mind have to obey God (v.7)? _____
 - c. Is it possible for fallen man to please God (v.8)? _____

IV. Personal Application

- A. How can you grow in your appreciation for God's creative work? In what ways are you thankful to God for creating you? _____

- B. How does the knowledge of righteousness of God and the weightiness of sin impact the way you will think, speak, and act? How does the understanding of your sinful nature and choices affect you? _____

- C. How has your understanding of fallen man's depravity increased your compassion for the lost and your dependence on God and His sovereignty? _____

DIVINE ELECTION AND HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY

LESSON #4

Memory Verse: Ephesians 1:4-5

Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will,

Who decides whether a person will be saved, God or the person? The Bible teaches that God unconditionally predestined and elected individuals to salvation before the foundation of the world. The Bible equally teaches that every individual is culpable for his sin and responsible for belief and repentance. In this lesson, we will examine these two truths.

I. Predestination and Election

Predestination is the biblical teaching that God, in His sovereignty, predestined the course of human history and the lives of individuals. Election is the gracious, free, and sovereign act of God by which He chooses sinners to become His children.

A. Predestination and election are the prerogative of God.

1. According to Matthew 11:25-27, who will come to know the Father? _____

2. What is the prerequisite for a person to come to Christ (John 6:37, 44, 65)? _____

3. Does God choose the elect or do they choose God (John 15:16, 19)? _____

4. According to Romans 9:11, who controls election, when was the decision made, and on what is it based? _____

5. Why did Paul give thanks for the church in Thessalonica (1 Thessalonians 1:2-4)? ____

B. Predestination and election are unconditional.

1. According to Ephesians 1:5, 11, what is the basis of God's election? _____

2. Read Romans 9:10-21 and answer the following questions.
 - a. Could the choice have been made on the basis of anything within the individuals (vv.11, 16)? _____
 - b. Was God's choice unjust (v.14)? _____
 - c. Are any human conditions required to receive God's mercy (vv.15-16, 18)?

 - d. What is the significance of the potter/clay analogy (vv.20-21)? _____

C. Predestination and election are individual.

1. What promises are given to elect individuals in Romans 8:28-30? _____

2. Re-read Romans 9:10-21. How does Paul illustrate the fact that predestination and election are individual rather than collective? _____

3. In Matthew 13:11, which individuals were chosen to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven and which were not? _____

D. Predestination and election are past tense.

1. According to Ephesians 1:4, when were the elect chosen by God? _____

2. Why did Paul yet again give thanks for the church in Thessalonica (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14)? _____
3. On the basis of Matthew 25:34 and Revelation 17:8, what did God do before the foundation of the world? _____

E. Predestination and election are in Christ.

- How are the phrases "*in Him*" and "*in Christ Jesus*" used in Ephesians 1:4 and 1 Corinthians 1:2-4? _____

Whatever may be said about the doctrine of election, it is written in the Word of God as with an iron pen, and there is no getting rid of it. To me, it is one of the sweetest and most blessed truths in the whole of revelation...¹

F. Predestination and election are by grace.

1. According to what did God call the elect to salvation (2 Timothy 1:9-10)? _____

2. How is election described in Romans 11:5-7? _____

G. Predestination and election are unto salvation.

1. For what did Paul say the elect were chosen (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14)? _____

2. What do John 6:37-40, Ephesians 1:11, and John 17:4-12 tell us the Father's gift of the elect to the Son, the will of the Father, and the Son's fulfillment of the Father's will? _____

3. How does the fact that election is God's prerogative make salvation certain (Romans 8:28-33)? _____

H. Predestination and election are evidenced by belief.

1. How are those who are Christ's sheep (i.e. the elect) contrasted with those who are not Christ's sheep in John 10:26-29? _____

2. How many people in the audience believed in Acts 13:48? _____

I. Predestination and election are Old Testament concepts

1. Describe God's actions and declarations regarding Israel (Deuteronomy 7:6). _____

2. According to Deuteronomy 9:4-6 what characteristic of Israel had no impact on God's choice of them? _____

¹ Tom Carter, *2,200 Quotations from the Writings of Charles H. Spurgeon*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Books, 1988), 63.

3. How does Isaiah 45:4 describe election by grace? _____

J. Predestination and election are ultimately for God's glory.

1. How did Paul explain God's motivation for election in Ephesians 1:4-6? _____

2. Why does God endure with patience those who have been prepared for destruction (Romans 9:22-23)? _____

Before the foundation of the world, God chose in Christ those whom He graciously regenerates, saves, and sanctifies... Sovereign election does not contradict or negate the responsibility of man to repent and trust Christ as Savior and Lord.²

II. Human Responsibility

God has made the blessings of salvation freely available to all through the gospel, and it is the immediate duty of all people to accept them by sincere, penitent, and obedient faith. Failure to do so is the result of nothing but their inherent depravity and willing rejection of the gospel, resulting in eternal condemnation in hell.

A. Man is responsible for his sins and bears the full guilt of them.

1. How much guilt is associated with sin (Matthew 5:22)? _____

2. What is the punishment for sin (Romans 6:23)? _____

3. What is the eternal destiny of those who rebel against the living God (1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Revelation 21:8)? _____

4. What is the status of one who does not believe in Jesus (John 3:18, 36)? _____

B. Man is responsible to repent and believe in Christ.³

1. What invitation did Christ give to all people in Matthew 11:28 and Revelation 22:17?

² Grace to You, "What We Teach," <http://www.gty.org/Meet/Doctrinal#Salvation>.

³ Please see Lessons #6 and #7 for more information on this topic.

2. What command did Jesus give to all people and what is the consequence for disobedience (Acts 17:30-31; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, 2:10-12)? _____

3. Why did Jesus rebuke the Jews in John 5:39-40? _____

4. What promise did Jesus give to anyone who is willing to believe (John 3:16)? _____

5. What desire did God reveal and what command did He give in Ezekiel 18:32 and 33:11? _____

If I was asked, "Why is a man damned?" I should answer as an Arminian answers, "He destroys himself." I should not dare to lay man's ruin at the door of divine sovereignty. On the other hand, if I were asked, "Why is a man saved?" I could only give the Calvinistic answer, "He is saved through the sovereign grace of God, and not at all of himself." I should not dream of ascribing the man's salvation in any measure to himself.⁴

III. Reconciliation of Divine Election and Human Responsibility

Divine sovereignty in predestination and election as well as human responsibility are both in the Bible, so neither should be over-emphasized to the minimization or exclusion of the other. Both truths should be equally accepted, appreciated, and loved.

A. These doctrines are difficult to reconcile, because our understanding is finite.

1. What does Isaiah 55:8-9 teach us about the wisdom of God? _____

2. Read Romans 11:33-36 and answer the following questions.
 - a. Why is it impossible to fully understand God's purposes in election? _____

⁴ Tom Carter, *2,200 Quotations from the Writings of Charles H. Spurgeon*, (Grand Rapids, MI.: Baker Books, 1988), 199.

- b. Why should we never impose our human reason and logic on God? _____

- c. What is the ultimate purpose for which God does everything that He does? _____

3. Re-read Romans 9:19-24. What can we learn from this text about questioning God regarding His purposes in election? _____

- B. These doctrines are reconciled in the fact that God works in the hearts of believers.⁵
1. According to Philippians 2:12, who is responsible for “*working out salvation*”? _____

2. According to Philippians 2:13, how does one work out his salvation? _____

IV. Personal Application

- A. How have you been comforted by the doctrines of predestination and election? How have they moved you to praise God for your eternal salvation? _____

- B. How does the knowledge of human responsibility and guilt drive you to “work out your salvation with fear and trembling”? _____

- C. How can you keep a healthy perspective regarding divine sovereignty and human responsibility? How does it encourage you in evangelism? _____

⁵ Please see Lesson #6 for more information on this topic.

THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST

LESSON #5

Memory Verse: John 1:1, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God...And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Nothing is more central to the Christian faith than the supremacy of Jesus Christ, who came to earth and did what no man ever has done or ever could do. At one point in His ministry, Jesus asked his disciples, “Who do you say I am?” In the same way, we must all ask ourselves that exact question. More importantly, “Who did Jesus claim to be, what does the Bible say about Him, and will you believe these claims?” In this lesson, we will examine a few of them.

I. The Person of Christ

A. Jesus Christ is fully God.

1. Read Philippians 2:6-11 and answer the following questions.
 - a. What is the nature and essence of the Son of God (v.6)? _____

 - b. What will all people eventually do and say in His presence (vv.10-11)? _____

2. How is Jesus described in Hebrews 1:3 _____

3. What is said about the deity of Christ in Colossians 2:9? _____

4. Jesus Christ is referred to in the Bible by several divine titles. Read the following passages and list the divine title used.
 - a. Romans 10:9 and Philippians 2:10-11 _____
 - b. Revelation 19:16 _____
 - c. Revelation 22:13 _____

- d. Titus 2:13 _____
- e. Mark 1:1 _____
- f. Matthew 1:23 _____
- g. John 8:58 _____
5. Since Jesus is God, all of the attributes of God are also ascribed to Him. Match the passages (left) to the divine attributes of Christ (right).
- | | |
|---|----------------------|
| a. Matthew 28:18 | Mercy / Faithfulness |
| b. Micah 5:2 and 1 John 1:1-2 | Goodness |
| c. Matthew 8:26-27 and Colossians 1:16-17 | Sovereignty |
| d. John 16:30 | All-Knowing |
| e. Hebrews 2:17 | Sinless |
| f. Acts 3:14-15 | Holy / Pure |
| g. John 14:6 | Eternal |
| h. Acts 10:38 | All-Powerful |
| i. John 15:9 | Truth |
| j. Hebrews 7:26 and 1 John 3:3 | Unchanging |
| k. Hebrews 13:8 | Holy / Righteous |
| l. 2 Corinthians 5:21 | Love |

Jesus in His incarnation was at the same time fully God and fully man—the Son of God as to His deity and the Son of Adam as to His humanity.¹

B. Jesus Christ is fully man.

1. Re-read Philippians 2:6-11 and answer the following questions.
- a. What likeness did Jesus assume in His incarnation, i.e. when He took on human flesh (v.7)? _____
- _____

¹ John MacArthur, *God in the Manger: The Miraculous Birth of Christ*, (Nashville, TN.: W Publishing Group, 2001), 24.

- b. What significant act did He do as a man (v.8)? _____

2. What do we learn about the humanity of Jesus from Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:18-23? _____
3. How is the humanity of Jesus demonstrated in each of the following passages?
- Matthew 4:2 _____
 - Luke 2:52 _____
 - John 4:6 _____
 - John 11:35 _____
 - John 13:21 _____
 - John 19:28 _____
4. It was necessary for Christ to be fully human for several reasons. Read each passage below and list the reason it gives for why Christ had to be human.
- Romans 5:18-19 _____
 - Hebrews 2:17-18 _____
 - 1 Timothy 2:5-6 _____
 - 1 Peter 2:21 and John 13:15 _____
 - 1 John 3:2-3 _____

II. The Work of Christ

A. The work of Christ before coming to earth

- Jesus enjoyed Trinitarian fellowship in glory.
 - What did Jesus pray to the Father in John 17:5? _____

- Jesus created all things.
 - What is the extent of Christ's involvement in creation (John 1:3; Colossians 1:16)? _____

- Jesus sustained all things.
 - How is the sustaining hand of Christ described in Colossians 1:17? _____

B. The work of Christ while on earth

1. Jesus showed the compassion of God.

- Describe how Jesus showed compassion in each of the following verses.

(1) Matthew 9:36-38 _____

(2) Matthew 14:14 _____

(3) Matthew 15:32 _____

(4) Mark 6:34 _____

2. Jesus lived a perfect life and perfectly fulfilled God's Law.

a. How did Peter describe Jesus in 1 Peter 2:22? _____

b. According to 1 John 3:5, what was Jesus like and what was His mission? _____

c. How did Jesus describe His purpose in Matthew 5:17? _____

d. Was Christ's life pleasing to the Father (John 4:34, 6:38, 17:4)? _____

3. Jesus suffered and died on a cross for sin.

a. According to Ephesians 5:25-27 and John 10:14-15, whom did Jesus die to save? _____

b. Jesus died as our substitute. According to 2 Corinthians 5:21, what did the sinless Savior "*become*" while on the cross so that we could be credited with His righteousness? _____

c. Read 1 Peter 3:18 and answer the following questions?

(1) How many times did Christ have to die for sins? _____

(2) How is the substitutionary nature of His death described? _____

(3) What happens as a result? _____

d. How is the purpose of His death described in Hebrews 9:26? _____

e. How unique was Christ's saving work (John 8:24,14:6; Acts 4:12; 1 John 5:11-12)? _____

Christ's death on the cross is not a peripheral issue or a secondary theme; it is the central, indeed crucial doctrine of the faith.²

4. Jesus rose victoriously from the grave.
- Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8 and answer the following questions.
 - How important is the message of the cross (v.3)? _____
 - Why did Christ die and rise (v.3; see also Romans 4:25)? _____

 - What happened after three days of burial (v.4)? _____
 - Was His death and resurrection foretold (vv.3-4)? _____
 - What did He do after His resurrection (vv.5-8)? _____
 - Who raised Christ from the dead (Acts 2:32; John 10:17; 1 Peter 3:18)? _____

 - What is true for believers as a result of Christ's resurrection (1 Corinthians 6:14)? _____

 - According to 1 Corinthians 15:12-20, what is the significance of Christ's resurrection? _____

5. Jesus ascended into heaven.
- Read Acts 1:9-11 and answer the following questions.
 - In what manner did Jesus depart from the earth (v.9)? _____
 - Where did He go (v.11)? _____
 - How will He return (v.11)? _____
 - According to Hebrews 9:12 and 10:12, what did Jesus do when He ascended?

 - What could not have happened if Christ had not ascended (John 16:7)? _____

² Bruce Demerest, *The Cross and Salvation*, (Wheaton, IL.: Crossway Books, 2006), 166.

d. What promise did believers receive as a result of Christ's ascension (John 14:3)?

C. The work of Christ after leaving earth

1. Jesus is Lord and Head of the church.

- How is Jesus described by the apostle Peter in Acts 2:32-36? _____

2. Jesus intercedes for the church.

- What does Jesus do on behalf of believers (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:24) and what impact does it have (Hebrews 7:24-26)? _____

3. Jesus will return for the church³

III. Personal Application

A. How has the knowledge and conviction of the person and work of Christ strengthened your faith, hope, and love? _____

B. How does the knowledge and appreciation of the deity and Lordship of Christ impact your walk with Him? _____

C. How does the knowledge that Christ is fully human help you as a believer? How can you follow the example that He set for you? _____

D. How does Christ work on earth and in heaven give you comfort in the present and hope for the future? _____

³ Please see Lesson #12 for more information.

GRACE AND THE CALL TO SALVATION

LESSON #6

Memory Verse: John 6:37

All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.

Man is thoroughly and helplessly corrupt. He does not have the capacity to seek, believe in, and love God (Lesson #3). In this depraved condition, no man ever can or will, in his own strength and wisdom, turn to God and be saved. Therefore, God, in His great love, elected to save some (Lesson #4) through Christ (Lesson #5). But how does this result in their salvation? In this lesson we will examine saving grace, general calling, and effectual calling.

I. Saving Grace

Apart from the grace of God, there is no hope for man. The only way for sinful man to be reconciled to God through the appropriation of Christ's atoning work is to exercise faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. However, apart from God's grace, it is utterly impossible to do so.

A. Saving grace is given to the elect.

1. Read Ephesians 1:3-7. This passage says that the elect are (1) blessed "*with every spiritual blessing*," (2) eternally chosen in Christ, (3) designed to be holy, (4) predestined to be adopted, (5) redeemed through the blood of Christ, and (6) forgiven of trespasses. All of this is "*according to the kind intention of His will to the praise of the glory of His _____*" and "*according to the riches of His _____.*"
2. In Romans 11:5, according to what did God leave a remnant? _____

B. Saving grace is a free gift of God.

1. How are sinners justified by God (Romans 3:23-24)? _____

2. How is salvation / eternal life described in Romans 6:23 and Ephesians 2:4-7? _____

3. What is spoken of as a gift in Romans 5:15-17? _____

C. Grace is neither merited nor secured in part or in whole by any virtue or work of man.

1. How are grace and works contrasted in the following passages?

a. Titus 3:3-7 _____

b. Romans 4:3-5 _____

c. Ephesians 2:8-9 _____

d. Romans 11:6 _____

e. 1 Corinthians 15:10 _____

2. Why is it crucial to understand the difference between grace and works (Galatians 2:21)? _____

D. Grace enables sinners to believe the gospel, be saved, and live for Christ.

1. How did the grace of God impact the faith, hope, and love of the Colossian believers (Colossians 1:3-6)? _____

2. According to Titus 2:11-14, what effect does the grace of God have on the elect?

3. How did Luke describe the brethren from Achaia in Acts 18:27? _____

4. By God's grace, He gives saving faith (i.e. belief and repentance) to the elect as a gift.¹

E. Grace leaves no room for boasting.

1. According to Paul in Romans 4:1-2, what right would Abraham have if he was justified by works? _____

2. Why did Paul argue that boasting has no place (Romans 3:27-31; Ephesians 2:8-9)?

3. Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-31 and answer the following questions.

a. Why does God choose foolish and weak people (vv.26-28)? _____

¹ Please see Lesson #7 for more details.

- b. Based on this, how many of the chosen can boast (v.29)? _____
- c. By whose will are the elect “*in Christ*” (v.30)? _____
- d. What is the one thing of which we are permitted to boast? Why? (vv.30-31)? _____
- _____

II. The General Call

Despite the fact that man is thoroughly corrupt, and therefore cannot or will not ever independently choose to exercise faith in Jesus Christ, he is still responsible to do so. God genuinely stretches out His hand and offers salvation to every person, and every person is accountable to God for believing or rejecting God’s offer.² This invitation / offer / command is known as the *general call* or *external call*.

A. The general call is offered to all people.

1. According to John 7:37, Isaiah 45:22, and Revelation 22:17, who is welcome to take the water of life? _____
 2. Is everyone who is invited to be saved considered to be elect (Matthew 22:14)? _____
- _____

B. The general call is both an invitation and a command to which all are accountable.

1. What command is given in Acts 17:30-31? _____
2. To whom is eternal life freely offered (John 3:16)? _____

The Spirit’s enlightening, wooing, and subduing work vis-à-vis the elect enlightens darkened minds, frees stubborn wills, and inclines contrary affections toward Christ. In short, the Spirit’s effectual call opens sinners’ hearts, thereby creating a new desire and hunger to know Christ. The general call meets with a variety of responses in the unconverted, whereas the effectual call effectively draws sinners to Christ. Expressed more directly, the preacher’s word in the general call is made effective by the Spirit’s work in the special call. The general call is a legitimate offer to “whosoever will,” even though its efficacy depends on the gracious power of God’s Spirit.³

² Please see Lesson #4 for more information on human responsibility.

³ Bruce Demerest, *The Cross and Salvation*, (Wheaton, IL.: Crossway Books, 2006), 211.

III. The Effectual Call

The *effectual call* or *internal call* is distinguished from the general call in that it is an irresistible call extended only to the elect. Through the effectual call, God supernaturally draws those chosen for salvation to Himself and grants them saving grace through the gospel by which He changes their hearts to make them both able and willing to believe.

A. Effectual calling is the prerogative of God alone.

1. Read John 6:37, 44, 63-65 and answer the following questions.
 - a. Who will come to Christ (v.37)? _____
 - b. Who can come to Christ (v.44)? _____
 - c. Who gives life (v.63)? _____
 - d. How much can the flesh contribute (v.63)? _____
 - e. Can everyone come to Christ (v.65)? _____
2. Who wills the elect person to believe the gospel (James 1:17-18)? _____
3. Who causes the elect person to be born again (1 Peter 1:3)? _____

B. The purpose of the effectual call is to save the elect.

- According to the following passages, to what or by what does God call His elect?
 - a. 1 Peter 2:9-10 _____
 - b. 1 Peter 5:10-11 _____
 - c. 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12 _____
 - d. 2 Peter 1:2-3 _____
 - e. Hebrews 3:1 _____

C. The gospel is the vehicle through which God effectually calls the elect to salvation.

1. Through what means were those chosen to salvation called in order that they may gain the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Thessalonians 2:13-14)? _____

2. Through what means does God cause the elect person to be born again (1 Peter 1:23-25, cf. v.3)? _____
3. How is the message of the gospel described in Romans 1:16-17 and 1 Corinthians 1:18? _____
4. What guarantee does God give regarding His Word (Isaiah 55:11)? _____

D. God reveals Himself to the elect through the effectual call.

1. According to Matthew 11:27, who can know the Father? _____

2. Given what you have just read in Matthew 11:27, how do the elect respond when Christ reveals the Father to them (John 17:4-8)? _____

3. Re-read Romans 1:16-17. What is revealed to the elect through the gospel? _____

4. Read 1 Corinthians 2:6-16 and answer the following questions.
 - a. What kind of wisdom is contained in the gospel (vv.6-7)? _____

 - b. Can natural man understand this wisdom (vv.8-9, 14)? _____
 - c. Who reveals the truth of the gospel and how can one know this truth (vv.10-13)?

 - d. What else are the elect given (v.16)? _____

E. God grants saving grace to the elect through the effectual call.

1. Why did Paul thank God for those who were “*saints by calling*” (1 Corinthians 1:2-4)? _____
2. How did Paul describe his own election and calling (Galatians 1:15-17)?⁴ _____

3. What is given to each person who is effectually called (Ephesians 4:4-7)? _____

4. According to what are the elect called with a holy calling (2 Timothy 1:8-10)? _____

F. Effectual calling is God’s work of changing the heart of the elect so they will freely, willingly, and gladly believe.

1. According to 1 John 5:20, what does Christ give to the elect that enables them to enter into a saving relationship with Him? _____
2. What must God do to the hard and stony heart in order for the elect to love Him and live (Deuteronomy 30:6)? _____

⁴ Compare Paul’s election/calling to that of Jeremiah (Jeremiah 1:4-5) and John the Baptist (Luke 1:11 ff).

3. How does God's work on the human heart and mind affect the will (Philippians 2:13)? _____

4. Why did Lydia receive the gospel message spoken by Paul (Acts 16:14)? _____

5. Why does anyone confess Christ as Lord (1 Corinthians 12:3)? _____

"No one was ever saved against their will. No one was ever brought into the kingdom kicking and screaming, protesting. No one was ever saved who was dragged against the grain of having dug their heels in. That is not what Scripture teaches. No one has ever been saved against his will. No one ever will be. Everyone who is saved is saved because they will to believe the gospel. In fact, they will with all their heart and soul to believe the gospel. No one is ever saved without being willing. It is an act of the will to believe. The question is, 'What made them willing?' Or better, 'Who made them willing?'"⁵

G. Effectual calling infallibly ensures that the elect will believe and be saved.

1. According to John 6:37-40, _____ that the Father gives to the Son _____ come to Him, because Christ perfectly fulfills the Father's will to lose _____
2. Why can the one called be sure that he will be entirely sanctified and blameless before God (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24)? _____

3. Read Romans 8:28-33 and answer the following questions.
 - a. What does God do for those who He calls (v.28)? _____
 - b. How many of those who are effectually called will be saved (v.30)? _____
 - c. How are the called identified in v.33? _____
4. According to Acts 13:48, how many people who have been appointed to eternal life will believe the gospel? _____

⁵ John MacArthur, "The Doctrine of God's Effectual Call," <http://www.gty.org/Resources/Sermons/90-296> (September 18, 2005).

5. According to Romans 11:7, how many of the chosen will obtain salvation? _____

6. Read John 8:32-36. What guarantee did Jesus give in verses 32 and 36? _____

7. To whom does God promise the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38-39)? _____

IV. Personal Application

- A. How does it make you feel to know that you have no hope apart from God's grace? How would you explain to an unbeliever that grace is a gift from God that cannot be earned?

- B. Have you been impacted by the knowledge that you have nothing to boast about before God? How does embracing the doctrines of grace (i.e. depravity, election, effectual calling, etc.) accentuate the fact that no one can boast before God? How does denial of these doctrines leave room for boasting? _____

- C. How does the knowledge that the general call should go out to all people motivate you to be faithful in doing evangelism? _____

- D. What are some of the specific ways in which God has changed your heart? _____

SAVING FAITH

LESSON #7

Memory Verse: Ephesians 2:8-10

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

As we have seen in the previous six lessons, salvation is completely the work of God. However, when God performs a saving work in the heart of man, He makes it abundantly evident. From a human perspective, faith is the only requirement for man to be saved, yet even faith is a gift of God. This faith, known as “saving faith,” has a precursor and two components.

I. Humility – The Precursor to Saving Faith

True humility is the exact opposite of pride. It is not an overestimation of self; nor is it an underestimation. It is seeing ourselves the way that God sees us.

A. The genuinely humble person will admit that he is helpless without God.

1. Read Revelation 3:17. What five descriptors are given for the godless individual? Is this how you see your natural self?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

d. _____

e. _____

2. In Matthew 18:3-4, what type of person did Jesus say we must be like to be saved? To what specific qualities was He referring? _____

B. The genuinely humble person will admit that he is hopeless without God.

1. In Ephesians 2:12, how did Paul describe a life without God in the world?

2. According to James 4:6, why is pride a hopeless condition?

C. The genuinely humble person will cast off all self-effort and selflessly admit his sinfulness and need for the Savior.

1. In Matthew 9:12, Jesus likened sinners who need Him to _____ people who need a _____ .

2. Read Philippians 3:3-11.

a. How much confidence did Paul have in his flesh (v.3)? _____

b. How did Paul view his accomplishments (v.7-8)? _____

c. From where did Paul derive his sense of value (v.9)? _____

d. Were Paul's aspirations self-centered (vv.10-11)? _____

Who can enter into salvation? Those who, like children, are dependent, not independent. Those who are humble, not proud. Those who recognize that they are helpless and empty. Aware that they are nothing, they turn in utter dependency to Christ.¹

II. Belief and Repentance – The Components of Saving Faith

A. Belief – True belief is much more than mere intellectual assent to a set of facts. Although it encompasses believing the truth about God and the Bible, it also necessitates a heart-felt trust in them.

¹ John MacArthur, *The Gospel According to Jesus: What Does Jesus Mean When He Says "Follow Me"?* (Grand Rapids, MI.: Zondervan Publishing House, 1988), 116.

1. True belief must be rooted in the Bible.
 - a. According to John 20:31, why was the gospel of John written? _____

 - b. Read John 5:24 and answer the following questions.
 - (1) Who/what must one believe to receive eternal life (cf. Hebrews 11:6)?

 - (2) What is the prerequisite to believing (cf. Romans 10:17)? _____

 - c. How did Paul describe the Scriptures in 2 Timothy 3:15? _____

 2. True belief must be rooted in the gospel.²
 - According to Romans 1:16, to whom is the gospel the power of God to salvation?

 3. True belief must contain whole-hearted trust in God.
 - In Romans 10:11-13, what did Paul say about the man who trusts God enough to call on His name? _____

- B. Repentance – Repentance unto salvation is not an act, but an attitude. More than anything, it is the desire and willingness to submit to the authority of God. It is a commitment to obey Him and live for His glory.
1. Repentant people confess sin, because sin grieves them.
 - a. What was the psalmist's attitude toward sin in Psalm 38:18? _____

 - b. How does God respond to the repentant sinner who does not hide his sin but freely confesses it (Psalm 32:5)? _____

 - c. In 2 Corinthians 7:8-11, what does Paul say makes the difference between the road to repentance and the road to death (v.10)? _____

² One must believe in the person and work of Jesus Christ (i.e. that Jesus is fully God and fully man; that He came to the earth and lived a perfect life; that Jesus died as his substitute to pay for his sins; and that He rose from the dead). For more information on the person and work of Christ, please see Lesson #5.

2. Repentant people have a change of mind and heart which leads them to turn away from sin and turn to Jesus Christ.
 - a. According to 2 Timothy 2:19, everyone who names the name of the Lord must turn _____ wickedness.
 - b. In Acts 26:20, Paul declared that people must repent and turn _____ God.
3. Repentant people are willing to give up everything to follow Jesus.
 - a. Read Matthew 10:37-39.
 - (1) How much must we be willing to love Jesus (v.37)? _____

 - (2) How much devotion to Jesus must one have (v.38)? _____

 - (3) How much ownership of our lives are we permitted to have (v.39)?

 - b. How much did Jesus say one must be willing to give up in order to be saved (Luke 14:33)? _____

When we ask, Is Christ your LORD? we mean, does He in every deed occupy the throne of your heart, does He actually rule over your life?...There are many people who would like to be saved from Hell, but who do not want to be saved from self-will, from having their own way, from a life of some form of worldliness. But God will not save on their terms. To be saved, we must submit to HIS terms.³

4. Repentant people bow to Jesus Christ as Lord (i.e. Master). They submit to His authority as Lord and live for His glory.
 - a. What must one confess to be saved (Romans 10:9-10)? _____
 - b. How did Peter say that Christ must be sanctified (set apart, regarded) in the hearts of believers (1 Peter 3:15)? _____
 - c. According to Ephesians 1:21-22, what position does Christ occupy? _____

³ A.W. Pink, "Is Christ Your Lord?", http://www.bornofhim.org/Christ_Your_Lord.htm.

5. Repentant people (i.e. people who submit to Christ as Lord) bear “*fruits of repentance*” as God changes their lives.
 - a. In Matthew 3:8, John the Baptist preached that those who have truly repented and are saved will “_____ *fruit in keeping with repentance*”.
 - b. In Acts 26:20, what did Paul say follows repentance and proves that one truly is repentant? _____
 - c. What did James say about a faith that never produces good deeds (James 2:20, 26)? _____

III. The Gift of Saving Faith

Salvation is clearly a gift from God. In Ephesians 2:8-10, Paul declares that salvation is by grace through faith. He then says, “*it is the gift of God.*” The “*it*” here refers to salvation itself, which includes both grace and faith. And if grace and faith are both gifts of God, then the components of faith (i.e. faith and repentance) are gifts from God also. Read the following verses and note which component of saving faith is described as a gift: belief, repentance, or both.

- A. Acts 5:31 _____
- B. Acts 11:18 _____
- C. Philippians 1:29 _____
- D. 2 Timothy 2:24-26 _____
- E. 2 Peter 1:1 _____

The Bible portrays faith and repentance as God’s gifts to his elect in order to emphasize that although [the elect person] is the author of these actions, God is the ultimate cause. [The elect person] willed to believe, but only after and because God provided him with the power. Thus, [his] repentance from sin and his faith in Christ are portrayed as gifts because they flow from God’s sovereign grace.⁴

Sam Storms

⁴ Sam Storms, “Faith and Repentance,” <http://www.enjoyinggodministries.com/article/faith-and-repentance/> (November 6, 2006).

IV. Personal Application

A. In what specific ways did God humble you and reveal your need of salvation?

B. How would you describe your belief in the truths of the Bible in general and the gospel in particular? How would you describe your trust in God? _____

C. How have you turned from sin and turned to Jesus Christ? Are you willing to give up everything for Him? What specific thing have you given up? Do you submit to His lordship over your life? What fruits of repentance are evident in your life? _____

D. How has learning that saving faith is a gift from God affected your attitude toward Him?

SALVATION

LESSON #8

Memory Verse: Romans 8:1

Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

In the previous seven lessons, we have seen both the divine and human actions necessary for a person to be saved. But what does “salvation” mean and what happens when a person “gets saved”? Far from being a one-time event, salvation has been described as “*a process begun by justification, advanced by sanctification, and climaxed in glorification.*”¹ In short, salvation is the process by which God saves sinners from the penalty (justification), power (sanctification), and eventually, the presence (glorification) of their sin. Salvation is completely the work of God, and every saved person will exhibit evidence of God’s work in their lives.

I. Justification – Deliverance from the Penalty of Sin

Justification is God’s instantaneous act of declaring a sinner “not guilty” of sin and therefore righteous in His sight. It is a one-time, immediate judicial act performed completely by God and wholly by grace the moment a person possesses saving faith.² At justification, several instantaneous transactions occur.

A. At justification, the sinner receives reparation of his relationship with God. This is known as *atonement*. The act of atonement has five components.

1. Redemption – The complete payment of our sin debt

a. According to 1 Peter 1:18-19, from what does redemption free the believer?

b. Who paid the redemption price (i.e. the ransom) and what was the substance of the payment (v.19)? _____

¹ David K. Lowery, “1 Corinthians,” in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament*, ed., by John F. Walvoord and Roy B. Zuck, (Colorado Springs, CO.: ChariotVictor Publishing, 1983), 509.

² See Lesson #7 for a detailed study of saving faith.

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2. Propitiation – The satisfaction of justice and removal of God’s wrath
 - a. What did John say abides with the unbeliever (John 3:36)? _____
 - b. From what did Paul say the believer is saved (Romans 5:9)? _____
 3. Forgiveness – The act of excusing/pardoning the sins of the believer
 - According to Psalm 103:12, to what extent does God forgive sins? _____
 4. Substitution – The imputation (crediting) of the believer’s sins to Christ and of the righteousness of Christ to believers
 - a. According to 1 Peter 3:18, how are we able to be brought to God? _____
 - b. In 2 Corinthians 5:21 we learn that our _____ was imputed/credited to Christ and His _____ is imputed/credited to us
 5. Reconciliation – The transformation of a relationship of hostility and alienation into one of peace and fellowship³
 - a. Who is the initiator of reconciliation and what is its result (Romans 5:1, 6-8; 2 Corinthians 5:18)? _____
 - b. Describe the difference Paul gives in Colossians 1:21-22 between Christians and non-Christians. _____
- B. At justification, the sinner receives a new nature and is indwelt and sealed with the Holy Spirit. This is known as *regeneration / the new birth*.⁴
1. What did Jesus say regarding the relationship of the new birth (i.e. being born again) and eternal life (John 3:3, 6-7)? _____
 2. How did Paul describe the impact of the new birth on the believer’s desires in Romans 6:17-18 and Galatians 2:20? _____
-

³ R.F. Youngblood, F.F. Bruce, R.K. Harrison, *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, (Nashville, TN.: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1995).

⁴ Although they are chronologically indistinguishable, some argue that one aspect of regeneration (i.e. the impartation of the new nature) logically precedes justification, since one cannot believe until he receives a new heart and justification logically follows faith. Others understand the whole of regeneration to take place at justification and argue that the ability to believe is imparted at the effectual call, which they distinguish from regeneration. Both views are acceptable. See Lesson #6 for a detailed study of effectual calling.

C. At justification, the sinner receives entrance as a son/daughter into the family of God. This is known as *adoption*.

1. According to John 1:12-13, how does one become a child of God? _____

2. What are some of the benefits of being children of God (Romans 8:16-17)? _____

D. At justification, the sinner receives God's promise of an eternal, abiding relationship with Him, on earth and in heaven. This is known as *eternal life*.

1. According to 1 John 1:2 and 5:20, what is eternal life? _____

2. How is eternal life described in John 17:3? _____
3. In John 10:28-29 and 14:2-3, what did Jesus say about the security of the eternal life of the believer? _____

4. Can a believer know for sure that he has eternal life (1 John 5:13)? _____

If you could have heaven, with no sickness, and with all the friends you ever had on earth, and all the food you ever liked, and all the leisure activities you ever enjoyed, and all the natural beauties you ever saw, all the physical pleasures you ever tasted, and no human conflict or any natural disasters, could you be satisfied with heaven, if Christ was not there?⁵

II. Sanctification – Deliverance from the Power of Sin

Sanctification is the process of continually becoming more like Christ as he becomes increasingly set apart from sin and dedicated to a life of holiness. Although sanctification is the gracious work of God, the believer also has a responsibility to work toward sanctification.

A. Sanctification is the work of God

1. Sanctification is accomplished by God the _____ (Jude 1:1)
2. Sanctification is accomplished by God the _____ (Hebrews 2:11, 10:10)
3. Sanctification is accomplished by God the _____ (2 Thessalonians 2:13)

⁵ John Piper, *God is the Gospel*, (Wheaton, IL.: Crossway Books, 2005), 15.

4. Sanctification is accomplished by God's _____ (John 17:17)
5. Sanctification is God's work of setting believers apart for holiness. How did Paul describe this in 1 Corinthians 3:18 and 6:11? _____

6. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 and answer the following questions:
- How much of the believer will be sanctified (v.23)? _____
 - How long does the sanctification process last (v.23)? _____
 - How sure is the result (v.24; cf. Hebrews 10:14)? _____
- B. Sanctification is the work of the believer
- What is the command of God to the believer (1 Peter 1:15-16)? _____

 - To what kind of life are believers called (Ephesians 4:22-24; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9)?

 - What is the goal of our sanctification (Matthew 5:48; 2 Corinthians 7:1)? _____

 - How should we present our bodies to God (Romans 6:19)? _____

- C. Sanctification results in spiritual growth in the life of the believer.
- According to Galatians 5:22-24, what are the fruits the Holy Spirit produces in the life of the believer throughout the process of sanctification? _____

 - Why was Paul thankful for the church in Thessalonica (2 Thessalonians 1:3)? _____

This is the Spirit's work, to set us apart from sin, consecrate us, make us holy. He is conforming us to the image of Christ.⁶

⁶ John MacArthur, *Ashamed of the Gospel: When the Church Becomes Like the World*, (Wheaton, IL.: Crossway Books, 1993), 167.

III. Glorification – Deliverance from the Presence of Sin

Glorification is the instantaneous completion of salvation whereby God finishes the work of sanctification by perfecting the believer in holiness and ushering him into perfect glory.

A. How did John in 1 John 3:2 describe what the believer will be like at glorification?

B. Where will the believer appear with Christ (Colossians 3:4)? _____

C. How well will the believer know Christ at glorification (1 Corinthians 13:11)? _____

D. How many of the people God justifies will He also glorify (Romans 8:30)? _____

E. What is God's promise regarding glorification (Romans 8:29; Philippians 1:6)? _____

IV. The Evidence of Salvation

God makes it abundantly evident when He does a saving work in a person's life. The Bible tells us to "*Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!*" (2 Corinthians 13:5). How can we know if we are genuinely saved?

A. Potential indicators of true conversion and genuine salvation.

1. Devotion to the hope of the _____ of God (Romans 5:1-2)
2. Loves _____ (John 8:42) and desires _____ (Matthew 5:6)
3. Experiences a decreasing pattern of _____ (1 John 3:4-10)
4. Selflessly _____ others (1 John 2:9-11)
5. Separates himself from the _____ (1 John 2:15-17)
6. Grows spiritually and bears _____ (Matthew 7:17-18; Galatians 5:22-24)
7. Lives a life characterized by _____ (Acts 5:29; John 14:15)
8. _____ the truth about God (John 19:35; 3 John 1:3-4)

B. Potential indicators of false conversion and hypocrisy.

1. More concerned with external religion than the condition of the _____ (Mark 7:6-9)
2. Pursues salvation on the basis of good _____ (Romans 9:31-32)
3. Has never experienced a change in lifestyle as a result of being born again as a new _____ (2 Corinthians 5:17)
4. Has more concern for the _____ than for Christ (James 4:4)

5. Places children, spouse, etc. above _____ (Matthew 10:37-38)
6. Has no desire to read, meditate on, and apply the _____ (1 Peter 2:2)
7. Is _____ to share his faith with the lost (Luke 9:26)
8. Never _____ about Christ and what He has done in his life (Luke 6:45)

If there is not, then, at least a yearning in our hearts to live a holy life pleasing to God, we need to seriously question whether our faith in Christ is genuine... True salvation brings with it a desire to be made holy.⁷

V. Personal Application

- A. Have you been justified by God's grace through faith in Christ? If so, do you have assurance of your salvation? How has it affected your attitude toward God? _____

- B. How have you exerted effort in the sanctification process? How have you grown spiritually as a result? _____

- C. What evidences of genuine salvation do you see in your life? _____

⁷ Jerry Bridges, *The Pursuit of Holiness*, (Colorado Springs, CO.: Navpress, 1996), 33.

THE PERSON AND WORK OF SATAN

LESSON #9

Memory Verse: John 8:44

You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Satan is the chief enemy of God. His works are characterized by pride, hatred, and deception. He opposes everything that God has created. To effectively engage in spiritual warfare, we must understand our enemy. The Scriptures paint a clear image of Satan's history, character, tactics, and future. The wise believer will cling to God's revelation about the enemy of our souls.

I. Satan's Original State

In Ezekiel 28:12-19, God had Ezekiel speak a lamentation over the king of Tyre. In this passage we find a comparison of the king of Tyre to the king of all lies. The symbolism used in this passage refers to none other than Satan. In this passage we find a clear description of his status as God originally intended it. Satan was originally created to be the highest angel in all of God's creation. There was nothing but perfection found in him.

A. The description of Satan.

- What three phrases describe Satan in verse 12?

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

B. The original condition of Satan.

1. What kind of being was Satan originally (v.14)? _____
2. How is Satan's original condition described in verse 15? _____

II. Satan's Fall

In Isaiah 14:12-21, the prophet is describing God's judgment on the king of Babylon, but as the passage progresses Isaiah uses words too intense to simply refer to an earthly leader. He is speaking of the fall of Satan.

A. The details of Satan's fall.

1. According to verse 12, from where did Satan fall (cf. Luke 10:18)? _____

2. According to verse 12, to where did he fall (cf. Ezekiel 28:17)? _____

B. The impact of Satan's fall.

- How did Satan's fall impact the nations (v.12)? _____

C. The events leading to Satan's fall.

1. How exalted did Satan desire his throne to be (v.13)? _____

2. To what status did Satan desire to elevate himself (v.14)? _____

3. What was the source of his pride and corruption (Ezekiel 28:17)? _____

III. Satan's Character

Like fallen humanity, Satan is depraved in every part of his being; but Satan's depravity is distinct in that he is the initiator of evil. While humanity inherited its sin nature passively through the headship of Adam, Satan became depraved actively and purposefully as the enemy of God and all of God's creation. An evaluation of the names ascribed to Satan is an effective way to study his character.

A. Read the following passages and fill in the names on the following chart.¹

Name	Meaning	Passage
	Adversary	Matthew 4:10
	Slanderer	Matthew 4:1
	Intrinsically evil	John 17:15
	Destructive creature	Revelation 12:3, 7, 9
	Deceiver in Eden	Revelation 12:9
	Destruction	Revelation 9:11
	Destroyer	Revelation 9:11
	Opponent	1 Peter 5:8
	Lord of the flies (Baalzebub)	Matthew 12:24
	Worthless (Beliar)	2 Corinthians 6:15
	Controls philosophy of world	2 Corinthians 4:4
	Rules in world system	John 12:31
	Control of unbelievers	Ephesians 2:2
	Opponent	Matthew 13:28
	Solicits people to sin	Matthew 4:3
	Leads people to eternal death	John 8:44
	Perverts the truth	John 8:44
	Opposes believers before God	Revelation 12:10

B. Answer the following questions regarding the above chart.

- List several characteristics of Satan that stand out to you from the “meaning” column of this list. _____

- List several ways in which Satan’s character differs from that of fallen humanity and several ways in which his character parallels that of fallen humanity. _____

¹ Adapted from Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, (Chicago, IL.: Moody Press, 1989), 293.

IV. Satan's Work on Earth

Satan is the avowed enemy of God. He opposes God's purposes, as well as His creation, including angels and humans. Satan is such an enemy of God that his will is always directly opposed to the will of God. There are two great kingdoms in conflict: (1) God's kingdom, made up of the Trinity, God's angelic agents, and His human agents (i.e. believers); (2) Satan's kingdom, made up of himself, his angelic agents (i.e. demons), and his human agents (i.e. unbelievers). Satan's purpose on earth is to counter and destroy God's kingdom.

A. Satan's work on earth is characterized by direct opposition to God.

1. Read Genesis 3:1-6, 13-15. What was Satan's purpose in tempting Eve in the garden? How was this temptation aimed at hurting God (cf. Genesis 1:31)? _____

2. How does Satan's temptation of Christ in Luke 4:1-13 demonstrate his opposition to God? _____

3. Explain how Luke 22:3-4 shows Satan's enmity toward God? _____

4. What type of hatred will Satan have for the Creator throughout history until the Second Coming of Christ (Revelation 20:7-8)? _____

B. Satan's work on earth also involves unseen spiritual battles among heavenly forces that result in tangible results on earth.

1. What insight does Jude 9 give us concerning the evil ones opposition to God's angels? _____

2. Daniel 10:13 speaks of an angel who receives the help of Michael the archangel. How does this verse add to your understanding of the activity that goes on in the spiritual realm? _____

3. What insight does Revelation 12:7 give us concerning Satan's opposition to God's angels in the tribulation to come? _____

C. Satan opposes all of humanity. His goal is to deceive them and ultimately bring them into the judgment he himself will one day face.

1. The Devil is active in keeping unbelievers under his deluding influence.
 - a. What does Ephesians 2:2 teach us about the direction of the unbelieving world?

 - b. According to 1 John 5:19, what is the extent of the devil's influence over humanity? _____
 - c. Explain how Revelation 12:9 adds to our knowledge of the extent of Satan's ability to deceive? _____
 - d. How does Satan oppose the lost (2 Corinthians 4:4)? _____

 - e. How does Satan show hatred toward those in 2 Timothy 2:24-26 who are in need of God's rescue? _____

 - f. What kind of satanic work did Jesus reverse according to Acts 10:38? _____

2. Unlike the unregenerate, believers are capable of withstanding Satan's deluding influence and fiery attacks because of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. With vigilance in prayer and faithfulness to the Scriptures, the child of God will live in victory over the evil one.
 - a. What does Satan desire to do to believers and how should believers respond (1 Peter 5:8)? _____

 - b. Describe the devil's activities against the believers in the church of Smyrna and their proper response (Revelation 2:10). _____

 - c. Read Ephesians 6:11-12. What does this passage tell us about Satan's tenacity in opposing believers and about the believer's defense from his evil attacks? _____

- d. How does Job 1:9-11 and 2:4-5 relate to the title given to Satan in Revelation 12:10? _____

- e. What kind of influence did Satan wield in 1 Chronicles 21:1? _____

- f. How does Satan oppose the gospel (Mark 4:15)? _____

- g. How does Satan oppose the church (1 Thessalonians 3:5)? _____

- h. What can we learn from Luke 22:31-32, Job 1:12, and Job 2:6 about Satan's limitations concerning his desire to attack believers? _____

For when Satan is called the god and prince of this world, when he is spoken of as a strong armed man, the spirit who holds power over the air, a roaring lion, these descriptions serve only to make us more cautious and watchful, and thus more prepared to take up the struggle.²

V. Satan's Judgment

The reality of the future eternal judgment of Satan is sure and certain. It is also true that the deceiver abides under holy judgment. God will dispense His full fury in His perfect timing.

A. Satan already stands judged.

1. How does Job 1:6-7 inform us of God's judgment on Satan? _____

2. What judgment did Genesis 3:14 give Satan immediately? _____

3. What judgment does Genesis 3:15 promise for Satan? _____

² John Calvin, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion, Volume 1*, translated by Ford Lewis Battles, (Albany, OR.: Ages Software, 1998), 217.

4. How are 1 Corinthians 15:25-26, 55-57 and Hebrews 2:14-15 a form of judgment over Satan? _____

B. When God's full fury is poured out on the kingdom of the devil, the torment will be unparalleled in severity. The lake of fire and brimstone has been especially prepared as the eternal home of the evil one and his demons.³

VI. Personal Application

A. Describe the confidence that you can have knowing that Satan's attacks only happen with God's sovereign permission? _____

B. Have you ever heard someone talk about hell in terms of all the fun and rebellious people who will be there, and that Satan will be the life of the party? Given what you learned in this study, how will you respond to such comments in the future? _____

C. Ephesians 6:10-17 teaches us how to be ready for spiritual warfare with the evil one. List three specific, measurable ways to which you will commit in order to improve your defense against the devils schemes. _____

³ Please see Lesson #12 for more details.

THE PERSON AND WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

LESSON #10

Memory Verse: John 14:26

But 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 said to you.

Throughout church history there have been numerous attacks upon the deity and personality of the Holy Spirit; and in more recent years, there has been great misunderstanding and error in regard to His work in the life of believers. Hence, this lesson will highlight the scriptural evidence of the deity and person of the Holy Spirit, as well as a biblical description of His work in the life of believers.

I. The Deity of the Holy Spirit

A. The Holy Spirit possesses divine attributes. Match the passages (left) to the divine attributes of the Holy Spirit (right).

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Isaiah 40:13; 1 Corinthians 2:10-12 | Omnipotence (all-powerful) |
| 2. Job 33:4; Luke 1:35; Romans 8:11 | Sovereignty (total authority) |
| 3. Psalm 139:7-10; Ephesians 2:17-18 | Omnipresence (present everywhere) |
| 4. 1 Corinthians 12:11; Zechariah 4:6 | Omniscient (all-knowing) |

B. The Holy Spirit accomplishes divine works.

1. Read Genesis 1:1-2 and Job 33:4 and discuss the divine action/work performed by the Holy Spirit. _____

2. According to 2 Samuel 23:2-3 and 2 Peter 1:21, what active role did the Holy Spirit play in the divine work of prophecy? _____

3. What part did the Holy Spirit play in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and what part does He play in the resurrection of Christians (Romans 8:11)? _____

C. The Holy Spirit possesses divine titles. Match the passages (left) to the divine titles of the Holy Spirit (right).

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. 1 Corinthians 3:16 | The Spirit of the Lord |
| 2. Isaiah 11:2 | The Spirit of God |
| 3. 2 Corinthians 3:2-3 | The Spirit of the living God |
| 4. Romans 8:9 | The Spirit of Grace |
| 5. Hebrews 10:29 | The Spirit of Truth |
| 6. John 16:13 | The Spirit of Christ |

II. The Personality of the Holy Spirit

A. Personal attributes – The Holy Spirit possesses the capacity to know, feel and act. These attributes could never be assigned to a power or force, but only to a person.

1. The Holy Spirit has intellect – He knows.
 - a. *“He who searches the hearts _____ what the mind of the Spirit is, because He _____ for the saints according to the will of God.”* (Romans 8:27)
 - b. Read 1 Corinthians 2:10-11 and answer the following questions.
 - (1) How much knowledge does the Holy Spirit have (v.10)? _____
 - (2) What knowledge is unique to the Holy Spirit (v.11)? _____
2. The Holy Spirit has emotions – He feels.
 - a. What emotion of the Holy Spirit is spoken of in Ephesians 4:30? _____
 - b. What emotion of the Holy Spirit is described in Hebrews 10:29? _____
3. The Holy Spirit has a will – He acts.
 - a. What decision or direction was given by the Holy Spirit to Paul and his team in Acts 16:6-11? _____
 - b. What two ways does 1 Corinthians 12:11 say that the Holy Spirit carries out His will? _____

B. Personal Recognition – The actions of individuals in response to the Holy Spirit clearly indicate personality. Describe how people responded to the Holy Spirit in the following passages.

1. Isaiah 63:10 _____
2. Acts 5:3-4 _____

3. Acts 5:9 _____
4. Acts 7:51 _____
5. Acts 10:19-21 _____

C. Personal performance – The works and actions of the Holy Spirit clearly indicate personality. Match the passages (left) to the works of the Holy Spirit (right).

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Isaiah 48:16 | He calls / chooses |
| 2. John 16:13 | He commands and directs |
| 3. John 14:26 | He teaches |
| 4. John 16:7-8 | He convicts |
| 5. Acts 8:29 | He guides |
| 6. Acts 13:2 | He comforts |

III. The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Believer

A. The permanent and non-repetitive work of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation.

1. Conviction – Opening the sinner’s eyes to a knowledge and conviction of his sin.

- Of what three things does the Holy Spirit convict the world (John 16:7-11)? _____

2. Regeneration¹

3. Spirit Baptism – A one time occurrence that places the believer into the body of Christ, thus identifying and uniting him with Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection.

a. Read Romans 6:1-11 and answer the following questions.

(1) How are believers described (v.3)? _____

(2) What have believers been baptized into (v.3)? _____

(3) What is the purpose of this Spirit baptism (v.4)? _____

(4) How are Christians united with Christ (v.5)? _____

(5) How are believers impacted by Christ’s death and resurrection (vv.6-11)? _____

b. “For by one _____ we were all _____ into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 12:13)

¹ Please see Lesson #8 for a discussion of regeneration.

4. Indwelling – Every believer is indwelt by the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation.
- A believer’s body is a _____ of the _____
_____ (1 Corinthians 6:19)
 - “However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God _____ in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.” (Romans 8:9)
5. Sealing – All believers are sealed by the Holy Spirit, and this seal is a sign of ownership, security and authenticity.
- How did God guarantee His pledge in the life of believers (2 Corinthians 1:22)?

 - What did Paul say the Holy Spirit does when a person believes the gospel and is saved (Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30)? _____

6. Giving of spiritual gifts – The key passages dealing with spiritual gifts are Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 28-30 and Ephesians 4:11-12 along with 1 Peter 4:10-11 and 1 Corinthians 14:12. Read these passages and answer the following questions.
- Who gives spiritual gifts? _____
 - Who receives spiritual gifts? _____
 - What spiritual gifts are listed? _____

 - What is the purpose of the spiritual gifts? _____

The temporary sign gifts were limited to the apostolic age and therefore ceased after that time. Those gifts included miracles, healing, languages, and the interpretation of languages. The purpose of temporary sign gifts was to authenticate the apostolic message as the Word of God, until the time when the Scriptures, His written Word, were completed and became self-authenticating.²

² John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: 1 Corinthians*, (Chicago, IL.: Moody Press, 1984).

- B. The continuous and repetitive work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer.
1. Bearing witness to the truth – The Holy Spirit reveals and teaches truth to believers.
 - a. To what did Peter say that the Holy Spirit is a witness (Acts 5:31-32)? _____

 - b. Of whom does the Holy Spirit testify (John 15:26)? _____
 - c. What does the Holy Spirit declare to believers (John 14:26, 16:13-14)? _____

 - d. What assurance comes from the inner witness of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:16)?

 - e. Why was Paul able to be confident in his teaching (1 Corinthians 2:12-13)? _____

 2. Filling – The Holy Spirit controls the willing believer
 - a. What are believers commanded to do in Ephesians 5:18? _____
 - b. What conditions are given for the filling of the Holy Spirit (i.e. to be transformed by the renewing of your mind) in Romans 12:1-3? _____

 - c. Read the following verses and list the results of being filled with the Holy Spirit.
 - (1) Ephesians 5:19-20 _____
 - (2) Ephesians 5:21 _____
 - (3) Galatians 5:22-25 _____
 - (4) Romans 5:3-5 _____

*To be filled with the Spirit is to “be under His total domination and control...To be filled with the Spirit involves confession of sin, surrender of will, intellect, body, time, talent, possessions, and desires. It requires the death of selfishness and the slaying of self-will...To be filled with God’s Spirit is to be filled with His Word. And as we are filled with God’s Word, it controls our thinking and action.”*³

³ John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Ephesians*, (Chicago, IL.: Moody Press, 1986), 250-252.

3. Empowering – The Holy Spirit empowers believers to do the work of God.
 - a. According to Acts 1:8, what would the Holy Spirit soon give the disciples power to do? _____
 - b. Should we depend on our own strength or that of the Holy Spirit (Zechariah 4:6)?

 - c. How does the Holy Spirit relate to the believer's obedience (1 Peter 1:1-2; 1 John 3:24)? _____

4. Protecting – The Holy Spirit enables the believer in weakness and temptation.
 - a. What was David's prayer (Psalm 51:12)? _____
 - b. What was Paul's prayer (Ephesians 3:16)? _____
 - c. How does the Spirit help believers in weakness (Romans 8:26)? _____

 - d. How does the Spirit help believers in temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13)? _____

IV. Personal Application

- A. Reflect on how your life gives evidence of the work of the Spirit in your heart. _____

- B. How have you been and are you being filled with the Spirit? _____

- C. How does knowing that God the Holy Spirit dwells within you impact your life? Read 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 and comment on how you can glorify God by taking care of His temple. _____

THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

LESSON #11

Memory Verse: Hebrews 12:1-2

Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

The Bible teaches that a Christian can never lose his salvation. Since God is “*the author and perfecter [i.e. finisher] of our faith*” (Hebrews 12:2), salvation is secure. God is faithful to cause His children to persevere to the end. Those who “fall away” from faith prove that they were falsely converted and never truly belonged to God, because God protects and keeps those who believe.

I. The Security of Salvation

Salvation is the work of God from beginning to end. He purposes salvation, enacts salvation, and secures salvation. There is no one who will be justified who will not also be glorified.

A. Christians are secure in their salvation, because they are called according to the purpose of God. Read Romans 8:28-30 and answer the following questions.

1. God works together _____ things for good for a Christian (v.28).
2. Believers are called according to the purpose of _____ (v.28).
3. What is the purpose of God’s calling and predestination (v.29)? _____

4. What are the five “links” to the “golden chain of redemption” given by Paul in verses 29-30? _____
5. Which two “links” precede calling, justification, and glorification? _____

6. In light of this, why do you think God inspired Paul to use the past tense? _____

7. What is the significance of the fact that everyone who is justified will also be glorified (v.30)? _____
- B. Christians are secure in their salvation, because, by definition, the gift of eternal life is eternal.
1. Is there any possibility for one who possesses eternal life to ever be condemned (John 5:24)? _____
 2. Is there any possibility for one who possesses eternal life to ever perish (John 3:16)? _____

You can't have eternal life that's not eternal.¹

II. The Power and Faithfulness of God

The power and faithfulness of God is the ultimate reason why any believer is secure in his salvation. God purposes to save each and every believer, and God is always faithful to His own purpose. He accomplishes this by causing them to persevere in faith.

- A. Christians are kept and protected by God the Father.
1. According to 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24, how will God prepare the believer for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ? _____
 2. Why will the believer be blameless on the day of the Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 1:8-9)? _____
 3. What is God's promise in Philippians 1:6 to those who have been saved? _____
 4. According to John 10:27-30, why is it impossible for the believer to fall away from faith? _____

¹ John MacArthur, "The Perseverance of the Saints, Part 1," <http://www.gty.org/Resources/Sermons/90-270> (August 29, 2004).

B. Christians are kept and protected by Jesus Christ.

1. What is the will of God that Jesus promised to do in John 6:37-40? _____

2. Did Jesus keep His promise while on earth (John 17:9-12)? _____
3. Does Jesus still keep His promise (Hebrews 7:25)? _____

C. Christians are kept and protected by the Holy Spirit.

- How does the Spirit contribute to the perseverance of the Christian (Romans 8:26-27)? _____

D. Read Ephesians 1:3-14 and answer the following questions.

1. Who chooses believers for salvation (v.4)? _____
2. Who redeems believers to salvation (v.7)? _____
3. Who seals believers and guarantees their inheritance (vv.13-14)? _____

They who God hath accepted in His beloved, effectually called and sanctified by His Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere to the end and be eternally saved.

The Westminster Confession of Faith

III. The Perseverance of the Believer

Although it is God who works in the believer to persevere, the believer willfully obeys and takes responsibility for his perseverance.

A. True believers will persevere in faith and never reject God.

1. What did Paul say must be true regarding the faith of a person who professes Christ in order to be truly saved (1 Corinthians 15:1-2)? _____

2. In Colossians 1:21-23, how did Paul characterize those who have been reconciled?

3. How does a believer live (2 Timothy 2:11)? _____

4. How long must a believer be faithful to be saved (Mark 13:13; Hebrews 3:14)? _____

5. Read Philippians 2:12-13. What is the Christian's responsibility? _____

6. How did Paul describe his own perseverance (2 Timothy 4:7-8)? _____

B. All believers persevere only because God moves them to persevere.

1. What promise did God make to Israel in Jeremiah 32:40? _____

2. How did God plan to accomplish this promise (Ezekiel 36:26-27; cf. Hebrews 8:10)?

3. Re-read Philippians 2:12-13. Why can the believer be confident as he works out his salvation with fear and trembling? _____

4. In Ephesians 2:8-10, what did Paul say that God did in eternity past in order to ensure that believers persevere? _____

5. For what reason did Jude specifically praise God in Jude 24-25? _____

This doctrine does not mean that Christians will not fail (i.e. perseverance does not mean perfection); it means that they will not fail completely and finally. Believers have the ability to backslide and grieve the Spirit. This doctrine also does not mean that those who "accept Christ" can live however they want with no fear of hell. This is why "eternal security" is not as good of a designation as "perseverance of the saints".

IV. The Non-Perseverance of the Unbeliever

Unbelievers sometimes claim to be Christians but do not persevere in their faith. In fact, they cannot persevere. It is important to understand that the Bible consistently equates lack of perseverance to faithlessness and unbelief. This unbelief is evidenced by ungodly living.

A. Unbelief is evidence that one never belonged to Christ. In John 10:26, Jesus told the unbelieving Jews that they did not _____ *because* they were not His sheep.

B. What did Jesus say about the relationship of perseverance to salvation in John 8:31?

C. Why did John say that a believer cannot sin his way out of salvation (1 John 3:6, 9-10)?

D. Read the parable of the sower and its explanation (Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23) and answer the following questions.

1. How much fruit was produced by the seed that fell on the path (vv.4, 19), rocky places (vv.5-6, 20-21), and thorns (v.7, 22)? _____

2. How long did the three types of hearers listed above persevere? _____

3. How did Jesus respond to the faith of the teacher of the law (Matthew 8:19-20) and the disciple (Matthew 8:21-22)? Which types of soil do these men represent? _____

E. What reason did John give in 1 John 2:19 to explain why people had defected from the faith? _____

F. Read Matthew 7:21-23 and answer the following questions.

1. What is the destiny of all ungodly people who are not living a life of holy perseverance (see also 1 Corinthians 6:9-10)? _____

2. The people described in this passage are churchgoers who were involved in ministry. On the basis of Jesus words, how can we know that they were definitely never saved (v.23)? _____

V. Personal Application

A. Do you believe that your salvation is secure in Christ? If so, how has this truth impacted your life? _____

B. How does knowing that God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) is faithful to fulfill His purpose give you confidence regarding your salvation? _____

C. How is your life characterized by holiness and perseverance? What evidences do you see in your life that God has begun a good work in you?

THE RETURN OF JESUS CHRIST

LESSON #12

Memory Verse: Matthew 25:31

But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne.

There is no more relevant and necessary knowledge for the believer in Jesus Christ than to know that he will one day stand face to face with the one who bore his sin to give account for all his thoughts and actions as a child of God.

I. The First Coming of Christ

The mission of Jesus Christ coming to earth the first time was spiritual salvation.¹

A. Jesus presented Himself as the Savior of Israel.

1. Why did the angel tell Joseph that he should name the child Jesus (Matthew 1:19-25)?

2. To whom was Jesus sent (Matthew 15:24)? _____

3. Which aspects of Isaiah 61:1-2 did Jesus claim to fulfill during His first advent (Luke 4:16-20)? Which aspect did He omit? _____

B. Jesus presented Himself as the Savior of Gentiles (non-Jews).

1. How was the centurion's faith representative of the Gentiles who would believe in Christ (Matthew 8:10-12)? _____

2. How did Jesus describe the elect Gentiles in John 10:16? _____

¹ For more information regarding the first coming of Christ, please see Lesson #5.

II. The Second Coming of Christ

The return of Christ is a series of events fulfilling all end-time prophecies. These include predictions of His coming *for* His Church (rapture) and His coming *with* His Church (physical return to earth). There are certain similarities between rapture and second coming passages, since they both refer to future events. However, similarities do not always mean the events are the same. Careful observation reveals a clear distinction.

A. The rapture – The removal of the Church from the earth.

1. How did Jesus promise His disciples that He would receive them to Himself (John 14:1-4)? _____

2. How is the rapture described in 1 Corinthians 15:51-55? _____

3. Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and answer the following questions.

a. What was Paul's purpose for teaching his readers about the rapture (v.13, 18)? ____

b. Who will be raptured by Christ (v.15)? _____

c. From where will Jesus descend to claim His church (v.16)? _____

d. What will happen to those who are alive at that time (v.17)? _____

B. The judgment seat of Christ – The judgment seat of Christ serves not to determine the eternal destiny of believers, but to reward them for faithful service to the Lord.

1. According to Romans 14:10, where will every believer stand? _____

2. What is the purpose of the judgment seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10)? _____

3. Read 1 Corinthians 3:10-15 and answer the following questions.

a. What is the foundation of every believer (v.11)? _____

b. What is tested at the judgment seat of Christ (vv.12-13)? _____

- c. What is distributed at the judgment seat (v.14)? _____
- d. What happens to the one who did not do much to build on the foundation of Christ (v.15)? _____
- _____

Some years ago a young man told me he was leaving a certain ministry. The reason he gave was: "I wasn't doing what I do best. I was using my abilities but not my spiritual gifts." There was nothing wrong with the work he had been doing. In fact, for another person it could be gold. But for him it was wood, hay, or straw, because he was doing what others thought he should do rather than what the Lord had particularly gifted and called him to do.²

C. The marriage supper of the Lamb – Initiated in heaven but extends throughout the 1,000-year millennial kingdom

1. Who is considered to be the wife of Christ (Ephesians 5:25-27)? _____
- _____
2. How is the bride of Christ described in Revelation 19:7-9? _____
- _____

D. The physical return of Christ to earth – The culmination of redemptive history

1. How did Jesus promise that He would return to earth (Acts 1:11)? _____
- _____
2. With whom does Christ appear in His second coming (Matthew 25:31)? _____
- _____
3. Who will come with Jesus at His second coming (Zechariah 14:4-5; Revelation 19:8, 14)? _____
- _____
4. How will Christ appear (Matthew 24:29-31)? _____
- _____
5. Read Revelation 19:11-21 and answer the following questions.
- a. What actions of Jesus are described in v.11? _____
- b. What is His name (v.13)? _____

² John MacArthur, *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: 1 Corinthians*, (Chicago, IL.: Moody Press, 1984).

- c. Who will follow Him (v.14)? _____
- d. What will He do to the nations (v.15)? _____

- e. What name is written on His robe and thigh (v.16)? _____

- f. How will the unbelieving world respond (v.19)? _____

- E. The judgment of Satan and the antichrist
1. How is Christ's judgment on the antichrist and the false prophet described in Revelation 19:19-21? _____

 2. What does Jesus' encounter with demons in Matthew 8:28 teach us about the knowledge of Satan and his minions concerning coming judgment? _____

 3. What judgment is waiting for the dragon according to Revelation 20:1-3? _____

 4. Revelation 20:7-10 addresses the devil's ultimate judgment. What will characterize Satan's eternal dwelling place? _____

- F. The great white throne judgment – The final damnation of all unbelievers
1. Revelation 20:11-15, 21:8 describes the great white throne judgment. Read the passage and answer the following questions.
 - a. On what basis will unbelievers be judged (vv.12-13)? _____

 - b. What is their destiny (vv.14-15)? _____

III. The Eternal State

Everything in this life ultimately points to eternity. The Bible teaches that every human will face one of two possible destinies: heaven or hell. There are no other options and no one is exempt.

A. The eternal state of the saved.

1. Prior to Christ's return to earth (second advent), the spirits of the saved (Old and New Testament saints) at death immediately go into God's presence.
 - a. How did Paul describe death for believers and where do they go (2 Corinthians 5:8; Philippians 1:21-23)? _____

 - b. How does 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 describe the fact that believers in the Church age (Acts 2 – present) are reunited with their physical body at the rapture? _____

2. At the Christ's second coming, the spirits of deceased Old Testament and tribulational believers will reunite with their bodies, which shall be raised from the grave and changed into the likeness of Christ.
 - Read 1 Corinthians 15:35-58 and answer the following questions.
 - (1) What is the difference between the body that dies and the body that rises for the believer (vv.42-44)? _____
 - (2) Why must the believer's body change (vv.47-50)? _____

 - (3) What are the implications of knowing this truth (vv.51-58)? _____

3. After being transformed into the likeness of Christ, believers will stand before the judgment seat of Christ.³
4. Believers will spend eternity with Christ in heaven.
 - Read Revelation 21:1-7, 22:3-5 and answer the following questions.
 - (1) With whom will believers spend eternity (21:3)? _____
 - (2) What will it be like (21:4, 22:3-5)? _____

Heaven itself is an infinite, eternal expression of the divine glory.⁴

³ Please see section II-B above for details.

⁴ John MacArthur, *The Glory of Heaven: The Truth About Heaven, Angels, and Eternal Life*, (Wheaton, IL.: Crossway Books, 1996), 105.

B. The eternal state of the unsaved.

1. Prior to the return of Christ, the spirits of the unsaved at death descend immediately into Hades where they are reserved for punishment until the day of judgment.
 - Where does an unbeliever go after death and what is it like (Luke 16:23-24; 2 Peter 2:9)? _____

2. After the Millennium, the spirits of deceased unbelievers throughout history will reunite with their bodies, which shall be raised from the grave. After being raised from the grave, they will face the great white throne judgment. They will then be cast into the lake of fire, where they will experience final and everlasting punishment.⁵

IV. Personal Application

- A. How does understanding the difference between the first and second comings of Christ impact your life and ministry? _____

- B. How does the knowledge that you will stand before the judgment seat of Christ to give account for everything you have done in His name motivate you to serve Him? _____

- C. How does the knowledge that unbelievers will stand before the great white throne and be judged and cast into the lake of fire for eternity motivate you to pray for them and share the gospel with them? _____

⁵ Please see section II-F above for details.

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