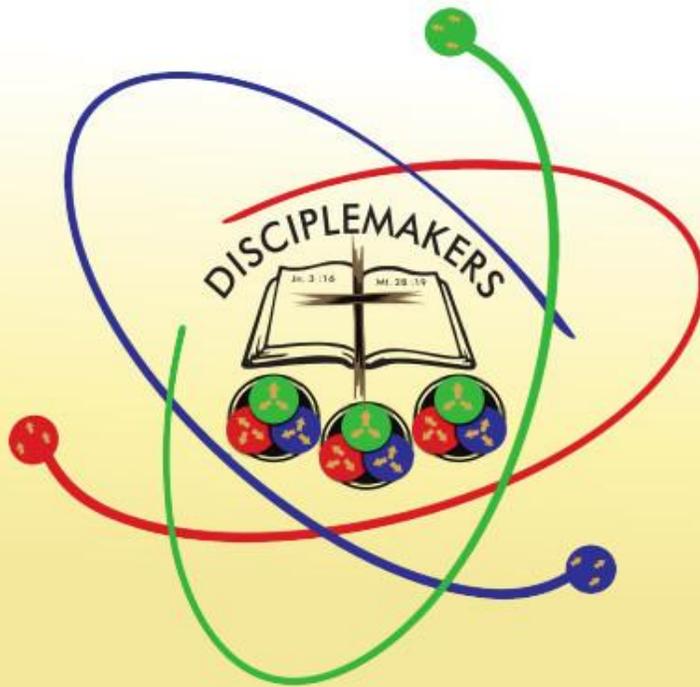


HOPE BUILDERS MINISTRIES



***Christian Faith
Principles Defined***

Christian Faith Principles Defined
Hope Builders Ministries DMP

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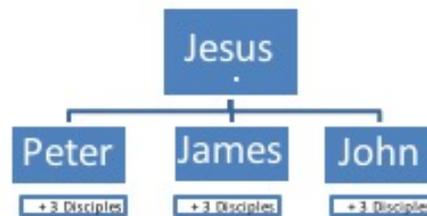
Introduction: Disciple Maker Program (DMP)

The One-on-three to the fourth-generation model

Hope Builders Ministries has adopted the model described because it follows the PATTERN discerned from the basic scriptures that our calling is based on – The Great Commission, Matthew 28:19ff and the multiplication inherent in 2 Timothy 2:2.

The way the Lord Jesus started and grew His ministry on earth was to PRAY that He would find people who would be ready to follow Him faithfully. After PRAYER He chose twelve men to be His Disciples. Their training to be His DISCIPLES was very practical – as they walked daily He would teach them through parables and examples – always from things that they could relate to: sheep, plants, soil, parents, to relationships with family.

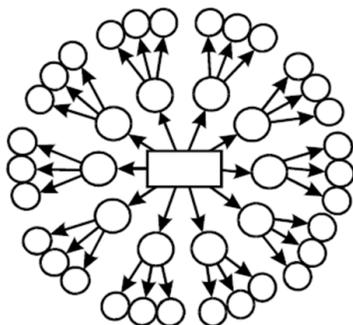
Not only did He give them the “message” but He also did His Evangelism according to a pattern. Although Jesus had twelve Disciples He had three, Peter, James and John, that He invested a lot more into; He took them with when he went to raise Jairus’ daughter from the dead; when he went on the mount of transfiguration; to Gethsemane just before He was arrested. At each of these places they saw and learned a lot that the other disciples did not see. Who do you think had to tell the other nine disciples? Now, if each of them MENTORED three of the other disciples you will see that that makes a total of 12 ($3 + 9 = 12$). This is the 1-3 Strategy.



The fourth generation Strategy comes from 2 Timothy 2:2, where the Apostle Paul (first generation) writes to Timothy (second generation) to find and teach faithful men (third generation) who would be able to teach others also (fourth generation).

Implementation of the DMP:

The Disciple Makers Program is a 24-week course in foundational Christian truths that are to be taught in a small group setting, called the “ONE on THREE” strategy, through churches/leaders where Hope Builders works.



The 24 lessons will be in two parts. Twelve lessons called “Learning to be a Christian” will introduce the disciple of Christ to four critical areas of Christian growth. They are: Becoming a Christian, Becoming Christ’s Disciple, Becoming Like Christ, and Becoming Christ’s Disciple Maker. The other 12 lessons (Walking with Jesus & The Fruit of the Spirit) will expand upon the Gospel and WHO Jesus is and HOW to live the Christian Life victoriously to the glory of Christ and our future glory with Christ.

The Pastor/Leader (1st generation) must identify 3 to 5 leaders (2nd generation) very carefully because the FAITHFULNESS of the students determine the success of the program. He can train regularly for 6 months – after 3 months of training each of his students enroll their 3 students (3rd generation); the 4th generation (also 3 for each student) enrolls after the 3rd generation has had 3 months training as Disciple-Makers.

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INTRODUCTION

Learning to walk with Jesus is serious and exciting business. It does not come naturally to human nature. Over the next weeks we are going to explore some basic Bible teachings and from them define key Christian faith principles to help us in our walk with Jesus.

Definitions and features are included in this course to help you get to know your Bible better and to guide you in your walk with the Lord Jesus.

1. A Scripture Reading is given at the beginning of each lesson. Find it in your Bible and read it once. Then work through the lesson and read the scripture reading in your Bible again. Finally, reread the lesson before starting on the answer sheet.

Special NOTE: When reading the Bible, remember that it is GOD speaking through the pages of the Scriptures. What the Bibles says is what God is saying. Yield to the Holy Spirit, listen and obey.

2. A Key Verse is given for each lesson. Memorize this key verse.

3. Definitions are included within the study to help you with difficult and unfamiliar words. If you can't find it within the study, look it up in your dictionary. In this way you will understand the lessons better.

4. Questions are provided for you and those you are learning with can better understand the lessons as you work through them together.

5. The Right Column of every page is wide for your convenience to make notes.

We will be diligent to look for our answers in the Bible, the most wonderful Book that was ever written.

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Lesson One: God's Revelation to Man

How do we know that God exists?

One proof that God exists is the universe itself. There are only two possible explanations for the universe:

1. It came into being by chance (there is no plan, order or design), or
2. It came into being by **intelligent design**. By this we mean that God created it.

What is the characteristic of something that comes into being by chance?

Disorder.

What is the characteristic of something that is the result of intelligent design?

Order.

How did the universe come into existence? The only possible answer is that **God created it!** The very first sentence in the Bible says: *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth"* (Genesis 1:1). The Bible also tells us **how** God created the universe:

"By the word of the Lord the heavens were made; and all the stars by the breath of His mouth ... For He spoke, and it came into being; He gave the order and there it stood." Psalm 33:6,9

1. Creation is a revelation of God.

"The Heavens declare the GLORY of God!" Psalm 19:1

"For since the creation of the world God's invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that 'no one' is without excuse." Romans 1:20

2. The Scriptures are a revelation of God

God has chosen to reveal Himself to us in a way that we can understand – He has revealed Himself in writings. This is one of the ways we as human beings communicate with one another.

If God has chosen to reveal Himself through writings, then there must be at least one book in the world that is written by God's direction. If there is such a book, it must claim to be written by God, and there must be proofs that indeed it was written by God.

God is Spirit and He can speak in such a way that His voice can be heard in the heart of man. If someone should write down the things God's Spirit speaks in the heart of man, we would call that **inspiration**.

Is there such a book? Yes! The Bible is the only book that is inspired by God. It consists of a collection of 39 books (the Old Testament) and a later collection of 27 books (the New Testament). "Thus says the Lord" is mentioned at least 500 times in the first five books of the Bible. Other books in the Old Testament repeat this phrase about 700 times. In addition, there are hundreds of places in the New Testament where this phrase or its equivalent is used.

One proof that the Bible is God's Word is fulfilled prophecy. Over half of the Bible is prophecy, and hundreds of these prophecies have been fulfilled exactly. Some of the prophecies refer to His Second Coming, and they will be fulfilled in the future.

Who wrote the Bible? God Himself is the true Author of the Bible, but He used men to write it. God used about 40 different men to write the 66 books. They were

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written over a period of about 1600 years. For the most part, these men did not know each other, and yet all these different books do not contradict each other but they fit together to form this wonderful book – the Word of God.

The Bible says,

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God ...” 2 Timothy 3:16

God’s written revelation to man was completed with the last book in the Bible, the *Book of Revelation*. There are no writings since that time that we call **inspired of God**. There is a solemn warning in the Bible against taking anything away from the Word of God or adding anything to it. Revelation 22:18-19 in the New Testament; Deuteronomy 12:32 in the Old Testament

Also Proverbs 30:5-6

Does God speak to us today?

Yes, He does! God speaks to us through His Word. The Bible is a living book. It can change your life. When a person is “born again” the Holy Spirit lives in them and He speaks to them through the Word of God.

Experience for yourself how God speaks to us today. Begin reading the Bible. Start with the Gospel of John. The Bible is not like any other book. When you read the Bible, you can discover God’s will. In fact, God’s will is God’s Word.

God will speak through His Word and by His Spirit as you read, pray and meditate on the His written Word and the principles which it prescribes. When a verse seems especially meaningful to you underline it, write it down and memorize it. Memorize such verses as:

Romans 3:23 John 3:36 Romans 6:23 John 14:6
John 3:16,17 Ephesians 2:8,9 John 1:11,12 1 John 5:11-13

God reveals Himself to those who love Him and have placed their faith in Him. Bible faith is when you believe what God says in His Word and act upon it. The Bible says,

“Without faith it is impossible to please Him: for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He rewards of those that diligently seek Him.”
Hebrew 11:6

And, “Faith comes to us by hearing the Word of God.” Romans 10:17

3. God’s FINAL and COMPLETE Revelation, The Lord Jesus Christ

John 1:1, 2, 14 says, *“In the beginning was the WORD and the WORD was with God and the WORD was God. And the same was in the beginning with God...And the WORD became flesh (a Man) and dwelt among us, and we beheld His Glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of Grace and Truth.”*

To identify this Person who is both man and God, there must be some qualifications:

- A. The way he comes into this world must be different from ours.
- B. He must claim to be God.
- C. He must be without sin.
- D. He must be able to do things that only God can do.

We shall see that the only person in the history of mankind to fulfill all these qualifications is Jesus Christ.

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A. The way He comes into the world must be different from ours.

The birth of Jesus was foretold (prophesied) over 700 years before He was born.

The Bible says, *“Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign; Behold, the virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and you shall call His name Immanuel.”* Isaiah 7:14

The word “Immanuel” means “God with us.” Matthew, chapter 1, tells us that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin. Luke chapter 1 tells how the angel Gabriel was sent by God to explain this to the Virgin Mary. Mary asked how this could be that she would bear a son since she was a pure virgin and had never known a man sexually.

The angel said, *“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the highest will overshadow you; and therefore, the Holy One who is to be born shall be called the Son of God”* Luke 1:35

One of the titles of the Lord Jesus is “the WORD.” We use words to express our thoughts to one another. Jesus is called “the Word” because He is the One who perfectly expresses God’s thoughts to us. The Bible says, *“In the beginning was the Word (Jesus), and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ... And the Word became flesh, and lived among us, and we saw His glory”* John 1:1, 14

And again, in Hebrews 1:3, *“And He (the Son, Jesus) is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.”*

In these verses the Bible declares three great facts about Jesus Christ:

- His eternity – “In the beginning was the Word.”
- His deity – “And the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”
- His coming into the world as a man – “and the Word was made flesh and dwelled among us.”

Note: **eternal** means not having a beginning or an end, **deity** means that someone is “God”.

B. Jesus claimed to be God.

He is called “the God-man.” This is a very good name for Him because He is truly God and truly man. He is not half God and half man. He is fully God and fully man. He called Himself “the Son of Man” to stress the fact that he was fully man and the man who God promised to be the Messiah in Genesis 3:15, “the SEED of the woman.” This is the “Son of Man” who Daniel saw in his vision recorded in Daniel 7:13 *“I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him.”*

He also said that if we have seen Him we have seen the Father (John 14:9). This He said to stress the fact that He was also fully God.

The virgin birth of Jesus perfectly expresses how the Son of God came to earth as both God and man. He was “the Son of God” because God was His father. He was “the Son of Man” because Mary was His mother.

C. He is sinless. The religious leaders hated Him because He claimed to be God. On one occasion, they surrounded Him, trying to trip Him up in His words. In return, Jesus asked them, *“Which of you convicts Me of sin?”* John 8:46. He challenged them to point to one sin in His life. They were put to shame because they could not point to a single sin in His life.

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Jesus was raised from the dead on the third day to PROVE He was sinless. The Lord Jesus Christ died for the sins of the World, not His. He had no sin.

"He who know no sin, became sin for us, so that we could become the righteousness God demanded through Him." 1 Corinthians 5:21

And as for the fact that he raised him from the dead, no more to return to corruption, he has spoken in this way, "I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David." Therefore he says also in another psalm, "You will not let your Holy One see corruption." For David, after he had served the purpose of God in his own generation fell asleep and was laid with his fathers and saw corruption, but he whom God raised up did not see corruption. Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by him everyone who believes is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses. Acts 13:34-39

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

"... He (God the Father) raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, authority, power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the coming age." Ephesians 1:20, 21

D. He proved his claims to be God through the miracles He did.

In Matthew, chapter 8, we read that Jesus was in a ship with His disciples. Jesus fell asleep and as He slept a great storm arose. The disciples were afraid that the ship would sink. They woke Jesus up saying, "Lord, save us!"

Jesus spoke to the wind and the sea saying, "Peace be still." Immediately the wind and the sea became calm. The disciples were amazed and said, "What kind of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him!"

Jesus had power over evil spirits. The evil spirits recognized that He was the Son of God, and, when He commanded them to leave, they obeyed Him.

Jesus had power to heal all kinds sicknesses and diseases. He caused the lame to walk again. He restored sight to the blind. He had power over death itself. The Bible records that He raised at least 3 people from the dead. The people praised God saying, "God has visited His people." Notice that the people equated Jesus with God.

Jesus has power over sin and death because He rose from the dead.

Jesus Christ has proved His claims to be God as we have just seen.

HE is God's solution to our entire sin problem.

Apart from Christ we feel empty and useless and life has no real meaning. Jesus came that we might have **eternal life** (the forgiveness of sin) and to give **abundant life**. He said,

"I came that they may have life, and experience it abundantly" John 10:10.

How do we enter into this new life? We enter into it by *believing in the Lord Jesus Christ*. That is, to trust in who He is and what He completed for us on the cross as the perfect sacrifice for our sin. Jesus said,

"Let your heart not be troubled: believe in God, believe also in Me." John 14:1

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*"I can truly assure you of this, he who believes [in Me] has everlasting life."
John 6:47*

God, giving His Son makes available the gift of eternal life by Faith IN Jesus Christ. When anyone believes in the Lord Jesus Christ, God gives them everlasting life.

Conclusion:

God has revealed Himself to mankind

1. Through a perfectly ordered creation
2. Through the divine revelation of the Scriptures, the Bible
3. Through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

God has revealed Himself to mankind so that He could save anyone and everyone who believes in His Son, His ultimate revelation, The Lord Jesus Christ.

Who is Jesus Christ to you?

Listen to what those who knew Jesus said about Him?

- The apostle John, who knew Jesus well said, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten (Son) of the Father."
- The apostle Peter proclaimed, "You are the Son of the living God!"
- The Roman centurion, as he watched Jesus die on the cross, said, "Truly this was the Son of God."
- Thomas, one of the Twelve disciples, doubted when he was told that Jesus had risen from the dead, but when he saw the risen Christ, he fell on his face and cried out, "My LORD and my God!"

Dear friend, who is Jesus Christ to you? Take some time to think about this because your answer determines your eternity. The Bible says,

"He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." John 3:36.

Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ?

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INTRODUCTION to Lesson Two

As we have learned in the first lesson God has revealed Himself through Creation, the Bible and the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has also revealed the mysteries of life, death, and life after death - things that we could never know if God had not decided to tell us about them.

- Why am I here? • Where am I going? • How can I become a child of God?
- How can I live the Christian life?

The Bible contains the answers to these questions and many more.

The Bible is the story of God's greatest creation, man. In it, we learn about the first man's (Adam's) failure to qualify to be the ruler of this world and God's work to remedy Adam's failure with another Man, the Lord Jesus Christ.

As we study the Bible together, we will discover that everything in it is about the Lord Jesus Christ, from the first chapter to the last.

LESSON TWO – In the Beginning

Now let's go to the Beginning...

Scripture Reading:

Genesis, Chapter 1

Key Verse: *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."* Genesis 1:1

Have you ever wondered why the first book in the Bible is called Genesis? Well, the word "genesis" means "beginning", and the book of Genesis is the story of beginnings. It tells us of the beginning of the universe, the beginning of the earth, and the beginning of the human race. However, the book of Genesis does not tell us about the beginning of God. The reason for this is that God has no beginning.

GOD has always existed in all His power and glory. Everything that exists outside of God was created by Him. The Bible says, "In the beginning God ..." Before the beginning of everything, God was there. He has always existed. In Him everything else exists.

God is. The Bible says, *"... From everlasting to everlasting, You are God."* Psalm 90:2

1. The creation of the universe

We live in a fantastic universe. The heavenly bodies move around in marvelous precision. So precise is the clockwork of the heavens that we can foretell an eclipse or the visit of a comet years in advance. And we can work out with mathematical precision the position of any given star at any moment in time.

Such order and precision are not the products of chance. There had to be some incredible power to bring such stars into being, and there has to be an incredible power to control them.

How did the universe come into being? The Bible tells us that God created it! Although many other ideas have been presented as to how the universe came into being, no one really knows how this happened except God. He is the only one who can tell us about it.

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The Bible begins with this majestic statement: *"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."* Genesis 1:1 This verse reveals God as the Creator of the heavens and the earth at some unknown time in the past.

How did God create the heavens and the earth? He created them through the Lord Jesus Christ, the Word, **John 1:1!** His Word is the expression of His will. Jesus Christ IS the Word of God. **John 1:3** *"All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made."* **Colossians 1:16 (NKJV)** *For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.*

The Bible also says, *"By the word of the Lord the heavens were made; and by the breath of His mouth all the stars."* **Psalm 33:6**

"For He spoke, and it came into being; He gave the order and there it stood." **Psalm 33:9**

God spoke and the world was. God spoke and the heavenly bodies came into being. He commanded, and they stood fast in the paths that He planned for them.

Not only did God create all things, but He also controls and cares for His creation by His mighty power. The Bible says that He upholds all things *"by the word of His power"* **Heb. 1:3.** And in **Col. 1:17,** *"And He (Jesus) is before all things, and in Him all things consist."*

How do we know these things? We know these things because of God's written word.

"By faith (in God's Word) we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God" Hebrew 11:3

The account of creation given to us in the Bible is not a scientific report. It contains exactly what God wants us to know about the beginning of the universe. He was there before it was made. It was made wonderfully and orderly, and God still cares for it all.

2. The creation of the earth

Genesis 1:1 simply says, *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."*

We do not know what the earth was like at this time, but everything in this verse points to God's power, His wisdom and His perfection.

The Bible says, *"The morning stars (the angels) sang together and all the sons of God (the angels) shouted for joy" [when God created the earth]"* Job 38:7. In Genesis 1:2 we look at the details of how God wrought order into the world.

The Bible says, *"And the earth was without form and void; and darkness covered the deep water."*

When the Bible begins this description at some time in the past, the earth was formless and empty. Over this dark scene the Spirit of God hovered. Then God began to speak creating order, material and life and ultimately, Man.

God said, *"Let there be light,"* and instantly there was light. God divided the light from the darkness. He called the light "day," and He called the darkness "night".

The Bible says, *"And there was evening and there was morning, [this established] the first day."*

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In this way the passing of time was first measured off. God created this awareness of time on the “first day”.

On the second day God separated the air and the water to form the sky and the clouds, which the Bible calls “the firmament.” This divided the water in the clouds from the water upon the earth. The Bible says, “There was evening, then morning which established the second day.”

On the third day, God separated the waters from the land. He called the dry land “earth,” and He called the waters “the seas.” God caused the earth to bring forth grass and herbs and fruit trees. The Bible says, “And the evening and the morning concluded the third day.”

With these three days completed in which the three great principles of light, air and land are established, God now went on to give content to His creation. See how these three days match with the next three days. There are three pairs of days matching, each giving content to the principle created three days before. Isn't it wonderful how God does things in a perfectly orderly fashion?

On the fourth day, God made the sun and the moon to give light upon the earth by day and by night that also produce the different seasons. This concludes the fourth day.

On the fifth day, God created the fishes and the birds. God said, “Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creatures that have life, and the fowl that may fly above the earth.” This was God's work of the fifth day.”

On the sixth day, God created all the animals and reptiles of the earth. Last of all, He created man on this same sixth day. God looks at all He has made and is satisfied.

The Bible says,

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

On the seventh day God rested from His work of creation.

3. The creation of man

God's most wonderful creation was man, because God created man in His own image and after His own likeness.

God said, *“Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness...”* Genesis 1:26

God named the first man Adam. God created a wife for Adam, and her name was Eve. Adam and Eve did not come up from lower forms of animal life by a process of evolution. God created Adam and Eve, and they were created in the image of God.

The Bible says,

“And God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him [mankind]; male and female created He them.” Genesis 1:27

God was pleased with all that He had made, and He pronounced it “VERY GOOD.”

The Bible also reveals God's purpose for creating man. In Genesis 1:26 God also says, *“let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”*

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4. God the Creator – Worthy of all Worship

We have learned many important truths in this lesson, but the most important one is this; God is the Creator of all things. The universe, the earth, and the living creatures did not come into being by themselves. God created them!

In Isaiah 45:12, God says,

“I have made the earth, and created man on it: It was I – My hands that stretched out the heavens, and all their stars have I commanded [to shine].”

Since God created all things, then to whom do all things belong? They belong to God! All things belong to the One Who created them.

Why did God create all things? He created them for His own glory and purposes. In the creation of the universe, the earth, and all living creatures, God has manifested His power, His glory, and His wisdom.

The Bible says,

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the sky displays the work of His hands.”
Psalm 19:1

Because God is the Creator of all things, He alone is the One who should receive all worship. What is worship? Worship is the love, reverence, and obedience which are due God. We should never worship any man, angel, creature, or object.

The Bible says,

“You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.” Matthew 4:10

Why should God alone be worshipped? Because He is the Creator and because He alone is worthy of all worship.

The Bible says,

“You are worthy, O Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power, because you created all things, and according to your will they were all created and do exist.”
Revelation 4:11

The Apostle John tells us that God made all things through “The Word” and that without the Word nothing was made (John 1:3). John goes on to tell us that “the Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14), the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul tells us,

“By Him (the Lord Jesus Christ) all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible... All things were created through Him and for Him”
(Colossians 1:16).

TRUTH TO TREASURE:

There is one living God who created all things. He alone is worthy of all worship. His Name is the Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER: Lord, You have created the earth, the heavens and all that is in it. You alone are worthy to be worshipped and praised. Today I bow before You and give You all my worship, because you are worthy. Amen.

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QUESTIONS:

1. What is the theme, the main topic, of the Bible?
2. What does the word “inspiration” mean?
3. How did God create the universe?
4. When did God create the heavens and the earth?
5. Why did God create man?
6. Who is the Creator according to John 1 and Colossians 1?
7. Why is God worthy of our worship?

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LESSON THREE – Creation of Man

Scripture Reading

Read the following portions carefully in your Bible:

Genesis 1: 26 to 31

Genesis 2: 1 to 20

Key Verse:

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion..." Genesis 1:26

We have already learned that God created all things - the universe and everything in it – light, the sky, stars, dry land, the seas as well as the universe. He also created all living creatures – the birds, fish, and animals. Because God wanted to fill the earth with living creatures He gave them the ability to reproduce "after their own kind." The Bible repeats it eight times in chapter one of Genesis to show the importance of order in God's creation plan. Every living creature could only produce offspring like itself – dogs produce dogs and horses, horses. This principle still applies today. Living creatures produce offspring like themselves.

God planned to create Man.

Man was no accident. God planned to create man.

"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." (Genesis 2:7)

Everything God created He pronounced as "good." When, last of all, He created man God declared that he was "very good."

"Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So, the evening and the morning were the sixth day." (Genesis 1:31)

Man was not at last minute thought by God. He was planned with a purpose.

God's most wonderful creation

Man remains God's most wonderful creation. God created man as we know man today. He did not grow out of some form of animal life changing over a long time to become like we are today. God created man with a mind to think and feel and make choices. Man is created with a free will, the ability to choose. God made man in His image. *"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness..."* Genesis 1:26

God Created Man in His Image.

The Bible says,

"So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him..." Genesis 1:27.

This first man He called Adam. In chapter 2 of Genesis we read how Adam was created and where LIFE came from.

The Bible says, *"Then, the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being ..."* Genesis 2:7

Adam was created having three main parts - body, soul, and spirit – even today, after sin entered the world, we are born having the same parts. The body can be seen and touched. The soul is the inner part of man that is the mind, will and emotions. The spirit is the innermost part of man by which he can communicate and have fellowship

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with God. The soul and the spirit of man cannot be seen just as the wind cannot be seen. We can see the trees blowing in the wind, but not the wind itself.

Let us consider each of these three parts of man:

The First Part: Adam's Body

Man's body (Adam) was created out of the earth and man is the offspring of Adam therefore we are like Adam. All men have an earthly, physical body.

The Bible says,

"The first man is of the earth, earthy ..."

Man can see, hear, touch, taste, and smell with the senses God equipped his body with. In this way he can experience life in the world around him.

Let us look at these senses that God designed man's body with:

The human ear, like a piano, has many "strings" called nerves. Each nerve picks up a part of the sound – like each note on the piano makes only one sound but if they are played together they create a tune – so the ear adds all the sounds from the different nerves together to allow us to hear the different sound combinations – knowing what these combinations are helps us to recognize specific sounds; like birds chirping, and a rooster crowing.

The human eye is designed to quickly take many pictures (just like a movie camera). The pictures show us where things are so that we can find them or so that we know where we are going without bumping into something that may be in the way.

The heart of man is designed so that it could work for a lifetime without wearing out. We have to look after our hearts because they work hard every day – a healthy heart can beat more than 100,000 times a day. We should do our part to keep our hearts healthy with good habits of eating and work.

We could look at many more body parts but from these few we can see that God designed and created the human body to function well on the earth where God has placed man.

As the psalmist says, *"I will praise Thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made ..."*
Psalm 139:14

The Second Part - Adam's soul:

Adam was not created with a body only, but he also had a soul. The Bible says,

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living Soul." Genesis 2:7

We have already learned that the soul of man cannot be seen – it is essentially the mind with the ability to think and feel. God designed the mind so that man could think and make decisions, communicate and reason. Adam had to give names to all the creatures showing that he could use the mind God gave him.

"And out of the ground the Lord God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air: and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was its name." Genesis 2:19

With his emotions he could experience love, sadness, and happiness just as God does. With his will Adam could make choices in the way he lived before God. Because he had a free will he was also responsible for the choices he made – just as we are today.

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Because he could think, love, and follow his own choices Adam (and therefore man) was called a living soul.

Third Part - Adam's spirit

But Adam was more than just a living soul – he was created different to animals – he had a spirit. God is spirit and man is created in the image of God.

Man was created to fellowship with God. *"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."* (John 4:24)

Man was created in God's image so that he could worship God with all our being, body, soul and spirit.

God Created Man to Rule

"And God said...let them have dominion... over all the earth ..." Genesis 1:26b

God created Adam to rule the world as His representative. In this way man was to glorify God and walk in a loving relationship with God, knowing, worshipping and fellowshiping with God.

As we will learn Adam lost this rulership over the world. God would someday send another Adam, the last Adam, who is the Messiah, the Christ who will rule the world.

"And so it is written, "THE FIRST MAN ADAM BECAME A LIVING BEING." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit." (1 Corinthians 15:45)

"Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice."" (John 18:37)

"And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." (Luke 1:31-33)

"Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." (Revelation 19:15-16)

When Jesus returns He will establish His Kingdom over the earth and His faithful partners (metachoi) will share with Him His glory and rule over the Kingdom of God on the earth.

"Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus," (Hebrews 3:1)

"For we have become partakers (metochoi) of Christ (Messiah) if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast to the end," (Hebrews 3:14)

"... and joint heirs with Christ (Messiah), if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together." (Romans 8:17)

"If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us." (2 Timothy 2:12)

Important things you have learned:

1. God created Man.

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A theory called “evolution” teaches that man began as some animal, fish or bird, which over a very long time changed into a more intelligent being. No final evidence confirming this theory can be presented – only speculation. The Bible facts however are confirmed by people finding old cities buried for generations in the places where the Bible said they were. We accept the teaching of the Bible and reject the theory of evolution.

The Bible says: *“From the beginning of the creation, God made them male and female.”* (Mark 10:6)

2. God created man with a body, soul and spirit. Man is a complete being with a body, a soul, and a spirit.

3. God created man to be His image bearer.

God created man in His image. Man is to look like God. That is in who we are and what we do, man is to reflect the image of God, in regal bearing and character.

4. God created man to glorify Him.

We do not have to go far to find the reason why God created man, the Bible clearly tells us, *“I have created him for My glory.”* Isaiah 43: 7

To glorify God means that we love and obey Him (with all your heart, strength).

5. God created man to rule the earth.

Man was created to rule the world and from what we learned about the Last Adam man will share with the Messiah King as His “metochoi” in the coming Kingdom.

Central Theme:

God created man to be His ruler of the world and to worship, love, obey and fellowship with Him fulfilling his plan for creating us – to glorify Him.

Prayer: Father God I worship you my Creator. It is my prayer, my desire to glorify you in my body, soul and spirit, all of me, all the days of my life and throughout eternity.

DEFINITIONS

Image -- a likeness; something that is like something else. God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...” Adam was made in the image of God.

Create – to make something from nothing.

Dominion -- the rule or the authority over something or someone. Adam was to rule over all the earth; he was to have authority over God's creation.

Metochoi – means to be a partner, to share in something. Believers who are faithful and persevere are called “metochoi” or co-heirs with Christ Jesus of His glory and honor in the Kingdom on the earth.

QUESTIONS:

What did God say about each of the things He created?

Why did God create man?

How many “parts” does man have?

How can we glorify God today?

Who is the Last Adam?

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LESSON FOUR – Who is the Devil?

Scripture Reading:

Isaiah 14:12-17

Ezekiel 28:12-19

Key Verse:

" In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."
2 Corinthians 4: 4

The Bible tells us that, before the creation of Adam and Eve, there was in God's universe a being who had rebelled against God, his Creator. This being is called Satan or the devil. Satan is not just an influence for evil. He is a very real being.

Where did Satan come from?

There are two main passages in the Bible which tell us of the original position of Satan and how he became the enemy of God. These passages are found in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28.

From the Bible, we learn that Satan was originally created as an angel called Lucifer. The word angel means, messenger. All angels were created by God to serve Him. The Bible says, *"For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, ... all things were created through him and for him."* Colossians 1:16

Though angels are beautiful and powerful creatures, they are not to be worshipped for they are only created beings. Only God, the Creator, is to be worshipped.

The Bible describes Lucifer as follows:

"... "You were the example of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. " Ezekiel 28:12

Since Lucifer was perfect in beauty, he was as beautiful as it was possible for any creature to be. Since he was filled with wisdom, he was as wise as a creature of God could be. Of all the angels in Heaven, Lucifer was the wisest, the most beautiful, and the most powerful.

What Was Lucifer's sin?

It seems that, for some time after he was created, this mighty angel loved God with all his heart and obeyed Him perfectly. But a time came when Lucifer sinned against God. The Bible says,

"You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you." Ezekiel 28:15

Where did sin begin? It began in Lucifer's heart! The Bible says,

"Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor..." Ezekiel 28:17

Here is what Lucifer said in his heart:

"I will go up to heaven;

I will set my throne above the stars of God;

I will sit on the mount of assembly in the far away in the north;

I will go above the top of the clouds;

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I will make myself like the Most High.” Isaiah 14:13, 14

What was Lucifer's sin? His sin was pride. As this mighty angel considered how beautiful he was, his heart was lifted up with pride. Lucifer simply fell in love with himself! As he looked at himself, Lucifer decided that he was the greatest, most beautiful, and most wise; therefore, he decided, that he should be like God. He set his will against God's will. Five times Lucifer said, "I will." What a terrible thing it is for a creature of God to arrogantly challenge God's will by doing his own will! He rebelled against God's authority

The change in Lucifer's heart

A great change took place in Lucifer's heart when he sinned. Before this time, Lucifer had loved and enthroned God as King in his heart. Now Lucifer loved himself. He no longer chose to have God on the throne of his heart. Instead, he put Self [his own will] on the throne.

The sin of pride, which began in Lucifer's heart, led to self-love. His self-love led to self-will and to rebellion against his Creator. No longer was Lucifer content to be the highest angel under God. He now wanted to be God! God saw what was in his heart and threw Lucifer down from his exalted position. His name was changed from Lucifer (light bearer) to Satan, which means "enemy". This is how Satan began his career of opposing God, and he has been sinning against God ever since.

Satan is the ruler of this world kingdom.

Satan was the first to rebel against God, and a third of other angels over this world followed him in his rebellion. These angels are called "fallen angels" while those who remained obedient to God are called "holy angels."

Satan, along with these fallen angels, opposed God and His rule. Ever since the time of Satan's rebellion he was trying to establish his rule and authority over God and His eternal kingdom. He wanted to be God! He ruled over the dominion of the earth under God's authority and he rebelled against that authority. God destroyed this world and it became formless and void. It was covered in water (Genesis 1:2). When God recreated the earth he also created Adam, a little lower than the angels, to rule this domain, the heavens and the earth. When Adam sinned he gave the "title deed" to the earth back to the rebel, Satan. Today the devil is the "god of this world." God is working, since the fall of man, to restore His Kingdom rule over the heavens and the earth. He will do it through the Second Adam, the Messiah, the Anointed King.

The Lord Jesus is the "crowned prince" and He will reign over the heavens and the earth someday soon. Until then He is gathering those who will rule and reign with Him in His Kingdom. The devil has been defeated. He is the "incumbent" ruler, but his days are numbered. The rightful King is coming. So we continue to pray as the Lord Jesus taught us, "Thy Kingdom come..." "Come, Lord Jesus!" "Maranatha!"

Who are Satan's Subjects?

Satan's subjects include fallen angels and all unsaved people. The angels who followed Satan in his rebellion against God are his subjects and serve him in his wicked purposes. And all unsaved people are in Satan's kingdom whether they realize it or not – because of Adam's fall into sin all humans were separated from God (we will look at this in depth later).

What is Satan trying to do?

Satan wants to keep people from humbling themselves, repenting of their sin and receiving Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. He wants to keep unsaved people in

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his kingdom of darkness and under his control. He does not want man to "rule the earth."

To accomplish his objective, Satan tries to keep people from ever hearing about the Lord Jesus Christ. In the world today, almost two thousand years after Christ died for man's sins, there are still millions of people who have never once heard the name of Jesus. They cannot be saved without hearing about the Lord Jesus Christ. The Bible says, "... *there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*" Acts 4:12

If Satan has his way, these people will never hear the name of Jesus, the Savior who died for their sins. When he cannot keep people from hearing the Gospel, Satan uses a different approach. He tries to blind their minds so that they will not believe it. The Bible says, "... *the god of this world (Satan) has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel ...*" 2 Corinthians 4:4

How does Satan deceive people?

Satan is a clever deceiver. He deceives many people into believing that the Bible is not really the Word of God. He does not mind if people think of him as an imaginary person and laugh at the idea of him being a real person. He does not mind this because it suits his purposes very well because it means that they do not seriously think of him as a threat.

Some people are naturally very religious. How does Satan deceive these people? He deceives them through false religions and by deceiving people into trusting in their own good works, or in their church membership, or in some church ceremony instead of putting their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ who died for their sins.

What will happen to Satan?

Satan is a powerful and cunning enemy, and he has many followers. At times, he even appears to have great success in his battle against the people of God. We might ask, "Why doesn't God destroy Satan since He has the power to do so?" The answer to this question is that it is not God's will to do so at this time. Man was created with a free will to choose, therefore God allows man to choose who he will follow, God or Satan. God is replacing the devil and his angels who rule this world with His own chosen heirs of the Kingdom. It is here that men and women choose who they will serve. Once this "body of believers" is complete, God will send His Son, King Jesus, who will destroy the works of the devil and all those who follow him. His destiny has already been determined. Satan will eventually be cast into the lake of fire where he will be punished forever.

The Bible says, "*and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*" Revelation 20:10

Likewise, those who choose to believe Satan's lies and to remain in his kingdom of darkness will also be cast into the lake of fire.

The Bible says, "*And whoever's name was not found written in the book of life, was thrown into the lake of fire.*" Revelation 20:15

"But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the detestable, as for murderers, the sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death." Revelation 21:8

Not only are the very wicked lost, but also the "fearful and unbelieving".

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We have seen that Satan is a great deceiver, and we have seen the awful doom awaiting those who are deceived by him. How can one keep from being deceived by Satan? We can keep from being deceived by knowing the truth of God's Word. The Lord Jesus said, "... you will know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32

1 Timothy 2:4 and 5 says that God "*desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth,*" and this truth is that "*there is one mediator between (sinful) man and God, the Man Christ Jesus.*"

We must never put our trust in anything or anyone other than the Lord Jesus Christ, who He is and what He has done. He is God and He died for our sins. The Bible says: "*Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.*" Acts 4:12 and "*But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.*" Galatians 1:8

Central Theme:

Satan is a real being -- the enemy of God and man. To keep from being deceived by him, we must know the truth of God's Word, so that we can "resist him" (more about this subject later).

Prayer: Father, thank You for Your word, Your word is truth. Help me to know and understand Your word in my heart so that I can resist the devil in my life.

DEFINITIONS

Iniquity -- wickedness, sin.

Adversary -- a person who contends with or opposes another person. Satan is God's adversary because he opposes Him and is against Him.

Sorcerers -- persons who are empowered by evil spirits. Persons who practice witchcraft.

Idolaters -- persons who worship idols. Those who worship anything other than God.

Abominable -- a person or thing that is offensive, hateful, unclean or very bad -- something that is untrue and tries to destroy that which is good.

Helpful Hints

M-E-M-O-R-I-Z-I-N-G

Have you been having trouble memorizing the Key verse'? Here are some suggestions that will help you to learn the verse.

Read It - Read the verse aloud several times. As you read it, think of the meaning. Understand what the verse says.

Write It - Write the verse several times. Then try writing it from memory.

Say It - After writing it from memory, say it aloud. Perhaps someone will help you by looking at the verse in the Bible as you say it. Be sure to learn the reference, too.

It takes time to learn, so be patient and do not give up.

LESSON FIVE – THE FALL OF MAN

Scripture Reading:

Genesis 2: 7-17 Genesis 3:1-19

Key Verse:

"Just as by one man sin entered into the world and death by Sin. ..." Romans 5:12

In Lesson three we learned that Adam was created in the image of God. Adam was sinless when God created him. He was pure in nature. However, it was possible for Adam to sin because he was created with a free will. He was free to choose to obey God or to disobey God.

God created Adam and gave him authority to "rule" and together with his wife, Eve, to "be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule...over every living thing that moves on the earth" (Genesis 1:26-28).

When God created Adam he was placed in a beautiful Garden. In the midst of this garden were two special trees. One was the tree of life. Adam was to live forever. The other tree was the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2:7-9).

It was in this context that Adam was first placed into the Garden of Eden to cultivate and keep the Garden of Eden. It was in the Garden that God told Adam what he was to do and commanded him to NOT eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil on pain of death (Genesis 2:15-17). It was in the beautiful garden that the Lord saw that Adam needed a wife and blessed him with his helper and comforter, Eve (2:18-25).

The Garden was a place of joy and peace with God, but also a place of testing. God commanded Adam to NOT eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to test him. God made man in His image with a free will to choose to obey Him and to serve Him. Adam was given this choice. Adam would have informed his wife Eve of this command also. This ability to choose was to test Adam's devotion to God and to qualify him to have dominion over the earth.

It was in this perfect setting with wonderful fellowship with God, their Creator, that temptation came. Satan brings a "counterfeit," something similar to the genuine article but leaving out something of importance. Isaiah 14:14 says, that the devil aspired to be "like" God. The devil approached Eve in the "crafty" serpent with a plan, not unlike God's, but one that did not have the restriction of total obedience. He asked the question, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of ANY tree in the garden?'" The devil was placing doubt in the heart of Eve that God did not want them to enjoy ANY of the fruit of the trees. He was suggesting that God was too restrictive and demanding. Eve denied this but the evil seed of doubt was planted.

How Satan tricked Eve.

Eve replied to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, "You shall not eat from it or touch it or you will die." Genesis 3: 2, 3

Satan's next statement was a very big lie. He said, "Surely you shall not die. For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." Genesis 3: 4, 5

Not only did Satan contradict God, but he also suggested that God was holding back something good from Adam and Eve. Satan told Eve that, by eating this fruit, she and her husband would be like God. Eve must have rationalized that the fruit was good to eat and providing food was part of her responsibilities. She also must have reasoned, why would God withhold something so beautiful from them? Everything was made for them to enjoy. And God wanted them to be wise, didn't He? Therefore it would be desirable, even necessary, to eat it. Eve quickly forgot all the blessings of God and

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reasoned that the fruit would be “good to food” to sustain their lives, and it “delightful to look at” adding to their surrounding beauty, and it was “desirable to make one wise” Genesis 3:6. Having justified what she was about to do, she took the fruit from the tree and ate it! (Charles Ryrie, Basic Theology, Victor Books, pg. 201-206).

What are the consequences of sin?

Sin has consequences. It always affects more than just the sinner. Eve’s sin affected Adam and Adam’s sin affected the entire human race. No one sins in private. Adam’s sin affected the whole creation that now “groans.” There are always consequences that involve others. Sin cannot be undone. The ultimate result of sin is always death. Forgiveness can be experienced and fellowship restored but sin cannot be undone.

The results of Adam’s sin man died, body, soul, and spirit. (Genesis 3:7-13)

What does “death” mean? Death means separation. The death sentence on man would separate soul and body, man from man, and man from God. After Adam sinned there was an immediate change in Adam and Eve’s lives.

The Bible says, *“Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.”* (Genesis 3:7-8)

What did Adam and Eve feel when they sinned?

1. They felt shame at their nakedness.
2. They were afraid of God.

When God came and found them He asked Adam why he was hiding from Him. The answer is revealing, *“I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.”* Genesis 3:10

What was God’s response to their sin? Genesis 3:14-24

1. He cursed the serpent, the devil, for deceiving the woman and caused Adam to sin. Genesis 3:14
2. He promised the devil that there would be constant enmity between him and the “Seed of the woman” who would sometime in the future “bruise his head” (kill him), while he would only wound the Seed. Genesis 3:15
3. The woman would have “abundant” (Hebrew “rabah”) sorrow and pain in childbirth instead of the blessing of being fruitful and multiplying (Genesis 2:28). Genesis 3:16a
4. The woman would also be broken by her God-ordained subordination to man. She would “crave, long and desire” to rule over her husband, but the man would rule over her. Genesis 3:16b
5. And because of Adam’s disobedience to God in listening to his wife, the earth is cursed making it difficult for man to eat and sustain his life. He would now have to “work” the ground to make it produce. Genesis 3:17-19a, 23b
6. And man would physically die. That is, his body would return to dust. Genesis 3:19b
7. God made garments of skin to cover their nakedness. Genesis 3:21
8. Adam and Eve were driven out of the Garden away from the tree of life. They lost unrestricted fellowship with God. Genesis 3:22-24
9. Adam’s dominion of the earth was forfeited. Satan became the god of this world (2 Corinthians 4:4), the ruler of this world (John 16:11), the prince of the

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power of the air (Ephesians 2:2). The devil even tempted the Lord Jesus Christ to take the Kingdom back the easy way and not die for the sins of the world but instead to bow down to the devil (Luke 4:5-8).

God's Mercy

Genesis 3:15 tells us that God in His mercy planned to save man from the consequence of sin (death/separation) by sending a special kind of man, born not of Adam, but through the "seed" of the woman. This Seed was the Lamb of God, slain before the foundation of the world. He would make it possible for man to be reborn by the Holy Spirit and have fellowship with God and to glorify God by becoming a "co-heir with Christ." His promise is seen in the shedding of the blood of the animals to clothe Adam and Eve. Imagine, every time man made clothing they had to slay an innocent animal reminding them of the shame of their nakedness before God and one another.

God would eventually send His perfect lamb, "slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 18:24b) when He killed the first "lamb" to cover Adam and Eve.

God's first man, Adam, had been defeated by Satan. Here God gives the promise of a future Second Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, who would defeat Satan and remove the curse of sin. *"The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven."* (1 Corinthians 15:47)

But death was still the only remedy. "The DAY that you eat of it (the tree of the knowledge of good and evil) you will die" Genesis 2:17. God demonstrated His grace and mercy to Adam and Eve by providing a temporary covering for their sin. The death of an innocent animal and its shed blood for Adam and Eve's sin was a reminder of the terrible consequences of sin. This substitutionary death atoned for their sin and covered their shame. But it was only temporary. Its blood was not valuable enough for everlasting forgiveness (1 Peter 1:18-19; Hebrews 10:4). It was a vivid reminder that death, the shedding of blood, is the price of sin and that someday God would provide a perfect Lamb to eternally pay the price for all sin. In the meantime, He instituted this temporary atonement through the innocent animal he slew in the Garden for them.

The Bible says, *"And the LORD God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them."* Genesis 3: 21

God clothed their naked bodies removing their shame and He clothed them with the innocence (the righteousness) of the Lamb that died in their place. With this sacrifice God taught them, "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins." Hebrews 9: 22

They had to leave the Garden. The special fellowship was broken. Sin has consequences. But God had a plan as seen in the promise of Genesis 3:15. One day He would send His only begotten Son into the world to die for man's sin. By His death on the cross, the Lord Jesus would make it possible for man to be forgiven of sin, receive the gift of eternal life and have fellowship with God.

God provided the way for Adam and Eve and their descendants to come back into fellowship with Him. Adam and Eve had to put their faith in God's way of forgiveness, the death of an innocent life. From that time until Jesus would come as the Savior, people were to offer innocent animals, especially a lamb, as a sacrifice for their sins. God accepted these animal sacrifices temporarily because those who offered the sacrifices were looking forward by faith to the coming of God's "Seed of the woman," the Lord Jesus Christ.

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Man's ruin in sin came because Adam chose to follow his own will instead of obeying God's will.

God told Adam and Eve that if they ate from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil located in the middle of the garden they would die.

This is the first time we see the word "death" in the Bible.

The Bible says, *"but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."* (Genesis 2:17)

This is a very low place in Scripture. Man, the height of God's creation, made in His very own image has fallen to a terrible place. Fear and shame have replaced their former confident fellowship with God their creator.

Living life would now be very difficult from the bearing of children to the reaping of food to sustain their lives. Their beautiful bodies that held the "breath of life" would eventually physically corrupt and return to dust. What shame! What sorrow! What fear!

And with these physical and emotional sorrows, they are also "driven out" of the garden of fellowship with God to no longer walk in the cool of the morning with their Creator.

Physical, emotional and spiritual death has taken place. Man has died, body, soul and spirit.

The Bible says:

"The wages of sin is death..." Romans 6:23

"You were dead (death sentence) in trespasses and sins in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others." Ephesians 2:1-3

The Bible speaks of two deaths, the first and the second deaths. The first death is the death of man's body, soul and spirit because of Adam's sin. All men are born in sin. Fellowship with God is broken. Fellowship with man is broken. And all men die physically seen in sickness and death of the body.

The second death is even worse than the first. The second death is when sinners are cast, body, soul, and spirit into the eternal Lake of Fire burning with brimstone. Revelation 20:14; 21:8

This is a very serious and sober lesson. We have learned that Adam sinned and the consequence is DEATH.

In our next lesson, we will learn how Adam's "one" sin has affected all of mankind.

PRAYER: Father, I thank you for not overlooking sin. I am very sad that our father Adam sinned against you. And I know that too have sinned against you. Death is the consequence of sin. Unless you save me from sin there is no hope. Thank you for giving me hope when You said you would send the Seed of the Woman to crush the head of the devil. I put my faith in your promise, the Seed of the Woman, the Lord Jesus Christ.

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QUESTION:

1. How did Satan trick Eve into sinning?
2. What did Adam do that led him to sin?
3. What is the main consequence of sin?
Explain the 1st and 2nd deaths.

What is the cause of each death?
4. What are some of the other consequences to sin?
5. How did God show mercy to Adam and Eve?
6. What is the promise of Genesis 3:15? What is its significance?
7. What is God's remedy for our sin?

DEFINITIONS:

Contradict --to resist or oppose by arguing. Satan opposed or twisted God's word when he tempted Eve.

Enmity — hatred, being an enemy

Provision — to supply a need. Adam and Eve had sinned. God provided a solution for this need. He supplied the skins of innocent animals to cover them.

Fellowship — being with another; enjoying another's company; having a good relationship with someone.

Remission — forgiveness or pardon. Christ died on the cross and shed His blood so that we can have forgiveness of sins.

Begotten – to become a man by a natural birth

First Death – is the separation of the spiritual and physical man resulting in the death of the body. It also involves the spiritual separation of man's soul and spirit from God resulting in a broken relationship with God. The first death is the death of the body, soul, and spirit because of Adam's sin. All mankind is born dead because of Adam's sin.

Second Death – is to be separated body, soul and spirit from God for all eternity in the Lake of Fire (Matthew 10:28; Revelations 20:14, 21:8). This is the result of our own personal sin.

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LESSON SIX – Being IN Adam

Scripture Reading:

Romans 5:12 to 21 Ephesians 2:1 to 13

Key Verse: "... by one man's disobedience many [people] were made sinners..." Romans 5:19

In the last two lectures, we saw how sin came into the world. First, Satan rebelled against God and set up a kingdom opposed to God. Then Adam, when he was tempted, rebelled against God.

Satan said, "I will," and in this way challenged and rebelled against God's will.

Then Adam said in his heart, "I will," and rebelled against God.

Adam's sin affected each part of his being - spirit, soul, and body. Adam's spirit (heart) was cut off from God's life and presence. His soul (mind) was affected by sin and became self-centered instead of God-centered. His body became subject to physical death because "the wages of sin is death."

In this lesson, we are going to see the awful consequences of Adam's sin upon the human race. Ephesians 2:1 says, all of us were "dead in trespasses and sins." That is instead of having eternal life

Why should we worry about Adam and what happened to him? The reason is this - Adam is the representative or "federal" head of the human race. Adam was different from all other men in that he was the first man - the source and root from which the entire human race came.

Since Adam was the father of the human family, what happened to Adam's nature affected the whole human family, and it affects you and me. God did not create millions of people to populate the earth. He created only one man, Adam. From this one man, all human life was borne. Therefore, everyone born of Adam is IN ADAM. Everyone has Adam's nature.

To be in Adam

To be in Adam means to share in all that Adam was because of what he did. Certain things are true of every person in Adam.

In Adam, ALL are separated from the life of God.

In Adam, ALL are now living in the kingdom of darkness.

In Adam, ALL become sinners.

In Adam, ALL are under the power of sin.

In Adam, ALL are sentenced to die physically.

Let us study each of these five things to see how this happened.

1. Adam's Sin brought death upon ALL Mankind.

Sin always brings separation from God. Sin separates us from fellowship with God and His life. Man would return to the dust of the earth. All mankind has inherited Adam's flesh and therefore, all die physically. "... for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die" Genesis 2:17. Adam's sin resulted in physical death, not only for him, but also for the entire human race. Everyone dies because all of mankind is born IN ADAM.

2. Adam's Sin allowed the devil to become the ruler of this world.

When Adam rebelled against God, he took sides with and joined Satan, the first rebel.

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The world came under the authority of Satan who became the ruler of this world.

Since Adam was the head of the human race, he placed the whole human race in the kingdom of darkness.

3. Adam's Sin Resulted in a Race of Sinners.

As created by God, Adam was an innocent man with God's life flowing through his entire being (body, soul, and spirit).

After Adam sinned he no longer had the Spirit of God giving life to his body and spirit. His now "enlightened" nature "knowing good and evil" fought against submitting to God.

Adam needed forgiveness to regain fellowship with God. Adam was made in the image of God. His children are made in Adam's image. Adam passed his now sinful, self-centered nature to ALL mankind to his children, his seed. The Bible says that Adam had a son "in his own likeness, after his image." Adam himself had been created in the image of God, but he produced a son in his own sinful image.

In Lesson 4, we saw Cain's rebellion against God when he refused to worship God in the way which God had told him to, with an innocent blood sacrifice. He wanted to worship God in his own way. Later Cain's rebellion leads him to murder his own brother. The effects of Adam's sin did not stop with his own children. Adam was the father of the entire human family, and he passed his sinful nature on to the whole human race. Adam's disobedience resulted in a race of sinners. The Bible says, "For just as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners..." Rom 5:19

4. Adam's Sin Brought All Men under the weakness of the flesh without God's nature. Adam's nature is to sin and rebel against God. Everyone has this same nature. The Bible says, "All have sinned and fallen short of God's glory." Romans 3:23

Because of sin, all are under the power of sin. The Bible says, "...everyone who commits sin is a slave to sin" John 8:34. In the kingdom of darkness, Satan reigns as a king and all men live in this kingdom are under the power of sin.

5. Adam's Sin brought Death and Condemnation into the Human Race. Sin entered the world through one man - Adam, and death came as a result of sin.

The Bible says,

"Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, in this way death spread to all men, because all sinned." Romans 5:12

"The wages of sin is death..." Romans 6:23

After Death – Judgment

After men die physically they must then face God in judgment for their works.

The Bible says, "It is appointed for men to die once (one time), but after this (one death) *they are appointed for the judgment...*" Hebrews 9:27

Every person IN ADAM is guilty before God. Some people may think that they are acceptable to God as they are, but God says otherwise. He knows the heart of ALL men. Concerning Adam's race, God says in His Word:

"THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NO, NOT ONE;

THERE IS NONE WHO UNDERSTANDS;

THERE IS NONE WHO SEEKS AFTER GOD.

THEY HAVE ALL TURNED ASIDE;

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THEY HAVE ALL TOGETHER BECOME UNPROFITABLE;

THERE IS NONE WHO DOES GOOD, NO, NOT ONE."

"FOR ALL HAVE SINNED, AND COME SHORT OF GOD'S GLORY."

Romans 3:10-12, 23 It is not that man cannot choose to serve God, he still has a free will, but no one chooses not to sin.

Now we can understand why Jesus said, "You must be born again" John 3:7.

Why does every person need to be born again? It is because every person has been born with Adam's nature to sin and in fact, chooses to sin.

Let us look again at the picture of every person in Adam:

1. He is separated from the life of God.
2. He is born with Adam's nature now subject to the kingdom of darkness.
3. He is a sinner by choice.
4. He is under the condemnation of physical death because of Adam's sin.
5. He is under condemnation to the 2nd death, the Lake of Fire that burns forever, because of personal sin.

Thus, we see the results of sin (physical and eternal death). All mankind dies sooner or later because all have Adam's nature. Because all have Adam's nature everyone sins sooner or later by choice. Once someone sins, there is no amount of doing good, being religious or "joining the church" which can change the fact that he is a sinner and condemned to the 2nd Death.

To save mankind, God had to do something. Man, could not do anything to save his self. Death is the price of sin. But God loved mankind so much that He did something wonderful. He sent His Son into the world to rescue everyone from the punishment for sin. He became the Savior of the whole world by becoming the only acceptable sacrifice for man's sin. As the Bible says, "God is love" and "... the Father sent the Son to be the Savior of the world." I John 4:8, 14

The Lord Jesus was crucified for our sins. He took the punishment for the sins of all men upon Himself. In fact, the Bible says that He BECAME sin for us when He died on the Cross!

"The LORD has laid on him (Jesus) the iniquity of us all." Isaiah 53:6

"For He (God) made Him (Jesus) who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Corinthians 5:21

God does not overlook our sins, but He forgives them if we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ because He is the sacrifice that God accepts in our place. The Bible says, "the price of sin is death." Romans 6:23

Jesus died as the only satisfactory substitute for Adam's entire sinful race. This is called "propitiation."

By His death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus made it possible for men to become a New Creation, a new man in Christ.

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Through faith (see definitions) in the Lord Jesus Christ anyone can be justified (made righteous) and forgiven of their sin – bringing them into a new relationship with God – this now results in being BORN AGAIN. This is called “regeneration.”

We see that God's salvation is found in a Person - the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Bible says, “For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's obedience many will be made righteous.” Romans 5:19

By birth, every person is a member of Adam's sinful, ruined nature. But, by new birth every person who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ receives a NEW Nature, the nature of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is adopted into the family of God. This is what the next lesson is about.

In the next lesson, we will find out more about GOD'S PERFECT PLAN TO RESTORE MAN IN CHRIST.

PRAYER: "Father, thank You for Your Word which shows me my complete ruin in sin and my absolute need of You. Thank you for sending your son the Lord Jesus Christ to die in my place. Lord Jesus, thank you for dying for me and forgiving me when I believed in You and giving me eternal life.

DEFINITIONS -

Consequence — the outcome of something, the result of some action.

Condemnation — the state of being declared wrong and under judgment.

Faith in Jesus Christ – To believe in Who Jesus is (God in the flesh) and what He did (died in the place of sinful man). This faith is personal. “I believe that Jesus the Son of God died in my place for my sin.” Faith is based upon fact, not desires. The Bible, God’s Word, is the substance, the fact, that we put our faith in.

Justification – to be declared righteous.

Propitiation – Something that satisfies. The Death of Jesus Christ is the sacrifice that satisfies the righteous wrath of God against man’s sin.

Regeneration – to be born again, to have new eternal life.

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LESSON SEVEN – GOD’S 2nd Adam, the God-Man

Scripture Reading:

Matthew 1:18 to 25; Philippians 2:5 to 11; Ephesians 1:20 to 23

Key Verse:

"For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous." Romans 5:19

Man's rebellion against God

God created the first man, Adam, because He wanted people who would glorify Him, but Adam rebelled against God. In our last lesson, we saw the terrible results of Adam's disobedience, death. Even though God spared Adam's life that day, he still eventually died and all his children would suffer physical death as well. Instead of having God's life, all men became partakers of death. Instead of having God's nature, man became sinful and self-centered possessing Adam's nature. Instead of ruling over the earth, man became enslaved to sin and Satan. How could sinful man glorify God and fulfill His purpose? The answer is: He could not without God's help.

God's purpose had not changed. God still wanted man to rule the earth and to glorify Him. But how would God bring this about? He would do it through another Man! Since ruin came to the human race through one man, God would provide salvation for all men through one man, Jesus Christ. See Romans 5:19 above.

God's Second Man

God's first man had failed to obey Him and to glorify Him, so there had to be a second man, a new kind of man, to become the head of a new race of men who would glorify God. God chose His own Son to be this second Man, the 2nd Adam. The Bible says, *"The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven."* 1 Corinthians 15:47

God loved mankind and He wanted to save us from His righteous punishment of sin. To make salvation possible, God would send His own Son into the world. He would die in man's place and for the sins of all mankind. Then He would rise again to become the Head of the One New Man, a new creation. By His death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus would make it possible to give Adam's race a new nature, allowing all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ to become the children of God. Now let's see how God did this.

The first step was the Incarnation. What do we mean when we speak of the Incarnation? We mean that God became a man with flesh and bones like us. The Son of God Himself became a human being. This is marvelous to hear.

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 ... John 1:1,14

The One who created man became a Man Himself. This is truly a great mystery. An even greater mystery is the means by which God became a human being. The first man, Adam, was created as a full-grown man, but the second Man, Jesus Christ, was born into the human race.

The Lord Jesus was born of a virgin. He did not have a human father. Who, then, was His father? His Father was God. Mary, His mother, was engaged to marry Joseph; but, before they came together in marriage, an angel appeared to Mary and said,

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"The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy-- the Son of God." Luke 1:35

The angel also appeared to Joseph and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." Matthew 1:20,21

The name Jesus means "Savior."

Jesus Christ is called the God-Man because He is fully God and fully Man in one person. He is the eternal God, and He became a Man by means of a miraculous human birth. Jesus Christ was one with God, and He was one with humanity. He is called "the Son of God" because he is the only begotten Son of God the Father. He is called "the Son of Man" because He is the possessor of true humanity and he represents all of mankind.

The Bible says, "... Great indeed, we confess, is the mystery of godliness: He [the Son of God] was manifested in the flesh ..." 1 Timothy 3:16

Jesus is the one whom God promised, the Son of Man, to be the Messiah, the King of the Earth. Daniel 7:13 *"I was watching in the night visions, And behold, one like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him."*

Why did the Son of God come to this earth as a man? There are two very important reasons

1. He came to destroy the works of the devil. The Bible says,

"The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil." 1 John 3:8

2. He came to identify with man so that He could die for mankind's sin and destroy the devil and the power of death freeing all who believe in Him from the bondage of sin and death. This is what it means to be saved.

"Inasmuch then as the children have partaken of flesh and blood, He Himself (The Lord Jesus Christ) likewise shared in the same (flesh and blood), that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage." Hebrews 2:14, 15

How the Second Man was tested

The first man, Adam, was tested. It was necessary that the second Man, Jesus, be tested also. The Bible says, *"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil."* Matthew 4:1

Jesus was tempted to prove that He was not like the first Adam. He resisted the temptation. The devil wanted Jesus to sin and disobey God, as did Adam and forfeit the right to rule the World and save the world and thereby glorify His Father. (Note especially the third and final temptation! The devil would give Him the very world He came to redeem and rule.) Three times Satan tempted Jesus to act in self-will. Three times Jesus refused to do so. Matthew 4:3-11

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The first man, Adam, was conquered by the devil because he disobeyed God. The second Man, Christ, was triumphant over the devil because He obeyed God.

The Lord Jesus identified with us completely so that He could give us eternal life and enables us to live the abundant life.

“Therefore, in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in the things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.” Hebrews 2:17, 18

For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

The Lord Jesus faced other tests in His life and was victorious because He delighted to do His Father’s will. The Bible says,

“Although he was a son, he learned obedience through what he suffered.” Hebrews 5:8

He remained faithful and learned by experience to obey His Father in all things. These tests prepared Him for the ultimate test, the shame of the cross.

Jesus became sin for us

Jesus had to suffer the punishment for our sins on the cross in order to save man from the 2nd death, eternal separation from God in the Lake of Fire. In the Old Testament God required the sacrifice of an innocent animal for the sins of his people, Israel. These sacrifices were a type or picture of the perfect sacrifice that would come, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. As the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus came to take the sins of the whole world upon Himself.

The Bible says, *“For He [God] made Him [Jesus Christ] who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God IN HIM.”* 2 Corinthians 5:21

In the Garden of Gethsemane, as He thought about how He would be made sin for us, the Lord Jesus fell on His face and prayed, *“My Father, if it is possible, let this cup (of suffering) pass from me...”* So great was His agony that His sweat became as great drops of blood. But here, as always, He was obedient to the will of His Father, and he prayed, *“...nevertheless, not my will, but as you will.”* Matthew 26:39

The terrible death of the Lord Jesus

The Lord Jesus was taken into the court of the Roman governor, Pilate. There he was stripped naked, humiliated and beaten with a whip made of leather thongs, each of which contained a piece of sharp metal or bone that cut deep into the flesh. 500 years

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before the event Isaiah prophesied, *“But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.”* 53:5

He was humiliated, disrespected and spat upon. His face was disfigured so that He could not be recognized. A crown of thorns was placed on His head to make Him look foolish because He had said He was the King of the Jews. He was given a cross to carry to Calvary, the place of His execution. King David prophesied this of his future Messiah Son in Psalm 22 one thousand years before His death.

In spite of the injustice and cruelty of man and the devil, Jesus the Son of God and Man would not save Himself, though He could have called Legions of Angels (Matthew 26:53). He was obedient unto death, even the cruel death of the cross.

Hebrews 12:2 says, *“for the joy set before Him”* that He *“endured the cross, despising the shame”* so that He could save us!

1 Corinthians 2:7 and 8 say this mystery of God was hidden from *“the rulers of this age (the devil and his angels)...for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.”* His “joy” was to obey His Father and be glorified with Him again.

At the end of His life, God’s second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, could say, *“I have glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do. And now, O Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was.”* John 17:4,5

The glorious resurrection of Jesus Christ

The body in which the Lord Jesus had lived for thirty-three years was taken down from the cross, tenderly wrapped in grave clothes, and placed in the tomb of a rich man. For three days and nights, His body lay in the tomb. Then something miraculous happened. Jesus was raised from the dead by the mighty power of God!

God’s second Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, had been obedient to His Father in all things. Death could not hold Him in its power because it had no right to hold Him. He did not sin and therefore He did not die for His sin, but ours. He rose from the grave – the Victor forever over sin, death, and the devil, just as David prophesied in Psalm 16:10. *“For You will not leave my soul in Sheol; You will not allow your Holy One to see decay.”* Jesus’ body was not allowed to corrupt in the grave proving that HE had no sin (Acts 2:27, 31; 13:34-37). The Lord Jesus appeared to His disciples in His resurrected body and showed them the nail holes in His hands and the hole the spear made in His side.

The death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are the most important events in the history of the universe. The Cross of Jesus Christ is God’s master plan for dealing with the sinful world, flesh, and devil.

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When Jesus died on the cross, Satan thought that he had achieved a great victory. But this is where he made a very big mistake. The very cross by which Satan meant to end the life of the Son of God became the way by which he was defeated and mankind was delivered from the wages of sin. Through the death of Jesus Christ, God destroyed the works of the devil and set free those whom he had enslaved.

The Bible says,

"Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery." Hebrews 2:14,15

Jesus returned to the Father

The Lord Jesus Christ appeared on the earth for forty days after His resurrection. He appeared to His chosen Apostles who would be the special representatives of His resurrection. He also appeared to other men who were also His apostles.

1 Corinthians 15:3-9 reveals who they are: *"For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas (Peter), then by the Twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep. After that He was seen by James (the Lord's brother), then by all the apostles. Then, last of all, He was seen by me (Paul) also, as by one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."*

Before He ascended back into Heaven, He commanded His Apostles and through them all who believe in Him to go into the entire world and to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom to every creature. He gave them this wonderful promise to encourage them to be faithful in doing so, *"And behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."* Matthew 28:20

As the Apostles watched the Lord Jesus ascend into heaven two angels stood beside them and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come in the same way that you have seen Him going into heaven!"

He went back into Heaven to wait at the right hand of the Father (on His Father's Throne) until "the end of the age" when He will return and occupy His own glorious Throne and RULE this world with the people who believe the message, the Gospel of the Kingdom, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Until His return, Jesus lives as our Man in Heaven as our High Priest and He is able to completely save everyone who will come to Him by faith.

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“And so he is able, now and always, to save those who come to God through him, because he lives (and will not die!) to make intercession for them.” Hebrews 7:25

Jesus Christ – Lord of all

God made his second Man, Jesus Christ, to be Lord of all giving Him authority over everything. There is a beautiful passage in the book of Philippians which tells how the Lord Jesus humbled Himself and how the Father has put Him on the highest place of honor:

“And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the Name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

Jesus Christ – the Head of a New Family

God the Father has not only made Jesus Christ to be Lord of all, but He has also made Him the Head of a new family. This new family is called “the children of God.” 1 John 3:1

There are two families in the world today. Each of these families has a head. The devil is the head of the sinful family produced by Adam. Jesus Christ is the Head of the new family called the children of God. Everyone is born a son of Adam. But now, by His death and resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ has made it possible for anyone to be born into the family of God and become a Child of God. This requires a new birth, a spiritual birth.

In our next lesson, we are going to learn how to have this new birth and be born again by the Spirit of God.

Central Theme

Jesus Christ is God the Son! He became the Son of Man so that we might become children of God.

PRAYER: “Father, thank You for Your second Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is perfect God and perfect Man and was perfectly obedient to Your will. I pray that I may always love to do Your will as He did.”

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LESSON EIGHT – THE NEW BIRTH

Scripture Reading:

John 3:1 to 21; John 1:10 to 13; John 8:32 to 44; 2 Corinthians 5:17 to 21

Key Verse: *“Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” John 3:3*

In our last lesson, we learned that there are two families in the world. The head of one of these families is Adam, the first man. The head of the other family is Christ, God’s second Man.

Some people think that God is the Father of all men, but this is not true. Only those who are in Christ’s family have God as their Father. Those who are in Adam’s family have Satan as their spiritual father. The Lord Jesus Himself said that God is not the Father of all men. One day He was speaking to some religious leaders of the city of Jerusalem. These men claimed that God was their Father. But their hearts were under the control of Satan, for they hated Jesus and wanted to kill Him. Jesus knew their hearts, and He said to them, *“If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God ...”* John 8:42.

When Jesus said, *“If God were your Father,”* He plainly showed that God was not their Father. To make it even clearer, He told them who their spiritual father was. He said, *“You are of your father THE DEVIL....”*

The same thing is true of all who do not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet, no one has to remain in Satan’s family, for the Lord Jesus has made it possible for every one of us to become a child of God. The Bible calls this to be “born again.” We are going to see what it means to be born again.

You must be born again

In the third chapter of the Gospel of John, we read of a man called Nicodemus who came at night to talk to the Lord Jesus. This man was a Pharisee (very strict religious leaders). He attended the synagogue faithfully. He prayed often. He gave money regularly. He did many good deeds. He knew the Scriptures well. He was a teacher of the Jews. But still, he came to Jesus.

We do not know exactly why Nicodemus came, but he must have recognized that Jesus had the power of God in His life. And perhaps Nicodemus thought that Jesus could give him some new teaching on the Scriptures that would help him. But Nicodemus needed more than teaching – he needed to be born again! Jesus said to him,

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

This statement must have shocked Nicodemus. Was he not a Jew, a member of God’s Chosen race? Was he not a good, moral man? Was he not a teacher among the Jews? Yes, Nicodemus was all of these things, but he was still a member of Adam’s sinful family. He was not a child of God. Jesus spoke again to Nicodemus,

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be surprised that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’” John 3:6,7

The Lord Jesus says here that it is absolutely necessary to be born again. This applied not only to Nicodemus, but it applies to every person.

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YOU – no matter who you are – “must be born again.” We must be born “from above” by the Spirit of God. There is no other way to become a child of God.

Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ – necessary for the New Birth

The requirement for the new birth is faith in Jesus, WHO He is and WHAT He has done for every human being and therefore also for me personally. Jesus is God in the flesh and He died in payment for our sin and rose again on the third day proving that God accepted this sacrifice in our place.

Jesus Christ was crucified for our sins. Although He made this sacrifice for every human being only those who receive this GIFT from God by faith become children of God.

John 1:12 But as many as RECEIVED Him, to them He gave the right to become the children of God.”

The Lord Jesus explained this to Nicodemus by reminding him of something that happened to the children of Israel while they were in the wilderness.

The people had complained against God and Moses, so God sent poisonous snakes among them. Those who were bitten by the serpents died. The people repent (admitted their sin) and cried to Moses to be rescued. Moses prayed to God, and the Lord told him to make an image of a snake of bronze and put it up on a pole so that everyone who looked at it might live. The Bible says, “So Moses made a bronze serpent and set it on a pole. And if a serpent bit anyone, he would look at the bronze serpent and live.” Numbers 21:9

Then Jesus said, *“As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.”* John 3:14,15

Just as the Israelites were saved from physical death by looking, in faith at the serpent on the pole, so we are saved from eternal death (the 2nd Death) by looking (believing) in faith at the Lord Jesus Christ who died for us upon the Cross.

The new birth is by the Word and the Spirit

The new birth is the work of the Holy Spirit using the Word of God. No one can be born again without hearing and believing the Word of God, and no one can be born again without the work of the Holy Spirit. Here are some verses that make this clear:
The Word –

“By his own will he brought us into being through the word of truth...” James 1:18

“Since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and everlasting (eternal) Word of God ...” 1 Peter 1:23

The Spirit –

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.”
John 3:6

Before a person can be born again, he must admit that he is a sinner. This is called repentance. The Holy Spirit uses the Word of God to reveal to us that we are sinners in need of a Savior. Then, the Holy Spirit uses the same Word to show us that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Savior we need.

“Faith comes by hearing (understanding) and hearing by the Word of God.” Romans 10:17

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"When He (the Holy Spirit) comes, He will convict the world of sin, righteousness and judgment to come." John 16:8

The new birth comes from God

Let us look at a further explanation of the new birth. The Bible says that those who receive the Lord Jesus as Savior receive a spiritual birth. It is not another physical birth, "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, not of the will of man, but of God." John 1:13

The new birth is NOT "of blood." This means that it is not a human birth. No one is born into this world as a Christian. Having Christian parents is wonderful, but it does not make you a child of God. Each one of us must be born individually into God's family.

The new birth is NOT "of the will of the flesh." This means that no one becomes a child of God by physical birth. Another human being cannot give eternal life to you nor can it be earned by your own self-efforts. It must be received as a free gift from God. John 3:36

The new birth is NOT "of the will of man." Again this is speaking of being born physically. Being born again is a spiritual birth that GOD must do. His will is to save whoever will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ for eternal life.

The new birth is "from God." The Bible says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith (in the Lord Jesus Christ). And this (salvation) is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of (your own) works, so that no one may boast." Ephesians 2:8,9

What is man's part in the new birth?

Man's part is to believe! God demands faith in the Lord Jesus Christ in order to be saved.

Faith is to BELIEVE or put your TRUST in WHO Jesus is, the LORD God. And it is to TRUST that WHAT He did in dying on the cross and rising from the dead – satisfied God's judgment for sin so that He could grant eternal life to those who would believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

So our part is to come to the Lord Jesus confessing that we are sinners (repentance) and receive Him by faith as our Savior.

The Bible says, *"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name"* (who He is and what He has done). John 1:12

"... If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Romans 10:9, 10

To CONFESS Jesus is **LORD** means to believe that **He is God** and yield to Him as the LORD. He is now your master forever. Our life becomes His and His alone. We confess with our very life, what we say and what we do that Jesus Christ is the Lord of ALL.

To BELIEVE means accepting (trusting) that when Jesus died on the cross His death satisfied God righteous judgment against my sin. When Jesus rose from the dead it proved that God accepted His sacrifice in my place.

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When you will simply believe within your heart (your inner being) that Jesus Christ is the Lord God and that He died for your sins and rose from the dead, you receive Him as our Savior. At that very moment, you are born again and have eternal life.

What does God do when we trust in the Lord Jesus Christ?

God does many, many wonderful things for us when we put our trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior. Here are just a few:

God forgive us. We are REDEEMED! (Acts 13:38; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:14)

God declares us righteous. Because of our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His righteousness

God declares us righteous before Him. Justified! (Romans 5:1-4)

God is at peace with us. We are no longer His enemies. He has reconciled us to Himself by the blood of Christ. (Romans 5:6-11)

God takes us out of the kingdom of darkness (the devil's family) and places us into the Kingdom of His Dear Son (God's family). We are now IN Christ. (Colossians 1:13)

God makes us His child. God does something for us that He does for no other creature. He makes us His very own children. The Bible says, *"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God."* 1John 3:1

God gives us a new life in our spirit by giving us His Holy Spirit to dwell with our spirit (the Holy Spirit lives inside of us).

This is called Regeneration. We need to make one thing clear here – our old nature is not removed when we are born again. The old nature of Adam is still in our soul and flesh but it is no longer in our spirit because God's Spirit is now there. God does not remove our old sinful nature (We still have our old dying bodies), but He gives us His life in our spirit to overcome it. Our old nature will not be removed until Jesus comes for us and our bodies are made new, but, with the Holy Spirit dwelling in us, we can overcome sinful desires (Lesson Nine, Dealing with Temptation).

Remember when Adam sinned God's Presence left him. He immediately began to die physically (the curse of sin). Because Adam is our human father we all die physically as he did. Because we sin we are also under the judgment of the coming 2nd Death. When God gives His Spirit to the believer in Jesus Christ he is no longer dead, but alive in Christ because Jesus is in him. We are "born again." The Bible says that *"Christ in you, the hope of (future) Glory"* (Colossians 1:29).

God gives us eternal life. We shall never be separated from God again because He gives us His Holy Spirit as a guarantee of eternal life.

The Bible says, *"And this is the testimony, that God gave us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life."* 1 John 5:11,12

And, God has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee" (of eternal life). 2 Corinthians 1:22.

God does many other wonderful things for us when we are born again. He makes it possible for us to have victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. We are going to find out more about these things in lessons that follow.

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How can someone be assured that he has been born again?

We know that we are “born again” based upon the Word of God.

1. **The Word of God.** God cannot lie. He says in His Word that IF you BELIEVE on the LORD Jesus Christ YOU SHALL be saved. (Acts 16:31, Romans 10:9-11; John 3:15, 16)

“I write these things to you who believe in the Name (who He is and what He has done) of the Son of God that you may know that you have eternal life.” 1 John 5:13

Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? If you do, God’s Word says that you HAVE eternal life.

When we are “walking” in right relationship, fellowship, with God we have confidence before the Lord. Then, the world, the flesh and the devil are not able to steal the peace and joy of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

2. **The witness and fruit of the Spirit.** When we are born again, God’s Holy Spirit is given to dwell within us, and when we walk in obedience to Him, He bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. When we are walking in God’s ways (according to the Bible) we have fellowship with God. The Bible says, “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” Romans 8:16

“Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.” Romans 15:13

“For you were once in darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.” Ephesians 5:8 cp. Galatians 5:22, 23

3. **The conviction of the Holy Spirit.** If you do not “harden your heart” against God you will no longer be comfortable doing the things you use to do. The Holy Spirit will convict you of Sin bringing sorry and even fear. Just as happened to Adam and Eve when they sinned the first time in the Garden. This CONVICTION lets you know that the Holy Spirit in you is GRIEVED by your sin. The Bible says, “*And do not grieve the Holy Spirit, who SEALED you for the day of redemption (when Jesus returns and gives you a new body). And put away all bitterness, anger and wrath, insult and slander must be removed from you, along with all wickedness. And be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as God also forgave you in Christ. Be imitators of God... love one another... (Ephesians 4:30-5:5).* It is a call to “confess your sin” to the Lord Jesus Christ (your only High Priest), and “*He will forgive you of your sin and cleanse you from all unrighteousness*” 1 John 1:9.

We are NOW new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17). We have a new man living inside us, the LORD Jesus Christ.

The Bible says,

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,” (2 Corinthians 5:17-18)

“Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” (1 John 3:2)

Are you “In Christ” today? If so, you are a New Creation. NOW you are a child of God.

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Central Theme

Because of Who Jesus is and what He has done, we are born again when we put our faith and trust in Him. When we are born again, HE makes a difference in our lives.

PRAYER: “Father, thank You for making it possible for me to be Your child by the life, death and, resurrection of your only Son, Jesus Christ the Lord. Thank you that I can now call You ‘Father’ because I am your child. I am a new creation in Christ. You have given me eternal life. Thank you that I can KNOW that I am saved right now and for all eternity because of my faith in the Lord Jesus Christ who died for me. By your grace I have been saved, and by your grace I will live in a new way of life that reflects your new life in me. Thank you for giving me your Holy Spirit to do just that. In the Name of Jesus Christ I pray. AMEN”

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LESSON NINE – Being IN Christ

Scripture Reading:

Ephesians chapters 1 & 2; Colossians chapters 2 & 3

Key Verse: 2 Corinthians 5:17 “Therefore, if anyone is IN CHRIST he is a new creation. The old things have passed away; behold the new has come.”

As we have learned in the previous lessons everyone belongs to one of two families, the family of Adam or the family of Christ. Having put our faith in Christ we now belong to His Family forever. The Father now sees all believers in Jesus Christ as being IN CHRIST.

This is who I am now that I have received eternal life. I am saved. I am IN Christ.

The phrase, “in Christ” or “in Him” is found many times in the New Testament (at least 130 times). In Colossians 2:10 God teaches, “And IN HIM you have been made complete...”

That idea of completeness should be comforting to us, because it means that there is nothing lacking, not wanting or needing anything to be added to. Even though we may have times of physical need, we know from this verse that our times of spiritual need are behind us when we are in Christ. The moment a believer is IN Christ everything needed to live this Christian life in a manner worthy of God’s calling is provided. You are complete in Him!

Another section of scripture that is equally as comforting is found in the first chapter of Ephesians. Listen to these comforting words:

Ephesians 1:3-6

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.

Ephesians 1:7-10

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the

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times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth-in Him.

Ephesians 1: 11-12

In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

Ephesians 1:13-14

In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory”

Look at all that is true of you in this one section of God’s Word because you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ! If you believe in Jesus everything that belongs to Him belongs to you right now.

You have been identified with the Lord Jesus Christ by means of His indwelling Holy Spirit.

What the Father sees, thinks and feels about His Son is exactly the way He sees and thinks and feels about you, because you are IN Christ.

You are blessed with ALL spiritual blessings in Christ. Everything that is Christ’s is yours.

You are chosen before the foundation of the world to be like the Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 8:29

You are holy and without blame. You are righteous in Him. Romans 5:1

You have been adopted into the family of God. Romans 8:15

You are accepted by God. You are no longer an enemy. Romans 5:8-10

You are redeemed from death.

You have forgiveness of sins.

You know the mystery of God’s will; that is to glorify all things in Christ.

You have obtained an inheritance to be glorified with Christ.

You are His glory.

You are sealed with the Holy Spirit guaranteeing your resurrection with Christ.

Your inheritance in the resurrection is guaranteed, that is, a new body. Romans 8:11

What does it do to you to read a list like that? Do you, like me, look at that list and say to yourself, “I don’t deserve that?”

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You're right. You don't deserve any of that. In fact, no one does.

From the greatest to the least, no one deserves to be treated that way, because all have sinned. We all deserve to be punished for our sin. I have sinned against the Lord in thought, word, deed and willful neglect. And so have you. But IN Christ all our sin has been paid for. We are no longer sinners. Now we are Saints, holy ones, IN Christ.

That is the beautiful thing about the good news, the Gospel: there is Someone who can rescue me from this dilemma, and that Someone is Jesus the Christ, the Son of God, who became flesh and dwelt among us, who lived a perfect life for me, who died the perfect death in my place, and whom God raised for me so that I could be saved from the penalty of sin. That is to be forgiven, and be declared righteous!

And all of these things listed here are true NOW of you and me by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. We are IN HIM right now and forever. They are a reality in God's eyes because He has promised in His Word that they are true. God does not lie, He does not go back on His Word, and He does not back away from His promises.

"For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father'", Romans 8:15.

You do not have to live in fear of the fires of hell "nipping at your heels", as some might suggest, but you can rest in the promises of God that your inheritance is guaranteed, that it is an objective reality that you already possess, and that you are accepted by God because you believe in Jesus the Christ.

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes My word, and believes Him who sent Me (the Lord Jesus Christ), HAS eternal life and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life." John 5:24

How should we then live?

We should live in the confidence that we are adopted by our Heavenly Father, who planned before the foundation of the world to transform all those who believe in His Son into His same likeness, making us holy and without blame before Him and making us complete in Christ who is the head of all principality and power.

We should live this life out of our position in Christ and not, as some say, by trying all the harder to prove it. We cannot prove we are righteous. Jesus proved it by dying on the cross and rising from the dead. His work of salvation for us is finished. And because we believe God's Word we can live in a position of security instead of doubt.

We cannot contribute anything to our Salvation by our achievements. God has given us all we need. "You are complete IN Him" Colossians 1:20. The GRACE of God has

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saved us. Salvation is a FREE GIFT to all who believe and trust the Lord Jesus Christ as their SAVIOR.

Spiritual REBIRTH means that I have been transferred, by Christ, from the kingdom of darkness and implanted into the Kingdom of Light (God).

“He, God the Father, has delivered us from the power of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of the Son of His love.” Colossians 1:13

It is by spiritual rebirth that we are RECONCILED to the Father that is we have PEACE with God. The entire process clearly described including the MINISTRY of every single child of God - being His AMBASSADORS (representatives) on this earth with the MESSAGE of reconciliation.

“Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given to us the MINISTRY of reconciliation, that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the MESSAGE of reconciliation.” 2 Corinthians 5:18, 19

Satan still accuses us of sinning (which is true) BUT the Bible refers to us as SAINTS (in God’s eyes) because He sees us “IN CHRIST”. We must confess our sins when we do sin, BUT we are no longer CHARACTERIZED as “sinners” because Christ has redeemed us. So, if we fall in sin we confess and we are forgiven - restored in our relationship with the Father. And this is because we are IN Christ.

1 John 2:1, 2 “My little children, these things I am writing to you, so that you may not sin. But if anyone sins, we have an Advocate (a lawyer) with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous One. And HE Himself is the propitiation (our sacrifice) for our sins, and not ours only but also for the whole world.”

What a Savior!

The above is “part” of what it means to be “in Christ.” GROWING in our relationship with Jesus means we will resist the temptations of the evil one more and more as we grow. Our lives of OBEDIENCE to the Lord enable us to experience the life and joy that is ours IN Christ every moment.

“For to be carnally minded (thinking in Adam) is death, but to be spiritually minded (thinking IN CHRIST) is to experience abundant life and inner peace.” Romans 8:6

YOU are now and forever IN Christ! Therefore, walk in a manner worthy of your calling IN CHRIST.

LESSON TEN – Dealing with Temptation

This lesson is on how to deal with temptation and overcome the old nature to sin and to walk in the Spirit/be filled with the Spirit and not give in to temptation to sin.

Jesus has commanded us to make disciples of all the nations and to do so we must be disciples. A disciple is one who not only has heard the gospel call to repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sin but also one who has heard the call to “come and die.” That is we must die to our “self,” the “me,” the selfish pathetic person that is in the process of being saved in the present as well as having been saved in the past.

Remember, my spirit is saved on the day of salvation when I received Christ. I am a new creation IN Christ. My soul is being saved daily as I walk with Christ in submission to Him (the Word) and my body will be saved on that DAY when I see Jesus face to face in the first resurrection.

Our salvation is past, present and future. Our Triune God guarantees all of this, the Holy Spirit Himself being the deposit from God that He means what He says. “All who call upon the Lord SHALL be saved.”

God’s Word commands us to “walk by the Spirit” and if we obey God’s Word we will not “carry out the desire of the flesh.” In other words, you will not give in to the temptation to sin if you are walking in or controlled by the Holy Spirit. Paul says in Galatians that when we are not walking in the Spirit we have fallen from grace. That is, we are not living by God’s grace, but by our own works and efforts (5:4). The Grace he is speaking of is that of the Indwelling Holy Spirit. The argument is this, “since you live (were saved) by means of the Spirit, then walk (conduct your life) by means of the Spirit” (5:25).

Ephesians 5:18 give us a similar command. Paul says, “Don’t be drunk with wine but be filled with the Holy Spirit.” That is to say, “be controlled by the Holy Spirit.” Instead of being controlled by too much wine, you should yield to the Holy Spirit by obeying Him. The “conduct” of our lives should reflect God’s life in Christ (imitate God, 5:1). A companion verse to this is Colossians 3:16 “Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly...” The results of being “filled” with the Holy Spirit and the “indwelling” of the Word are the same (cp. Ephesians 5:18 – 6:9 with Colossians 3:16 – 4:1).

So our question is “HOW” do we walk in the Spirit? What does it mean to be “filled” with the Holy Spirit? How do we overcome the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil?

Some Basics:

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You are a three-part being – Body (the tent of man), Soul (the mind of man), Spirit (heart of man).

The body is your earthly house and it is perishing/dying because of our being Adam's flesh. It is where "you" live. It will be saved in the resurrection.

The soul is the old "you" and the seat of your intellect, will and emotions (the old nature called "flesh" and is quite at home in the fleshly body. The flesh can only sin). It is being saved daily as we yield to the Holy Spirit. This is what it means to "overcome."

The spirit is where God dwells by His Spirit when we are saved/born again. This is the inner man or New Nature and is perfect and cannot sin (1 John 3:9, 18). It has already been saved the moment you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. The indwelling Holy Spirit is our guarantee that the rest of us will also be saved. See Ephesians 1:14; 2 Corinthians 1:22, 5:5

Before you are born again your spirit is dead because of sin. You are born that way because of our father Adam. Everyone has inherited Adam's dying flesh and his nature to willfully sin. God does not dwell in any man at birth.

Read Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 5:12 - 21

After we are saved/born again there is constant conflict between our Spirit and our Flesh. That is between the New Man, Christ, and the Old Man, Adam.

When we yield to the Spirit there are positive fruit and reward, but when we yield to the flesh or old man there is negative actions with a negative result.

Read Galatians 5:16, 17

When we believe who Jesus Christ is (The LORD) and what He has done (Died for my sin in my place) He baptizes (identifies) the believing sinner with the Holy Spirit. This spiritual baptism is the only baptism that saves (Ephesians 4:5). If Christ has not baptized you with His Holy Spirit, He will baptize you in eternal fire (Matthew 3:12-13).

The results of this spiritual baptism identify the believer with Christ's Body in His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6:1-3) and with His Body now on earth, the Church (1 Corinthians 12:13). We are now the representatives of Jesus Christ on earth. As His ambassadors, we are to be doing and saying what He Himself would do and say if HE were here (2 Corinthians 5:20).

There was a two-fold work of Christ accomplished on the Cross. Under the Old Covenant, a lamb was offered as a sin offering for the sinning believer. Its blood was

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poured out as a ransom payment to provide for atonement to the petitioner. But the body of the lamb was also offered and burnt completely on the altar. In the same manner, we appeal to God on the bases of the blood of the Lamb on the cross when we have sinned and need forgiveness and cleansing. But we appeal on the bases of the crucified body of Christ when we need deliverance from the power of temptation at work in our fleshly body.

The normal Christian life is one of complete control by God's indwelling Spirit so that we experience God's life and peace at all times (Romans 8:6). That is we are confessing sin and receiving forgiveness and cleansing so as to remain in fellowship with God (1 John 1:9) and we are appealing to the Holy Spirit to overcome our fleshly impulses to sin when we are tempted to sin (Romans 8:13). Our body, our will, and our emotions are all to be in subjection to Christ.

The fact is that most of us rarely experience Christ's life and peace continually. That is because we most often give in to our fleshly impulses to satisfy them. "It is all about ME." And then we excuse our sin hardening our hearts so as to not recognize it for what it is and repent of it. We give in to our selfish will, our selfish emotions and our selfish bodily addictions. What is worse is that we many times believe that our will and emotions and needs are God's desire for me!

Read Romans 6:1 – 14

To be victorious in our Christian life and live in such a way that Christ's life is experienced in us we must "KNOW" some important truth (6:1-7) and take a personal life "INVENTORY" (6:8-11) and then "YIELD" ourselves to the Lord completely, BODY AND SOUL (6:12-14).

VS 1 Now that you have been justified by faith in Jesus Christ do you think that you can just go on sinning so that God's Grace can increase even more?

Romans 5:1 Therefore, having been justified (made righteous) by faith (in Christ), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

VS 2 Paul's answer, NO WAY! And his reason Why...

You, the believer in Jesus Christ, have already died to sin, so how can you keep on sinning as if you cannot help it? You may ask when did I die?

VS 3 DON'T YOU KNOW? This is stated in the sense that "you ought to know this." It is not just ignorance of truth here but that if you don't know this you should.

As many of us who are saved, are baptized into (identified with) the death of Christ. YOU share in His death, not in the accomplishing of it but in the benefits derived from it.

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FACT: Matthew 3:11-12, You are either baptized by Christ in/with the Holy Spirit or you will be baptized by Christ in Hell Fire. The receiving of the Holy Spirit from Christ upon faith in Him is the gift (Acts 2:38) of eternal life promised in the Old Testament.

This new era began at Pentecost when ALL believers would receive the Holy Spirit (Joel 2/Acts 2:17-21). Peter reminds the Jewish believers of this and they agreed with this fact when Cornelius and the first Gentiles were also saved. (Acts 11:1-18 note especially vs. 18 “repentance that leads to life”).

Ephesians 4:5 lets us all know that this is the ONLY baptism that saves us. “One Lord (Jesus Christ), One faith (in the Lord Jesus Christ) and One baptism (by the Lord Jesus Christ).

FACT: All believers are “baptized with the Holy Spirit into one body” and thus members of the ONE body of Christ made up of all believers. Believers are the “hands and feet” of the Lord in the world today. The Church is to be the “incarnation” of Christ today. (1 Corinthians 12:13)

FACT: This Baptism identifies all believers with the powerful effects of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Baptism = Identification

VS 4 THEREFORE, we were buried with Him through Baptism into His DEATH. We were identified with His Death, so that, JUST AS Christ Jesus was raised from the dead by the Father with a new body, even we also SHOULD walk in this newness of life.

It is a logical conclusion that if I have been buried with Christ in death, then I should now live a brand-new kind of life seeing that Christ was raised from the dead by God in a glorified body by which God is honored instead of dishonored.

VS 5 For if we have become planted with him in the likeness of his death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection.

After all, if I have been planted with Christ through His spiritual baptism so that I might grow in the likeness of His death, then it is only logical that I should be growing in the likeness of His resurrection.

VS 6 NOW we know (because I just told you)

Our old Adam’s nature has been crucified with Christ – it is dead

The sinful body has been made “powerless” (to be (render) entirely idle (useless), literally or figuratively: - abolish, destroy, do away, become (make) of no (none, without) effect, fail, loose, bring (come) to nothing, put away (down), vanish away, make void.)

We are no longer slaves to sin – in , we have been set free!

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VS 7-8 How can this be?

A dead person does not respond to bodily passions. I do not have to respond to temptations.

On the other hand, I am alive in Christ and planted with Him and can live in a manner that pleases God.

John 12:24-26 "I assure you: Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains by itself. But if it dies, it produces a large crop. The one who loves his life will lose it, and the one who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal (abundant) life. If anyone serves Me, he must follow Me. Where I am, there My servant also will be. If anyone serves Me the Father will honor him."

VS 9-10 You also know this: OUR ASSURANCE of VICTORY

Having risen from the dead Jesus cannot die again. Death has absolutely NO dominion over Him.

Jesus died to sin once for all of us.

Jesus lives to God without temptation.

VS 11 LIKEWISE (in the same manner), take an inventory of yourself and realize that you are absolutely dead to sin and ALIVE to God IN Christ Jesus our LORD.

When you realize you are about to be or are being tempted, IMMEDIATELY see yourself in Christ.

Being dead to sin IN His body on the Cross you cannot respond to temptation

And being ALIVE to God IN Christ's resurrected body you are able to respond with new desires from HIM.

VS 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, so that you should obey its desires.

I may feel the temptations of sinful desires at work in this dying body, but I do not have to let sin rule over me to the point where I obey what it wants me to do. In fact, I am commanded to NOT LET sin reign. It is a personal decision every time I am tempted to sin. Don't be deceived. Compare James 1:14-16

VS 13a and do not go on presenting (as a pagan offering) the members of your body as instruments of unrighteousness to sin;

Never should I surrender my mind in conscious thinking, my ears, my eyes, my mouth, my hands, my feet, my sexuality as instruments to carry out unrighteous deeds/acts giving in to what my sinful passions compel me to do.

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VS 13b BUT present yourselves (as an offering) to God as one who is alive from the dead, and your body members as instruments of righteousness to God.

I should instead surrender myself purposely to God, realizing that I am alive in my spirit by the Holy Spirit that lives in me through Christ's spiritual baptism, and yield the members (mind, eyes, ears, hands, feet, etc.) of my body to the Spirit's control.

VS 14a For SIN shall not be master (have dominion) over you!

This is a reasonable command that can be obeyed IF we will immediately PRESENT ourselves to God when we see temptation coming or it is already upon us. No sinful desire will be able to rule over my will when it is surrendered to my spirit/Holy Spirit. AS I wait upon the Lord by faith those desires will die and new desires to serve the Lord will arise. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13

Romans 8:12-13 So then, brothers, we are not obligated to "our old Adam nature" to live according to the flesh, for if you live according to Adam's old nature you are going to die. But if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

VS 14b *For you are not under law, but under GRACE!*

This is all true and possible because the moment that God justified me (made me righteous with Christ's righteousness).

I was under the curse of God's moral law, and by it under His WRATH and disfavor, but NOW IN Christ I am under His FAVOR/GRACE because of my baptism by Christ with His Holy Spirit, that is, my union with Christ.

The Bible is the source of our faith. "Faith comes by hearing (with intent to obey the Word of God), and hearing by the Word of God" (Romans 10:17). The facts given to us in the Word of God are there to "hear" and "obey." When we "walk by faith" we are obeying the Word of God. This is the "faith that pleases God" (Hebrews 11:6).

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CONCLUSION/APPLICATIONS

KNOW your blessings. YOU are identified with Christ and in union with Him through spiritual baptism.

KNOW that just because Grace is abounding it is NOT okay to continue to live in SIN.

KNOW that you can walk in this new way of life today. You have Christ's life in you. LIVE IT.

NOW we KNOW the old nature of Adam has been crucified making it powerless to MAKE us sin.

HAVE YOU taken a spiritual inventory lately?

DO YOU CONSIDER your old self dead to sin and alive to Christ?

Will you NOW determine to continually PRESENT your body as a living sacrifice to God and His service? Romans 12:1-2

Who is your master today, your old nature inherited from Adam, or your new nature, Christ?

You are either living under the law of death (sin and die) or the Grace of Life in Christ. It is your choice.

Dear Holy Spirit of God, forgive me for the many times I have quenched your power at work in me by not giving you first place in my life when I felt tempted. It is only by yielding to you, the one Jesus gave me through his baptism when I believed in Him, that I am able to be faithful to my Lord Jesus in my mind and body and experience a saving power over sin – which I could never realize by my own efforts to keep God's Law. I am sorry for the unnecessary suffering I have experienced since being saved for not yielding to you. I am sorry for grieving you in my continual sinning, and in provoking you to jealousy because of my love for the world and sinful pleasures.

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LESSON ELEVEN – The Fruit of the Spirit, Part 1

In the first ten lessons, we have been giving DEFINITION to what Scripture teaches about a LIFE of relationship as a follower of God through Jesus Christ. That is how to walk with God. In the next three lessons, we are going to learn what it means to walk IN CHRIST (in such a close RELATIONSHIP that our entire lives are TOTALLY focused on living under the control of the Holy Spirit, who guides us in line with God's declared will as given to us in the Bible). Becoming a SERVANT of God is the final goal. Yielding, in obedience to the Holy Spirit, in accordance with the Word, is essential for our personal growth - becoming like Jesus. It is our responsibility to diligently study the Word, pray and practice our faith.

Introduction to the fruit of the Spirit

We will follow the teachings of Galatians 5:22 – 26, also known as the Fruit of the Spirit to help us to grow into a living relationship that honors God and reflects our love for Him. We will be quoting and discussing different scripture verses to enhance our understanding of each of the 9 parts of the Fruit of the Spirit. *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness (generosity), faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. 24 And those [who are] Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. 26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.”* These qualities are directly in opposition with the characteristics of the FLESH - worldly sins that so easily enslave us.

We can see from this verse that there are two aspects to “Walking in Relationship with Jesus” – things we must NOT do any longer as a child of God and other things that confirm that we are thankful for His salvation and therefore we WANT to do them in gratitude. The Bible describes it: “walking in the fear (or reverent knowledge) of God.” Our goal is to make the teaching understandable with examples that will help each of us walk “worthy of God” (Word).

The purpose of these lessons is to Equip, Empower and Encourage you as a disciple of Christ to share the practical life lessons you experience with (preferably) 3 people who will do the same after they have been inspired by you. Multiplication in the 1-on-3 Disciple Maker Program (to the 4th generation – as mentioned in 2 Timothy 2:2) is the key to reaching entire communities with the Gospel of Jesus.

In the week after attending each lesson: 1. Go over the central messages of the lesson. 2. Use the Biblical Principles from the lessons and share with others. 3. Clearly share your faith in Christ with others. Great impact can be made on people who have some need or another if we can accurately apply God's Word to their situation (especially if we have experienced God's favor at a time that we ourselves had been in a similar difficulty).

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For our students to gain the maximum benefit from these lessons we encourage you to:

Make sure that you understand the central message of each Scripture by asking a few questions –

- a) What is being said exactly?
- b) What does it call ME to do today?
- c) How does it change my views on this subject? d) What does it call me to do?

Understand what the message of verses before and after the verse you are studying is?

This helps to give you a better understanding of WHY the subject is addressed in certain ways.

Pray about the message of the particular verses, asking the Holy Spirit to give insight and wisdom into what, why, how and when you will be able to share that information and experience with Brothers or Sisters in your community.

Share what God has done for you personally (Salvation, freedom from fear of condemnation for your sins, etc.). Asking questions is always a good way of starting conversations because they are not threatening – statements about faith can often have people act defensively.

There are many more verses in Scripture on the subjects, you need to find them in your reading and make notes of what you discern GOD the Holy Spirit is teaching you through them.

Remember that LIVING in a RELATIONSHIP with Christ is the key to a fruitful life.

LOVE: God is Love. God's love is selfless John 3:16. God's love commands us to love God selflessly and to love others selflessly. This love does not always "feel" good but can hurt, BUT it will always yield the fruit of Joy and Peace. See God's "emotions" in Judges 10:16.

Let us look at Philippians 1:9 – 11. “And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, 10 that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, 11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness which [are] by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”

Read John 3:16. Scripture shows how DEEP God's love for His fallen creation goes – only God can GIVE His Son as a sacrifice so that you and I can be FORGIVEN because

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Jesus has paid the price (in our place) to set us free from the POWER and PUNISHMENT of sin.

When Jesus was asked what the greatest command was, He answered, "Love the Lord your God ... and your neighbor as yourself". From this, we can see that as we grow in our faith, relationship and walk with Christ, LOVE has a high priority with God, our Father.

What happens if we allow the "worldly love" to rule in our lives? We are told in 2Timothy 3:1 - 5: "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: 2 For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, 3 unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, 4 traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, 5 having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!"

1 John 4:9 helps us to see again how much God loves His children: *"In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him."*

So, as disciples of Christ, we have the calling to grow and exercise our faith in LIVING with God's love in our hearts which moves us to share His Word to our family, friends, and community (loving them).

From John 13:35 we learn how important it is to show this quality Love to people we meet with: "Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

Here is space for you to write down more on LOVE to help you know and live as the Scriptures call for:

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JOY: Is not dependent on our circumstances, but upon our trust in God, who is with us in all circumstances. Joy is an attitude of cheerfulness that circumstances cannot affect because our JOY is in the LORD who is greater than our circumstances, good or bad. (Psalm 30:5). In Psalm 90:14 it is God's loving-kindness towards us that brings us joy regardless of what the world or the devil is doing to us.

John 16:19 – 24 Put Jesus first: *"19 Now Jesus knew that they desired to ask Him, and He said to them, 'Are you inquiring among yourselves about what I said, 'A little while, and you will not see Me; and again, a little while, and you will see Me'? 20 'Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. 21 'A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. 22 'Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you. 23 'And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. 24 'Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full."*

Philippians 4:4 – 7: *4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say, rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord [is] at hand. 6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

James 1:2 & 3 helps us to see the exact purpose for such difficulties: *"My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, 3 knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience."*

Write down more verses/experiences that inspire you to rejoice in the Lord. The encouragement gained from the joyful acknowledgment that God is the source of real LIFE will inspire you to yield more to the working of the Holy Spirit in your life, gaining more insight into God's will/calling for you personally:

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PEACE: An attitude of Calmness in our inner man that only the Holy Spirit can give us as we trust in Christ, no matter the circumstances of life (sad, tragic, dangerous, etc.) We trust that Christ knows all about things happening to me (as a child of God) and that He has our best interests at heart. We do, however, suffer the consequences of our sins such sins limit our RELATIONSHIP with God.

In John 14:27 we see that Jesus gives us the heavenly peace which is different from the worldly peace: 27 "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

From Ephesians 2:13 – 18, we learn God's peace allows us to remain in control of our emotions and actions. This is essential in the life of a "Servant Leader". The Apostle Paul teaches this to the Ephesians saying, *"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father."*

Our POSITION in Christ is defined in Romans 5:1-2 "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

In Romans 12: 18 we see the Apostle Paul clarify the operation of this peace in our lives "in Christ" further: "18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. 19 Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."

From the last two scriptures, we see that PEACE covers relationships at two levels. First, if we are Believers, our relationship with God has been restored/reconciled. Second, to KEEP that relationship PURE we also must live in a "relationship of peace" with our fellow man. ONLY obedience to God in both of these relationships will allow us to grow Spiritually as Disciples of Jesus.

Use the space below to record more Scriptures/teaching notes for yourself to use when you teach your disciples in the future:

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LESSON TWELVE – The Fruit of the Spirit, Part 2

We trust that you have learned in Part 1 how important it is for you to Study the Word of God to understand what His will for His children is AND that obeying the leading of the Holy Spirit allows us to grow and to represent Christ here on earth. We need to understand that growing in our Spiritual life also means that we can be His AMBASSADORS (2 Corinthians 5:20-21) “Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ’s behalf, be reconciled to God. 21 For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” WHAT is an Ambassador? A person who goes to a host country to represent the home country’s best interests in the host country. So, while in this world (host country) we represent Christ (the heavenly Host) by declaring His Gospel of Salvation to the “worldly people” (unbelievers) NOT because of anything we have or are BUT because of what JESUS has done for us (reconciled us with the Father through His sacrifice on the cross and declaring BELIEVERS “RIGHTEOUS”).

When we submit to the leading of the Spirit of God we grow through obeying His direction – we have already discussed the first 3 parts of the Fruit of the Spirit – Love, Joy & Peace – How are you experiencing them in your life?

Write down some of the things you have seen God show you over the last week with regard to:

1. How you can love God and your neighbor better?

2. What increases your Joyfulness?

3. Do you see how living in PEACE with people around you can take away STRESS from your life? This makes it much easier to follow Christ fully.

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PATIENCE (some translations use “Longsuffering”).

The PATIENCE referred to is the attitude that God has towards us when we sin: He holds back the punishment that we deserve and waits to give us a chance to REPENT. 1 John 1:9 -10 shows God’s patience clearly: *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”* So, no one escapes God’s scrutiny, believers are forgiven while worldly people will face justice.

Psalm 46:10 reminds us that we are limited in insight and wisdom but He is not “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!” – as His heirs we can wait with patience.

In Hebrews 6:9 – 12 the promise is confirmed: “9 But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. 10 For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love, which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. 11 And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, 12 that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

Isaiah 40:31

“But those who wait on the LORD Shall renew their strength;

They shall mount up with wings like eagles,

They shall run and not be weary,

and They shall walk and not faint.”

Two of the places where our patience is tested regularly is waiting for answers to prayers and holding back when we want to respond to people who have offended us. Exercising in this area will be fruitful. Pray to become the disciples God wants you to connect with when you reach out in the community and study so that you know how to work with the people you lead.

Write down your experience on how and in what areas God is growing your “Patience”:

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KINDNESS (or GENTLENESS) In Titus 3:4 – 6 we see God modeling this prescribed attribute, while we are still His enemies: *“But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior”*. He does not condemn us (as unbelievers) but by His “loving kindness” draws our hearts towards Him to allow us to receive His Salvation. This KINDNESS is reflected in “mentoring” or “investing” time (discipleship) to help people grow in their faith.

As Disciples of Christ, we are called to take the Gospel to everybody, everywhere, all the time – but we have to do so wisely by meeting them where they are and engaging them kindly. The apostle Paul models this very clearly when he uses this example: *“to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some”* 1 Corinthians 9:22.

A simple yet practical test for each of us is to MEASURE our ATTITUDE when we disciple people who are having difficulties and need help. Do we: 1. Keep quiet, and LISTEN to them? 2. Express sympathy? 3. Respond with “I will pray for you” and then leave? 4. Assure them that you are THERE if they need help? Or 5. Sit down, pray with them right there and then find out what you can do to make their lives more bearable and then do it! – Help them to a position where they can better cope with their problems! The closer you grow to number 5 in your Spiritual Life the more of this fruit, KINDNESS, is present. We have to be aware that this is not something that we can do by our will, it is worked in our hearts as we yield to the promptings of the Spirit, thus there is a very real PRAYER activity attached to discipling people.

Write down how you believe you can be more kind to people so that you can bring the GOSPEL to them.

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GOODNESS – 2 Peter 1:5 – 9; Philippians 2

"Goodness as an inherent quality, condition" and is the Christ-like character in the believer to display God's goodness. This glorifies Him as the author (source) of what is truly good."

Although Goodness and Kindness are fairly closely related to the distinction (in the original language) can be made that GOODNESS lies closer to helping someone materially (including financially) than Kindness does. We can define it as "being a person who is generous, big-hearted and charitable with his finances." We see that the Bible tells us that GOODNESS includes God giving His people land, etc. In Jeremiah 9:25 "They captured fortified cities and fertile land; they took possession of houses filled with all kinds of good things, wells already dug, vineyards, olive groves and fruit trees in abundance. They ate to the full and were well-nourished; they reveled in your great goodness."

Also, we are admonished to be generous (as individuals and as a church in our communities) in Romans 15:5 "Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus,"

This last thought becomes even more important as our group (or church) grows – that is why we are working with you – so that the Body of Christ (believers) can take care of people struggling in your communities. Do NOT wait for "someone else" – the person who obeys God is His true disciple and displaying "goodness."

Discuss with one another and write down what you (individually and as a group) see can YOU do in your community (home):

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LESSON THIRTEEN – The Fruit of the Spirit, part 3

We are now going to look at the last 3 parts of the Fruit of the Spirit and how they impact our personal and community lives. The best way to see how we grow in our Spiritual Lives is to measure how much of each of the 9 parts of the Fruit of the Spirit is present in your life.

A quick look back: Discuss in the group for a short time how you have grown over the past weeks in each of the areas that we have already covered (make sure that you also mention the PRAYERS God has answered in your life and in the lives of people you are actively praying for):

Love: Are you finding it easier to pray for and/or to speak to people about your relationship with Jesus as your Savior?

Joy: Are you experiencing the JOY of being set free from the OLD life as you allow Jesus to fill your heart and Life with more of Himself (knowledge and activities to His honor)?

Peace: Have you released the burdens of the OLD life to Jesus and experienced His freedom to follow Him in your New Life?

Patience: When you talk to people with problems or those who do not follow Jesus, are you able to share your faith WITHOUT becoming tired or angry, even if you must explain something over and over?

Kindness: Do you have the attitude of looking to help people who you meet and then become aware of a need in their lives – saying it differently; are you looking for opportunities to “befriend” such people?

Goodness: When a need is identified in someone’s life, are you prepared to invest time, effort and even finances into that relationship? Or would you introduce such a person to your church leadership AND work TOGETHER with them to help such people get on their feet again?

CAUTION: The temptation to become “self-righteous/ Prideful” about MY Accomplishments can damage our RELATIONSHIP with Christ, and therefore God. Scripture is clear: God resists the proud.

To grow in our practical walk with Jesus we must study (not just read) the WORD of God regularly so that we can see what the Word teaches us in different circumstances (different places in the Bible); how to be obedient to His purposes for our lives. We also need to PRAY to grow in the RELATIONSHIP even more as God answers our prayers – this does NOT mean that whatever we ask for He gives exactly as requested.

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It means that He promised to HEAR our prayers and by the promptings of the Spirit (through the Scriptures and others) we are led to follow God's Word faithfully and allow God to work in His way and His time. As an example: I need a job, so I pray for God to help me find one. Then I hear from a friend who is taking another job and tells me that he has mentioned my name to the company and they want me to come in for an interview. See this as an answer to prayer NOT A COINCIDENCE.

Share what you see God doing in your life to make you more like Jesus.

We continue with the last 3 parts of the Fruit of the Spirit in this lesson:

FAITH (faithfulness or to be faithful) – Faithfulness is to be fully convinced about what one has heard about God or Christ or spiritual truth. Hebrews 11:1 and following teach this kind of faith is that which is convinced that God is faithful to what He has said and we can trust Him to do and we can act upon what He has said. We can walk obediently to God's Word in our daily life knowing that He will keep His Word. By obeying Him, we practice being FAITHFUL to Him – Walking in His will = Faithfulness. This is how God allows us to participate in the GROWING RELATIONSHIP with Him that He desires.

Faithfulness is that quality of faith that presses on. It is enduring and "maturing. Here are two examples in the Bible that the Apostle Paul gives of the importance of "Faithfulness" in the life of a believer. In 2 Timothy 2:2 he writes that the people Timothy chooses to disciple MUST be faithful - "and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also." In 1 Corinthians 4:2 we see that it is required in Stewards (or Leaders) that they are found faithful.

If we want to describe a person who is faithful a bit more we could say, it is someone whose CHARACTER makes them RELIABLE, LOYAL, STEADFAST, DEVOTED, TRUSTWORTHY, DEPENDABLE, DEDICATED, someone in whom the church and community see Christ. To be faithful as a Christian is to be like Jesus Christ who was faithful to His Father, obeying His Will regardless of the hardship. Look at Hebrews 12:1-3

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Discuss each 1 of these qualities of CHARACTER with your group and make sure that each of you understands what is meant by each of these words.

Reflect on these qualities in your life and ask the Holy Spirit to show you where you need to grow. Confess these shortcomings to Christ and ask God to work in you in such a way that your relatives, friends, and community see Jesus Christ in you.

GENTLENESS (also translated MEEKNESS) does not mean WEAKNESS or someone who is indecisive – it can be well defined as “power or authority under control”. Think of the power of an ox that is used to plow with – if that ox is trained to pull in a yoke the farmer can do a lot of work with it – but if it is wild it can do a lot of damage.

A disciple-Maker in whose life the Spirit of God rules (he or she has grown as a Servant Leader) can work fruitfully with people without force, anger or manipulation. People will be comfortable to follow such leaders.

Said positively, it is a disciplined person with strong convictions who submit to authority and is able to control how to respond with measured, thoughtful answers even under difficult and hurtful conditions.

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In 1 Peter 3:15 – 17 a real-life example is discussed: “But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for doing good than for doing evil.”

The character of a person who asks God to use him to reach others with the Gospel is given in 1 Timothy 3. “This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach; not given to wine, not violent, not greedy for money, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not covetous; one who rules his own house well, having his children in submission with all reverence (for if a man does not know how to rule his own house, how will he take care of the church of God?); not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil. Moreover, he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he falls into reproach and the snare of the devil.”

These are qualifications for men to be elders in the local church but apply to ALL Christians who want to be effective in the ministry of the Lord.

SELF-CONTROL (Temperance) – to be in control of one’s own emotions, passions, and desires. That is a person who lives in moderation, restraint, being balanced and disciplined.

This quality does not stop someone from being a strong follower of Christ, but it does mean that such a person submits to God under control of the Spirit of God, by being obedient to, and LIVING by, the principles set out in the Word of God.

A positive, good way of practically defining a person who has grown in well in their walk with God, under the control of the Holy Spirit, in gratitude of the reconciliation (redemptive) work of Christ Jesus on the cross is:

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1. A person who submits to the Will of God as seen in Matthew 11:29, "Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."

2. Someone who is teachable – not too proud to learn: 2 Timothy 2:15 "Be diligent (learn) to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

3. In 2 Peter 1:3-11, Peter is reminding us that God has given us everything we need to live a godly life (divine power - indwelling Holy Spirit) by coming to an "experiential/relationship" knowledge of Him. It is through knowing God's Promises (Walking according to the Word) that we are able then to have fellowship (word "partakers" is *koinonos* or fellowship) with the divine nature (Christ in us) and have (can) escape the corruption of the world and selfish lusts.

Therefore BE very diligent to apply the virtues of Christ (including self-control vs. 6). IF you are diligent to apply the virtues of Christ, you will not be useless in the ministry of Christ, nor without fruit, for your co-laboring with Christ (experiential knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ). Therefore be diligent (vs. 10) to make sure you are fulfilling the obligations of your calling (walk worthy) and election (kingdom inheritance) so you don't stumble (around in sin and error). The result will be an abundant entrance (well done, full reward, glory and, honor with Christ, greater positions of authority, etc.) into the Kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

James 3 deals with controlling the Tongue, and gives us good illustrations for measuring how far we have grown in our spiritual lives.

The easiest way to measure the self-control in your life is to answer the following questions truthfully: Do people easily anger you? Do you feel you have to "defend yourself" aggressively or often? Do you have strained relationships with many people? Do you feel that you MUST always be right?

Do you need to repent/confess or lay something down before God?