

The Bible Made Simple



Teacher's Manual



Ryan N. Franklin

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by Ryan N. Franklin

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1 The Word of God

As this world is faced with enormous problems—marital, financial, emotional, and many others, we have to have something that will provide the help and the answers that we need. The question is, “Where do we find this help?” The best place we can look is in the Word of God. There is a deep desire and thirst within every one of us that can only be satisfied by Christ. John 4:14 says, “But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” The Bible gives us hope of life. It’s not life that will wither and die. It’s an unbelievable everlasting life. II Timothy 2:15 says, “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” The only way we will discover these principles and this life the Lord desires us to have is by opening His Book and studying the Scriptures.

This Bible study is not about the teachings of a church or of a specific religion. It is a simple overview of the Word of God. In this first lesson, we are going to do a basic introduction to the Bible. In your own words, what does the Bible mean to you?

In This Lesson

- ✓ The Journey of the Bible
- ✓ Facts about This Amazing Book
- ✓ Is the Bible True?
- ✓ The Bible in Our Lives

The Journey of the Bible

1 The Start of God's Communication

Do you know how God communicated before the Bible?

The fascinating story of how we got the Bible in its present form actually started thousands of years ago.

During the first 2500 years of man's history, there was no written Word.

God spoke through a few specific men, which we will study in future lessons. He also used other ways of communication, such as nature, dreams, visions, angels, and symbols.

He communicated in many ways, but the main way He spoke before the introduction of the Bible was through man's conscience.

2 The Beginnings of the Written Word

The first person to see a written Covenant of God was Moses. On Mount Sinai, the Lord inscribed a portion of the Law on tablets of stone with His finger.

Then Moses was told to put the tablets of stone inside a holy, sacred place called the Ark of the Covenant.

In time, the scribes of Israel very carefully began to write on leather, clay tablets, wood, and other things. Eventually paper was used.

Enforced reading of the Word was a strong way of preserving the Law as well (Deuteronomy 31:9-11). Every Israelite was required to hear someone read all of God's written laws every seven years.

Through a lifetime, a Jew would have heard the Word read about ten or twelve times. This continual reading of the Bible put God's Word as a priority in their lives.

Then, the Jewish scribes fulfilled an order to copy and preserve the Scriptures.

They came up with a plan to make sure that every letter was copied exactly.

The original Hebrew Scriptures were copied and translated for many generations.

In the 1450s, the first Bible was printed. The accuracy of the printing press and lower costs for books has placed the Word of God in many people's hands.

The King James Version was published in 1611.

Other translations are available in English and other languages. It was a long road—from the first day God spoke to Adam until today.

Facts about This Amazing Book

1 | God-Inspired



Read II Peter 1:20-21.

The Bible is God-inspired (I Corinthians 14:37; II Timothy 3:16).

In the Bible, there were at least thirty-two writers covering 3600 years of man's history.

These books were written in different ages, different countries, and by different men; yet when their writings became one book, there is not even one contradiction.

The most intellectual men could not pull off the feats of knowledge contained in the Bible without the inspiration of God.

The words "Thus saith the Lord" appear over three hundred times.

The Bible is either God's Word to man—or it's not. There's no middle ground. The bottom line is the Bible is God-inspired.

2 | Most Popular Book Ever

The Bible is the best gift God ever gave to man.

The American Bible Society has distributed over eight hundred sixty million Bibles since 1816.

The Bible in its completeness is now available in over two hundred thirty languages, more than there are nations on earth.

It has been published in more languages, more copies have been produced, and more people have read it than any other book in history.

3 | Unforgotten



Read Matthew 24:35.

Only half of 1 percent of all books published survive seven years. Eighty percent of all books published are forgotten in one year. The Bible is over two thousand years old and is today's best seller.

It doesn't matter how old it is or how many people criticize it, His Word will never pass away.

4 | Arrangement

Turn to the table of contents in your Bible.

The Bible isn't one book. It is a library of books compiled into one volume.

The Bible is divided into two testaments—the old and the new.

God's agreement with man about salvation before He came in the flesh as Jesus Christ is called the Old Testament.

God's agreement with man about salvation after Christ came is called the New Testament.

How many books are in the Bible?

There is a total of sixty-six—thirty-nine in the Old Testament and twenty-seven in the New Testament.

Each testament is divided into sections. The Old Testament begins with the Law. This includes the first five books of the Bible written by Moses.

These books have the story of Creation, the Flood, and how the Jewish people began.

The next twelve books are the history of the Jewish people.

Then, there are five poetry books.

Next, there are the major prophets and the minor prophets. Minor does not mean they are any less important. It just means they are shorter.

The first four books of the New Testament are the Gospels, or the life of Christ. These are the records of when Jesus walked on earth, taught His apostles, died on the cross, rose again, and many other details.

Acts, the next book, is the actions of the apostles after Christ ascended.

Romans through Jude were letters to the churches and writings of the apostles.

Revelation, the last book, is prophecy of the end time.

Which parts of the Bible are you most familiar with?

Is the Bible True?

1 | Scientific Evidence

What kind of evidence do you need? How much evidence do you need? If you had the evidence, would you believe?

There are many proofs within the Bible that show it is a divine book, but how can we really know that it is true?

Because God is the Creator of the universe (Hebrews 11:3), everything the Bible says about science is true. Let's look at a few Scriptures.



Read Isaiah 40:22.

During the 1400s, people of learning believed that the world was flat. It was about 2,100 years after the Bible was written that mankind learned the earth was round.

Most of us learned in elementary school that Christopher Columbus sailed into the sea to discover the earth was round. It is believed that part of his justification to Queen Isabella of Spain was Isaiah 40:22 which had been written many years before.

The Bible was two thousand years ahead of science.



Read Jeremiah 33:22.

Learned men believed there were a certain number of stars in the sky that could be counted. It was not until the 1600s that they found out by using a telescope that they were innumerable. Yet, Jeremiah had it written many years before that the host of Heaven, which is the stars, cannot be numbered (Genesis 15:5).

At one time, the scientists were convinced that the earth rested upon something. Job 26:7 discusses the fact that the earth has an invisible support. This was not accepted as a scientific fact until 1687, three thousand years after Job stated it.

2 | Medical Evidence



Read Leviticus 17:11.

Had only the doctors of the past known this, many lives, perhaps even that of George Washington, would have been spared a death caused by the practice of “bleeding.” George Washington died because he had a common cold. The doctors believed they could cure him by removing his blood from his body. We know today and the Bible had it written many years ago that blood is needed to sustain life.

3 | Historical Evidence

Do you like to study history?

Many cities mentioned in the Bible have been located and identified.

The Flood has been verified in every known civilization.

The historical accounts in the Bible have been used by archeologists, geologists, and others to find valuable artifacts, minerals, and wealth.

4 | Dead Sea Scrolls Evidence

The Dead Sea Scrolls are a set of scrolls found by a few shepherd boys near the Dead Sea between the years of 1947 and 1956.

The scrolls were more than 1900 years old. They provide remarkable proof that late copies and translations were identical to the Scriptures Christ read while on the earth.

Due to this discovery, we have fragments and some complete texts of every Old Testament book except Esther, all dating from the time of Christ.

5 | Archaeological Evidence

Have you ever had an interest in archaeology?

The confirmation of archaeology to the truthfulness of the Bible is one of the most amazing developments of modern times.

There are thousands of archaeological finds that support the validity of the Bible.

Entire Old Testament nations have been found and identified.

The identities of major Bible characters, such as Abraham, have been uncovered through archaeology.

In 1922, Ur of the Chaldees was discovered. Genesis 11 says this was the birthplace of Abraham.

Confirming evidence has been found for the creation and fall of man, the Flood, and the Tower of Babel.

Not one archaeological find has ever disproved the Bible.

6 | Prophetic Evidence

Because man cannot see the future by himself, prophecy is a very reasonable gauge of supernatural inspiration.

Predicting the future is something that many men have desired since the beginning of time. Concerning prophecy, the Bible is supreme to any other book. A person could search in vain through pages of other "sacred writings" and not find even one single line of accurate prophecy. However, one-third of the entire Bible deals with prophecy.

Our Bible has over 6,000 prophecies and many of those have already happened exactly as they were given.

During the lifetime of Jesus, hundreds of prophecies were fulfilled.

Five hundred years before the birth of Jesus Christ, Old Testament writers predicted the time of His birth and that He would be born of a virgin (Isaiah 7:14) in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2).

Isaiah said He would be cast off by men (Isaiah 53:3) and brutally crucified (Isaiah 53).

There are many prophecies relating to the betrayal, trial, death, suffering, and burial of Jesus and were fulfilled in one day's time.

Christ predicted there would be wars. He talked about famines and earthquakes. He cautioned that there would be political turmoil. He warned that in the last days there would be an increase in deception, false Christs, and witchcraft.

Sickening immorality and rebellion was predicted.

A "Beast" (the antichrist) would one day dominate the world as we know it and require every person to take the mark of the Beast to buy or sell (Revelation 13).



Read Isaiah 31:5.

Isaiah predicted that airplanes would be used to defend Israel thousands of years before the invention of an airplane.

We have just touched the surface of all the Scriptures that show the Bible is true. We could spend many, many hours studying and researching them.

Is there any doubt in your mind that the Bible is true?

What parts of this evidence do you find most convincing or impressive?

The Bible In Our Lives

1 | How Do We Get the Word of God Inside Us?



Read Acts 17:11.

Reading the Bible can't just be a Sunday ritual. We have to read it every day.



Read II Timothy 2:15.

Again, we can't just read it as ritual. We have to study it.



Read Psalm 119:2.

We have to open our whole heart to it.



Read Psalm 119:15, 48.

We have to think about it and reflect on it. We have to meditate on it.



Read James 1:22 and Matthew 7:21.

Finally, once we have heard the Word of God, have hidden it in our hearts, and have meditated on it, we have to begin actually doing the things the Bible tells us to do.

2 | Why Is the Word of God So Important?



Read Matthew 4:4.

We need it for everyday life. It's impossible to live a Christian life with "bread alone."



Read Romans 10:17.

It gives us faith.



Read Psalm 119:11.

God hates sin. Most of the time, people don't even realize they are sinning.

The Bible allows us to recognize it and therefore helps us to make the decision to not sin.



Read Psalm 119:98-99.

It gives us wisdom and understanding.



Read Psalm 119:105, 133.

It guides our steps. The Bible will lead us and help us make it from day to day.



Read Romans 5:12.

It lets us know we've sinned and we need a savior.



Read John 3:16.

It shows us God's love for the world.



Read John 3:5.

It tells us God's plan for saving the world.

3 | What Is Next?

Taking a step back, why should we even care to read the Bible? What if I don't want to have faith? Who cares if He guides my steps? What if I don't want to get rid of the sin in my life?

What happens next in the overall timeline of life may be of interest to you.

We'll study this in more detail in upcoming lessons, but let us take a look at one part now.



Read II Peter 3:10.

The Lord is coming back soon. This Scripture says that He will come as a thief in the night and there will be lots of destruction on earth. More than two thousand years ago, the prophet Joel and Peter prophesied it (Joel 2:25-32).



Read Acts 2:16-21.

What do these Scriptures mean to you?

God is pouring out His Spirit on all flesh, now. He is giving us an opportunity to study His Word and find out what we need to do to escape eternal destruction.

God has awesome things in store for the people that choose Him. We must study and search the Scriptures. For in them, through Jesus Christ, we will have life more abundantly (II Timothy 2:15; John 10:10). The Bible is a miracle and it's one of the greatest possessions we could ever hold in our hand. Next, we'll open the first few pages of this miracle book and study the beginning in Genesis.

Note: If your student(s) have already repented of their sins, been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, and received the gift of the Holy Ghost, it is encouraged to consider teaching Lesson 10 regarding Covenant living before moving on to Lesson 2.

2 How the World Began

This lesson is a study of how the world began in the book of Genesis. In this book, we find the “roots” of our world and the universe, of man and nations, of sin and redemption. Genesis is the foundation of all theology. God first built man a home and then created man in His own image. He wanted to have communion with His sons and daughters who would eventually rule the earth. Unfortunately, man chose not to be obedient to the one thing God required. When man made the choice to disobey God, Satan was allowed to become god of this world. The rest of the Bible tells a story of what God did to save man from Satan’s slavery and reunite man with God.

In This Lesson

- ✓ In the Beginning God
- ✓ The Age of Innocence
- ✓ Innocence Ends

In the Beginning God

1 | The Incomprehensible God



Read the first verse of the Bible, Genesis 1:1.

The first four words say, “In the beginning God.” There is no way to truly comprehend how awesome God really is. He is beyond what we could ever think or imagine.

If you had to put words to your description of God, what would they be?

Our human reasoning alone is not a sufficient way to understand the character of God, but through Scripture, we can get a small glimpse of Him.

Psalm 25:8 says He is good. God is not good because it is popular to be good. Neither does He follow by some sort of standard for goodness. God sets the standard. He is the source of goodness. He alone is the rule and measure of what we truly know to be good.

Psalm 145:17 says that He is gracious in all His works. When we speak of God's grace, we speak of those gifts that no man deserves, but God gives them anyway. Because of His grace, we are able to experience salvation today.

Isaiah 6:3 speaks of His holiness. God is eternally incorruptible.

In John 4:8 says that God is love. God is the Creator and the source of love. It is by Him that we experience love. We can't even comprehend the depths of His love for us.

God is omnipotent, which means He has all power (Revelation 19:6).

God is omnipresent, which means He is everywhere at the same time (Jeremiah 23:24).

God is omniscient, which means He is all-knowing (Job 34:21). Nothing is hidden from Him. He sees and hears everything.

Revelation 1:8 says He is the beginning and the ending. He is eternal. He is infinite. He is not limited by time or space.

Daniel 6:26 says that He is a living God. God is not some figment of our imagination.

John 4:24 says God is a Spirit.

We can also find in many places in the Bible that God is one. There are many Scriptures to confirm that, and we will explore this in more detail later on in the study (Deuteronomy 6:4; 4:35; Ephesians 4:6; Malachi 2:10).

Hebrews 13:8 says that He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. There are many other attributes we can find in Scripture that illustrate who He is and how truly awesome He really is. It is a comfort to know that all of those descriptions we see in Scripture still stand today because God never changes.

2 | The Creation of Angels

Genesis, which means beginnings, provides the foundation for understanding the rest of the Bible.



Read Genesis 1:1 again.

The phrase "heaven and the earth" refers to the entire universe. This would include all the separate parts.

God created many things in the Book of Genesis. In each act of creation, God simply spoke, and it happened.

The Bible does not specifically say when angels were created, but most believe they were created before man (Job 38:4, 8).

Angels were created strictly to worship and serve God (Revelation 5:11-12). We, as humans, can ask God for help, and He will send them to help. The Bible has many instances where God used angels for certain special assignments on earth.

They were used to administer aid in a crisis, provide protection from danger, or to give a message from God (Psalm 34:7; 91:11; Hebrews 1:14).

Do you know who Lucifer is?

Lucifer was believed to hold the highest rank among the angels. He was very attractive and wise (Ezekiel 28:13-17).

God gave him special gifts and talents and he allowed pride to corrupt his heart. He wanted to exalt his throne above God's (Isaiah 14:12-15). Because of this, he was thrown out of Heaven to the earth, and divine judgment was made against him.

When he was cast to Earth, Satan took on the role of "ruler of the darkness of this world" (Ephesians 6:12).

Revelation 12:7-9 indicates a third of the angels in Heaven also went with Lucifer.

Their one purpose on Earth is to deceive and hinder the plan of God. Hell was created for the devil and his angels, and eventually they will all go there (Matthew 25:41).

Satan is one of the many names of Lucifer. It means adversary. He became an adversary when he rebelled against God.

Satan is powerful, but he's not all-powerful like God. He has knowledge, but he's not all-knowing.

 Read II Corinthians 4:4.

According to this Scripture, Satan deceives the minds of men.

Can you see in this world how Satan deceives people?

To avoid this deception, we have to allow the light of Christ to shine on us.

We have to rely on God's guidance and His direction.

3 | The Creation of the Earth



Read Genesis 1:3-5.

On the first day, light appeared, and then light and darkness were divided.

On the second day (Genesis 1:6-8) the firmament—which is the atmosphere surrounding the earth—was made, and the waters were divided from each other (water and air).

On the third day (Genesis 1:9-13) dry land appeared, the land plants began to grow, and the water and land were divided.

On the fourth day (Genesis 1:14-19) the sun, the moon, and the stars became visible and began to function as light. The work on the fourth day permanently regulated the solar system.

On the fifth day (Genesis 1:20-23) living creatures such as fish, insects, and birds were made.



Read Genesis 1:24-31.

On the sixth day three types of animals were made—cattle (domestic animals such as cows, sheep, goats, and horses), creeping things (all reptiles), and beasts of the field (all wild animals and other four-footed animals).

Man was the last thing God created on the sixth day.

In the midst of creating these animals and other amazing creations, why do you think God would create man?

The main thing that makes man distinct from every other creature is the power of choice. Humanity has a choice. God didn't want a being that operated like a robot. He wanted a man that could choose to have relationship with Him.

According to Revelation 4:11, man was created to give pleasure to God.

Even though God does extend a helping hand in anything we ask, we were created to give pleasure to Him.

God desires to be close to every one of us, but He wants a voluntary relationship. Will man choose to join with Him?



Read Genesis 2:1-3.

Then on the seventh day, God stopped creating and rested.

The Age of Innocence

1 | Adam and Eve in Paradise

Bible scholars have divided the span of time from Creation through the end into seven time periods, or ages. In every age in the Bible, God gives an opportunity for man to fulfill His plan before a judgment is made.

The first age is called "Innocence" because man was innocent.

God placed the first man, Adam, in a paradise called the Garden of Eden.

In your words, how would you describe paradise?

God saw that Adam needed what the Bible calls a "help meet," or a companion, compatible to him intellectually, morally, and physically.

As God caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep, a rib was taken from his side. From that rib, the Lord made the first woman—Eve.

2 | Adam and Eve's Sin



There was one rule in the Garden. Do you know what it was?

Read Genesis 2:17.

God's plan was to not eat of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

Adam and Eve could eat of any other tree in the Garden, but Eve focused on the one tree of which they could not eat.



Read Genesis 3:1-5.

Satan deceived the woman by causing her to question what God said.

Satan wants us to question everything about God. He wants to bring confusion and ultimately deceive us into living a life outside of the instructions of God.

Then Eve ate the forbidden fruit and gave it to Adam as well (Genesis 3:6-7).

With this act of disobedience, they were cut off from their relationship with God and with it gave up the ability to rule the earth.

Because Adam was responsible for populating the earth, this sin of disobedience would pass down to all of his offspring and would affect the entire human race (Romans 5:12).

They were ashamed when they realized they had lost their innocence. When they realized the change, they tried to hide their nakedness with fig leaves.

When they heard the voice of the Lord walking through the Garden as they did every day, they foolishly tried to hide from God. The Lord called out, "Adam, where art thou?"

Instead of Adam falling at the Lord's feet to confess, he just pointed a finger at Eve and blamed it all on her. It's so difficult for man to take responsibility for his own sin and simply confess it to God.

In this situation, disobedience separated man from God (Genesis 3:10).



Read Hebrews 5:9.

In every age of time, belief and obedience to God will be an essential part of the plan of salvation.

When Adam and Eve sinned, a spiritual and eventually a physical death occurred (Ephesians 2:1-3). Sin demands death, but Adam didn't instantly fall dead at the moment of the sin. He lived to be 930 years old.

At the moment of disobedience, sin began to rule in the spirit of man (Romans 5:17, 19, 21).

Can you see a sinful nature in the people of this world? In your life? In your relationship with God? Explain.

Innocence Ends

1 | The Result of Sin—Judgment

Man's choice to sin resulted in judgment. The judgment included several curses and the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the Garden.



Read Genesis 3:14.

The serpent was cursed above all creatures and required to crawl on its belly.



Read Genesis 3:16.

For the woman, she would have to experience pain in bearing children.



Read Genesis 3:17-19.

For Adam, the earth itself was cursed. Unwanted thorns and thistles would choke out good fruits that were planted and cultivated by man.



Read Genesis 3:21.

The coats of skins were from an animal. Now, God required a blood sacrifice. Romans 6:23 says the wages of sin is death. Hebrews 9:22 says without the shedding of blood, sins cannot be remitted.



Read Genesis 3:22-24.

Adam and Eve were then driven from the Garden. They were no longer allowed to walk in the Garden and eat of its fruits. Cherubim (angelic creatures) and a flaming sword that turned every way was placed at the east of the garden to prevent them from eating fruit from the Tree of Life. Adam and Eve were separated from the presence of God.

2 | Promise for Mankind



Read Genesis 3:15.

Although we might think that Eve should have been severely punished, God's mercy said there would be a redeemer of mankind through her. God was warning the serpent that a descendant of the woman would someday destroy Satan.



Read Matthew 1:21-23.

When God reached out to take man's life for the sin he committed, something said no. It was God's love. Love said, I will not let you kill this creature, but righteousness demanded a death.

Here was the compromise—mankind would die spiritually. He allowed them to live a period of time physically, and during that time He would make a way for them to be redeemed.

God's righteousness killed a lamb and wrapped the skins of that animal around Adam and Eve.

If you can just imagine with me for a moment, they looked down at the skins of that animal and realized the only thing that saved them was the blood of that innocent lamb.

Mercy produced a substitute for them (the animal) until God could come four thousand years later in the form of Jesus Christ, the lamb of God, and die in the place of all mankind.

Even today, God desires to have relationship with man more than anything.

In the next lesson, we'll take a look at God's promised relationship with mankind.

3 The Benefit of Covenant

This lesson is a study of God's promised relationship with man. God desires to have a bond with man so much that He made a promise, or a covenant. If we would follow His requests, He would allow us to have a true, personal relationship with Him once again. Satan's two main strategies to try to prevent man's restoration were to destroy the lineage that would lead to Christ and distort all men with sin and evil. Because man became so corrupt, God chose to destroy man with a flood. Noah and his family would be the only one to survive. Eventually, God chose Abraham to preserve the knowledge of God and provide the family line through which Jesus Christ would come. Today, by obeying the plan of salvation, we can actually reap the benefits of Abraham's covenant blessings.

In This Lesson

- ✓ The Age of Conscience
- ✓ The Age of Human Government
- ✓ The Age of Promise

The Age of Conscience

1 | Cain and Abel (Sacrifice)

The Age of Conscience started when Adam and Eve began their life outside the Garden of Eden.

At this time, God began to speak to man through a sense of right and wrong called "conscience."

Does a person's conscience still play a role today? How?

Adam and Eve had many sons and daughters, but only three sons are named.



Read Genesis 4:1-5.

The first two were Cain and Abel. Cain chose to become a farmer, and Abel became a shepherd.

Adam had obviously taught their sons about God's existence. He also taught them about the need to worship Him and to offer blood sacrifices to Him.

When they brought their offerings, Cain's offering was fruit from the cursed ground, and Abel gave a sheep from his flock.

Abel's sacrifice was accepted by God. Because Cain gave fruit, his offering was unaccepted. God required a blood sacrifice. Obedience to God's requirement is what made the difference for Abel.

It's not enough to just do what we think is right. It's very important to follow what God commands us to do.

Because Cain's sacrifice was rejected, he was angry at God and resented Abel.

He eventually murdered his brother Abel (Genesis 4:5-10).

Because of Cain's sin and continued disobedience, God cursed him. God said, "Now you are cursed from the earth which has opened her mouth to receive your brother's blood. When you till the ground it shall yield you no return. A fugitive and vagabond you will be."

Cain went to the land of Nod where he spent his last days (Genesis 4:11-16).

2 | Seth (Substitute)

When Adam was 130 years old, another son was born named Seth. He was a substitute for Abel. Through Seth's descendants, Jesus would come to earth.

Enoch was one of Seth's descendents and the Bible says he walked with God.

The wickedness became so out of control that Enoch warned his generation that if something didn't change, the Lord would execute judgment on the ungodly (Jude 14, 15).

3 | Noah (Grace)

For hundreds of years, God tolerated the wickedness, then He repented that He had made man. The Lord said that He would destroy man from the face of the earth.

Enoch had a son named Methuselah. Methuselah's grandson was Noah.



Read Genesis 6:8.

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and God announced His plan to destroy the world.

The entire world was going to be destroyed by a Flood.

Noah was told to build an ark.

What do you think the neighbors thought when Noah began to build this big boat?

People probably thought he was crazy, but he was still obedient to the will of God.

Noah believed God and knew the rain was coming, even though it had never before rained on the earth (Genesis 2:5). Even when the command of God is beyond our ability to comprehend, we still must obey Him.

The only way out of the coming judgment was getting on the ark. God gave the world 120 years to repent while Noah built the ark (Genesis 6:3).

Do you know how many of each animal Noah was told to take?



Read Genesis 7:2.

Noah was told to take seven pairs of every clean and two of every unclean animal.

When the ark was finished and the animals were in, the Lord told Noah and his family to get in. Then God shut the door. After seven days, the rain started.

Do you think people were making fun of Noah on about day six and there was still no rain? How do you think people felt when the rain started coming and the door was shut?

When the rain started, there was probably horror everywhere as people tried everything they could to save themselves and their families. Can you imagine dads reaching for their kids as they got swept away by water? People were probably beating on the door of the ark wanting to get in, but the door had already been sealed.

After a year and seventeen days, God told Noah and his family to leave the ark (Genesis 8:13-18). One of the first things Noah did was build an altar to offer sacrifices to the Lord.

God promised Noah that He would never again destroy the earth by a flood (Genesis 9:8-17). II Peter 3:6-7 says the next destruction will be by fire.



Read Matthew 24:37-39.

Jesus compared the conditions of Noah's day to the time of His return.

The flood came in the days of Noah and destroyed everyone who didn't take advantage of God's plan of salvation. Likewise, there will be a judgment for this age of time and only those who follow His plan will escape.

Noah chose to be obedient to the Lord, and it paid off for him. He and his family were saved from the judgment.

The Age of Human Government

1 | The Foundation

After the flood, a new plan started. They now had to listen to their conscience and govern each other. This began the third time period, the age of Human Government.

Noah had three sons; Shem, Japheth, and Ham. The entire world had to be repopulated from these three.

Through a series of events, Noah made several predictions. He predicted that Ham would be cursed and that Shem and Japheth would receive blessings (Genesis 9:18-27).

2 | The Confusion at Babel

Ham's grandson, Nimrod, didn't like God or God's plans and led others in his rebellion.



Read Genesis 11:4.

Nimrod started building a huge city and a tower.

Many false ways were born at this tower—idolatry, Satanism, witchcraft, the Babylonian religion, and more.

The Lord let them work on the tower for a period of time, but He knew they had to be stopped.

Instead of destroying mankind again, God confused their language. Then the Lord scattered them across the earth in three main directions.

If you notice, in each one of these ages, man starts out righteous, but slowly drifts to a more and more sinful state. Of course, God hates sin, so it always ends in judgment. Only the righteous are spared from the judgment. All He asks is that we are obedient to the few things that He wants us to do.

Is man's natural tendency to drift toward sin today?

The Age of Promise

1 | God's Promises to Abraham

The fourth time period, which began after the dispersion at Babel, was the age of Promise because of the covenant promises made to

Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3). These same promises were also given to his son, Isaac, and his grandson, Jacob. We will see how they were fulfilled.

Abraham came from the lineage of Shem.

God called Abram to travel to a distant land (Hebrew 11:8). Even though he did not know where he was going, Abram obeyed because of his faith.

In our lives, we will not be able to see the future; therefore, we have to trust God that He will reveal the next step of His will in His timing. Even when we do not know where obedience will ultimately take us, we must obey Him.



Read Genesis 17:1-5.

Abram had a strong relationship with the Lord, and to seal this relationship, they made a covenant (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:6; 17:1-8). Before officially entering into the covenant, Abram received a new name, which was Abraham.

In this covenant, Abraham was required to perform a ritual called circumcision (Genesis 17:10-14). Every male child had to be circumcised at eight days old to become part of this agreement.

It was a sign he had been separated unto God. If they were not circumcised, it was impossible to be a part of the benefits of Abraham's promises.

When he pledged his life to God and obeyed, he was promised financial, physical, and spiritual blessings (Genesis 17:6-8 and 22:17-18).

Today, we are not required to be circumcised physically. Our circumcision is of the heart (Romans 2:29), by the Spirit, and through baptism (Colossians 2:11).



Read Galatians 3:14.

This covenant was a shadow of things that would come later in history. It meant that any believer, even today, could enter into a spiritual covenant with God and would become Abraham's spiritual heir (Galatians 3:1-29; Romans 4:3-5; Colossians 2:11-12).

2 | Abraham's Promised Son

God promised Abraham a son, but after ten years, Abraham and Sarah still had no children.

Abraham's wife, Sarah, gave him her maid, Hagar, as a wife. She gave birth to a son named Ishmael (Genesis 16:1-16; 21:9-21). The plan brought a son, but it still did not bring happiness because it was not God's will.

God never intended to establish the covenant with Ishmael. Instead of trusting God's timing, Abraham took matters in his own hands. The Lord promised him that he would have a son with Sarah, but it was thirteen long years before God appeared to Abraham again. When Abraham was one hundred years old and Sarah was ninety, they had a son and named him Isaac (Genesis 17:1-19; 21:1-5; 9-14). Ishmael did not like it and mocked the new baby, so Abraham sent Ishmael away.



Read Genesis 22:2.

This was a very hard test God had given Abraham. He was telling him to go sacrifice his son. Abraham did not understand exactly how it would all work out, but he decided God had a higher plan. His strong faith in God led him to obedience (Romans 4:20-21).



Read Genesis 22:5.

For three days, Abraham, Isaac, and two servants traveled together to the base of Mount Moriah. The servants were left when they saw the place of sacrifice far off. Abraham knew that God would provide.

Isaac carried the supplies as they climbed the mountain. Isaac questioned (paraphrased), "Father, haven't you forgotten something? Here is the wood and the fire, but where is the lamb?"

The altar was completed, and the wood was laid in place. Isaac could have overpowered his father, but he willingly lay on the altar and was bound. As Abraham raised the knife to sacrifice his son, he again heard the Lord's voice.



Read Genesis 22:12.

So Abraham did not have to sacrifice his son. This was only a test for him. Once again the Lord wanted to know if Abraham would be obedient to Him. All He wants is obedience.

The Lord provided a ram that was caught in a thicket nearby to be used in the sacrifice that day.

When Isaac was thirty-seven years old, Sarah died. Abraham married again and had six more sons. God promised him that he would be the "father of many nations." This was fulfilled through these sons.

3 | Jacob Becomes Israel

Isaac married Rebecca, and they had twin sons. Esau was born first and Jacob was born second (Genesis 25:19-28).

As the oldest, the birthright privileges belonged to Esau. This gave him preferred treatment in the family, including first claim on the inheritance.

Jacob longed for these rights more than anything, but to Esau it really was not a big deal.

One day Esau came back tired and hungry from hunting and noticed his brother Jacob had prepared stew. Esau begged for some of his brother's food. Jacob saw his chance. He agreed to share his stew if Esau would give up the birthright. In the heat of the moment, he agreed to trade his birthright for only one meal.

Does it seem absurd to think he would give up all the privileges that were coming to him for one meal?

Many of us do the same thing. In the heat of the moment, we will trade our blessings and our relationship with God for one good time.

When Isaac was old and dying, he was also going blind. Jacob went in and received the covenant blessing by tricking his dad and making himself appear to be Esau.

Esau had sold his birthright years earlier to Jacob. Now when he found out Jacob had also cheated him out of the blessing, Esau decided he would kill his brother. When Jacob's mother found out what Esau planned to do, she sent Jacob away to her brother's home.

While on this trip, Jacob fell asleep one night. God revealed some plans to Jacob through a dream (Genesis 28:10-22).

The Bible says the heavens opened, and a ladder rose from the earth to the heavens, with angels ascending and descending upon it. Then the Lord confirmed with Jacob the covenant he had received from his father.

Jacob discovered that God was near, merciful, and forgiving. After that night, Jacob built a monument and vowed to commit himself to the Lord. He also promised to give a tenth of all his possessions to God.

Jacob married two wives and, at this time, had eleven sons and one daughter. He also accumulated a large herd of sheep.

After a period of time, Jacob decided to return to his home.

Then the bad news came. Esau and four hundred men were coming to meet Jacob. So, he divided his flock and family into two camps, so that if Esau got one, the other would escape. Then Jacob pleaded with God and asked for help.

Read Genesis 32:24.

In the night, Jacob began to pray (Genesis 32:24-32; 36:1-8). Eventually, God (the angel) gave him his answer. The Bible says the angel touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh so that it remained out of joint forever.

If there is something we desperately need from the Lord, sometimes we have to show Him that we mean business and let Him know how desperate we really are. He likes to see our dependence on Him.

The name Jacob, meaning supplanter and deceiver, was changed to Is-



rael, which means a prince with God. The name of God's chosen people would then become Israel. At that point a new nation was born and introduced as God's nation. The next morning Esau met Jacob. Instead of killing him, he forgave him. Esau agreed to leave the land of Jacob's inheritance. God renewed the promises to Jacob that He had made to Abraham and Isaac years before.

4 Joseph's Journey

Of Jacob's twelve sons, Joseph was the favorite (Genesis 37:2-11). To show this, Jacob gave Joseph a "coat of many colors". When his brothers saw that their father loved him more than his brothers, they envied him and hated him. At the same time, Joseph started having dreams of his brothers bowing to him. When he told his brothers about these dreams, they hated him even more. One day, Joseph's brothers wanted to kill him, but instead decided to sell him to a caravan of Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. To make it look like he was killed, they dipped Joseph's coat in animal blood and showed it to their father. Joseph was then sold to Potiphar in Egypt and blessed Potiphar's house with his presence (Genesis 37:12-36). While he was in the house one day, he was confronted by Potiphar's wife. She tried to seduce him, but he refused. Then she turned it around on him and said he had tried to seduce her. Joseph went straight to jail, but the Lord was still with him. Throughout eleven years in prison, Joseph remained persistent, believing in God (Genesis 39:1-23). He won the confidence of the jailer and the other prisoners. He interpreted their dreams. Eventually, because of this, he was released. Joseph got an opportunity to interpret a dream for Pharaoh, which said there would be seven years of abundant harvests followed by seven years of famine. Because of this, Pharaoh made Joseph the second most powerful ruler in Egypt and gave him the duty to prepare the nation for the seven years of famine. When the famine became extremely bad, his brothers had nowhere to turn and came to buy food in Egypt. As the sons of Jacob stood before the second most powerful leader of Egypt, they bowed before him just like Joseph had dreamed years before. Joseph knew who they were, but

they did not recognize him.

Read Genesis 45:1-5.



After challenging his brothers to prove whether their attitudes had changed,

Joseph forgave them (Genesis 45:1-15).

Later Joseph's father and all of his family came to live in Egypt.

5 Enslaved to Egypt

For many years the Israelites lived there and enjoyed peaceful surroundings, but everything changed when the new Pharaoh came to power. The Bible says he "knew not Joseph," and he did not have respect for the nation of Israel. He also looked at their fast growth as a threat, fearing they might partner with an enemy in a time of war. As a result, he made all of the Israelites slaves.

Egypt had been Israel's home for many years while they multiplied. Now the time had come to return to their inheritance and reclaim their promised covenant.

Many people today are in the same situation as the Israelites were in Egypt. They do not know about the benefits of God's blessings and they just struggle for existence. Satan then has free reign to manipulate them and lead them with deception and bondage.

God wants us to have liberty and joy. Through the New Testament covenant, we are promised blessings. God never intended for His chosen people to be oppressed and defeated slaves.

In our next lesson, we will see the close of the age of promise and see how God delivered His covenant people from their bondage.

4 God Delivers His People

We saw in the last lesson how Egypt forced Israel into slavery and this made them long for their promised land. God heard their cry and sent a deliverer. We will now leave the book of Genesis and move into Exodus. Exodus describes how Israel left Egypt. While the people were waiting for their deliverance from Egypt, they had everyday life struggles and temptations. If you were in the shoes of the Israelites, how would you respond to their problems? Do you think they would have ever left Egypt if they would not have gone through the oppression and slavery? Would they have been too comfortable? We will study Moses' life, the deliverance of the Israelites, and what took place at Mount Sinai.

In This Lesson

- ✓ The Exodus (The Plan of Departure)
- ✓ The Age of Law

The Exodus (The Plan of Departure)

1 | Moses' Call

The new Pharaoh feared the Israelites would rise up and overthrow the Egyptians. To control their population, he commanded the death of every male Hebrew baby. The baby would be drowned in the Nile River. A couple in Levi's tribe, one of the tribes of Israel, had a baby boy at the time (Exodus 2:1-10). They hid their baby at home for about three months. Then the mother put the baby in a basket in the middle of the reeds of the Nile River. They knew the princess of Egypt usually took a bath close by. When the baby started to cry the maternal instincts of the Egyptian princess naturally kicked in. She decided to take the Hebrew boy and keep him for herself.

The princess named the baby Moses. She later officially adopted him, raised him, and gave him a royal education.

As Moses grew older, the cruel treatment of his people started to bother him. At the age of forty years, Moses began to fulfill his role as a deliverer—but not completely with God’s leading. One day he saw one of his people being treated badly. He responded too quickly, killed the Egyptian, and then hid the body.

Later, someone found out what he had done and Moses had to run for his life. He spent the next forty years in the Sinai Desert as a shepherd.

One day while he was tending his sheep on Mount Horeb Moses saw a burning bush that wasn’t consumed by the fire. God spoke from the burning bush and told Moses not to come near.



Read Exodus 3:5.

Moses had to learn about God’s holiness and that he must always approach Him with respect and admiration (Exodus 3:1-4, 17).

How should we approach God today?

God told Moses to bring His people out of Egypt and lead them to their promised land.

2 | The Passover

Moses and his brother, Aaron, met with the elders of Israel to give them the message from God. The time had finally come to leave Egypt and travel to their promised land (Exodus 5:1-9; 7:10-13).



Read Exodus 5:1-2.

Because of their request, Pharaoh doubled Israel’s required work.

How would you have felt if your workload doubled just because you obeyed God?

Remember, God is always in control. When Pharaoh resisted, God allowed ten plagues to happen. (See Exodus 7:14-11:10 and Psalm 105:26-38 for a summary of plagues.) The first three affected the Israelites and the Egyptians. The next six affected only the Egyptians. The final plague affected everyone, but there was a way of escape.

The first plague happened as Pharaoh was offering worship to the Nile River. When Pharaoh refused to release the people, the Nile River was turned to blood (Exodus 7:17-25). This went on for seven days until God withdrew the plague.

When Pharaoh refused again, there was an epidemic of frogs (Exodus 8:1-14). They couldn’t be killed and they were everywhere—houses, beds, troughs, ovens. Out of desperation, Pharaoh promised that if Moses’ and Aaron’s God would end the plague, they could go and offer sac-

rifices. But when the plague ended and the tons of frogs were buried, Pharaoh denied his promise.

Each time the Pharaoh denied his promise another plague came—dust became lice throughout the land (Exodus 8:16-18), there were swarms of flies (Exodus 8:21-31), a disease killed the cattle (Exodus 9:3-7), there were running boils on men and animals (Exodus 9:8-12), a violent hailstorm destroyed their crops (Exodus 9:18-34), locust infested the country (Exodus 10:4-20), and total darkness covered the land (Exodus 10:21-29).

The final plague was death to the firstborn of man and every animal (Exodus 11-12). This tenth plague would set Israel free.

If the Israelites were going to escape this plague, God told them a lamb had to be offered as a substitute for their firstborn children (Exodus 12:1-36; 41-51). The lamb's blood had to be put on the doorway. This showed the requirement of a blood covering for sin.

At midnight, the Lord killed the firstborn all through the land. Only those protected by the blood were "passed over." Even Pharaoh's own son was killed. Imagine the hurt and pain in the homes that were affected by the death of the firstborn.

The Passover story was a symbol of a future time where Christ would be sent to earth as God's perfect Lamb. Our sin could only be covered and washed by His blood (Hebrews 9:26).

Finally, Pharaoh told Moses and the children of Israel to leave immediately.

3 Escape from Egypt

The Israelites spent over four hundred years in Egypt. Now they were set free to travel to their promised land. It is estimated that two to three million people traveled with them.

God gave them a pillar of cloud to guide their path. When this cloud stopped, they stopped. When the cloud moved, they moved. The cloud was also there to protect them. It sheltered them from the sun. When it got dark, there was a pillar of fire that gave them light and heat. With many obstacles, God provided for them every step of the way.

Back in Egypt, Pharaoh changed his mind again. He ordered six hundred chariots to chase them down and get them back to Egypt.

The Red Sea was on the east, mountains were on the south and west, and Israel was unarmed (Exodus 14:1-31). As the Egyptian chariots started coming in from the north, it looked like it would be impossible for the Israelites to escape.

What would you have done if you were surrounded on all sides and felt

there was no escape? What do you think the Israelites did? They started crying and complaining to Moses and to God. Why would God lead them out of Egypt into a trap?

Read Exodus 14:13-14.



As God told him, Moses lifted his rod over the sea and a strong wind divided the waters into walls on either side and dried the sea bed.

When the time was right, Israel moved across to the other side. Shortly after, Pharaoh's army slowly moved into the sea bed. When Moses' hand was lifted again, the wall of water fell and the waves swallowed up the Egyptian army.

Israel was now a free nation for the very first time. The water of the sea completely separated them from Egypt and their old bondage.

No matter how much our old life tries to hang on and keep us in bondage, if we will follow Jesus, He will provide a way of escape for His people.

Have you ever been set free from anything in your life? How did you feel when you knew you were completely separated from it?

At this point, the free nation sang and danced to worship the Lord for what He had done.

The Age of Law

1 The Commandments

Several weeks after leaving Egypt, the Israelites made it to the desert of Sinai (Exodus 19:1-40:38). This was the area where Moses had lived for forty years. Israel stayed here for the next year. They reorganized and prepared themselves for the rest of the journey.

While there, Moses climbed Mount Sinai to talk with God. This began the age of law.

God told him of His plan of renewing the Abrahamic covenant. Moses got orders for carrying out the completion of the covenant and exact details of the Ten Commandments. Also, he received the moral, ceremonial, and civil laws that would govern God's covenant people.

The Ten Commandments were the foundation of the law for Israel (Exodus 20:1-17). These commandments were imprinted on both sides of two tables of stone, "written with the finger of God" (Exodus 31:18, Deuteronomy 4:13).

Four commandments speak about our attitude toward God. The other six have to do with our attitude towards other people. Jesus condensed them into two commandments.

Read Luke 10:25-28.



The first of the Ten Commandments is, “Thou shalt have no other gods before me.” This shows man’s first responsibility.

Throughout the ages, God has searched and longed for people to choose to think and talk about Him (Malachi 3:16-17).

God is a jealous God. Once He enters into covenant with a nation or an individual, He claims them as His own. When we flirt with other gods it infuriates Him.

What are some examples of other gods we could have in our lives?

Money, pleasure, fashion, fame, or any other god should never replace the one true God. He should be our number one priority.

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.” In another words, nothing else should be made to worship.

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.”

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.”

“Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land.” This is the first commandment with an attached promise.

“Thou shalt not kill.”

“Thou shalt not commit adultery.” Marriage is the highest and most sacred form of human relations and is not meant to be violated.

“Thou shalt not steal.”

“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.”

“Thou shalt not covet.” We shouldn’t crave what is already owned by someone else.

Did God want to place a heavy burden of laws and commandments on Israel out of spite? Did the Lord want to just give them a list of strict rules and regulations to make it difficult for them?

Each part of the law was a protection and a benefit. God was preparing Israel for the idolatry of the Canaanite religion. God’s intent is only to help His creation.

Why do we generally tend to think of laws or rules as negative? What are some positive effects of laws?

2 The Tabernacle Plan

God’s desire was to be near His covenant people. Because they were spiritually dead, He couldn’t live in their hearts, yet. So, His presence was shown to them by their physical senses. Their worship was also on the same level. They were told to build a tabernacle.

To build this tabernacle, the place in which God would dwell, He asked them to give monetary offerings. Giving money or valuables would prove whether the people really wanted His presence.

The camp was carefully organized and the tabernacle was in the very cen-

ter (Numbers 1:50-3:39).

God designed the layout of the tabernacle and all of the furniture in it for a specific reason. Moses was not allowed to change it in any way.

All of Israel could go into the court, but only the priests could go into the Holy Place. Only the high priest could go into the Holy of Holies once a year. They offered sacrifices daily, weekly, monthly, and annually.

When they entered the courtyard, the first item was the brazen altar (Exodus 20:24; 27:1-8).

Because it was first, it shows that the blood atonement was very necessary before they could fellowship with God. This is where the blood of an animal was shed as a sacrifice was offered.

The next thing in the layout was the brazen laver (Exodus 30:18-21).

The laver was for washing of the priest before they went into the Holy Place. If they didn't wash, they would die (Exodus 30:20).

When they entered the Holy Place, to the right was a table with twelve loaves of bread (Exodus 25:23-30).

The loaves symbolize Jesus Christ, our Bread of Life, or the Word of God. The bread gave nourishment for the priests just like Christ meets the needs of us today.

The altar of incense was in the center of the Holy Place and it provided an offering of incense to God (Exodus 30:1-9). Twice a day, a priest offered incense.

Incense symbolizes prayer and communion with God.

The golden candlestick provided light for the priests to perform their duties on a daily basis (Exodus 25:31-38).

The candlestick symbolizes Jesus Christ, the true light of the world. If you believe in Him, you are also called the light of the world. The Holy Spirit shines from the lives He has filled.

Behind the veil was the Holiest of Holies. This was the most essential part of the Tabernacle. It was never displayed. It was the Ark of the Covenant (Exodus 25:10-22).

Inside of the ark was the law written on two stones, a pot of manna, and Aaron's rod that budded.

This is where God dwelled. God's divine presence occupied the space above the mercy seat between the two cherubim on the ark.

The mercy seat was made of gold, the most precious metal, and represented God's most precious attribute—mercy. It covered the law as He covers the sins and offenses of His people.

This is where the high priest sprinkled blood, signifying the sacrifice of Christ. This was done once a year on the annual Day of Atonement.

Day after day, people brought sacrifices to God for their sin. This was a very bloody system.

Why do you think God would make this part of the Law? How do you think

this impacted Israel's view of God's holiness? How would it affect your perspective on sin if you had to kill an animal every time you sinned?

3 The Symbol of the Cross



Read Hebrews 8:5,

The Tabernacle symbolizes Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection (Hebrews 9:8-10:1).

The sacrificial blood of the animals could never completely erase sin, but it did provide a temporary solution. It pointed toward the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ who would one day completely redeem man from sin.

The bloody tabernacle probably seemed a little overboard, but God was teaching Israel how much He hated sin. There had to be a blood sacrifice. Because of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection—which is the “gospel,” or “good news”—every believer becomes a priest and is allowed to enter into the holy presence of God. When Jesus died on the cross, the veil that separated man from God was ripped at that moment and now we have free access.

How does that impact you? A holy and powerful God cares enough about you to make a sacrifice for you. Do you think you deserve it?

How is this tabernacle plan an example of the New Covenant salvation?

First, the brazen altar reminds us of the cross and Jesus' blood that cleanses and removes our sins. Our death at the altar is a mental surrendering of our will to God's will.

The brazen laver represents the cleansing from sin that Jesus provides through water baptism and Jesus' burial. When we “bury” the old man, we are buried with Jesus Christ into His death and His blood washes away our sins.

His Word becomes our Bread of Life at the table of showbread; the altar of incense represents our daily communion with Him in prayer and praise; the golden candlestick is His light shining through us, attracting other people to Christ.

The best part of it all is that the Holiest of Holies has been opened to us. The presence of God Himself is available to us. We can enter into His presence any time we want to.

Because of the death, burial, and resurrection, we can leave our old dead nature and receive life everlasting. It's free to you and me and whoever wants it.

In the next lesson, we will close out the Old Testament by talking about the remaining journey of the Israelites into the Promise Land.

5 Moving into the Promised Land

In this lesson, we will see the journey of Joshua leading Israel to their new home in the Land of Promise. When Israel listened to God's Word, they were successful. When they began to rely on their own selves, they failed miserably. This lesson also shows what happened when God's covenant people became involved with idolatry. Then, we will close out the Old Testament with a review of the ages.

In This Lesson

- ✓ Taking the Land
- ✓ Israel Divided, Then Reunited
- ✓ The Old Testament Ends

Taking the Land

1 Joshua Leads Israel

Because of Israel's unbelief, they had to reap the judgment of God. For nearly forty years, Israel had to roam in the wilderness. The old generation that did not believe that God would give them the land of promise died in the wilderness. Now, a new generation was ready to claim the land promised to Abraham.

Moses was not allowed to enter the Promised Land. He had disobeyed God at one point and God told him that he would not be the one to lead the congregation into the Land of Promise.

At the age of 120, Moses gave his last speech. This speech covers the entire Book of Deuteronomy, basically repeating the law that was given earlier.



Read Deuteronomy 6:5-6.

Moses reemphasized the need to love and obey God. To love and obey God is still today one of the most important principles of a Christian walk.

After Moses spoke to the people, he climbed Mount Nebo alone and God buried him somewhere on the mountain (Deuteronomy 34).

The leadership role was given to Joshua, Moses' personal assistant. He was selected by God to lead God's people into the Promised Land (Joshua 1:1-9).

Now, Joshua was faced with an impossible job of crossing the raging Jordan River. The river separated the Israelites from Canaan. Enemy nations guarding their own territories were on the other side of the Jordan.



Read Joshua 1:2.

The people were told to get ready to cross the Jordan (Joshua 3:1-17).

The pillar of cloud that normally led them had disappeared. So, Israel had to walk by faith.

Has there ever been a time that you felt like God disappeared off the scene? How did that make you feel?

There are times in our walk with God that He will require us to walk by faith. We want always have a visible sign. He wants to see that we can trust and obey Him without a sign.

As the priests approached the Jordan River and stepped out on faith, the river miraculously stopped. The river bed dried up completely and Israel was able to cross on dry land (this is the second time this miracle happened.)

When the people came out of the Jordan riverbed, the water fell and began to flow again.

This meant that there was no turning back for Israel. The wilderness was gone forever.

Now, their goal was to drive out the enemy and claim their Promised Land.

2 The Battle for the Land

Canaan was already populated and developed. The people had built homes and cities. They planted orchards and vineyards. All Israel had to do was conquer the land.

The Canaanites were the cursed family of Ham's son, Canaan. The Canaanites were one of the most corrupt groups of people to ever exist. They had many sinful practices, such as sexual sins, idol gods, and evil spiritual dealings. God had given them about four hundred years to turn from their wickedness, but they did not. So, God decided

to destroy them by helping the Israelites conquer the land. God also warned the Israelites not to get involved in the Canaanites evil ways. The Book of Joshua records the history of a seven-year war. Joshua and his people were successful when they were obedient to God. When they tried to use their own plan, they were defeated. Throughout the war, they only had one big defeat.

After the war was over, the land was divided between the twelve tribes. At some point, Joshua called a meeting with all of the people because they were beginning to involve themselves in idolatry. In Joshua's final speech, he told them about Israel's history and then he gave them a choice. The Israelites could choose to get involved in the Canaanite sinful ways or they could choose to serve God.

Back in time at the base of Mount Sinai, the Israelites grandparents chose God and entered into covenant with Him. This new generation had to decide for themselves.

Read Joshua 24:15.



Joshua determined for his family: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord."

How does this story relate to us?

Do we choose everyday who we will serve? How?

We choose by our actions.

Read Joshua 24:18.



The people of Israel as a whole decided to make a good choice, "Therefore will we also serve the Lord; for he is our God."

Israel Divided, Then Reunited

1 The Rulers of Israel

Israel went through major trials for about the next two hundred years. The Scripture calls this period "the days when the judges ruled." A total of fifteen judges ruled.

Throughout this time period, when the people got away from their godly principles and practiced idolatry, God allowed oppression and attacks from their enemy neighbors. The people would then repent and return to God; and God would appoint a judge to restore peace. This was a recurring pattern.

Eventually, Israel decided they wanted to be like all the other nations and have a king to rule over them. Even though it was not in God's plan to be similar to other nations, He agreed to give Israel their heart's desire. Under the rule of three kings—Saul, David, and Solomon—the nation lived

for 120 years.

2 Israel Divided

When King Solomon died, his son, Rehoboam, took the throne. Because he was arrogant, had no concern for the people, and taxed the people heavily, the kingdom eventually split.

The ten northern tribes appointed Jeroboam as their king. They became known as Israel. Rehoboam continued as king of the other two southern tribes which were called Judah.

For the next two hundred years, the political situation in Israel was in turmoil and sin. They were no longer dedicated to God and started worshipping idols.

Every now and then, God would send prophets, like Elijah and Elisha, to warn Israel to stop their disobedience.

God has done similar things throughout history to warn His people. If He sent someone to you, do you think you would listen?

In the meantime, their neighbors, the Egyptians and Syrians, continually weakened Israel.

In 721 BC, the king of Assyria captured the Israelites.

In Judah, the same lineage of people still remained as ruler. Some of the kings throughout their history were righteous. Others were wicked and idolatrous.

Several prophets also warned Judah of their disobedient ways. They told them to repent. The prophet Joel told them that if the priests and Judah would fast and cry out to the Lord, He would hear them and renew their relationship. Judah continued to be disobedient.

In 606 BC, over 130 years after Israel was taken by Assyria, Judah was conquered by Babylon. They ultimately destroyed the city.

Israel is an example of a nation that forgot God. Because of their disobedience to the will of God, the Lord allowed them to be defeated.

The Promised Land itself was not what was most important. The most important thing for them and for us today is to trust and obey the Lord.

Why do you think Israel drifted from God? Why do so many people have trouble trusting and being obedient to God even today?

Over time and through strong prophetic encouragement, Israel started to renew their dedication to God and realize that restoration was possible.

3 Israel Reunited

Babylon had turned the land into a place of self-indulgence and idolatry.

Several years after Babylon conquered the land, God sent a supernatural word that Babylon would be doomed.

That same night Babylon was conquered and its king was killed by Persia.

In the year 536 BC the Lord caused the king of Persia to release the Jews and allow them to rebuild Jerusalem.

Many of the Jews were comfortable where they were and decided to stay.

Only about fifty thousand people returned to Jerusalem.

Seven months after getting back to Jerusalem, the Temple was restored.

The Jews had built a new altar and the priests were offering sacrifices again.

They then started rebuilding the Temple. It took several years to rebuild, but it was finally finished in 516 BC. The Jews had their house of worship back again.

About sixty years later, a priest named Ezra was allowed to return to Jerusalem. Ezra started teaching the law and restored the temple worship.

Because Jerusalem was still not protected, a man named Nehemiah from Persia was allowed to go to Jerusalem and help rebuild the city (Nehemiah 1:1-3; 6:15-16).

After 150 years of despair and neglect, in only fifty-two days a wall was built and Jerusalem was fortified again.

Nehemiah also connected with Ezra to try to intensify the spiritual life of the people. Repentance reinstated their covenant to God.

The Jewish people failed and lost communion with God many times over the years, but all they had to do was repent and confess their sins to renew their relationship with Him.

Sadly for the Jews, as time went on, they disappointed God again. They had corruption in the priesthood.

The Old Testament ends with man's disobedience to God.

1 Silent Years

God stopped talking to Israel for four hundred years. This is the time period between the Old and New Testaments.

During the era from Malachi to the time of Christ, the writings of the Old Testament were collected and preserved. We call this collection the Old Testament canon.

2 Religion

There were several religious groups that developed during the period between the Testaments—the Pharisees and the Sadducees.

Pharisees were Jewish leaders and were very hypocritical in their ways.

The Sadducees were more influenced by the Hellenistic culture. They were wealthy and very worldly.

The two major religious groups of that day did not often have much to offer. When people had to choose between legalism and ritualism, it left a spiritual void.

This made people search for something else and long for the Messiah to come.

Why are we here? Where did we come from? What is next?

The Old Testament canon provided the answers and started to prepare the way for Christ to come.

3 Review of the Old Testament

As previously discussed, man has divided the span of time from creation through the end into seven time periods, or ages.

Since the beginning, God has chosen to reveal Himself to man in stages, a little at a time. When God reveals more of Himself and His plans, we call it a new age. It's a period of time when God works with man in a specific way.

Every age is based on trust and obedience and asks the same question: Will man accept and take action to His new plan?

Man has had many failures, but God has faithfully continued to show His love and grace until He finally came in the form of man to fulfill the ultimate plan for us.

Let us review the five ages of the Old Testament:

Innocence:

This age goes from the creation of Adam in Genesis 2:7 to the expulsion from Eden. Adam, created in innocence and ignorant of good and evil, was placed in the garden of Eden with his wife, Eve, and put under responsibility to abstain from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The age of innocence resulted in the first failure of man. The far-reaching effects were disastrous. It closed in judgment on the man, woman, and Satan. Then, God drove man out of the garden.

Conscience:

By their mistake, Adam and Eve gave to all mankind the knowledge of good and evil. This gave conscience a basis for right moral judgment. Mankind came under the responsibility to do good and abstain from evil. The result of the age of conscience, from Eden to the Flood, was that “all flesh had corrupted his way on the earth,”

that “the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually,” and God closed the second testing of the natural man with judgment and the flood.

Human Government:

Out of the fearful judgment of the flood, God saved Noah and his family with an ark. After the waters dried up, God gave Noah and his descendants power to govern the earth. The age of human government resulted in man making a sinful attempt to become independent of God and closed in judgment with the confusion of tongues.

Promise:

Out of the dispersed descendants of the builders of Babel, God chose to enter into covenant with Abram. Some of the promises to Abram and his descendants were purely gracious and unconditional: many descendants, inheriting the land of Canaan, a spiritual seed through which the world would be blessed, and financial prosperity. Other promises were conditional upon the faithfulness and obedience of the Israelites. Abraham’s requirements were to separate himself unto God, refuse to indulge in idolatry and wickedness, and enforce the rite of circumcision upon all the males of his household. Everyone who obeyed the covenant terms could share the promises. The age of promise resulted in the failure of Israel and closed in the judgment of bondage in Egypt.

Law:

Again the grace of God came to the help of man and delivered the chosen people out of Egypt. In the wilderness of Sinai, He proposed to them the covenant of law. The plan was to abide by the terms of Abraham’s blood covenant relationship with God and obedience to the Mosaic Law. The history of Israel in the wilderness and in the land is a long record of obvious, persistent violation of the law. At last, after multiplied warnings, God closed the age of law in judgment: first Israel, and then Judah, was driven out of the land into a dispersion which still continues. A remnant returned to the land under Ezra and Nehemiah. At the close of this period, Christ came to fulfill Moses’ law. The age of law ended at Calvary.

4 A Look at the New Testament

In upcoming lessons, we will get a glimpse of what happened in the New

Testament and tell what it means to us today. The following is a short summary of the age of grace and the kingdom age:

Grace:

Jesus came to redeem man from the curse of sin with His blood and give us everlasting life. Christ coming to earth showed His grace toward men.

The age of grace provided a new covenant with God's laws written in the hearts of men. Abraham entered into covenant by faith and obedience. We also enter into the new covenant by believing and obeying His plan of salvation.

In the age of grace, the plan is to believe and obey the gospel, which is the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). Those who believe and obey the gospel become sons of God and members of Christ's church in a new spiritual kingdom.

Kingdom Age:

When Christ returns to earth to be in the Battle of Armageddon, His kingdom will start in Jerusalem.

Jesus Christ will rule the world during a period of one thousand years called the kingdom age. The faithful people from every dispensation will rule and reign with Him.

The plan will be to love Christ and obey His laws.

Eternity will begin and time will end at the White Throne judgment. The eternal destiny of each individual who has ever lived on earth will be determined by whether or not he obeyed the revealed plan for that particular period of time.

If we simply believe and obey, God has awesome things in store for us. Not only do we receive the blessings promised to Abraham while we are on earth, we will eventually have everlasting life in an amazing place called Heaven.

In the next lesson, we will open the door to the New Testament and introduce Jesus Christ.

6 The Hope of the World

The Old Testament ended and man went four hundred years without hearing from God. The New Testament began and John the Baptist came on the scene. He told everyone that the Lamb of God was coming to take away the sins of the world. He also spoke of believers being baptized with the Holy Ghost and fire. A new plan and new requirements would be established among men. The old law would now be fulfilled in the Messiah Himself. Jesus began His ministry. He surrounded Himself with twelve disciples and taught them spiritual concepts. Then, He commissioned them to spread the gospel to a lost world.

In This Lesson

- ✓ Beginning the New Testament
- ✓ The Message of Repentance
- ✓ The Life of Jesus

Beginning the New Testament

1 Introduction to a New Covenant

At the close of the Old Testament, every Israelite waited and longed for the coming of the King of the Jews the Old Testament prophets told about.



Read John 1:45.

Finally, He came. This closed the Old Testament and opened a New Covenant, or Testament, for all of us today.

There are twenty-seven New Testament books.

The first four books are called the Gospels. Each of the four writers recorded the story of Jesus from their personal viewpoints. They record how Jesus walked on earth, performed miracles, taught His apostles, and much more.

Next is the Book of Acts, recording the birth of the church and the spreading of the gospel to the world. It is the actions of the apostles once Christ ascended.

The Gospels showed what Christ began and Acts shows what He continued to do through His disciples.

The next fourteen books, called the epistles, were books, or letters, written to the churches by Paul.

Then there were seven more general epistles, written by four other men (James, Peter, John, and Jude). The epistles were written to the churches and were intended to give instruction on how to live the Christian life.

The last book, Revelation, was written by John and describes Heaven and end-time events.

2 | John the Baptist Prepares the Way

The prophets Malachi and Isaiah predicted that a man, John the Baptist, would prepare the way for Christ to begin His ministry on Earth (Malachi 3:1; Isaiah 40:3).



Read Luke 1:76-77.

God was beginning to deal with men in a different way. John's purpose was to introduce people to this new way. The old law was coming to a close and the new covenant was about to begin (Luke 16:16).

John lived in the wilderness in isolation in his early years of life. He had wild, uncut hair and ate locusts and wild honey to survive.

At the age of thirty, the legal age for performing religious rites, John came out to the edge of the wilderness and began preaching near the Jordan River.



Read Mark 1:7.

The Jewish people at this time were not used to hearing from God, so John was sent to wake them up.

If you had not heard from God all of your life, do you think you would be open to this wild man preaching about the Christ? What do you think attracted people to him?

The Message of Repentance

1 | John's Message

There was something about John, a special anointing, that attracted crowds of people. As the people gathered, his primary message was to repent of their sins to prepare for the one that would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire (Matthew 3:5-12; Mark 1:4-8; Luke 3:1-18; John 1:19-28).

Up to this point, God dealt with His people through the law. Soon, the law would be fulfilled through Christ Himself. Even the Abrahamic Covenant sign of circumcision would be replaced by the New Covenant sign of water baptism.

Remission, or removal, of sins would soon be through repentance, faith, and baptism in water. Man would no longer have to offer blood sacrifices.

The religious authorities in Jerusalem sent spies to find out what John was saying. They found out he was preaching the beginning of the kingdom of God and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.



Read Matthew 3:2, 11.

John baptized people in water unto repentance. It was a temporary ceremony preparing believers for what was to come. It didn't remove the necessity of them having to later be rebaptized by the apostles in the name of Jesus. In Acts 19, Paul rebaptized some of John's disciples.

2 | From Darkness to Light

What does repentance mean to you?

Repentance is a decision to turn from sinful actions.



Read II Peter 3:9.

God is not willing that any should perish. He wants everyone to have everlasting life. The first part of His plan is repentance.

The Greek word for repentance means "to change one's mind and purpose." Repentance is a decision we make to turn away from sin and turn towards God.



Read Luke 13:3, 5 and Acts 17:30.

Christ and His apostles commanded all men everywhere to repent.



Read Acts 26:18, 20.

Our emotions can be affected, but repentance is much more than just emotion. We acknowledge our actions are sinful and we try to change them. Our relationship with God becomes a priority. We begin seeing sin as God sees it.



When Adam's sin broke his relationship with God, death took dominion over man.

Read Romans 5:12.

Therefore, every one of us is born with a natural, sinful state of mind. We have all been cut off from God.

Every man has to change his mind about the path he is on, turn from sin, and begin the journey towards God. This is the first move everyone must make to begin to line up with God's plan. God will not allow Himself to be in the presence of sin, so sin separates a person from God. It pushes Him away.

Repentance is the only thing that can tear down the barrier that separates man from God.

3 | Repentance

In the old Tabernacle plan, the brazen altar was where animals were sacrificed. A death happened for that sin.



Read Romans 6:6.

At the altar of repentance, spiritually speaking, the old man dies. When a person comes to Christ, their fleshly, sinful desires have to die. This is not a literal, physical death. It is a commitment. We have to surrender our will to His (Romans 6:6-13; Galatians 5:24).

First, we begin to call on the name of the Lord in faith (Acts 2:21; 22:16; Romans 10:12-13; 1 John 1:7-9; Revelation 1:5). Then, we confess our sins to God. To confess means to put thoughts into words. We tell God the wrong things we have done.

Honesty is a key. Acknowledge that you are a sinner.



Read I John 1:9.

If we will confess, He is faithful and just to forgive us.

Is it OK to continue sinning as long as we repent later?

We prove to God our sincerity of repentance by forsaking all sin. We've got to get it out of our lives and get away from it (Proverbs 28:13; Acts 19:13-20).

The New Covenant salvation begins at an altar, but it doesn't stop there.

Repentance prepares us for water baptism. Baptism is an act for the remission or removal of sins (Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38).



Read I Corinthians 15:1-4.

When the old nature has been put to death at the altar of repentance, it is time to bury it in the waters of baptism. We'll study baptism more in later lessons.

As we learn more about Christ and we desire a deeper relationship with Him, repentance must become a way of life.

How often should we repent?



Read I Corinthians 15:31.

I die daily. Repentance should be a daily act.

The Life of Jesus

1 | The Early Days

The young virgin, Mary, miraculously gave birth to a Son just six months after John's birth (Luke 2:1-20).



Read Matthew 1:21-25.

This was the Savior. Jesus shall save His people from their sins. He is "God with us."

Jesus came in a humble stable with cattle and other animals. His bed was a manger for livestock.

God could have miraculously opened up any lodging He wanted. Why do you think He chose a stable?

Jesus was a normal child growing up. On the other hand, He never once committed a sin (II Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15). No criticism could be found in His life—spiritually or physically.

From the age of twelve until the beginning of His ministry at age thirty, the only thing that is recorded of Jesus' life is that He increased in wisdom and stature (Luke 2:52).

2 | The Preparation for Ministry

The legal age for a priest to begin officiating was thirty years. Now Jesus was ready to begin His ministry.

As previously studied, John the Baptist started preaching repentance and baptism about six months before Jesus started His public ministry. John was baptizing in the Jordan River one day and Jesus along with several others came to be baptized.

Even though John and Jesus were cousins and knew each other, John felt a heavenly presence when Jesus approached him. John knew that He was a holy person.

Confession of sins went along with the baptism of repentance. How could Jesus confess if He had no sin?

John felt the roles should be reversed. He felt unworthy to be in the presence of Jesus Christ. John baptized Him out of obedience.

Why do you think Jesus wanted to be baptized?

He was baptized to "fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15).

He was our example. Jesus modeled what He wanted all His disciples to follow.

He was a human. Jesus was made in the likeness of sinful flesh. We know Jesus was God, but He was man as well. Baptism was for all mankind.

He submitted to the initiating rite of the New Covenant. At birth under the old covenant, males were circumcised. This was the way they were initiated into Abraham's covenant. When Christ introduced the New Covenant, a new inner circumcision of the heart through water baptism was required (Colossians 2:9-14). Jesus gave His own body and blood to institute the New Covenant (Isaiah 42:6). This baptism paved the way as an example for the New Covenant to be initiated.

Not long after His baptism, Jesus went to the wilderness to get ready for His ministry. He spent forty days in prayer and fasting.

After Jesus returned from the wilderness, He went to the place where John was baptizing and started choosing His disciples. They would later become apostles (Mark 3:13-19). It took about a year and a half to choose them all.

Shortly after, they were given the responsibility to become fishers of men.

What is a fisher of men?

How does this apply to us today as followers of Christ?

3 | The Beginning of Ministry

When God came to earth as a man, He came as a God of love. People felt comfortable befriending Him. He loved them even if they could not live up to His standards.

Should we love someone even if we do not agree with their lifestyle?

Even sinful men were attracted to Him and felt free to sit and eat with Him.

They were not afraid of His holiness because they were drawn by His love. His mission was not to condemn, but to save.

His two main methods of attracting people were by His miracles and His teaching.

His miracles included: casting out demons (Luke 4:33-37, 8:26-36), opening blind eyes (Matthew 9:27-31), raising the dead (John 11:41-45), turning water into wine (John 2:1-11), multiplying loaves and fish (Matthew 14:15-21), and calming water (Luke 8:22-25).

As far as teaching is concerned, every word had divine authority. One fourth of His teaching was through parables, or what we know as short stories.

Many times Jesus used analogies and comparisons of nature and spirit.

There are some great stories that give us Godly direction and instruction: the lost sheep (Matthew 18:11-14), the sower (Matthew 13:1-23), and the good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).

4 | The Keys to the Kingdom



Read Matthew 16:13.

Jesus went with His twelve disciples to a secluded area. He talked with them on a more personal level, “Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?”



Read Matthew 16:14, 15.

Now, Jesus asked them a harder question, “But whom say ye that I am?” Peter, one of the disciples, boldly spoke.



Read Matthew 16:16.

Here, without a doubt, was the Christ—Jehovah God of the Old Testament—the Messiah they had been waiting for.



Read Matthew 16:17-19.

Because Peter was the first to acknowledge that Jesus Christ was the Lord, he became a “key” to the foundation of the church in the Book of Acts.

If Peter has the keys of the kingdom of Heaven, does that make his words any more important?

The authority, or key, given to Peter would later open the door of faith and salvation to the entire world. This was a door open to anyone.

On the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2, Peter opened the door of salvation to the Jews (Acts 2:12-41). This was the very first time the gospel was preached to a lost world.

He continued with the Samaritans in Acts 8 (Acts 8:14-25).

In Acts 10, Peter opened the door for the Gentiles (Acts 10:1-48).

Peter’s authority was never designed to allow him to forgive sins, because only God can do that. Peter was inspired to preach publicly what was required for a man to enter the kingdom of God.



Read Acts 2:37.

These people are asking Peter, who has the keys, “What shall we do?” Let’s see what he tells them.



Read Acts 2:38-39.

Peter told the people that this plan and His Spirit were not only for them that day, but it was also for anyone in the future.

In the next lesson, we will study the final days of Christ and the story of His death, burial, and resurrection.

7 He Paid the Price

Jesus knew that His ministry would eventually lead to a long and agonizing death. He also knew that through this death redemption would come for all mankind. The spiritual kingdom would be established in the hearts of men. The blood of Jesus became the substitute for our sin and our dominion was restored. The God of the Old Testament manifested Himself in three roles. As the Father, He created man for His pleasure and to offer Him worship and praise. As the Son, He redeemed man with His blood. As the Holy Spirit, He dwells within us and gives us new life.

In This Lesson

- ✓ The Final Days of Christ
- ✓ A New Day

The Final Days of Christ

1 | The Road to Calvary

Jesus' ministry seemed to get stronger as His death became near. People started declaring that Jesus must really be the Messiah.

The high priest and religious officials were getting mad. They started to scheme and plan a way to stop Jesus.

Jesus and His disciples started their journey to Jerusalem. Christ tried to prepare His disciples for the tragedy to come—His betrayal, death, and burial. They still could not truly understand what He was saying. They were expecting a warm welcome with lots of excitement and joy, but Jesus knew it would be quite different.

Until now, there was no public announcement of who Jesus really was.

Since the hour for His departure had come, Jesus had to come publicly as the Messiah.

This would lead to His death, but through His death would come redemption and the establishment of His spiritual kingdom in the hearts of men.

Many people rejoiced and cried out as their King came riding through town on a donkey. This enraged the Pharisees.

Jesus knew there was only one more objective with His earthly mission. It was time for death on the cross.

When you think about that last statement, how do those words make you feel?



Read Matthew 26:14-16.

The Pharisees looked for a way to destroy Jesus, but it was more difficult than they thought it would be. Finally, Judas agreed to look for the right time to betray Jesus if they would give him thirty pieces of silver.



Read Luke 22:7-8.

At the same time, Peter and John were preparing the “Last Supper” for Jesus and the disciples.

Before supper was finished, Christ took the bread, blessed, and broke it. “Take, eat; this is my body, which is given for you.”

Then He took the cup, gave thanks, and told them to drink it symbolizing a new covenant of the blood of Christ.

For many years, a sacrificial lamb was a substitute for sin. Now, Jesus Christ became the Passover lamb to take away the sins of the world.



Read Hebrews 9:22.

In the Old Testament, a blood sacrifice was required as a payment for sin, but the blood of animals never erased sin. It was a temporary covering until the perfect sacrifice would come.



Read 1 John 1:7.

His blood cleansed us from all sin. Unlike the animal sacrifices, Jesus Christ was a permanent blood sacrifice.

As the twelve disciples left the supper, Jesus told them that they would all forsake Him that night.

Peter told Jesus that even if all of the other disciples denied Him, he would not. Jesus told him, “This night, before the cock crows, thou shalt deny me thrice.”

Jesus and His disciples then traveled to the Garden of Gethsemane, which was about three quarters of a mile from Jerusalem (Mark 14:32-52; Luke 22:39-53).

Jesus went back to a deeper part of the garden and began to be very heavy and sorrowful. He said, “My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.” Jesus fell on the ground and was wrecked with grief. He knew death was near.



Read Luke 22:42-44.

All the sins committed from Adam to those of the last living person were resting on the shoulders of Jesus as He prayed. The weight of this burden was beginning to press down on the Lamb of God.

Jesus had never been weakened by sickness and had never sinned. To Him, sin was horrible. Now, He was being engulfed with both. Our minds can't perceive the torment Jesus was suffering for us.

2 | The Betrayal Kiss



Around midnight, the chief priests came with Roman soldiers and followed Judas into the garden. When Judas approached Jesus, his sign to the Roman soldiers was his kiss. Jesus was betrayed with a kiss.

Read John 18:6.

Jesus could have killed every one of them with one spoken word. However, He knew what had to be fulfilled and so He allowed them to take Him. Members of Israel's council came together to interrogate Jesus (Matthew 26:57-75; Mark 14:53-72). They asked Him if He was the Christ. Jesus finally spoke and said, "I am."

This was just what they wanted to hear. Now, He was guilty of blasphemy. He would be put to death by crucifixion.

People began spitting, pushing, and even slapping Him. Crucifixion was the most painful and humiliating form of execution a man could endure in that day.

When it was announced that Jesus had been condemned to die, Judas, the traitor, was filled with regret. He knew he had made a mistake. The money meant nothing to him now.

He even tried to return the money to the priests and elders and confess his crime, but, of course, they rejected him.

Judas killed himself to try to escape the torment he was experiencing for what he had done (Matthew 27:3-10; Acts 1:15-20).

3 | The Crucifixion

They took Jesus to Pilate, the Roman governor (Matthew 27:1-2, 11-31; Luke 23:1-25). He was the only one who had the authority to execute. After Pilate questioned Jesus, he announced that he found no fault in Him.

The priests were infuriated and demanded that something be done. Pilate wasn't sure what to do. At the Passover, it was their custom to release

one prisoner selected by the people. So, he decided to allow the people to choose between Christ and Barabbas, a robber and murderer.

The crowd became wild and cried for Pilate to release Barabbas. Then they demanded that Christ be crucified. As the crowd got even more heated, Pilate washed his hands of the situation and turned Him over to the people to do what they wanted to with Him.

The long night of questioning and pounding completely drained Jesus' strength.

Jesus was severely beaten. The soldiers literally put thirty-nine stripes on His back. History tells us that the whip was lined with nails, sharp pieces of bone, and circles of bronze. The end had metal fish-hook spurs. Each lash cut deeper into the flesh as veins and insides were laid open.

He allowed this to happen to purchase salvation and healing for us.

Read Isaiah 53:5.



His torment brought healing for our bodies.

Healing is not just for the Bible era. The promise of healing is for us today (Luke 22:19; Matthew 8:17; I Peter 2:24; Luke 9:11; Acts 10:38; James 5:15).

He was stripped of His clothes. His hands and feet were nailed with huge iron nails to the wood. The cross was then raised (Matthew 27:32-56; Luke 23:26-49).

What is amazing is He could have stopped it at anytime, but He had a mission to accomplish. He came to redeem the world.

Jesus was in excruciating pain. Any movement caused even more pain.

Many things added to His death. At this time, He was probably literally dying of thirst and starvation. He probably had not slept in days. His extensive wounds probably caused high fever and inflammation all over his body.

Jesus' last words were, "It is finished! Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." And He bowed His head and died.

The blood of a lamb would not be needed for sacrifice any more. Jesus paid the ultimate sacrifice for the remission, or removal, of our sins.

The moment Jesus died, the veil that separated the Holy Place from the Holiest of Holies in the Temple was suddenly ripped from top to bottom (Matthew 27:50-51).

Before, only the High Priest could enter the Holiest of Holies once a year.

Now, man can enter freely into the presence of God at any time.

This description of Jesus' crucifixion is not in graphic detail. But with what has been said, what is going through your mind? How does this make you feel to know that He suffered this much for you?

1 The Mystery of Christ

It was very difficult for the disciples to understand what was taking place at first. But, God helped Paul understand the end product of salvation.

Paul called this mystery of Christ “my gospel” (Romans 16:25-26; Ephesians 3:1-12). He explained this “mystery” by comparing the first Adam with Jesus, who was the “last Adam.”

The first Adam, created in God’s image, was given authority and dominion over the earth (Genesis 1:26-28).

When Adam chose to be disobedient and sin, it resulted in a spiritual death, or being cut off from God.

Satan became “god of this world” (II Corinthians 4:4).

Read Romans 5:12, 14.

Even though we were not there with Adam, because of his sin, death has “reigned” on everyone.



Now, the penalty of man’s sin was eternal destruction. After a physical death, we all have to face the White Throne judgment. Hell was not originally prepared for man, but now it is necessary for those that do not find salvation.

To reestablish spiritual life in man, someone had to pay a penalty for the sin.

Only God’s grace could provide a remedy.

To legally redeem man from death and Satan’s dominion, God had to reconcile with humanity. There had to be a mediator, fully God and fully man, to forever settle the separation of man and God.

Read II Corinthians 5:21.

Jesus became sin and sickness and suffered the penalty of death that we might be made the righteousness of God (Acts 2:24-27; I Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:4-12).



2 The Resurrection of Jesus

After Jesus was buried in the tomb and the Sabbath had passed, an angel descended from heaven to roll away the stone in front of the tomb.

Read Matthew 28:5-6.

The grave clothes that covered Him were now empty.



Mary was the first person to see Jesus. She was told to go and spread the news that He was alive.

When Jesus came out of the grave, His victory made it possible for man to have spiritual freedom from Satan.

Read I John 3:8.



He came to conquer death and Satan (Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14-15).

Every one of us today is born into sin. The great part is that we were redeemed by the blood of Jesus. Our responsibility is to believe and obey the plan so clearly given to us.

By obeying the gospel, we become sons of God (I John 3:1-3), we become righteous (Romans 5:18-19), we are justified (Galatians 2:16), we find eternal life (John 6:40), and we become a new creation (II Corinthians 5:17).

But, if we reject the gospel, eventually a second death and a permanent separation from God will happen (Mark 16:15-16).

3 The Identity of Jesus

What does the name Jesus mean to you? Who is He?

Why is it important that we know who Jesus is?

Read John 8:24.



God slowly reveals Himself to us more and more throughout the Bible.

Many times God appeared to man. For example, He appeared as the “angel of the Lord,” a cloud, and a burning bush. But when the fullness of time had come, God needed a body with flesh and blood to redeem man.

It was then that the Holy Ghost overshadowed Mary, putting a seed in her womb, and a child was born. Because the Holy Spirit was His Father, He was called the Son of God; because Mary was His mother, He was also the Son of Man.

Read John 1:1, 14.



The God of Heaven came to live in a human body on earth.

Read Colossians 2:9-10.



The Spirit of God made a body for Himself so that He could come to the earth in a visible form and redeem mankind.

This was a new manifestation of God. Through the womb of Mary was produced a man—all human and all God.

As the Son of God, Jesus didn’t have the sinful nature of man. At the same time, as the Son of Man, He had the same temptations as man.

Read Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:23.



The Spirit of God and the flesh are united in the person of Jesus Christ.

He was not half God and half man. He was 100 percent God and 100 percent man. Jesus Christ was “God with us.”

God had a physical body, but His invisible Spirit couldn’t be completely contained in a small body. The Spirit who was in Christ was also the

Spirit who filled the universe. God was still omnipresent—meaning He is present everywhere at the same time.

Being God and man, Jesus had divine and human natures. Not two persons, but two natures—humanity and divinity.

He was born as an infant on earth (Matthew 1:23-25), but He was still the mighty God and He even created the earth (Isaiah 9:6; Colossians 1:16-17).

As a man, He increased in wisdom (Luke 2:52), but He knew all things as God (John 21:17).

As a man, He became hungry (Matthew 4:2), but as God, He fed the multitudes (Matthew 14:19:16).

As a man, He prayed (Luke 22:44), but as God, He answered prayer (John 14:13-14).

As a man, He was the sacrifice for sin (Hebrews 9:26), but as God, He forgave sin (Mark 2:5-7).

As a man, He suffered and died (John 19:30), but as God, He was resurrected (Luke 24:1-6).

Read I Timothy 3:16.

God's mission on earth was summed up with this one verse.

Read John 14:16, 18, and 26.

In these Scriptures, Jesus speaks of a Comforter, the Holy Ghost, which will come in His name.

In conclusion, the Father is an invisible Spirit. He is an all-powerful God who loves and cares for His children.

The Holy Spirit is the same Spirit that created the universe and the same Spirit that was in the body of Jesus. This manifestation lives within believers today.

There are three main manifestations.

1. He is the Father in creation (Malachi 2:10).
2. He is the Son in redemption (Galatians 4:4-5).
3. He is the Holy Spirit within us (John 7:37-39). The Lord our God is one Lord. His name is Jesus.

In our next lesson, we will talk about how God was finally brought back together with His creation, man. We are able to truly live in relationship with the almighty God.



8 Fulfilling the Commission

Peter, on the Day of Pentecost, became the first man to preach the gospel to a lost world and fulfill the Great Commission. His message relayed the importance of the initial stages of salvation. God was finally reunited with His creation. We are able to truly live in relationship with the almighty God. In this lesson, we will look in more detail at the gospel, the Great Commission, and what Peter actually taught.

In This Lesson

- ✓ The Age of Grace
- ✓ The New Covenant
- ✓ The Promise

The Age of Grace

1 | The Ascension of Jesus

The sacrificial death of Jesus Christ introduced the age of grace. Grace means undeserved favor.

As the disciples talked with Jesus for the first time after He was resurrected, there was lots of emotion and joy.

He appeared to several large and small groups of people in a short period of time before His ascension. This proved to them that He was truly alive (Acts 1:3; John 20:20).

One of His last encounters was on a mountain in Galilee. Jesus talked to His chosen few and entrusted them with the spreading of the gospel.

Read Luke 24:46-49.

Repentance and remission should be preached in His name.





Read Mark 16:15-17.

You must believe the gospel and be baptized. If you believe, you will speak with new tongues.



Read Matthew 28:18-20.

We have to baptize in the name. We will cover this in more detail later in this lesson.



Read Acts 1:4-8.

This talks about what is promised to those who repent, believe, and are baptized—the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

As we go further, we will see how these commands were obeyed by the apostles as they acted on what they were taught by Jesus.

As Jesus was about to ascend to Heaven, His last words were a source of hope to the disciples. He talked about receiving power from on high.

This supernatural power would help them accomplish the difficult commission that He gave them (Luke 24:50-51; Acts 1:9-11).

Then, He was taken up into the sky.

Have you ever experienced anything powerful from God?

So, when would this power from on high happen? How would it feel? How would they know when it arrived?

Let us move on and find out.

2 | The Church Begins

In Acts 2, one hundred and twenty men and women were in the “upper room.” They were sitting, meditating, and wondering what would happen next (Acts 1:15).

A roaring sound, like a windstorm, started blowing in. As the noise got louder, everyone in the room could hear the sound. It very quickly rang out in the entire house.

This was exactly what John the Baptist was talking about when he said in Luke 3:16: “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”



Read Acts 2:1-4.

All of a sudden, the Holy Ghost began to fill the people and they started to utter some sort of strange language. Instead of their normal native language, God’s Spirit was forming foreign words. Flowing from within, like rivers of living water, they were speaking with “new tongues” as Jesus had promised (Mark 16:17).

The interesting thing about this occurrence was they were all speaking with other tongues. It wasn’t just a few who “had the gift.” All one hundred and twenty people in the upper room were “filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”



Old Testament Scriptures described this Holy Ghost experience.

Read Joel 2:28-29; Isaiah 28:10-12; Ezekiel 11:19-20.



Ezekiel describes a “new heart” and “new spirit” for believers.

Read Jeremiah 31:33.

Jeremiah talks about the inward covenant.

After the outpouring in Acts 2:4, people started gathering around. They were amazed and demanded an explanation.

They accused the disciples of being drunk. Peter denied it. It was too early to be drunk because it was only 9:00 in the morning.

To explain why they looked drunk, Peter quoted an old prophecy.



Read Acts 2:16-17, 21.

Now, it was time for Peter to preach the gospel to a lost world. What is so important about Peter being the one to preach the gospel for the very first time in history?



Read Matthew 16:18-19.

We see that Peter has the keys to the kingdom of Heaven, or basically what it takes to make it to Heaven.



Read Acts 2:37.

After Peter preached, the people were pricked in their heart and asked, “What shall we do?”



Read Acts 2:38-39.

Repentance, baptism in Jesus’ name, and receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost. This promise is to you, your children, and to all afar off.

This is a gift given to every believer.

With the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, this was a new experience, a New Covenant, a new kingdom, and a new church of separated people of every race and nation.

Because of Calvary, we are now able to freely reunite with the Lord. A direct, personal contact with God was made possible for everyone. The gospel had opened the door of salvation to all flesh that day.

Now, let us take a look at how we can enter into this New Covenant relationship and kingdom of God.

The New Covenant

1 | Repentance Reviewed



Read Mark 1:14-15.

Belief is probably the most fundamental component of salvation. If you do not believe in Christ and what He has done for us, it would be impossible to respond to the gospel. We cannot just stop at belief, though.

We have to believe and obey. Many of the Jews believed in Jesus, but were responsible for His death. All through the ages, the Lord has always required His people to be obedient to what they believed. Today is no different.



Read Luke 24:47.

We studied this in Lesson 6. Even though it can be emotional, repentance is not just an emotional feeling. It's a decision. When we truly repent, we change our mind and our actions about sin.

How do we repent?

We choose to turn away from sin (Ezekiel 18:23; Acts 26:18, 20).

We surrender our self-governance (Romans 6:6-13; Galatians 5:24; Colossians 3:3).

We should allow God to guide and govern us.

We should call on the Lord, confess our sins, and give up our sinful ways (Acts 2:21; 22:16; Romans 10:12-13; I John 1:9; Ephesians 4:22).

What happens when we believe in Christ and repent?



Read I John 1:9.

When we call on the Lord and confess our sins, He will forgive us.

2 | Water Baptism

What is the purpose of baptism?

In the old Abrahamic covenant, circumcision was an observable mark that a Jewish male had been separated unto God (Genesis 17:10-14). Men could not become part of the covenant unless the ceremony was performed.



On the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2, a new circumcision was introduced.

Read Romans 2:29.

This was a new circumcision of the heart.



Read Colossians 2:11-12.

Being buried with Him in baptism is the way to fulfill this new circumcision and enter into the New Covenant.

Water baptism is the only act in the New Testament that will make God and man blood-covenant partners.

The specific way to baptism in the Bible should be by immersion into water. It was described as a burial in Colossians 2:12. Also, they "went down into the water" and came "up out of the water" (Acts 8:38-39). They "went up straightway out of the water" (Matthew 3:16).

Even the Greek word, *baptizo*, means "to immerse."

Sprinkling began at some point in church history for the purpose of baptizing infants. An infant can't acknowledge and confess his sins. An infant cannot even understand the gospel, much less be ready to be

baptized. We simply dedicate infants to the Lord and pray that one day they will make the decision to live for God and be baptized (I Samuel 1:11).

Wherever the disciples preached, they baptized the people who believed the gospel and repented of their sins.

Remission of sins comes from faith in Jesus, repentance, and water baptism.

Without repentance, water baptism is just an empty symbolic ritual. With repentance, water baptism remits or takes away sin.



Read Galatians 3:27; Revelation 1:5; Romans 6:4-5.

When we are baptized in the name of Jesus, we identify with Christ, sins are washed by His blood, and we should walk in newness of life.



Why is the name of Jesus Christ important when being baptized?

Read Matthew 28:19.

Baptize in the name. If we were to baptize in the name of these three manifestations, we would need to do it in the name of Jesus. We never see in the Bible the titles of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost spoken over anyone in baptism.

What is the name of the Father? Jesus. John 5:43 says, “I am come in my Father’s name.”

What is the name of the Son? Jesus. Matthew 1:21 says, “thou shalt call his name Jesus.”

What is the name of the Holy Ghost? Jesus. John 14:26 says, “the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name.”

A man can be a father, is a son, and has a spirit. If we were to baptize in the name of these three manifestations, we would need to baptize in the name of Jesus.

Also, this is the only Scripture in the entire Bible that says, “baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Any time after this Scripture that the Apostles acted on what Jesus taught, they baptized in the name of Jesus.

Again, we never see in the Bible the titles of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost spoken over anyone in baptism.



Read Philippians 2:9-11; Acts 4:12.

There is no other name with this much significance.

The name of Jesus has all authority and power over Satan’s dominion.

Let’s look at the examples of baptism in the Bible.



Read Acts 2:38-41.

Three thousand believers were baptized on the Day of Pentecost.



Read Acts 8:16.

Even though these people had joy, experienced healings, and believed in Jesus, were they still baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts 8:5-16)?



Read Acts 10:48.

Cornelius was a devout man, feared God, and spent time praying (Acts 10:1-2). Then later he and several others received the Holy Ghost and spoke with other tongues (Acts 10:44-46). Were they still required to be baptized in the name of the Lord?

If a person were baptized another way, should they be rebaptized?

Read Acts 19:3-5.

Did those baptized by John the Baptist need to be rebaptized in the name of the Lord Jesus?

Have you ever been baptized in the name of Jesus?

The Promise

1 | A Gift to Believers



Reread Acts 1:4-5.

Before ascending to Heaven, Jesus told His disciples they would be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days from then.

We cannot stop at just believing Him. When we believe His promises, we will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost (Mark 16:17; John 7:38-39; Acts 2:38; Ephesians 1:13; Luke 11:13).



Read Acts 11:17.

God gave the gift to those who believed.



Read Acts 19:1-2.

The disciples believed, but had they heard of or received the Holy Ghost?



Read Acts 19:6.

They believed and then they received the gift of the Holy Ghost.

This promise is for people who believe, repent, and are baptized. It's not for people who still want to live in sin. We have to repent and turn from our sin and be baptized. Then we are promised to receive the Holy Ghost (Acts 2:38). Some receive the Holy Ghost before they are baptized, but we are promised to receive it after we are baptized.

If Adam had never sinned and broken fellowship with God, there would have been no need for Jesus Christ to come. Because Adam sinned, it was impossible for man to have spiritual fellowship with God. God robed Himself in flesh and became our sacrifice for sin. Now, because He paid the price, we are able to commune with Him through the Holy Spirit once again.

What is the Holy Ghost?



Read John 14:16-18 and I Corinthians 3:16.

The Holy Ghost is God in us (II Timothy 1:14).

It is a promise and a gift. (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4; 2:38, 39; 11:17; Luke 11:13).

What are some of the benefits that come with receiving the Holy Ghost?

It is part of salvation (John 3:5).

It brings comfort (John 15:26; 16:7).

It brings peace and joy (Isaiah 28:11-12; Romans 14:17).

The Holy Ghost helps us pray (Romans 8:26; I Corinthians 14:14-15; Jude 20)

It gives us power to be witnesses for Him (Acts 1:8; 4:31).

It teaches, guides, and shows us things to come (John 14:26; 16:13).

The Spirit also gives us power to overcome the enemy (Luke 10:19-20; Isaiah 59:19; I John 4:1-4).

Do you have to have the Holy Ghost?

Read John 3:5.

John 7:38-39 says they that believe should receive.

In Acts 9:6, the Lord told Saul to go into the city and he would be told what he “must do.” In verse 17, he was told to be filled with the Holy Ghost.

According to Romans 8:9, if you do not have the Spirit of Christ, “he is none of His.”



2 Evidence of This Gift

When the Holy Ghost was first poured out on the Day of Pentecost, an audible evidence was used. Do you remember what that sign was?

Read Mark 16:17, 20 and I Corinthians 14:21-22.

Does the sign of speaking with other tongues always accompany the baptism of the Spirit?

Only three instances in the New Testament actually explain what happened when someone received the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

On the Day of Pentecost—Read Acts 2:2-4.

When Peter preached to Gentiles in Cornelius’ home—Read Acts 10:44-46.

When Paul preached to a group of disciples at Ephesus—Read Acts 19:6.

If you look at these Scriptures closely, only one outward manifestation is the same—they all spoke with tongues.

When they heard them speak with tongues, they knew that God had given His Spirit to them.

Have you ever spoken in tongues? Do you know anyone who has? Tell about your experience.



3 | Receive This Gift

There is no easy formula to receive the Holy Ghost. The following is meant to be a simple guideline to give you a little direction when you are seeking Him.

The Holy Ghost is a free gift for “whosoever will.”

We first have to believe in Christ and repent (Luke 24:47; Acts 20:21).

We need to ask and believe for God’s gift (Luke 11:9-13; Acts 5:32).

Then we should begin to offer praise and give thanks to the King of kings (Hebrews 13:15; Psalm 116:7). Call on the name of the Lord.

Let the Spirit of God begin to fill you and then flow out of you (John 7:37-38).

As you surrender yourself to God and He begins to flow out of you, surrender your tongue as well. You will begin to speak in tongues as the Spirit gives the utterance.

If you have not received the Holy Ghost, how does it make you feel to talk about it? If you have received, tell about your experience.

God desires to fill you with His Spirit. It may be as we are praying and closing out this study. It may be in your vehicle on the side of the road, in your room kneeling beside your bed, or even in a church service.

It can happen in many different settings, but one thing is for sure—it is for everyone.

Once a person has received the baptism of the Spirit, this is not the end; it is really only the beginning. God has much more. He wants to lead and guide us into all truth.

What is the plan for your life spiritually speaking?

You alone can decide whether or not to grow in your relationship with Him.

In our next lesson, we will take a simpler, summarized look at the plan of salvation for us today.

9 A Closer Look at Salvation

Salvation is the theme of the entire Bible. In every age, God provides a way to redeem man from his sin. Then, He gives an opportunity for man to fulfill His plan before a judgment is made. The time period that we live in, the age of grace, is no different. Man is born into sin and shaped in iniquity (Psalm 51:5). God has provided a plan of salvation and has given us a period of time to respond. His Word is faithful and true. When time is up, He will judge. We have discussed the components of the initial steps of salvation in the last several lessons. This lesson will repeat many of the same Scriptures and statements, but it will offer a closer, summarized look at today's plan of salvation.

In This Lesson

- ✓ The Foundation
- ✓ The Heart
- ✓ The Conclusion

The Foundation



Read II Peter 1:20, 21.

The Bible is God-inspired.



Read II Timothy 2:15.

We must study and search the Scriptures. We must rightly divide the Word.

We can't take one Scripture from one part of the Bible and say that it is salvation. We must look at the Bible as a whole and rightly divide the Word.



Read John 12:48.



This Bible is what will judge us. This is why we must not put our trust in theories or religion but what the Word of God says.

Read Matthew 7:13-15.

This is a narrow way and only few will find it. To find this narrow way, we must do the following:

Believe the Bible is 100 percent God-inspired.

Study it and do not accept man's word.

Rightly divide the Word. Look at the table of contents in the front of your Bible. The New Testament shows the following:

1. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John = Life of Christ (Christ walked on earth, performed miracles, and taught His apostles)
2. Acts = Actions of the apostles once Christ ascended
3. Romans through Jude = Letters to churches and writings of apostles

Now that we understand the layout of the Bible, it should all come together perfectly. When it comes to salvation, we shouldn't have to pick and choose Scriptures and create a theory to make it fit. We will simply study the teachings of Christ and then the actions of the apostles.

The Heart

1 | The Gospels



Read Matthew 16:18-19.

Jesus was talking in this Scripture and He gave Peter the keys or what it takes to make it to Heaven.



Read Matthew 28:19.

Baptize in the name. If we were to baptize in the name of these three manifestations, we would need to do it in the name of Jesus.

What is the name of the Father? Jesus. John 5:43 says, "I am come in my Father's name." What is the name of the Son? Jesus (Matthew 1:21).

What is the name of the Holy Ghost? Jesus. John 14:26 says, "the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name." A man can be a father, is a son, and has a spirit. If you were to try to get that man's attention, you would call him by name. If we were to baptize in the name of these three manifestations, we would need to baptize in the name of Jesus.

Also, this is the only Scripture in the entire Bible that says, "baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Any time after this Scripture that the apostles acted on what Jesus taught, they baptized in the name of Jesus. We never see in the Bible the titles of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost spoken over anyone in baptism.

Read Mark 16:16-17.

Believe and be baptized. They that believe will speak with new tongues.



Read Luke 24:47.

Repentance and remission of sins (which is baptism) should be preached in His name beginning at Jerusalem.



Read Luke 24:49.

You will receive the promise (the Holy Ghost) which is power from on high.



Read John 3:5.

A man must be born of water (which is baptism) and Spirit (which is the Holy Ghost) or he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.



Read John 7:38-39.

You must believe as the Scripture hath said. If you believe this way, you should receive the Holy Ghost.



2 The Book of Acts

Read Acts 1:3.

Jesus spent the next forty days before His ascension “speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” Being that salvation is such a critical topic, I’m sure that He spent much of His time answering any questions His apostles may have had.



Read Acts 1:8.

You shall receive power after the Holy Ghost comes upon you. This will be a very powerful experience.



Read Acts 1:9.

Christ ascended.



Read Acts 1:12.

They returned to Jerusalem.



Read Acts 1:15.

There were 120 people in this room.



Read Acts 2:4.

Of the 120 people in this upper room, there weren’t just ten people or twenty people that received the Holy Ghost. All 120 people in the upper room were filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues. This means that receiving the Holy Ghost and speaking in tongues is not just for certain people. It is for everyone.



Read Acts 2:12-14.

They were amazed and in doubt about what they saw. So, Peter stood up and began preaching.



Read Acts 2:37.

After he was finished preaching, the people were pricked in their heart and asked, “What shall we do?” Or what are we supposed to do to



be saved. Peter is preaching (Matthew 16:18, Peter has the keys to heaven) at Jerusalem (Luke 24:47; it will begin in Jerusalem). Does it fulfill the above Scripture?

Repentance – Luke 24:47

Baptism in Jesus' Name – Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Luke 24:47; John 3:5

Receiving the Holy Ghost – Luke 24:49; John 3:5; John 7:39; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:4

It does fulfill the above Scripture—repentance, baptism in Jesus' name, and receiving the Holy Ghost.

Some people say that feeling joy, experiencing healings, believing in Jesus or being baptized in water are evidence that they have received the Holy Ghost. What does the Bible say?

Read Acts 8:5-8.

Did they have great joy?



Were people healed?

Read Acts 8:12.

Did they believe what was preached about Jesus Christ?



Read Acts 8:14-17.

Were they baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus?



Did they receive the Holy Ghost as a separate experience?

We see that receiving the Holy Ghost is a separate experience from feeling joy, experiencing healings, believing in Jesus, or being baptized in water.

Many people say being a good person and living a devout life is good enough, or that being filled with the Holy Ghost and speaking in tongues was only for the Day of Pentecost. Let's see what the Bible says about the life of Cornelius.

Read Acts 10:1-2.

Was Cornelius a devout man?



Did he fear God and spend time praying?

Read Acts 10:5-6.

This is a good man and spent time praying, but did God have more for him to do?



Read Acts 10:44-46.

Did they receive the Holy Ghost and speak in tongues after the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2)?



Read Acts 10:47-48.

Even though they have received the Holy Ghost and spoke in other tongues, were they still required to be baptized in the name of the Lord?



Some people who believe may not have heard about the Holy Ghost. Others feel it is not necessary to be baptized. If you were baptized by John the Baptist, do you think you would need to be rebaptized? Some say

it does not matter what is spoken over you when you are baptized.

Let's see what the Bible says about the believers at Ephesus.

Read Acts 19:1-2.

The disciples believed, but had they heard of or received the Holy Ghost?



They had not even heard of, much less received, the Holy Ghost.

Read Acts 19:3-5.

Did those baptized by John the Baptist need to be rebaptized in the name of the Lord Jesus?



So, it does matter what is spoken over you when you are baptized.

Read Acts 19:6.

Did they speak with tongues when the Holy Ghost came on them?



3 The Epistles

Let's look at the teachings and writings to the churches.

Read I Timothy 1:3.

Teach no other doctrine.



Read II Timothy 4:3-4.

Men will change this doctrine.



Read Galatians 1:6-10.

Do not seek to please men because there is no other gospel.



Read II Timothy 3:5.

Turn away from those that deny the power which is the Holy Ghost.



Read Philippians 2:12.

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.



Read I Timothy 4:16.

This doctrine will save.



By putting these six Scriptures into a paragraph form, it makes a power statement. Timothy says teach no other doctrine. Men are going to change this doctrine, but do not seek to please men because there is no other gospel. Turn away from those that deny the power which is the Holy Ghost and work out your own salvation with fear and trembling because this doctrine will save you.

Jesus taught three things. What did he teach (repentance, baptism in Jesus' name, and receiving the Holy Ghost)?

The apostles taught three things as well. What did they teach (repentance, baptism in Jesus' name, and receiving the Holy Ghost)?

Do you believe the Word of God is true and will judge us all?

Do you believe it is necessary to repent by determining to turn from sin and giving your life to God?

Do you believe water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ is the biblical way to be baptized?

Do you believe when you receive the gift of the Holy Ghost you will speak with other tongues as the Spirit gives you the utterance?

In the next lesson, we will take a look at a new way of life after entering into covenant with Him.

Note: This lesson was taken mostly from *Salvation Made Simple* by Ryan Franklin.

10 Covenant Life

Once we have entered into covenant with Him, God has designed a new life for us. His desire for us is not only have life, but to have it more abundantly. This lesson is a study of that new way of life. We will look at privileges, responsibilities, and the Sermon on the Mount. We will also look at daily disciplines that provide spiritual strength. We have to throw away our own theories and discover the new direction, new joys, new happiness, and new goals the Lord shows us through Scripture.

In This Lesson

- ✓ New Beginnings
- ✓ Spiritual Strength
- ✓ Finding Your Place in the Kingdom

New Beginnings

1 | Understanding Kingdom Privileges and Responsibilities

Anyone can become a covenant partner with Jesus Christ. When we enter into the covenant of God, great blessings accompany it.

Just to name a few, He remits our sins and cleanses us of our past (Romans 3:25).

He adopts us into His family and becomes our heavenly father (I John 3:1-2).

He gives us righteousness so we can stand in His presence without guilt or shame (Romans 3:22).

We have everlasting life through Him (John 5:24). God's nature and life will live within our spirits.

We become a new and better person (II Corinthians 5:17).

He becomes our provider and will supply every need (Matthew 6:31-32; Luke 9:9).

Responsibilities come along with the covenant as well.

This is not an exhaustive list, but to name a few we have to love the Lord with all our heart and learn to obey Him (John 14:23).

We have to seek His will instead of our own desires and wishes (Matthew 7:21).

As you may already know, creating a new life is not always easy. Many times it involves conflicts, trials, suffering, adversity, and discipline.

We are also commissioned, just like the apostles, to continue the mission of spreading the gospel to the world (Mark 16:15).

2 | Overcoming Sin and Self



Read Acts 26:18.

Man's sinful nature naturally gravitates toward darkness and sin. When we are filled with His new life, we begin to show His light.

Our cravings for that old sinful nature will not just automatically go away.

Our flesh is very strong.



Read I John 1:7.

The only way to overcome that struggle is by walking in the light of God's Word and Spirit. When you step out of His covering, darkness begins to try creep back into us. Only the Word of God and His Spirit will keep us in check.

The Sermon on the Mount was great teaching by Jesus that gave us many practical tips on how we should live (Matthew chapters 5-7). It also gave some ways that we should not behave ourselves.

Some characteristics He encouraged were: poor in spirit (humility), mourn (the ability to weep and repent), meek (gentle or kind), hunger and thirst (an appetite for spiritual things), merciful (loving others without criticism), pure in heart (not having dishonesty), peacemakers (bring unity in conflicting situations), and persecuted (when shamefully treated, don't retaliate).

Then Jesus spoke against some things: murder, anger, sexual sins, revenge, prejudice, hypocrisy, greed, being judgmental, and even worrying.

The basic rule of Christian life can be summed up in one Scripture, known as the "Golden Rule."



Read Matthew 7:12.

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.



Read Mark 12:29-31.

The two most important commandments to remember are to love God with all your heart and to love your neighbor as yourself.

Why would Christ give us laws and rules? Why are these guidelines necessary?

Our human nature tends to drift away from God, so we have to have a standard to know where to draw the line. It gives us an opportunity to grow closer to Christ by separating ourselves from sin and the world.

As long as God's love is the driving force in our lives, the laws and rules of the Bible will be easy to follow. Instead of people thinking they are a bondage, they actually become a freedom.

Spiritual Strength

1 | Prayer

Because the world and the flesh are constantly tugging at us, spiritual renewing and strength becomes a priority.

There are three main sources of spiritual strength.

The first strength is prayer. Prayer is the communication system between man and God.

Read James 4:8; I Timothy 2:8; and I Peter 4:7.

Prayer is one of the most important disciplines that a person can learn.

Prayer is like spiritual breath to a Christian. If we do not want to die spiritually, we have to pray.

Prayer is the source of strength and power that we need to overcome every obstacle and difficulty of life.

In the Bible, great people of God became great because they knew how to pray. The people in history who did big things for God spent time in prayer.

There is no end to the list of things that we can seek God for in prayer.

The disciples of Jesus felt the need to be taught how to pray. Jesus gave the disciples what we call "The Lord's Prayer".



Read Matthew 6:9-13.

This prayer gives us a great pattern to model our personal prayer times:

"Our Father, which art in heaven" – Start by directing your prayer to God. He is your Father, so make your prayer personal.

“Hallowed be thy name” – Begin your prayer with a time of worship and thanksgiving. Allow plenty of time for this part of prayer.

“Thy kingdom come” – Pray that His church would reach more people and establish His kingdom in the hearts of men.

“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven” – Pray that God’s will would be done for your life and in the lives around you. Ask for God’s will to be accomplished in the church locally and worldwide.

“Give us this day our daily bread” – This is a time we ask God to help us with our needs: spiritual, physical, emotional, and so on.

“Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors” – Repent and ask God to forgive you for your sin and weaknesses. No one is perfect. We all need to seek God’s forgiveness every day.

“Lead us not into temptation, deliver us from evil” – Ask the Lord to keep you from temptation and the trials of Satan.

“Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever” – End your prayer the same way you began it, with a time of praise, worship, and thanksgiving.

Another practical model that can be used is the “ACTSS” of prayer. As you are praying, step through each letter of the acronym:

A – adoration (worship and praise)

C – confession (repentance)

T – thanksgiving

S – supplication (make your request known)

S – submission (meditate on God and His Word).

Spend as much time as you’d like on each component.

Let us talk about some of the experiences you have had with prayer.

2 Bible Study Foundation

The next main source of spiritual strength is Bible study (Joshua 1:8; Proverbs 4:4; Psalm 1:2-3).

On a scale of 0-10, how would you rate how familiar you are with the Bible?

Why do you think people are so intimidated by the Bible? Do you feel intimidated sometimes by the Bible?

Read II Timothy 2:15.



This is an amazing book and God has placed a craving in every human that cannot be fulfilled by anything but the Word of God. A good Bible study foundation gives us spiritual food.

When we are going through specific things, the Word is there to give us encouragement, direction, and many other things.

The Word of God was designed to be applied to our lives, not just read.

We have to put it into action and live according to its instructions.

Do you consistently study the Bible?

Was the Bible a centerpiece in your home while growing up?

Can you see a difference in your life just by studying the Word for the last few weeks?

Let us look at some ways to study the Bible.

First of all, getting a good study Bible could definitely help. Just be aware that doctrine should be taken only from the actual text of the Bible and not from commentaries you find printed in various Bibles.

One-year Bibles allow us to read through the Bible in a year by giving us a specific reading plan.

Read one chapter of Proverbs per day and finish it in one month.

Study a person by reading everything the Bible has to say about that person (i.e. Moses, David, or Jesus).

Study a topic by reading everything the Bible has to say about a specific topic (i.e. love, gifts of the Spirit, or salvation).

Reading though the Bible with a daily devotional could offer some great inspiration.

Study a book of the Bible or a passage by using the “observation method.”

In order to find key principles with the observation method, we can do three things as we are reading: observation, interpretation, and application.

For an example, let us read Mark 5:24-29 together.

Observation (key words and phrases)

Verse 24: Jesus was on His way to see Jairus’ daughter who was about to die. Many people were following Him.

Verse 25: There was a woman in the crowd who had a disease for twelve years.

Verse 26: She had tried all means and ways to be healed and had no more money left. Yet, instead of becoming better, her disease worsened.

Verse 27: She touched His garment.

Verse 28-29: She believed she could be healed of the plague and she was.

Interpretation

What words in verses 25-26 show the intensity of the desperation of the woman's problem? Twelve years; suffered many things from many physicians; spent all that she had

According to the woman, what was the formula for her healing in verse 28? She had to touch Jesus' clothes.

Why did she touch Jesus? She wanted to be healed and believed that He could do it.

Application

What can we learn from the woman's attitude and her faith?

How can we apply it to our lives?

The Bible is a powerful spiritual tool if only we search the Scriptures and apply them to our lives.

3 Fasting

Fasting is another spiritual strength (Matthew 6:16-18; Acts 13:2-3; Mark 9:29). There are over seventy references to fasting in the Bible.

Fasting is voluntarily abstaining from something, primarily food.

Why do you think fasting would be an important discipline?

Have you ever fasted before?

When we fast, we purposefully turn our attention from physical things to spiritual things. It helps increase our spiritual sensitivity and alertness. It also helps give direction for our lives.

Fasting is the partner of faith and should always be done with prayer (I Corinthians 7:5). In most cases where fasting is mentioned in the Bible, prayer is also included.

Fasting is a way that we humble ourselves before God (I Peter 5:6; Ezra 8:21; I Corinthians 9:27). It helps us organize our priorities. It places spirit over flesh. It places the will of the inward man over the will of the outward man.

Fasting is sometimes done during times of crisis or great need (Judges 20:26; Jonah 3:5, 10). Regular periods of fasting should be routine in the life of a Christian. This helps us keep the flesh under subjection, but there are also special times of crisis, disaster, and need that call for more intense times of prayer and fasting.

Fasting should be a part of our ongoing life of repentance (I Kings 21:7). In I Samuel 7:6, Israel fasted when they repented of idolatry. Nowhere in Scripture is it required to fast before repenting, being baptized in water, or receiving the Holy Ghost. But, when a Spirit-filled Christian has made a mistake or fallen into sin, fasting while repenting can help

bring the flesh back in line with God.

When we need specific guidance and direction for our lives, fasting brings us into closer communion with God so that we can discover His will (Acts 13:2-3).

One of the strongest desires of the body is for food and nourishment. When we deny this desire for a certain amount of time as a sacrifice unto the Lord, it is an act of genuine worship unto God (Romans 12:1-2).

Fasting is not a stubborn temper-tantrum to try to force God to do what we want Him to do. We are not driving God to do our will, but instead, fasting helps us bring our will into agreement to His will.

Fasting should not be a public display to draw attention. Unless we are fasting corporately, we should try to make fasting as subtle and unnoticed as possible (Matthew 6:16-18).

There are many different ways to fast. Fasting can be complete or partial. It can be for a long period of time or a short period of time.

The people in the Bible who fasted generally gave up food and/or water, but many other things that you give up could be considered a sacrifice as well. For example, while taking a three-day fast from food, it would be helpful to give up media as well.

Fasting is a powerful spiritual tool ordained by God to help us bring ourselves into subjection to His Spirit. Any reasonable sacrifice you can make will only help you and your walk with God.

If we could ever grasp the importance of daily prayer, fasting, and the Word, there is nothing that could stop us spiritually. As we develop a love for Him, it gives Him an opportunity to show His love for us.

Finding Your Place in the Kingdom

What is your vision? What has God called you to do in your everyday life and in the church?

For the most part, people just stumble halfheartedly through life hoping tomorrow will be better than today. Many have no plan and no dream. They mostly just exist hoping for a break. They just keep turning the pages of their life story, one after the other, until they get to the final chapter of their life.

The Bible makes it clear that we were designed from the start to live for a unique reason. You and I are made in the image of a forward-looking, purposeful God.

Read Psalm 139:13-16.



God created you with a divine intended plan in mind. Before you were born, God knew you. He knew what He wanted your life to be like, but He gave us a choice.

That's why God calls us to live on purpose, keeping the end in view. He wants us to seek Him in order to learn what His perfect plan is for our lives.



Read Proverbs 29:18.

Where there is no vision, no dream, or no sense of our created purpose, we perish.

Begin praying that He will lead and guide you to that perfect vision for you. It is up to you to seek out and choose His path.

In the next lesson, we will continue the journey through time and take a look at the history of Christianity over the past two thousand years.

11

The New Testament Church

To really understand why there are so many “flavors” of Christians and beliefs, we need to go back to the beginning. How did God originally design the church? Ephesians 4:4-6 says, “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” Matthew 7:13-14 says, “Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” It is a narrow path that leads to life and only few people will find it. In this lesson, we’ll look at the history of Christianity over the last couple thousand years.

In This Lesson

- ✓ The New Church Begins
- ✓ What Has Happened Since Then?

The New Church Begins

1 | The Book of Acts

Where can we look to find what the original church was like?

When Jesus left His disciples and ascended into Heaven, He gave them the challenge of establishing the church. The Book of Acts is a record of how they fulfilled this command. As we have studied in previous lessons, we can find exactly how people were saved and allowed to enter into God’s church by studying this book.

After the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, the new born church began evangelizing on the Day of Pentecost.

Now, the Spirit of God is able to dwell in anyone who believes and obeys the gospel. The Holy Ghost gives power to witness and power over the enemy. He teaches and guides into all truth.



Read John 14:12 and Acts 2:43.

The apostles were compelled by Jesus' words and love, and they ministered to anyone they came in contact with.

One day, Peter and John went to the Temple for prayer. They came across a lame beggar sitting on the steps (Acts 3:1-11).

Peter told the man, "Silver and gold have I none, but such as I have give I thee."

Then he said, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk!"

Taking the beggar by the hand, Peter pulled him up and suddenly the man felt strength in his feet and began to walk.

From this point on, an awesome healing ministry began. As the disciples spread the Word, the miracles increased.

Read Acts 5:16.



2 The Persecution of the Early Church

Along with an increase in miracles came an increase in persecution (Acts 4:13-22).

Stephen was another man who was mightily used by God and many miracles were performed through him (Acts 7:54-60). Some of the Jews, fighting this new belief, brought Stephen to trial. They lied about things he was doing, dragged him out in the streets, and stoned him.

This death caused a chain reaction of persecution, forcing the church to escape to isolated areas of Judea and Samaria.

According to Acts 8:4, they continued preaching the Word.

As persecution grew, some of the disciples and apostles were imprisoned and some were even put to death.

Even with the persecution, the early church still grew very quickly.

Saul was a man of Roman citizenship. He planned to exterminate the spreading of the gospel of the new church. He arrested and prosecuted many believers (Acts 9:1-2).

At one point, Saul traveled to a city named Damascus to arrest a group of refugee believers.

As Saul approached Damascus, a very bright light from Heaven suddenly beamed around him. He fell from his horse and Jesus appeared to him (I Corinthians 9:1).

Saul then heard a voice that said, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?"

He answered, “Who art thou, Lord?” The voice replied, “I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest.”

Saul was given instructions to go into Damascus. As he stood to his feet, he realized he could not see. He was led to a house in Damascus.

After fasting three days, Saul’s blindness was healed. He was taught and then baptized by a disciple called Ananias. The Bible also shows that he was filled with the Holy Ghost and spoke with other tongues (Acts 9:17-18; I Corinthians 14:18).

Saul later became an apostle and spent several years in Tarsus. Eventually, a church was started in Antioch and Saul went there to help Barnabas.

Later, Saul and Barnabas were led by the Holy Ghost to be the first foreign missionaries to the Gentiles (Acts 13:1-3).

In this Greek-speaking world, he changed his Hebrew name, Saul, to the Greek pronunciation, Paul.

He then went on to take several missionary trips and established several churches.

Paul was eventually arrested and almost killed by a Jewish mob. He was then sent to Caesarea and imprisoned (II Corinthians 11:23-28).

Paul wrote, “I have learned that in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.”

Through his persecution and imprisonment, Paul wrote thirteen of the twenty-one New Testament Epistles.

The reason we have so much knowledge and instruction about Christianity today is because God’s plan for Paul included a prison term.

What Has Happened Since Then?

1 Roman Rule

The Jews believed they were destined to conquer and govern the world.

Having this confidence, they refused to submit to Roman rule.

About 66 AD, the Jews broke into open rebellion against Rome.

Roman forces quickly conquered Jerusalem and took vengeance on the Jews for their stubbornness. Many Jews were slaughtered.

After 1300 years, the Jewish state was destroyed.

More than a million Jews died. Despite their oppression, the Jews prospered. They were ridiculed and feared. They were robbed, yet wealthy. They were massacred, but not destroyed. The Jews have outlived the persecution of centuries and will continue to live to the end of time.

This is one of the greatest miracles of our time.

The Jewish state, Israel, was restored in 1948 and eventually, the Jews will experience a complete restoration of their covenant promises again.

For the next two hundred years, the church overcame lots of persecution.

During the second, third, and early part of the fourth century, Rome used all its power to try to destroy the Christian movement. They were unsuccessful and the Christians continued to evangelize and reproduce for nineteen centuries.

Until the reign of Nero, Christianity was opposed, but it was tolerated.

In 64 AD, Nero made it worse as he tortured and executed thousands of people.

In 257 AD, the persecution continued. They would not even allow Christians to be buried in cemeteries. This forced believers to bury their dead in the “catacombs” of Rome, which were deep underground passages or tunnels dug to get stone for building the city. There were about five hundred miles of catacombs in Rome. It became a hiding place for worship and burial.

About twenty years had gone by without any anti-Christian policy. In 303 AD, a new order was issued to destroy all church buildings and copies of Scripture. Christianity was strictly prohibited and punished by torture and death for many years to come.

In less than eighty years after the last major move of persecution, Christianity rose from the threat of extermination to a place of prominence among the most influential throne of the world. In 381 AD, Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire.

2 The Christian Church Declines

30–50 AD

The Day of Pentecost – 30 AD

Sufferings and death of the apostles – 44–68 AD

Nero persecuted Christians – 54–68 AD

Jerusalem was destroyed – 70 AD

150–300 AD

In the last half of the second century, several deceptive untruths slowly became a problem to the church. False teachings started to rise up, such as Gnosticism and Montanists. There was a gradual digression of truth from the early church.

Also during this time, a man named Tertullian introduced a new theology about the Godhead called the Trinity.

The basic meaning of the Trinity is that in the unity of the Godhead there

are three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three persons, being truly distinct one from another, are all coeternal and coequal. All of them are uncreated and omnipotent. (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, Vol.15, page 47).

At first baptism was administered in the name of Jesus, but gradually it became popular to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

300–400 AD

The Council of Constantinople in 381 AD condemned the belief of three manifestations of one God as heresy. So the doctrine of the Trinity was fully established by law.

400–500 AD

After Constantine ended Christian persecution, it was soon an honor to be a “Christian.” At that time, Christianity meant political, military, and social power. Many heathens flocked to the church, bringing their pagan ways and beliefs. The church no longer changed people, but people changed the church.

In 410 AD, the Roman Empire fell.

In 461 AD, the Pope was established. Baptism started to be done by sprinkling instead of immersion.

500–1500 AD (The Dark Ages)

By the fifth century, many unscriptural teachings had entered and distorted its original basic beliefs. People called themselves “Christians,” but what they followed was far from the original apostles’ doctrine.

In 570 AD, Mohammed was born. Later, he claimed to have a new revelation and he established Islam. He preached there was one God, Allah. He encouraged people to fight for their faith even to the point of death. This created lots of religious violence.

In 1476 AD, the Roman Catholic Church started selling indulgences, an official document allowing a person to sin freely. This became a giant source of income for the church.

3 The Christian Church Improves

Between 1350 and 1650, man started to think for himself again. There was a move to look at the authority of the Bible over the Pope and Catholicism. A rebirth of learning and education known as the Renaissance began to take place.

1500–1600 AD

In the early 1500s, a Roman Catholic monk named Martin Luther became concerned and stirred by some of the deceptions that were happening in the Roman Catholic Church.

The more Luther studied, the more the Roman Catholic Church began to fall in his eyes. He began to attack the government and authority on which Catholicism was based. This led to the Protestant Reformation.

1600–1700 AD

In 1612, the first Baptist church was formed in England. They rebaptized their followers when they realized the biblical way was by immersion.

1647, the Quakers moved from England to Pennsylvania to seek religious freedom.

1700–1800 AD

In 1727, the Moravians began fulfilling the Great Commission and establishing missionary works.

In 1734, Jonathan Edwards started preaching repentance messages.

John Wesley helped form the Methodists in 1784. The early Methodists spoke in tongues, saw healings, and had visions. They were instrumental in bringing major restoration to portions of the Apostolic doctrine. They were getting closer to what the true church in the Book of Acts looked like.

1800–1900 AD

In 1821, Charles Finney came on the scene and became one of the greatest evangelists of his time. Many people came to the Lord through his ministry.

In 1859, the well-known Charles Spurgeon began a spiritual awakening in Britain.

4 The Revival of the True Church

A man named Charles Parham had a deep desire for the Word and decided to open a Bible school in October 1900 in Topeka, Kansas. His first enrollment was about forty students.

These students were studying Acts 2 and asked the questions, “Was the Holy Ghost baptism always accompanied by speaking with other tongues? Is the tongues experience still available?”

After prayerful study, the group concluded that speaking with other tongues always accompanied the Holy Ghost baptism in the New Testament.

Toward the end of 1900, they began seeking the baptism of the Holy Ghost for themselves, expecting to speak with other tongues.

On New Year’s Day, 1901, it happened. A student named Agnes Ozman asked her instructor to lay hands on her and pray that she would receive the Holy Ghost. As Parham prayed, she began to speak with other tongues with floods of joy and laughter.

By the third day, many of the students had received the Holy Ghost. No one was talking the same language and no one understood the other’s

speech. Twelve ministers of different faiths were baptized in the Spirit. Reporters, professors, foreigners, government interpreters, and many others came from all over to see what was going on.

This was the first time in America that believers received the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in other tongues.

Crowds from all over came to hear Parham and his students preach. People from many other towns soon began to experience the Holy Ghost.

In Galena, Kansas, people were healed of blindness, cancer, and other diseases. Hundreds were baptized. It then started spreading all over the country.

In 1906, there was another famous outpouring of God's Spirit called Azusa Street, which was led by W. J. Seymour.

For three years, the revival continued every day and night.

In 1913, R. E. McAlister began studying about New Testament water baptism.

In Los Angeles in 1913 at a worldwide camp meeting, McAlister pointed out that nowhere in the New Testament were believers ever baptized in the titles—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

By studying the Word, they discovered that our one God has revealed Himself as Father in creation, as the Son in redemption, and the Holy Ghost in reconciliation.

This scriptural revelation resulted in the formation of several Apostolic organizations.

During the 1950s a spiritual tidal wave began to sweep from one denomination to another.

Today, many millions of people have received the gift of the Holy Ghost. There are very few churches that have not been touched by the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in other tongues.

What do you think began the church reformation in the late 1300s?

We've quickly gone through more than 2000 years of history, but the greatest part of the church is still ahead of us. Peter told the apostles and the early church, "The promise is for you and your children, and to all who are afar off." It's up to us to make sure it continues to grow and get even better in the future.

In the next lesson, we will take a look at the signs that show which generation will be living on earth just before He returns.

12 The End Is Near

Before Christ ascended, He identified a generation who would be living on earth just before He returned. This lesson looks at the signs that show which generation that will be. Also, we will walk through the events that will happen in those last days.

Note: Look on the Internet and listen to the news to find relevant articles to support the various topics in this study.

In This Lesson

- ✓ How Will We Know the End Is Near?
- ✓ The Antichrist
- ✓ Events in the Last Days

How Will We Know the End Is Near?

1 Spiritual Signs



Read Matthew 24:3.

What are the signs of end of the world? How will we know the end is near?



Read II Timothy 3:1-5.

Christians today are feeling such a strong pull to the things of this world. As the end of the church age comes, we can expect it to get even stronger. We have to be careful not to reject what we know as truth and not to substitute the desires of this world for the desires of God.

The rise and development of cults and mystic religions seem to be everywhere.

The New Age movement gives the subtle scheme of “good will for all,” seeking the attainment of the highest individual human potential rather than a dependence on God. There is no unified belief system, though many practices and philosophies are common in New Age spirituality. The movement draws inspiration from a variety of world religions, such as Buddhism, Chinese Folk Religion, Hinduism, even Christianity, and many more.

There are thousands of different organizations and religious cults within the United States alone. Most of these groups encourage mysticism, free love, and mind control.



Read I Timothy 4:1.

For the last few decades, there has been an explosion of occult activity.

Now, many people think occult and psychic practices are legitimate.

Worldwide, there are many practicing witches and sorcerers, some who make money selling formulas and incantations.

Astrology and horoscopes are also prevalent. Most newspapers feature a horoscope column.

Christ warned us to beware of these practices.



Read Acts 2:17-18.

Not all the signs were negative. While conditions of the world continue to grow worse, the church will have worldwide revival and growth (Matthew 24:14; Mark 13:10).

2 | Israel Signs

Throughout Scripture, the fig tree has symbolized the nation of Israel.

When the fig tree begins to “shoot forth” with leaves, Christ warned, the end is near (Ezekiel 37:1-28; 36:33-35).

Psalms 102:16 tells us that Jerusalem’s rebuilding is a sign of the Lord’s soon return.

On May 14, 1948, Israel became a nation and millions of Jews are returning there.

Jerusalem, more than any other city of the world, will play a big role in the end-time events (Luke 21:24). It is the capital and cultural center of the nation of Israel.

The recovery of the old Jerusalem in 1967 is probably the greatest fulfillment of prophecy in our times. It had been 1,897 years since the Jews controlled Jerusalem.

Hatred for the Jewish people will be escalated. For example, Hitler tried to exterminate the Jewish race. Countries will rise up against Israel (Ezekiel 38, 39; Luke 21:20). There are many modern day examples of

a rise in Jewish hatred and countries rising up against Israel (research current articles).

Christ also predicted that after Israel had been re-gathered, a temple would be rebuilt with a “Holy Place” and the Mosaic system of blood sacrifices would resume (Matthew 24:15-16).

Israel has been regathered and restored as a nation, but has come in unbelief still rejecting the true Messiah. Surrounded by enemy nations, Israel is looking for solutions to its problems and still longing for the Messiah to come.

3 | Worldwide Signs

There are many worldwide signs that show we are living in the last days (research current articles on each Scripture).

The Bible says there will be an increase of wars between nations—“wars and rumours of wars” (Matthew 24:6; Mark 13:7).

Matthew 24:7 says, “and there shall be famines and pestilences.” Thousands of people die of starvation every day.

A third sign is earthquakes (Matthew 24:7; Luke 21:11). The present generation has experienced more earthquakes than any other time in history.



Read II Timothy 3:1-4.

Pleasure seeking is another sign. Pleasure is the number one industry in America. Billions of dollars are spent on pleasure every year.

According to Luke 21:26, men’s hearts are going to fail them.

Because of the high pressures of today, many people have heart problems and heart failure. Heart disease is one of the top killers in the United States.

Immorality will be rampant (Luke 17:28-30; II Timothy 3:2-4). Need I say more? Sexual perversion and immorality is everywhere today.

God brought judgment on Sodom for sexual perversion because it’s an abomination (Romans 1:27).



Read Daniel 12:4.

Two things are mentioned—an increase in travel and in human knowledge.

At the beginning of the last century, men traveled in carriages similar to the ones used by Pharaoh 3,500 years ago. There were no automobiles or airplanes. Now, man has been to the moon and back at 25,000 miles per hour or more.

Man fought with swords, bows, and arrows for 3,500 years before the invention of gunpowder. Our generation has created weapons capable of destroying the entire population of the earth.

Technology is increasing rapidly in these last days. It is thought that within a few decades machine intelligence will surpass human intelligence. In the 1950s, the military developed the first stages of the Internet. Now the Internet and computers are the way of life.

The Antichrist

1 | Humanistic Life

People have wondered for years how the Antichrist will dominate the entire world. How could people so easily be deceived to accept and worship the man of sin? Although the Book of Revelation has many specific details of all of this, many thousands of people will still accept him and his mark.

How do you think this will happen?

Bible scholars believe it will begin with a philosophy that promotes the Antichrist's world system called "humanism." This belief emphasizes man's wisdom instead of God's. It encourages man to solve his own problems instead of allowing God to intervene.

Humanism is based on the following principles:

1. Man is basically good.
2. Within man's own self is sufficient intelligence and ability to solve his own problems and meet his own needs.
3. No outside force of higher power needs to be consulted or expected, nor does any such power exist.
4. Evolution is responsible for the origin of man.
5. There is no life after death.
6. Man should actively pursue the "good life" here on earth.

Christianity is quickly being erased from the schools and it's because of these humanistic views. The Ten Commandments cannot be displayed in the classroom or government buildings now.

There are many, many other humanistic ways sweeping our country. With all that is happening, it would be easy for the Antichrist to quickly appear with feasible answers to the world's problems and be overwhelmingly accepted.

2 | Monetary System

The monetary system will play a big part. Until the late 1980s, cash and bartering were the two main forms of buying and selling. Then checks

became widely used. In the early to mid 1990s, the credit card was finally widely accepted.

Then, came the smart card. It has the memory capability to contain anything desired about a person. The goal of this card is to replace the wallet.

With this card, the individual will be able to buy and sell, never having to carry cash again.

This card is the size of a standard credit card, but doesn't carry the magnetic strip. Instead it has a micro-chip.

The same problem that exists with a credit card, checks, and ATM cards still to some degree exists with a smart card. It can easily be stolen.

It is speculated that in time, the micro-chip will be removed from the card and placed inside the body.



Read Revelation 13:16-18.

The world is moving to a cashless society, which will pave the way for the Antichrist and his system. Wouldn't it be so much easier to just be able to scan your hand in a grocery store to pay for your groceries? No more robberies or hold-ups.

In Revelation 13:18, John uses the term "beast" to describe a certain man.

The stage has been set for an antichrist to come on the scene and be the "answer" for the world. He will have a universal plan and will cause war to end. The economy will thrive because of his ideas. Miraculous feats will happen and many in the world will reverence him. Eventually he will even proclaim himself as God (II Thessalonians 2:4).

What will happen if someone rejects this proposed universal plan? Do you think you could refuse the Beast?



Read Revelation 20:4.

Many people will be beheaded because they do not worship the Beast or take his mark. Whatever you do, do not take it. The people who do not take the mark will live and reign with Christ.

Events in the Last Days

1 | The Rapture



Read John 14:1-3.

The good thing is that the church has a great future. These scriptures were promised by Jesus at the time of the last supper.

As Jesus ascended into Heaven, His disciples looked up and saw two men in white apparel and they spoke.



Read what they said in Acts 1:11.

The time is near when Jesus is going to come back in His glorified body and rescue us from this world. Many Bible scholars call this time the Rapture. Christ will come to get His bride, the church.



Read James 5:8.

Read Revelation 22:20, 21, the last two Scriptures of the Bible.

The Lord will come back quickly and when we least expect it.

Not everyone will be happy about Him coming back. People who are ready will be excited and rejoicing. Those that aren't will have a time of great wrath.



Read I Thessalonians 4:13-18.

The rapture of the church is described. Only God knows when the Rapture will take place. We do know it will be in correlation with many other end-time events.

According to the Book of Daniel, Israel will make a seven year covenant with the last world Gentile ruler, which is the Antichrist. This covenant will be the beginning of God's wrath on the world. This is considered the "Day of the Lord" and the "Great Day of Wrath" (Revelation chapters 6-19).

From I Thessalonians (1:9-10; 5:9-11), many people believe the church may be raptured before this time of tribulation and wrath.

The Great Day of Wrath, also known as the Great Tribulation, will involve Israel. God will prepare the unbelieving Israel to receive the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and to inherit the promised kingdom on earth. At the same time God is going to destroy the Gentile world systems headed by the Antichrist.

Jesus Christ alone will be King of kings and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16).

2 | The Last Test

The church, after being raptured, will have to face the judgment seat of Christ (I Corinthians 3:12-15).

This is the last test. How wisely did I spend my time? What were my priorities? Was I a faithful steward of the talents, time, and blessings given to me? Did I seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness? Did I strive to become like Christ and to do His will? Were His interests ahead of mine?

This judgment is not going to determine whether we are saved or not, but it does determine the reward and the position we receive in the new kingdom.

3 | The Marriage



Read Revelation 19:7-9.

The Marriage of the Lamb will be the greatest event of our lives. Jesus Christ will be joined with His Bride, the church. We will see Him face to face.

While the Bride and Bridegroom are being united in marriage, the world will be experiencing the worst judgments since the world began.

Then, after at least seven years, Christ will return to save Israel and setup His kingdom on earth. The church will return with Him to help Him rule and reign for a thousand years.

4 | The Great Day of His Wrath

Jesus' outline of the last generation events is recorded by three gospel writers in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21.

We start with a few introductory signs of the end times and then, as it gets closer, they get more and more intense.

The first signs are an increase in false Christs, deception, wars and rumors of wars (Matthew 24:6). Famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in diverse places will get worse.

As time progresses, the signs will intensify. Most everyone who loves and serves the Lord will begin to feel the hatred of unbelievers (II Peter 3:3). They will be offended and betrayed, sometimes by close friends and relatives. False prophets will be very sly. Unless our roots are deep in the Word, Satan will confuse us and frustrate us.

Do not become discouraged or impatient during these times. Refuse these attacks. If your spiritual house is built on the Rock, you will stand the trials and you will be saved (Matthew 7:24; 24:13).

Everything will begin to intensify even more around the time the antichrist is revealed about halfway through the tribulation period.

To summarize the events during the Great Day of Wrath: the signs of the end will intensify; the Jews have made a covenant with the Beast, thinking he is their Messiah; they realize the deception and escape the city; the mark of the Beast will be implemented throughout the world; men, women, and children are persecuted for refusing to worship the Beast and take the mark.



Read Luke 21:17-19.

Be persistent and wait patiently because Jesus is coming again.

The final stage is God's wrath on everyone who took the mark of the beast.

Again, just remember that He is coming.

5 The Final Battle—Armageddon

At some point, all the global conflicts will gather together in one battle called Armageddon (Ezekiel 38:1-6; Revelation 16:12). The battlefield will be in a fourteen by twenty mile plain in Northern Israel.

Satan has in mind for the nations involved to destroy Israel, and for the antichrist to reign as God. God, however, has in mind to destroy the armies and the antichrist, and bind Satan in the bottomless pit.

The climax will come when Christ returns to earth with the armies of heaven, which includes us (Revelation 19:11-16). He defeats all the forces of evil.

According to Revelation 14:20, the battle will be so gruesome that blood will flow for about one hundred eighty miles long and “unto the horse bridles.”

After Armageddon’s massive troops are destroyed, it will take seven months to bury the dead. The dead soldiers will be spread over a two hundred mile area.



Read Revelation 19:20 and 20:1-3.

Satan is doomed to a thousand year prison term. His final doom is still a millennium away.

In the next lesson, we’ll study what happens next: the Kingdom Age, the White Throne Judgment, and then take a look at the New Jerusalem.

The New Testament Timeline Overview

1. The Cross
2. The Ascension of Christ (Luke 24:50-51)
3. Holy Ghost Given (Acts 2:1-4)
4. Church Age (Revelation chapters 1-3)
5. The Rapture (the Church Caught Up) (Revelation chapters 4-5; I Thessalonians 4:16, 17)
6. Great Day of Wrath (Tribulation Period) (Isaiah 13:9; Revelation chapters 6-18)
7. Antichrist Appears Halfway through the Great Day of Wrath
8. Armageddon (Revelation 19)
9. The Kingdom Age (Thousand Years Peace and Christ Reign) (Revelation 20:1-10)
10. White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15)
11. New Heaven and New Jerusalem; or Death and Hell

13 Eternity Is Forever

After the Rapture, the dead in Christ and the “caught up” will return to Earth with Christ and will rule and reign for one thousand years. This period of time is called the kingdom age. There will be perfection on earth, in human life, in religion, and in government. After the thousand years on earth is over, humanity will be introduced to Heaven or Hell, and eternity will begin. When eternity begins, an individual could experience no more sorrow, sickness, or death—a life full of joy and happiness; or, he could experience everlasting fire with weeping and gnashing of teeth. Eternity is forever.

In This Lesson

- ✓ The Kingdom Age
- ✓ The Final Judgment

The Kingdom Age

1 | Life in the Kingdom Age

When Christ begins His millennial reign, the age of grace will have officially ended, and a new period of time will begin.

The first thing that will happen in the kingdom age is Satan will be bound (Revelation 20:1-3; Isaiah 24:21-22). The one that was the root cause of all the deception and confusion for thousands of years will be thrown in prison.

With Satan finally bound, the people on earth will have lots of liberty and freedom.

Read Isaiah 35:1, 6-7 and 55:13.



The curse on the earth will be lifted (Revelation 22:3) and the earth will be transformed into an Eden-like Earth (Zechariah 8:12; Isaiah 35:1, 6-7; 55:13). It will be an agricultural paradise—greatest period of time on earth since Adam and Eve were in the garden.

Animal natures will drastically change (Isaiah 11:6-8; 65:25). Ferocious animals will become harmless.

There will not be any need for the practice of medicine anymore (Isaiah 33:24; 35:5-6). There won't be any sickness, diseases, cancer, heart disease, or diabetes.

With Satan bound, the stress factors will be gone—no worrying, fear, or pressure. All the current sicknesses will be gone and deformities will be healed.

Humans on Earth will have extended lives, similar to the long lives of those in the Old Testament (Isaiah 65:20; Zechariah 8:4).

Like before the dispersion of nations, there will be one language on Earth (Zephaniah 3:9).

There will not be hundreds of different faiths and religions (Jeremiah 31:31-36; Zechariah 14:9). Everyone will serve the Lord in unity.

One of the main characteristics of this age will be universal peace (Isaiah 2:4; 9:6-7; 11:3-5; Micah 4:3-4). There will not be any wars or conflicts.

There will be a perfect government based on God's perfect laws.

Christ and His saints will rule the earth and Jerusalem will be the center of those operations (Isaiah 2:2-4; Jeremiah 17:25; Zechariah 8:3-8; 14:16-21).

Not only will the earth be completely different from the way we live today, we will be different as well. We will have glorified bodies, like the glorified body of Christ, after the Resurrection (Philippians 3:21; I Corinthians 15:49-54, 55).

The saints, who came back to rule and reign, will be immortal. Death will not have any power over us.

2 | Our Purpose in the Kingdom Age

With an awesome environment and glorified bodies, what will be our purpose in the kingdom age?

We'll begin fulfilling the jobs assigned to us at the judgment seat of Christ. Depending on the results of our judgment, some will have higher ranked jobs than others.

We're actually qualifying for our jobs right now. The Lord evaluates our behavior, our motives, our works, and the way we live our lives. This doesn't give us salvation; it does, however, determine our rank in the kingdom age.

Some of us will be kings and some priests (Revelation 1:6; 5:10). There will be nobles, governors, princes, and other positions.

Most of our assignments will involve teaching people the ways of the Lord and righteousness.

The Final Judgment

1 | The White Throne Judgment

God will then begin holding court for the unbelievers of all ages.

The devil, from the bottomless pit, will be cast into the lake of fire where the Beast and false prophets were thrown a thousand years earlier.

According to Revelation 20:10, they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.



Read Revelation 20:11-12.

Finally, the entire world will be summoned to the White Throne Judgment.

The saints will even be there, but only to watch.

Everyone, including the dead, will be appointed to a “second death” or eternal punishment (Revelation 20:14).

Several books will be opened during the judgment, including the sixty-six books of the Word of God. According to John 12:48, rejection of Jesus’ words will be used as evidence against them.

One of the worse sins, according to Mark 16:15-16, is just simply rejecting the gospel. Another sin the Lord will take vengeance on is not obeying the gospel (II Thessalonians 1:8-9).

Mark 16:16 says, “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

Paul said even our thoughts are being recorded and will judge us on that day (Romans 2:15-16).

In Matthew 12:36-37, Christ says every word we speak will also help decide our fate.

Every action and deed will be used to judge us (Revelation 20:12).

In conclusion, men will be judged by the Word of God, our thoughts, words, and actions. Yet, the most basic reason men will spend eternity in the lake of fire is because they have refused to accept Jesus’ offer of eternal life: the sin of rejecting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

If only they had chosen “life” instead of death while on Earth. If only they loved and served Jesus while they had the time and the opportunity.

2 | The Reality of Hell



Just as Heaven is a literal place, Hell is a literal place as well.

Read Revelation 21:8.

There will be a second death for those who do not choose life.

Matthew says there will be an everlasting fire, an outer darkness, weeping and gnashing of teeth, and a furnace of fire (Matthew 25:41; 8:12; 13:42).

Mark describes a place “where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched” (Mark 9:44).

Jude describes it as “the blackness of darkness” (Jude 13).



Read Revelation 14:11; 20:10.

We cannot even comprehend the horror and torment that will be in Hell.

3 | A Glimpse of Heaven

In the last few chapters, John saw a rare glimpse of Heaven, the New Jerusalem. It was a city floating down from the skies. This is the city that will be the home and reward of the faithful.



Read John 14:2-3.

This is the place Christ promised to prepare for His chosen ones. It must be pretty amazing.

Even with John giving exact details, the city is hard to imagine. Its beauty and dimensions are so immense no city or nation could ever compare to it.

The height, width, and length are equal and measure 12,000 furlongs wide, which is about 1,500 miles (Revelation 21:16).

There will be twelve entrances made of pearl and guarded by twelve angels.

The tree of life from from which Adam and Eve were removed no longer has restrictions. Anyone can eat the varieties of fruit (Revelation 22:2).

When we get to Heaven, there will be no need to gather in a temple, a church, or a place of worship (Revelation 21:22). We'll see Christ face to face.

Another object will be missing—the sun (Revelation 21:23). No external power source will be required. Jesus Christ will be the direct Source of “Light for living” in the New Jerusalem. He will be the Source for everything. He will be the Temple, the Light, and the Water of Life (Revelations 22:1).

The city will have precious gems everywhere. The streets and walkways will be transparent gold (Revelations 21:21).



Read Revelation 21:4.

Besides the physical qualities, there will be a life full of joy and happiness—no sorrow or pain.

There won't be any more time, clocks, or calendars. Everlasting life will be forever.

There won't be any work or labor. There will just be peaceful rest (Revelation 14:13).

We will not have to wonder or guess about anything. We'll have complete knowledge. Questions will be answered, mysteries will be solved, and all secrets will be opened (I Corinthians 13:12).

There will be complete purity and holiness. We will not have any temptation to sin ever again (Revelation 21:27).

We will never be without anything (Revelation 21:6).

We will be in continual worship and adoration toward Christ (Revelation 7:9-10, 12). We will have a perfect relationship with Him.



Read I Corinthians 2:9.

There's no way we can even comprehend the things God has prepared for us. We are going to be literally amazed at the beauty and perfection of Heaven.

4 | A Narrow Way

Coming to the end of our study, we have not even begun to uncover all of the truths of the Bible. We have just simply attempted to lay a foundation to help lead you to more personal Bible study and revelation.



Read Matthew 7:13-14.

There are two roads that can be traveled and every person will choose to take one or the other. Many people have and will choose their own pleasure seeking path that will only lead to destruction and ultimately death. We can't sit back and allow that to happen in our lives and the lives around us.

The great thing about serving the Lord is that He provided a way of escape through the cross. Jesus Christ suffered the pain that should have been ours. He became our substitute for sin and conquered death and Hell. Through His blood we are redeemed from Satan's slavery.

The Cross has become our hope to escape eternal punishment.

How do we find the road leading to eternal life? The map is called the "Bible."

We have a responsibility to fulfill the gospel in our lives and then share it with the world. Eternity is forever!



The Bible Made Simple, a thirteen-lesson extended Bible study with easy-to-teach content, was birthed out of the author's own experiences in teaching Bible studies. The teacher may read this study word-for-word or incorporate the lesson into his/her own teaching presentation. Each lesson is no more than one hour in length. This Bible study helps the teacher, especially new teachers, by having a concise document telling them exactly what he/she needs to teach. Each lesson is divided into carefully planned increments which will prevent the student from experiencing information overload.

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