# INTRODUCTION ABBABABIABABIAB

### **COURSE INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to Foundations Class! Participating in this class shows that you are a learner. As a learner, you know that there is always more to know, always another perspective or challenging idea. In this class you will have the opportunity to hear the Bible's timeless truth explored by the instructors and your fellow students in ways that you may not have considered before. While the Bible and its God do not change, we do when we come prepared to better know Him.

As a learner, you also know that you will get out of a class what you put into it. Consider your time in this class an investment rather than merely a cost. Make the effort to read, reflect, do your homework, and discuss. You will be setting and moving toward your personal learning goals. This is a long class so make it worth the time as you invest in understanding for your benefit and the benefit of others.

This class is not intended to be a comprehensive course on biblical doctrine. It is a topic-by-topic introduction intended to give you a thoughtful and organized basis in order to articulate the gospel and begin to understand the Bible's teaching and address gaps in your understanding. In order to learn more, you will be directed to resources for further study or you might consider enrolling in courses at Bible college.

May God bless you as you proceed through the Foundations class and may you know Him more closely.

### Our goals for this class:

- To have an overall understanding of the Bible's message and what it means for us
- To develop a basic biblical worldview
- To be able to articulate the gospel message
- To be equipped to share this message with someone you know.
- To move toward an answer to a question you have about biblical teaching
- To be able to articulate the gospel message
- To have the tools to learn more on our own
- To have an assurance of salvation
- To become familiar with Calvary Murrieta's statement of faith

### Before we get started, keep in mind:

- We all have different experiences but the same Jesus.
- We have different education levels but the same Truth.
- We have different priorities but the same Kingdom.
- We have different questions but the same Answer.

Considering these things, please read and sign this student commitment. It will be our standard for learning together.

- I agree to participate to the best of my ability.
- I agree to esteem others before myself. I will not force my viewpoint on others or monopolize discussion time. I will respectfully discuss any disagreement.
- I agree to go to Scripture as the highest authority.
- I agree to accept challenges in order to grow.

Signed:		
Signed.		

### **COURSE INTRODUCTION**

### Personal Learning Goals

Throughout the duration of the class you will be working on two learning goals along with the weekly reflection or "do" tasks.

Your first personal learning goal will be to apply the biblical worldview you build in the class to sharing the gospel message with someone in your sphere of influence. You will need to tailor your approach to addressing their worldview, anticipate their questions or objections, and take a step toward actually engaging them. This can either be a specific person in your life or it can be a set of people (i.e. an age-group to whom you minister).

Your second personal learning goal will be to address a question you have on biblical doctrine. This should be a question that is meaningful to you and not trivial or easily answered (i.e. it should be more substantial than something you can solve with a simple internet search). The goal is not to have your question completely answered by the end of the class but to make decisive moves toward an answer.

DO NOT fill this section out until after the first class session but be thinking ahead of what you might set as a goal.

•	The person or group I v	will learn to better address with the gospel is
•	The question I will be v	working on is
Μv	group leader is:	
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	Before your pro	oper questions begin, answer this question. You will be coming back to it later in the class.
Do	How would you	describe the gospel message?

### **COURSE INTRODUCTION**

#### Class Structure

Each week you will need to read the lesson before coming to class. In the class session we will discuss what you've been learning.

The sections in each lesson will be:



Read the entire lesson text. Mark areas you don't understand.



Reflection questions are for you to think about but be sure to actually write an answer down.

Reflect



"Do" items will ask you to experience or accomplish something for the week.



These topics will be discussed in the classroom. You do not need to have an answer per se but may want to think about them before class.

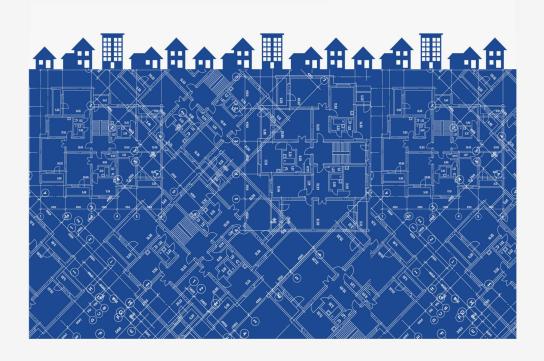
Discuss



At certain points throughout the class, "Aim" items will prompt you to move toward the personal learning goals you set in the beginning of class.

Each lesson includes a suggested memory verse. You will not be asked about or tested on these. They are there for your benefit. Each one corresponds to the lesson and if you were to memorize all of them, you would have a body of biblical knowledge to turn to on a variety of subjects.

# LESSON ONE: INTRODUCING THE BIBLE



# LESSON ONE: Introducing The Bible

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Doodles

In this lesson we will look at the Bible as God's word: where it came from, how it is structured, and what its general story is. In the next lesson we will discuss how to read the Bible.



### Revelation

When we learned about God, we saw that He reveals Himself to us partly through His creation (this is called "general revelation"). We can see aspects of God's nature in His creation but we do not get a full understanding of who God is and what His purposes are.

The Bible is called God's "special revelation" because it communicates specifics to those who have it.

Our most full revelation comes through Jesus Christ (Heb 1:1-3) since He lived as one of us, showing us and teaching us who God is (John 14:9). But we learn about Jesus through the Bible, God's revelation to the writers of scripture. Both Jesus and the Bible are referred to as God's Word because they reveal God to the world (John 1:1-2; Heb. 4:12).

If God's identity and purposes are seen in the Bible, we ought to become very familiar with it.

### Inspiration

Definition: God speaking to all people for all time through chosen writers carried by the Holy Spirit as He worked through them as individuals so that what is written is from God through man.

Inspiration means that the Holy Spirit led the writers of the biblical books in what to write, while allowing for their own personalities, cultures, and writing style to remain. They were not overtaken by God and writing under His control in some sort of trance state. Rather, they were carried along by the Holy Spirit, guided in what to write.

### II Peter 1:20-21

"knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

#### II Timothy 3:16-17

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

# LESSON ONE: Introducing The Bible

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	The phrase "breathed out by God" in II Timothy 3:16 is perhaps a more clear way to say how God gave us the Scriptures than to say the are "inspired". By "inspired" we do not mean that the words were a stroke of genius (like an "inspired work of art") or that God motivated the writers (like an inspirational speech). We mean that the Holy Spirit moved through the biblical authors.
	Because God inspired the writers of the biblical books, they did not always understand all that they were writing or the full implications of what they were saying. In I Peter 1:10-12, Peter tells us that the prophets of the Old Testament longed to know what their own prophecies about Jesus meant but they knew that their writings would be for the benefit of those who came after them and would understand what the prophecies meant.
	The Bible is both human and divine. The writers are not erased; rather, God used who they were. One example is to look at the four Gospel accounts: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Each is telling the story of Jesus's life and the first three are very similar in content. But each has a unique "personality" in the tone and focus of the writer.
	Because He inspired the Scriptures, God is the Author of Scripture but we still refer to the writers (and it is ok to refer to the author of a book of the Bible) of Scripture. The Bible, therefore, is both human and divine.
	Where else in this class have we seen the human and divine being united?
Doodles	The process of inspiration is mysterious to us but its evidence is apparent when we look at the nature of scripture. We can get to know any other book, but only the Bible knows us. We can come to it again and again and see new shades of meaning in sections we've read many times before.
	Why is the Bible important to you?
	Reflect

# LESSON ONE: Introducing The Bible

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Canonicity: why are these books "biblical"?

Canon is a term for the proper, inspired books to be included as Scripture. When the early Church and believers today ask if we have included the correct books these questions have served as a litmus test:

- Was the book written by a prophet or apostle (one who had been part of Jesus's ministry who was commissioned by Him)?
- Was the writer authenticated by miracles to confirm his message?
- Does the book tell the truth about God, with no falsehood or contradiction?
- Does the book have a divine capacity to transform lives?
- Was the book accepted as God's Word by the people to whom it was first delivered?
- Was the book written long after the other New Testament books?
- Does the book align with the rest of Scripture?

It is often said that the Church simply decided which books were inspired (or even that the Church granted the status of inspiration on certain books). But we believe that the Church discovered which

Incorrect View	Orthodox View
The Church is determiner of the canon.	The Church is discoverer of the canon.
The Church is regulator of the canon.	The Church is recognizer of the canon.
The Church is the judge of the canon.	The Church is witness of the canon.
The Church is master of the canon.	The Church is servant of the canon.
The Church is mother of the canon.	The Church is child of the canon.

From Norman L. Geisler, "Bible, Canonicity Of," Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, Baker Reference Library (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1999).

### Disputed authorship

If you continue on in your study of the canon of the Bible, you will come across arguments from some that certain books are not written by who they claim to be.

# LESSON ONE: Introducing The Bible

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Without getting into the details, you should be aware of several things:

- Some Bible books do not precisely say who wrote them and some
  do so we are sometimes making educated guesses as to the
  author but the earliest Church leaders often said who the author
  was (e.g. The Gospel of John). Anonymity doesn't negate
  inspiration.
- Some Old Testament books (e.g. Isaiah) change in tone, content, and use different names for God but this doesn't mean there is more than one author, as some claim. Likewise, some are different from an author's usual style but that doesn't mean they are by an imposter (e.g. Ephesians or Titus).
- Some books make no secret about being written by more than one person (e.g. Philippians or Deuteronomy 34).

### Apocryphal books

The Catholic Bible has books that Protestant Bibles do not. Protestants refer to these books as the "apocrypha" from a word meaning "secret" or "hidden". The content of some of these books is referred to in the New Testament but they have never been considered God's Word.

The Catholic Church did not decide to include these books in their Bible until 1546 and they were long argued against by the earliest Church fathers and later Protestant and Catholic scholars alike. Before the Protestant Reformation, both Protestants and Catholics placed apocryphal books in their own section of the Bible and they were not given the same level of respect. Eventually the Protestants removed them altogether.

It must be noted that all the apocryphal books in the Catholic Bible are Old Testament books. No New Testament books claiming to be biblical were ever admitted by Catholics or Protestants and are much more blatantly unbiblical in their teaching.

The Old Testament apocryphal books were written in the times between the return of the Jews from exile and the birth of Jesus (called the intertestamental period) but Jesus Himself refers to the Old Testament canon being what it is today—this is a little complicated but it is an implication of Jesus's comments in:

- Luke 24:44: Jesus mentions the sections of literature of our Old Testament today
- John 10:31-36: He agrees with the Pharisees' books
- Luke 11:51: He refers to the first person killed in Genesis and the last person killed in II Chronicles, the book describing the end of the "Old Testament" period.

# LESSON ONE: Introducing The Bible

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Norm Geisler summarized why these books are not part of the Bible:

- Some of their teaching is unbiblical or heretical.
- Some of their stories are extrabiblical or fanciful.
- Much of their teaching is sub-biblical, at times even immoral.
- Most of the Apocrypha was written in the postbiblical or intertestamental period.
- Finally, all of the Apocrypha is nonbiblical or uncanonical, because it was not received by the people of God.

### Evidences for the Bible being the inspired word of God:

for details see always beready.com/bible-evidence or  ${\it A}$  General Introduction to the Bible by Geisler and Nix.

### Fulfilled prophecy

The Bible contains predictions fulfilled hundreds of years before the events they prophecy.

### Archaeology

Archaeological discoveries have consistently proved the biblical accounts to be historically accurate.

### Internal consistency

Although compiled of 66 books by approximately 40 authors in three languages over 3 continents and 1500 years and addressing the key questions of life and meaning, there is a miraculously consistent message and overall storyline in the Bible.

### Extrabiblical writings

Writers who lived at the same time as the Bible's writers refer to events described in the Bible as being historical. The early church leaders also consistently quoted large portions of the New Testament in their commentaries and letters.

#### Scientific accuracy

The Bible contains scientifically accurate information long before those facts were discovered.

### Manuscripts

With 25,000 handwritten portions of the New Testament and thousands of the Old Testament, there is more manuscript evidence for the accuracy and consistency of the Bible than of most ancient writings.

#### Honesty about the authors and subjects

The Bible makes no attempt to ignore the sins of its writers and characters.

### Accuracy about human nature

The Bible shows an amazing level of understanding and explanation of the workings of human hearts and relationships.

# LESSON ONE: Introducing The Bible

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**Doodles** 

### Testimony of Jesus

Jesus referred to the Bible as given by God and as God's revelation to people.

#### Persecution of the early believers

The earliest Christians, some who even penned the biblical books, went to violent deaths professing the truth of the scriptures.

#### Power to transform lives

We are evidence for the divine inspiration of the Bible in that we see our lives changed by its message of who God is.

#### Without error

Having seen reasons to believe that the Bible is reliably given by God, we believe that the Bible is without error ("inerrant") in its original manuscripts, but what does that mean?

- All the Bible is God's divine word to us; it does not only contain divine portions.
- The Bible claims to be God's word and God does not make errors.
- The Bible is "unbroken" as Jesus said (John 10:35), and therefore not compromised. While we do not have the original, handwritten portions of the Bible we trust Jesus's words here and when He says that the Holy Spirit would bring what He'd said and done to the apostles' remembrance (Jn. 15:26-27;).
- God is powerful enough to have preserved the Bible through many copies.
- There are errors that came in through people copying the Bible but we know where they are (because of differing manuscripts) and they are not on matters that change our doctrine.
- The Bible being copied is not like a game of "telephone" but rather a careful process by people who either did the work as a vocational ministry (Jewish scribes and Christian monks) or who risked safety to carry scriptures throughout the Roman Empire. They were copying written Scripture and treating the process dearly.
- There are grammatical oddities but these are not errors.
- The Bible was written in a different culture from ours and many misunderstandings, especially in how literally or in exact chronological order something should be taken.

### LESSON ONE: Introducing The Bible

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	texts of same as man percent they ar the un we ha	the Hebrew Old Testament and Greek New Testament are the sthe original manuscripts. Thus, when we say that the original nuscripts were inerrant, we are also implying that over 99 to of the words in our present manuscripts are also inerrant, for the exact copies of the originals. Furthermore, we know where certain readings are (for where there are no textual variants two no reason to expect faulty copying of the original). Thus, present manuscripts are for most purposes the same as the l manuscripts, and the doctrine of inerrancy therefore directly concerns our present manuscripts as well.
	only <i>manus</i> e	if we have mistakes in the copies (as we do), then these are the mistakes of men. But if we have mistakes in the original cripts, then we are forced to say not only that men made mises, but that God himself made a mistake and spoke falsely.  This we cannot do."  -Wayne Grudem
	Aim	How does the person you want to share with perceive the Bible? Would anything we've learned be helpful to them? Would they believe it?
	Organi	zation of the Bible
Doodles	New Tes	e contains 66 books: 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the stament. The Jewish Old Testament had the same content as the organization was different.
	The Bibl chronolo	e books are organized according to type and are roughly ogical.
	Old Too	stament:

Law "Pentateuch": 5 books

Historical Books: 12 books

Poetic books: 5 books

Second Kings,

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon

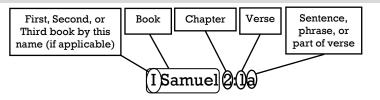
Joshua, Judges, Ruth, First Samuel, Second Samuel, First Kings,

First Chronicles, Second Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther

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	Prophetic books: 17 books     Major Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel,     Daniel     Minor Prophets Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah,     Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Mala     chi
	Note: the "major prophets" are called that simply because their books are longer than the minor prophets.
	New Testament:
	Gospels: 4 books Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
	History: 1 book Acts
	Pauline Letters ("Epistles"): 13 books Romans, I, II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, I, II Thessalonians; I, II Timothy, Titus, Philemon
	General Letters ("Epistles"): 7 books Hebrews, James, I, II Peter; I, II, III John, Jude
	Prophecy: 1 book Revelation
	The books are sometimes organized a little differently from this but the particular organization is not really important.
	Abbreviations
Doodles	Working with Bible references (address of a verse in the Bible) is

Working with Bible references (address of a verse in the Bible) is made easier is easer when we are familiar with common abbreviations for Bible books. If you are new to the Bible, these will become like second nature over time. There is a comprehensive chart available in class if you would like one.



I Samuel 2:1a

Practice: Write the full name of the reference:	
I Jn. 3:2a	
Ps. 129:1-6	

# LESSON ONE: Introducing The Bible

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	Chapter and Verse	
	not originally contain cha added later to help reade	ere written as entire books or letters and did upter and verse designations. These were ers find their place. Current chapters were erses were added in the mid-sixteenth
	Mile shorter	
	text, how might	s and verses help us find the same place in the t they be a hindrance? Another way to ask this d be to ask how you would read the Bible nout chapters and verses.
	Deviseres	
	Pericopes	
	usually marked by secti- naturally packaged sect complete story or teach in a chapter. You may fin	"per-ick-oh-peas") are sections of text on headings in your Bible. They are more of a ion than a chapter since they encompass a ing. There is usually more than one pericope and reading a pericope a happy medium verses and reading a whole chapter at a time.
Doodles	Translation	
Doonies	Aramaic (in Ezra, Daniel	originally written in Hebrew with portions in l, and Jeremiah). The New Testament was ek. Anything else is a translation.
	He	ebrew text of Genesis 1:1
		בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֵת הַשְּׁמִיִם וְאֵת הָ Greek Text of John 17:17
		ν τῆ ἀληθείᾳ· ὁ λόγος ὁ σὸς ἀλήθειά ἐστιν
	Translation includes sul	otle cultural meanings and figures of speech.

Some things are translated for understanding rather than for precise wording. For example Ps. 16:7 in the English Standard Version says:

in the night also my heart instructs me.

I bless the LORD who gives me counsel;

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But in the original Hebrew the word here translated as "heart" is "kidneys". The Hebrew mentality was that the gut/kidneys was the center of feeling and personhood whereas we use "heart" to mean the same thing. We can always refer back to the Hebrew and are not changing the Bible by translating it this way.

We do not always need to know the Hebrew or Greek words but sometimes they carry fuller or more specific meanings than a single English word may. This is why Bible teachers occasionally take time to cover a word from the original languages. The first readers would have understood the shades of meaning but, without careful study and teaching, these get "lost in translation". Understanding this dynamic lets us understand not only the riches of the biblical text and why some dedicate themselves to studying the original languages but also the painstaking task that Bible translators meet finding the right words in the languages of cultures around the world.

One who understands more than one language knows that most things may be translated more than one way, depending on the languages involved. Because of this, we can have the same Greek or Hebrew verse translated slightly differently without any one being unbiblical.

### **Translation Options**

Translations run a spectrum from those attempting to be very close ("word-for-word") to the original language to those written "thought -for-thought" which attempt to communicate the idea of the scripture in words more easily understood.

"Word-for-word" translations may also be known as "literal translations". "Thought-for-thought" translations may also be known as "paraphrases".

Examples of more literal translations include the New King James Version (NKJV) New American Standard Bible (NASB), and English Standard Version (ESV).

Examples of more paraphrased translations include the New International Version (NIV) and New Living Translation (NLT).

Notice the differences in this example: John 1:10

(ESV) He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him.

(NIV) He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him.

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	(KJV) He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.
	(NLT) He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him.
	(The Message) He was in the world, the world was there through him, and yet the world didn't even notice.
	What are some of the strengths of using more literal translations?  Reflect
	What are some of the strengths of using paraphrases?
Doodles	From Calvary Murrieta's Statement of Faith on Scripture  The Bible was written by men given by the Holy Spirit to human writers, and is God's revelation of Himself to mankind. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, truth without any mixture of error in its original texts, and salvation for its end. All Scripture is totally true and trustworthy, and pertains to all things regarding life and godliness.  Ps. 19:7-11   2 Tim. 3:15-17   2Pt. 1:3
	What sorts of things does our culture believe about the Bible?  Discuss

The Storyline of Scripture

Having learned a little about how the Bible is structured, we will turn to a brief description of the overall story told by Scripture. Some knowledge of this is crucial to learning the Bible.

# LESSON ONE: Introducing The Bible

### Learning the Story of Scripture

Scripture tells us a complete story and we shouldn't miss it by focusing only on the details. When we approach the Bible we should ask:

- Who is God?
- Who are we?
- What is God doing in our world?
- Where do I fit into His plan?

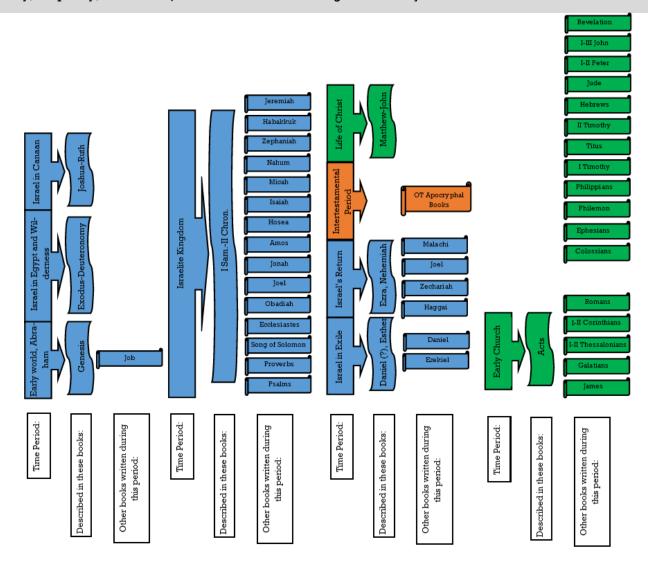
Knowing the story of Scripture will help us answer these questions.

### Where'd the Story Go?

Some portions of the Bible are more story-based than others. The Law, History books, and Gospels are the most clearly narrative portions of the Bible. Poetry and prophecy may not seem like narrative themselves but they are all part of the Bible's big story.

Keep in mind that while the historical books tell us the bigger story more directly than other books, the books of poetry and prophecy were written during the time described in the historical books. Thus, they reveal other dimensions to God's story.

This chart shows how some types of books (Law, History, and Gospels) show the events of God's story while others (Poetry, Prophecy, and Letters) fill in details of the message in the story.



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In each section of the Bible's story, we will see how God has worked throughout history to rescue us individually from sin and redeem (or fix/bring back) the things that are broken in our world. This is a way of looking at the gospel that is not common for most people so don't be frustrated if it's difficult to grasp. It is also a very brief overview of the Bible story and there are other threads and aspects of the story that are not included but that you may continue to discover through further study.

Layers in each section of the story:

**Event:** Biblical historical events telling God's story.

**Redemption of the World:** How God has moved in events toward redeeming the broken world and revealing who He is to all the peoples of the world.

<u>Individual salvation:</u> How God has revealed his plan to save each person from their rebellion against Him.

### Creation (Genesis 1-2)

**Event:** God creates a good world with mankind made in God's image but gives mankind the ability to choose to obey God's commands.

<u>Redemption of the World:</u> God created a good world for man's safety, enjoyment, and dominion.

#### Genesis 1:31

Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!

<u>Individual salvation:</u> Jesus, who, along with the Father, created all things, creates us anew when we believe in Him.

#### John 1:3

God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him.

#### II Corinthians 2:16-17

So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

# LESSON ONE: Introducing The Bible

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	The Fall of Man (Genesis 3)
	Event: The first people, Adam and Eve, choose to disobey God.
	Redemption of the World: A <u>curse</u> comes over Man and nature, with consequences throughout history. God's command to begin filling the earth with children still stands for Adam and Eve.
	Individual salvation: Desiring to be like God, Man rebels against God, becoming separated and more unlike God than ever before. Shame, guilt, and fear immediately set in. As an act of mercy, God bars Adam and Eve from living forever in their broken, fallen state. Immediately upon pronouncing the curse, God hints at the coming of one who will defeat the devil who tempted Eve.
	Genesis 3:15  And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring.  He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.  Romans 5:17  For the sin of this one man, Adam, caused death to rule over many. But even greater is God's wonderful grace and his gift of righteousness, for all who receive it will live in triumph over sin and death through this one man, Jesus Christ.
	The Flood (Genesis 6-8)
	<b>Event:</b> After the people of the world increasingly reject God's ways in favor of corruption and violence, God floods the earth, saving only one family.
Doodles	<b>Redemption of the World:</b> God purges the world of those who rebel against His holiness and starts afresh. After the flood, God told Noah's family to fill the earth with children again.
	Genesis 6:17-19 Look! I am about to cover the earth with a flood that will destroy every living thing that breathes. Everything on earth will die. 18 But I will confirm my covenant with you. So enter the boat—you and your wife and your sons and their wives. 19 Bring a pair of every kind of animal—a male and a female—into the boat with you to keep them alive during the flood.

multiply. Fill the earth."

Then God blessed Noah and his sons and told them, "Be fruitful and

# LESSON ONE: Introducing The Bible

Individual salvation: God did not withhold His mercy, rescuing Noah for his faith in God.  Hebrews 11:7 By faith Noah, being warned by God concerning events as yet unseen, in reverent fear constructed an ark for the saving of his household. By this he condemned the world and became an heir of the righteousness that comes by faith.  Tower of Babel (Genesis 11)  Event: As the population grows, the people decide to stay in one location and become a great people who have made a name for themselves. The people begin building a great tower to display their power and God separates their languages in order to stop their work and spread them out.  Redemption of the World: God desired an earth filled with people who knew that only God is worthy of glory. Rather than destroying again, God created confusion but also a colorful diversity of cultures.  Rev. 7:9-10  After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. 10 And they were shouting with a great roar,  "Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne	NOTES	
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and from the famb!		great roar,
	les	Event: God commands one man, Abraham, to go to a new land and promises to make his descendants a great nation through whom all the world will be blessed.
<b>Event:</b> God commands one man, Abraham, to go to a new land and promises to make his descendants a great nation through whom all		Redemption of the World: God blessed Abraham in order for him to be a blessing to all the nations of the world because his descendants would bring the world both God's scripture and Jesus, the Savior.
Event: God commands one man, Abraham, to go to a new land and promises to make his descendants a great nation through whom all the world will be blessed.  Redemption of the World: God blessed Abraham in order for him to be a blessing to all the nations of the world because his descendants		Genesis 12:1-3 The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you. <sup>2</sup> I will make you into a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous, and you will be a blessing to others. <sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you and curse those who treat you with

contempt. All the families on earth will be blessed through you."

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Individual salvation: God makes promises to Abraham and seeks only Abraham's trust. Abraham believed God and simply for that was called "righteous" by God. We are given the same offer of a righteous standing with God based on our trust in Him. Later, Abraham is told to sacrifice his only son to God but God stops him at the last moment and provides a ram for sacrifice. This happened at a place called Mount Moriah, later the scene of Christ's crucifixion, the sacrifice of God's only Son for us.

#### Genesis 22:12-14

He said, "Do not lay your hand on the boy or do anything to him, for now I know that you fear God, seeing you have not withheld your son, your only son, from me." 13 And Abraham lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, behind him was a ram, caught in a thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and took the ram and offered it up as a burnt offering instead of his son. 14 So Abraham called the name of that place, "The LORD will provide"; as it is said to this day, "On the mount of the LORD it shall be provided."

### Exodus from Egypt (Exodus 12-25)

**Event:** The population of Abraham's descendants (now called Hebrews or Israelites) has been subjugated under the Egyptians but through a series of punishments on the Egyptians, God releases His people in order that they may worship God freely.

**Redemption of the World:** God shows His power and love to His people and shows His glory and worthiness to be worshipped to the Egyptians as well.

#### Exodus 9:13-17

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Get up early in the morning and stand before Pharaoh. Tell him, 'This is what the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, says: Let my people go, so they can worship me. <sup>14</sup> If you don't, I will send more plagues on you and your officials and your people. Then you will know that there is no one like me in all the earth. <sup>15</sup> By now I could have lifted my hand and struck you and your people with a plague to wipe you off the face of the earth. <sup>16</sup> But I have spared you for a purpose—to show you my power and to spread my fame throughout the earth. <sup>17</sup> But you still lord it over my people and refuse to let them go."

<u>Individual salvation:</u> In the last of the ten punishments (called "plagues"), God responds to the Egyptians refusal to release the Israelites by killing each firstborn in the land. The Hebrews are told they can put the blood of a sacrificial lamb over their doors to spare their families. Later, Jesus (called God's "Firstborn Son") will die as the Sacrificial Lamb so that God will spare us from punishment for having refused Him.

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	Exodus 12:27 you shall say, 'It is the sacrifice of the LORD's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the people of Israel in Egypt, when he struck the Egyptians but spared our houses.' " And the people bowed their heads and worshiped.
	The Israelites in the Wilderness (Exodus 20, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy)
	<b>Event:</b> After escaping Egypt, the Israelites are given God's law for how to a have proper relationship of worship with Him, as well as how to treat their fellow Israelites and those outside their people. The Israelites quickly desire tangible idols to worship rather than God.
	Redemption of the World: God gives His law to show His ways to His people but also gives instructions on allowing other peoples to join the Israelites in worshiping the one true God and instructions on refusing to allow the other peoples to draw Israel into worshiping their false idols.
	Leviticus 22:18  Give Aaron and his sons and all the Israelites these instructions, which apply both to native Israelites and to the foreigners living among you
	You must not make for yourself an idol of any kind or an image of anything in the heavens or on the earth or in the sea. 5 You must not bow down to them or worship them, for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God who will not tolerate your affection for any other gods.  Individual salvation: God gives a set of laws to his people which can teach them how to behave according to what is important to God but the people can never fully keep the point of the laws: loving God and their neighbors.
Doodles	Galatians 3:24-26 The law was our guardian until Christ came; it protected us until we could be made right with God through faith. And now that the way of faith has come, we no longer need the law as our guardian. For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

### Conquering the Promised Land (Joshua-Ruth)

**Event:** The Israelites enter the land God had originally promised Abraham that his descendants would have. First, they had to drive out the peoples that were worshiping false gods using violence and sexual immorality. Once established in the land, the people went through cycles of obeying the Lord and then worshiping false gods and becoming enslaved to the local peoples.

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Redemption of the World: God had promised land and descendants to Abraham so that they would bless all the peoples. Some peoples were so far in rebellion against the Lord they had to be removed to keep Israel's worship pure but even then the people of God often worshiped idols.

#### **Deuteronomy 12:1-5**

"These are the decrees and regulations you must be careful to obey when you live in the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. You must obey them as long as you live. 2 "When you drive out the nations that live there, you must destroy all the places where they worship their gods—high on the mountains, up on the hills, and under every green tree. 3 Break down their altars and smash their sacred pillars. Burn their Asherah poles and cut down their carved idols. Completely erase the names of their gods!

4 "Do not worship the LORD your God in the way these pagan peoples worship their gods. 5 Rather, you must seek the LORD your God at the place of worship he himself will choose from among all the tribes—the place where his name will be honored.

Individual salvation: A woman named Ruth is an example of one foreigner who committed to following the true God and became part of the Israelite community. She was brought in by a man named Boaz who fulfilled a legal role called "redeemer" by marrying her, a picture of Christ redeeming us from our sin. She is even listed in Matthew as an ancestor of Jesus. Hebrews speaks of entering God's greater Promised Land prepared for us eternally.

#### Ruth 1:16

But Ruth replied, "Don't ask me to leave you and turn back. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God.

#### Hebrews 11:16

But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

### United Kingdom (I Samuel 10-I Kings 11)

**Event:** The Israelites decide they want a king like other nations have. During the reign of the third king, Solomon, a temple to God is built in Jerusalem.

Redemption of the World: The temple is planned by God to be the place for his people to approach Him in worship. It is also built for all the peoples of the world to be able to come worship the true God. David and Solomon rule well on God's behalf and His people, Israel are a light of who God is for a short time.

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#### II Chronicles 6:32-33

In the future, foreigners who do not belong to your people Israel will hear of you. They will come from distant lands when they hear of your great name and your strong hand and your powerful arm. And when they pray toward this Temple, <sup>33</sup> then hear from heaven where you live, and grant what they ask of you. In this way, all the people of the earth will come to know and fear you, just as your own people Israel do. They, too, will know that this Temple I have built honors your name.

1 Kings 8:41-43 In the future, foreigners who do not belong to your people Israel will hear of you. They will come from distant lands because of your name, <sup>42</sup> for they will hear of your great name and your strong hand and your powerful arm. And when they pray toward this Temple, <sup>43</sup> then hear from heaven where you live, and grant what they ask of you. In this way, all the people of the earth will come to know and fear you, just as your own people Israel do. They, too, will know that this Temple I have built honors your name.

Individual salvation: The temple was eventually destroyed but Jesus calls his body the temple and Paul calls our church body the temple. This means that while the Israelites had a place to go to meet with God, we have God the Holy Spirit living in us so we take "the temple" wherever we go and can pray to God anywhere. It also means that we live everyday sacrificing ourselves to God, rather than making animal sacrifices.

#### John 2:19-22

"All right," Jesus replied. "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

20 "What!" they exclaimed. "It has taken forty-six years to build this Temple, and you can rebuild it in three days?" 21 But when Jesus said "this temple," he meant his own body. 22 After he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered he had said this, and they believed both the Scriptures and what Jesus had said.

#### 1 Corinthians 6:19-20

Don't you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, 20 for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.

#### **Romans 12:1**

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable.

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Divided Kingdom (I Kings 12-II Kings 25; II Chronicles 10-36)

**Event:** The kingdom of Israel splits into two: the northern part is still called Israel and the southern part is called Judah. The majority of the kings of this time, except a few from Judah, lead their people to worship idols instead of the true God.

Redemption of the World: God waits patiently for His people to repent and return to Him. He uses prophets to speak to the people for Him. God tells Israel that, because of their rejection of Him, He will reject them as His people and exile them from their land but that one day He will bring them back. He is saying that He will take away the blessing promised to Abraham: many descendants and a promised land, and then return it to them later.

#### Hosea 1:10-11

"Yet the time will come when Israel's people will be like the sands of the seashore—too many to count! Then, at the place where they were told, 'You are not my people,' it will be said, 'You are children of the living God.' 11 Then the people of Judah and Israel will unite together. They will choose one leader for themselves, and they will return from exile together. What a day that will be—the day of Jezreel—when God will again plant his people in his land.

<u>Individual salvation:</u> One prophet during this time, Isaiah, foretold that a Chosen One would come who would suffer for His people to release them from their sins. This prophecy is of Jesus and is found in Isaiah 52-53.

### Isaiah 53:5

But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

Exile and Return (II Kings and II Chronicles, Daniel, Ezekiel, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther)

**Event:** God allows the foreign empires of Assyria and Babylon to take the Israelites captive and remove them from their land. The temple is destroyed. Those from the southern kingdom of Judah are allowed to return after 70 years and rebuild the city walls and temple in Jerusalem.

**Redemption of the World:** God preserved his people from being spread to the point of oblivion while at the same time moving them all over the world, taking knowledge of Him with them.

#### Galatians 4:4-5

But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. 5 God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children.

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**Individual salvation:** God punishes His people for not keeping His law but promises that a day is coming when His true people will know His law inside them and know Him intimately. God begins to show Himself through His people to the very nations that have captured His people.

#### **Teremiah 31:33-34**

"But this is the new covenant I will make with the people of Israel after those days," says the LORD. "I will put my instructions deep within them, and I will write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. 34 And they will not need to teach their neighbors, nor will they need to teach their relatives, saying, 'You should know the LORD.' For everyone, from the least to the greatest, will know me already," says the LORD. "And I will forgive their wickedness, and I will never again remember their sins."

### The Life of Jesus (Matthew-John)

**Event:** Jesus is born in Israel, teaches the true meaning of the scriptures, performs many miracles of healing and help, leads a small band of disciples, is executed, rises from the dead, and later ascends to heaven.

**Redemption of the World:** Jesus obeys the law as well as the true point of the law: to fully love God and others. He is the "second Adam" who never falls from grace. He is the sacrifice made at Mount Moriah where God provided a sacrifice in place of Abraham's son. He is the sacrificial "Passover lamb", killed at the same time as the literal lamb of the Jewish ritual. He defeats death. He is the truest temple where we meet God among us. He is the promised Suffering Servant who would die for the people. He gathers people to himself to worship the true God, fulfilling God's purpose for us in the world. He brings God's offer of entrance into God's Kingdom to all the peoples outside Israel.

#### Luke 2:27-33

That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required, 28 Simeon was there. He took the child in his arms and praised God, saying, 29 "Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace, as you have promised.

<sup>30</sup> I have seen your salvation, <sup>31</sup> which you have prepared for all people.<sup>32</sup> He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel!"33 Jesus' parents were amazed at what was being said about him.

John 12:24-32 I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives. <sup>25</sup> Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity. <sup>26</sup> Anyone who wants to serve me must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And the Father will honor anyone who serves me. 27 "Now my soul is deeply troubled.

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	Should I pray, 'Father, sav reason I came! <sup>28</sup> Father, k spoke from heaven, sayin
	name, and I will do so aga some thought it was thund
	spoken to him. <sup>30</sup> Then Jes benefit, not mine. <sup>31</sup> The tin
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	up from the earth, I will di
	Individual salvation: Jes
	Himself and gives us inste
	power before the Father.
	Jesus offers us a new life k
	life. The new life He gives
	II Corinthians 5:21
	For our sake he made him
	we might become the righ
	John 6:28–29
	Then they said to him, "W
	God?" 29 Jesus answered
	believe in him whom he h Matthew 16:25
	If you try to hang on to yo
	your life for my sake, you
	John 10:10-11
	The thief's purpose is to s
	give them a rich and satis
	good shepherd sacrifices
	John 1:29
	The next day John saw Jes
	Lamb of God who takes as
	1 John 2:25
Doodles	And this is the promise the

Should I pray, 'Father, save me from this hour'? But this is the very reason I came! <sup>28</sup> Father, bring glory to your name." Then a voice spoke from heaven, saying, "I have already brought glory to my name, and I will do so again." <sup>29</sup> When the crowd heard the voice, some thought it was thunder, while others declared an angel had spoken to him. <sup>30</sup> Then Jesus told them, "The voice was for your benefit, not mine. <sup>31</sup> The time for judging this world has come, when Satan, the ruler of this world, will be cast out. <sup>32</sup> And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself."

<u>Individual salvation:</u> Jesus takes all our guilt, shame, and fear on Himself and gives us instead His position of innocence, honor, and power before the Father. All that He requires is our trusting belief. Jesus offers us a new life but this requires that we let go of our current life. The new life He gives is abundant and eternal.

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Then they said to him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" 29 Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent."

If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will save it.

The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life. "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep.

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

And this is the promise that he made to us—eternal life.

### Early Church Expansion (Acts for narrative, Romans-III John for teachings and practices)

**Event:** After Jesus ascends to heaven, God the Holy Spirit comes to live in the disciples. The disciples of Jesus, now called apostles ("sent ones"), begin expanding the message of Jesus's salvation and establishing communities of Jewish followers of Jesus. Eventually, the followers of Jesus realize God wants them to go and bring new disciples from all peoples, not only the Jews.

**Redemption of the World:** God reveals a mystery to His people, that He is making a new people of all the followers of Jesus Christ, no longer only of the Jews. The church is to do what Israel never fully did: go to all the peoples of the world and make disciples of Jesus.

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	Matthew 28:18–20 Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. 19 Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. 20 Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."  Ephesians 3:6 And this is God's plan: Both Gentiles and Jews who believe the Good News share equally in the riches inherited by God's children. Both are part of the same body, and both enjoy the promise of
	Individual salvation: As the Holy Spirit works in us, we become more like Christ. As we live as the sacred community of the church; we live a life of discipleship, being disciples of Christ and godly leaders and discipling others as well. Christ died for all of us together and works on all of us together, and we are to recognize our unity.
	Ephesians 5:25–27 For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her 26 to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word. 27 He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault.
	Return and Reign of Christ (Revelation and various other passages)
Doodles	<b>Event:</b> While it hasn't happened yet, the Bible predicts Jesus's return to earth to collect His people (all who believe in Him) to Himself. This is followed by a time of great troubles for those who have not believed in Christ. This is followed by Jesus returning with the believers to finally conquer and judge the world. Eventually a new

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cts Jesus's return ) to Himself. who have not g with the betually a new heaven and earth are created afresh.

Redemption of the World: All that was broken by the curse of man's sin: nature, man's soul, the world's system of relationships, are made right and new. God's long-term desire to have some of all the world's peoples as part of His kingdom and worship Him in their own unique language and culture will be fulfilled.

#### **Romans 8:18-25**

Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. 19 For all creation is waiting eagerly for that future day when God will reveal who his children really are. 20 Against its will, all creation was subjected to God's curse. But with eager hope, 21 the creation looks forward to the day when it will join God's children in glorious freedom from death and decay.

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22 For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. 23 And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us. 24 We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. 25 But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)

**Revelation 7:9-10** After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. <sup>10</sup> And they were shouting with a great roar, "Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!"

Revelation 21:3, 22-26 I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among his people! He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them.

<sup>22</sup> I saw no temple in the city, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are its temple. <sup>23</sup> And the city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God illuminates the city, and the Lamb is its light. <sup>24</sup> The nations will walk in its light, and the kings of the world will enter the city in all their glory. <sup>25</sup> Its gates will never be closed at the end of day because there is no night there. <sup>26</sup> And all the nations will bring their glory and honor into the city.

### **Revelation 22:3**

No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him.

Individual salvation: Mankind, who in our first sin against God was committed in order to become like God instead became separated from God. God allowed us to die in order to not lock us in a separation from God forever. During our life here following Christ we become more and more like Christ, but, in our eternity with God, we will become like God because we will see Him clearly and intimately. We will live with Him and each other eternally.

### I John 3:1-2

See how very much our Father loves us, for he calls us his children, and that is what we are! But the people who belong to this world don't recognize that we are God's children because they don't know him. 2 Dear friends, we are already God's children, but he has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like him, for we will see him as he really is.

### 2 Corinthians 5:1-5

For we know that when this earthly tent we live in is taken down (that is, when we die and leave this earthly body), we will have a house in heaven, an eternal body made for us by God himself and not by human hands.

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	heavenl bodies; these ea die and on our n by life.	row weary in our present bodies, and we long to put on our ly bodies like new clothing. 3 For we will put on heavenly we will not be spirits without bodies. 4 While we live in arthly bodies, we groan and sigh, but it's not that we want to get rid of these bodies that clothe us. Rather, we want to put new bodies so that these dying bodies will be swallowed up 5 God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee given us his Holy Spirit.
	Jesus	ry Murrieta's Statement of Faith on The Return of
	faithful, a will retur righteou and prop	ond coming of Jesus is the hope and reminder that God is and that He has ultimate control over all things. Jesus Christ urn personally and visibly, and Christ will judge all men in usness. We believe that God will fulfill all future promises phecies regarding the second coming of Jesus
	• Kev.	. 19:11-16   Jn. 14:3   Zech. 14:4
	Discuss	How is looking at the gospel as a story helpful?
Doodles		
	Aim	How does the teaching that the Bible is God's wholly true revelation to us affect your personal learning question?  Does it cause confusion or bring help?

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Reflec	If someone asked you what the Bible is could you answer them confidently? What would you say?
Discus	What is the Bible about?
II Tin	Memory Verse
All So	cripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true o make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when se wrong and teaches us to do what is right.
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### LESSON TWO: READING THE BIBLE



### LESSON Two: Reading The Bible

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In the last lesson we saw how the Bible is God's inspired revelation of Himself to us. It reveals His heart and tells of His Son who redeems fallen humanity. We saw the Bible's structure of 66 books united in one Scripture.

In this lesson we will discuss how we go about reading the Bible and wisely finding what it says to us.



Effectively reading the Bible does not require any special degrees or really any theological education at all. You have the same Bible that any theologian or pastor has. They don't have any more access to Scripture than you do. What they may have that you don't is

- Access to helpful resources to understand the language or cultural context of the Bible
- A great amount of time spent studying the Bible and hearing how others interpret it
- A gift/calling of knowledge and teaching the Bible

Psalm 119:99-100 (ESV)

<sup>99</sup> I have more understanding than all my teachers, for your testimonies are my meditation.

I understand more than the aged, for I keep your precepts.

In Psalm 119:99-100 we see that truly learning God's word (even above experienced teachers) requires meditation and obedience. We learn the Bible best by allowing it to saturate our lives.

While we still need teachers (as the Bible itself tells us) we are able to learn to come to the Bible and learn from it on our own.

8	How confident do you feel in studying the Bible on your own? Why?
Reflect	·

### The Importance of Knowing the Bible

A. Scripture forms our worldview by answering our biggest questions:

- Who is God?
- Who are we?
- What is important in life?
- How should we live?

### LESSON Two: Reading The Bible

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	• Wha	y are we here?  It is wrong with the world?  Igh knowing the word we can know God's revealed will.
	Discuss	How do we go about finding God's will in His word?
	C. The S	Scripture presents God's standards
	<ul><li>In ou</li><li>In ou</li><li>D. We hat</li><li>We la</li></ul>	ur moral choices ur relationships ur interpretation of other scripture have the unchanging message of an unchanging God. have God's promises in black and white.
		see through God's eyes.  have a whole cohesive document which interprets itself.
Doodles	The Importance of Studying the Bible on Your Own  Reading on our own allows us to:  Go at our own pace Focus and learn first-hand Accompany the Bible with prayer  Have a time of personally approaching God in His word	
	Reflect	While studying the Bible on your own is very valuable, what is also valuable about studying the Bible together with others?

### LESSON Two: Reading The Bible

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	Paul Tripp's Eight Blessings of Studying the Bible
	1.God Consciousness: the constant reminder that God exists
	2.Self-Awareness: the constant reminder of how I am and my need for God
	3.Knowledge of God's Plan: "God works to rescue us from the claustrophobic confines of our little kingdoms of self and deliver us to his big Kingdom of glory and grace."
	4.Personal Transformation: seeing God's grace work to change each one of us
	5.Gospel Worldview: understanding God, yourself, and your world in order to make decisions.
	6.Street-Level Guidance: knowing how to respond to everyday issues and conversations
	7.Commitment to Ministry: reminding us of our call to and defining or methods of redemptive ministry in the lives of others.
	8. A Deeper Love For Jesus: reminding us of Jesus's presence, plan, power, and promises
	When You Open the Bible
	Preparation: am I ready to hear from the Lord?
	<ul><li>Observation: what does it say?</li><li>Interpretation: what does it mean?</li></ul>
	Application: what does it require?
Doodles	
3000.00	Preparation: The Dangers of Bible Study
	<ul> <li>When we study the Bible we risk focusing on knowing its words more than its subject: Jesus. Jesus rebuked a group called the Pharisees, who were a "back-to-the-Bible" movement, by saying:</li> </ul>
	John 5:39

You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,

How might we be guilty of this?

Discuss

## LESSON Two: Reading The Bible

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	We are held accountable for what we know of God's will. Anyone desiring to study the Bible without an intent to live by it is gathering judgment for themselves.
	Luke 12:47–49
	"And a servant who knows what the master wants, but isn't prepared and doesn't carry out those instructions, will be severely punished. But someone who does not know, and then does something wrong, will be punished only lightly. When someone has been given much, much will be required in return; and when someone has been entrusted with much, even more will be required."
	The Bible, when followed, will change your life in ways that are difficult, addressing your sin and need for Jesus, as well as the trials and sacrifice into which He calls you to follow Him.
	Hebrews 4:12
	For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.
	The Bible will also be your guide on into a life and world you could never have dreamed of. Are you willing to go?
	Ask yourself:
	Am I ready to hear whatever it has to say?
	Will I let my assumptions be challenged?
Doodles	Can I refrain from manipulating Scripture for my comfort?
	Am I willing to find where my life fits into God's story?
	What am I looking for?
	Wisdom? A checklist? God's perspective? Encouragement? Ammunition? Comfort? God's heart?
	What do you look for in reading the Bible?

Reflect

## LESSON Two: Reading The Bible

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After preparing our heart to approach the Bible, we go through a process of observation, interpretation, and application.

#### Observation: Ask these questions of the text:

During the observation phase of Bible study you are looking only for the facts. You don't need to look for meanings yet. Ask:

Who?

Who wrote this? Whom did they originally write to? Whom is it talking about? Who are the key players?

• What?

Was going on at the time? Is the scriptural context?

• Where?

Did this take place? What else in the Bible happened there?

When?

Was this in history?

Is this in the story of redemption?

- "Why?" is to be answered in the interpretation phase and "How?" is to be answered in the application phase.
- You may not be able to answer all of these questions in a given passage but do your best.

#### Other things to look for:

- **Genre**: What type of literature is this? History is different from poetry or prophecy.
- Words: Are there key, connector, title, or repeated words?
- Grammar: What parts of speech are the words in the passage?
   Focus especially on subjects, verbs, and objects. You don't have to know Hebrew, Greek, or even English grammar perfectly well to see the basic set-up of a sentence. Look for who is doing or saying something, about what, and to whom.
- Repetition: Does this passage sound familiar from somewhere else in the Bible? Over time you will find yourself making connections more an more easily.
- **Structure**: Are ideas repeated? Is there a comparison and contrast? Is there a reference to another part of the Bible?
- Mood: What is the tone or emotion of the people speaking? What is the implied attitude toward the events or ideas described?

## LESSON Two: Reading The Bible

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	After we have looked at the facts of what we are reading we begin to interpret what we've read. We are now looking for what it means. However, we are still asking question, not jumping to making statements.
	Four Basic Questions to ask of Scripture
	Don't overcomplicate what you are looking for when you approach the Bible. Keep these big-picture questions in mind and use the ob- servation and interpretations listed below as tools to answering these four basic questions.
	What does this say about God? (Ultimately, look for this!)
	What does this say about me?
	What does this say about my world?
	What does this say about what happens when any of the above meet?
	These are big questions and you may not know right away how to answer them right away or in all passages. Think of them as "target questions" you are looking for.
	How are these questions different from what you or our culture tend to look for in the Bible?  Reflect  ———————————————————————————————————
Doodles	
	What are some questions we can ask of the text to help figure out these target questions?  Discuss

## LESSON Two: Reading The Bible

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#### Putting Christ at the Center of His Story

The Bible tells us the story of God redeeming the fallen world through Jesus Christ so that God would live eternally with His children. Jesus says that the Old Testament ultimately points us to Him.

#### John 5:39

You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; and it is they that bear witness about me,

#### Luke 24:27

And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

Our individualistic culture wants to look to the significance of a single person but we also live in a self-centered culture that believes I must be the most significant person. This has greatly affected how we read the Bible. We often read like this:

#### Because [Insert Story] I [Insert Application].

Example: "Because Abraham believed God and was counted righteous, I should have more faith."

While not necessarily wrong, this reading is limited because it

- Ignores the bigger story and puts the person in the Bible as a hero.
- Fails to look beyond myself at my world.
- Places me as the central actor in charge of changing myself.
- Ignores what God may be revealing about Himself, looking only for what is revealed about myself.

A much fuller reading would be framed like this:

[Insert Story or Statement] because God [Insert Theology]. Therefore I [Insert Application].

Example: "Abraham believed God and was counted righteous because God is faithful and is glorified when we trust Him. He is worthy to call us righteous. He is sacrificial enough to take our punishment on Himself. **Therefore I** am wholly righteous and will eagerly await all God's further promises."

This framework:

- Keeps the story in context by asking why it happened
- Does not need to emulate the Bible character as a hero, leaving room for Christ to be the hero
- Places God as the central actor, making Him responsible to change me.
  - Finds who God is as revealed in the story and looks at self in the light of God's nature.

## LESSON Two: Reading The Bible

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This is not to say that every passage neatly fits into a magical formula or that studying and applying Scripture is simplistic. But try reading your Bible with this format in mind and see what you discover! The key is looking to Christ in the Bible. All things flow from Him.

#### **Christ-Centered Bible Study**

In order to train ourselves to keep Christ at the center of scripture, here are several questions to ask of a passage:

- Does this passage show a need for Jesus?
  - Through the characters' failings
  - Through the fallen world
  - Through showing my corrupt heart
  - Through showing a problem only Jesus can deal with
- Does this passage show a problem Jesus suffered under?
  - Can He identify with your pain?
  - How did He handle it?
  - How can He empower you?
- Is Jesus redeeming or overcoming the fallen world here?
  - Is He showing what things will be like when redeemed?
  - Is He redefining or re-teaching anything?
  - Is He taking on anyone's place with a new outcome?
- Does this passage directly refer to Jesus in the Old Testament?
  - Does it show Jesus literally appearing in the Old Testament?
  - Is there a prophecy about Jesus here?
  - Is there a person, event, or institution that points to Jesus?

Handling these questions takes time and study. Don't expect to quickly and easily answer them. It is recommended you take the Unfolding Gospel Bible Survey to help you start seeing Christ across all of Scripture and connecting your life into His story. The priority before learning to handle Christ-centered questions is to begin asking the big picture/target questions. All of this is a process so don't give up!

## LESSON Two: Reading The Bible

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	These supple passage:	lementary questions m	ıay help you think thr	ough a
			What would the	Where d
	Text	What does it sa	first readers have seen here?	this fit into Bible's st line?
	Theology	What is God do ing (perhaps to or through His people)?	o characteristics of	
	Application	What does this say about my identity/status	empowered and	
		w different is the set of ngs you usually look fo		here from the
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	fac	ould looking for God inctor into how you've but learning question?		

## LESSON Two: Reading The Bible

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	Aim	How would looking to Christ in Scripture rather than looking for a set of behaviors change the way you approach the person you are trying to reach with the gospel?
	Good	ways to misinterpret Scripture:
	• Exp	ect to hear only what want to hear
	• Exp	ect the God of Scripture to look like you
	• Exp	ect everything you read to directly involve you
	• Exp	ect the scripture to always support your decisions
	• Loo	k for secret meanings only you have discovered
		ept only the interpretation you have always been comforta- with
	• Nev	er study together with others
	Applic	ation
Doodles	asked w	e have looked at what the Bible says (observation) and that it means (interpretation) we can move to what we do as a response (application).
	Discuss	What can happen when we jump to application without proper observation and interpretation?

"Go to the Bible looking for God. Find Him, and application will follow. But go looking for application, and you may miss both."

-Trevin Wax, Gospel-Centered Teaching, 93.

## LESSON Two: Reading The Bible

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	When we look in the Bible for who God is, who we are, and who our world is, we will naturally be led to what we do. But we are not looking for biblical behaviors to apply; we are looking for an identity to live.
	While not a magical formula, try using this model to ask better questions for applying what you see in Scripture.
	If this passage reveals that God I should respond by
	This passage shows that God commands so     needs to change in my life.
	I can do and will ask God to in my life.
	Remember to apply the Bible to yourself first! Don't use it as ammunition for everyone around you who is not living well enough. But for Christ, you are no better than they are. However, Jesus does say that we should use what God has taught us and empowered us to change to then minister to others with the same needs. We don't read the Bible for self-improvement, nor do we read it to fix everyone in our life. We read it to find the Redeemer who redeems us and makes us a redemptive force in our fallen world.
	Matthew 7:5 You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.
	What about the passages that don't seem to apply in my life?
Doodles	Many times we arrive at passages that simply seem to have nothing to do with us. This doesn't necessarily mean that we can get nothing from them, however, because all of Scripture is God's revelation to us. Some passages do have more immediate or direct bearing on our lives today but there is no useless fluff in the Bible. Not all passages in the Bible are directly about you and that is a very good thing. We would be in trouble if everything applied to us. However, everything is meaningful to us. When you aren't sure what to do with a passage ask questions like these:

Does this describe my current experience?

do with you.

Before assuming this passage has nothing to do with you, have you thought about how maybe it does? Just because you're not sure what it means doesn't mean it has nothing to

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## LESSON Two: Reading The Bible

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	Doodles	

• Will I experience this in the future?

Storing up wisdom on something you may experience some day is as important (if not more so) than learning for today. You may not be married, a parent, persecuted, tempted, depressed, poor, sick or anything else now, but you may be later.

Is someone else experiencing this?

What you see in the Bible may relate to someone you know more directly than it relates to you. If you are not asking only what a passage says to someone else (and not looking at your own life also) it is healthy to look beyond yourself to others you may help.

Does this passage speak to my culture?

You may not find a picture of yourself in a passage but the values of your culture may be challenged there. Being able to dialogue with your world using the Bible's truth is a valuable outcome of studying Scripture.

Who would you be in the story?

You may not see a story as relating to you until you find who you are most like in the story. You are probably unlike the "hero" of the story and more like those around watching or receiving God's grace through the "hero". This may change how you read. Likewise, if the passage is warning unbelievers you do not need to apply it to yourself (if you believe) but it should inform how you see the unbelievers around you.

- What does this tell you about the bigger picture/story?
   A hard-to-apply passage may make more sense when you "zoom out" and see how it is building the big story of Scripture and Christ's redemption. That story will relate much more directly and fully to you and your world than a single piece might.
- Is this passage actually not telling me to do anything? Have you ever asked yourself how you would know if a passage is actually telling you what to do? Some don't tell us to do anything and yet we assume the best practice would be to see some command there anyway.
- Am I trying to apply a principle or a practice?
   Sometimes we see something done in the Bible and assume we should do the same. But there is a difference (discussed in Lesson Seven) between a principle (e.g. generosity) and a practice (e.g. when the first church in Jerusalem shared all possessions in common).

## LESSON Two: Reading The Bible

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Some of these questions take us back to interpretation to make sure we have the understanding we need to apply Scripture correctly. This is not an easy task. Over time you will become more adept at wisely applying what you read in the Bible but seeking guidance from resources, friends, and Bible teachers will help with the interpretive challenges that will set you up to be able to hear from the Lord on your particular life application.

Please remember to read the Bible to find who God is. If you walk away knowing your God better, that is more important than finding the right "to-do". Responding to who God is may be as simply profound as thanking and praising Him, sitting in awe of the God revealed in His word.

#### A "Raft" for Learning the Bible

We do not rely on any one method of learning the Bible. It is more like a raft made of various connected planks of wood rather than a single carved-out canoe. We combine these methods together to best get to know Scripture.

Remember that getting to know the Bible takes time, consistency, and obedience. We are always growing in our understanding. We learn the Bible through:

- Preaching
- Factual study (i.e. commentaries)
- Solo reading
- Memorization

- Devotional reading
- Discussion with others in the church
- Living according to the text

**Doodles** 



Which of these could you begin to incorporate into your learning?

Reflect

#### Some Methods of Reading the Bible

Journaling

Writing your thoughts or prayers on a passage

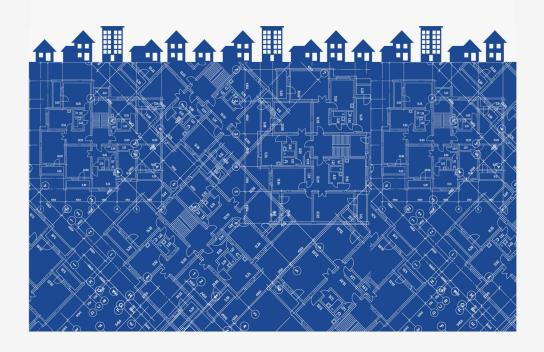
Books: (e.g. Search the Scriptures)

Search the Scriptures asks questions of the text without giving you answers to help you think through it. Other "devotional" books may help you see things in the Bible but be careful to not only lean on what the author has to say.

## LESSON Two: Reading The Bible

	Reading The Bible
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Reflect	What is most difficult for you about reading the Bible? What is one thing you can do to begin addressing that difficulty?
Do	With one or more passages (those below or any of your choice) and use the structure we learned to see what you find in the passage:
	[Insert Story or Statement] because God [Insert Theology]. Therefore I [Insert Application].
	• Mark 5:21-43 • Philippians 2:1-11
	• Psalms 24 • Leviticus 19:9-18
Psalms	Memory Verse : 119:15-16
	tudy your commandments and reflect on your ways. I will de- your decrees and not forget your word.
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# LESSON THREE: WHO IS GOD?



### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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	Doodles



#### Read

#### Hard things first

Because, as will become more clear throughout this class, all things find their root in who God is and all we believe and do comes from our view of God, we will begin this study by looking at God's nature. We cannot describe God's nature without talking about the trinity. This will likely be the most intellectually challenging part of this class because it is really not something we can understand. In fact, our goal in this lesson is not to understand the nature of God but to be introduced to a God greater than we realize, whether we have just met or have known Him for years.

Many teachers have undertaken to use metaphors to describe the trinitarian nature of God. However, there is nothing we know that can accurately serve as a picture of the Trinity and at some point we must come to terms with not fully understanding God as three-in-one.

We should realize that the concept of the trinity is so unnatural to our thinking that it is an evidence of our God being the true God: if we had invented our faith on our own we never would have come up with something like a trinity.

#### But wait...

The word "trinity" is not found in the Bible but that doesn't mean the Bible doesn't teach it to us. We learn about the trinity by putting together various scriptures from around the Bible which add up to give us this teaching about the nature of God. It's like if someone gave you clues about what color light they

#### If they said:

were talking about.

Clue #1: It's red light. Clue #2: It's green light. Clue #3: It's blue light. Clue #4: All three colors are perfectly equal.

The only answer is that it's white light. We were never told the word "white" but by putting the parts together we saw the whole picture if we understand that white light is made up of these.



At various places in the Bible God refers to God as "we" or "us", one Hebrew word for God, *Elohim*, is plural. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all referred to as God in the Bible. From this, the early Church discovered the doctrine of the trinity. Also see the chart on pg. 7

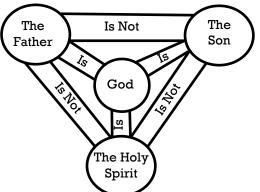
#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

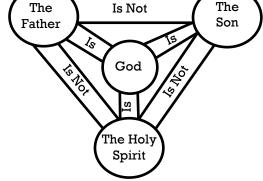
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#### What do we mean by "Trinity"?

When we talk about God being "triune" we mean:

- God is three persons
  - God is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
  - We say "persons" because God is a person, not a cosmic force or all of the universe, or an idea. While God is not a human, God is a person. He has a will, rationality, emotion, and relationships.
  - The persons of the trinity relate to one another
- Each person is fully God
  - When we say only "God" we are often referring specifically to God the Father, but all are equally God.
  - Each person is not a part of God but God.
  - All are equal in nature and divinity but not in role.
- There is one God
  - There are not three Gods.
  - God cannot be divided up. The trinity is not three "members" making up a team but three persons who are one.





**Discuss** 

If each person of God is equal in nature and value but different in role and authority, what does that mean about how we see our roles, value, and authority in relationship with others?

The trinity shows that God is:

- Beyond human understanding
- One in nature but different in roles.
- One Whose nature calls us to unity in diversity (I Cor. 12:12; Eph. 2:16).

#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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- Relational (God even relates to Himself!)
- One who both gives and receives glory (we see in the Bible that the Father gives glory to the Son, the Son gives glory to the Father, the Holy Spirit gives glory to both).
- Able to love Himself more than we love Him and more than we love ourselves. While our culture tells us to love ourselves, we can't have a relationship with ourselves like God can. But the God who is the source of all relationship loves us and offers us loving, unified relationship with Him, the Church, and a spouse, reflecting the kind of unity in the trinity (Eph. 2:14-16; Jn. 17:21; Mt. 19:6).

#### Shared Characteristics of the Trinity

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are one God but each person of the Trinity has roles and characteristics. Many of these characteristics are shared among the persons. The chart below shows how we find the description of the Trinity's characteristics all through the Bible.

Called God Creator Resurrects Indwells Everywhere All Knowing Sanctifies Life Giver Fellowship Eternal Has a Will Speaks Love Searches Hearts We belong to Savior We Serve Believe In Gives Joy Judges	FATHER Phil. 1:2 Isaiah 64:8 1 Thess. 1:10 2 Cor. 6:16 1 Kings 8:27 1 John 3:20 1 Thess. 5:23 Gen. 2:7: John 5:21 1 John 1:3 Psalm 90:2 Luke 22:42 Matt. 3:17; Luke 9:25 John 3:16 Jer. 17:10 John 17:9 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3; 4:10 Matt. 4:10 John 14:1 Romans 15:13 John 8:50	SON John 1:1,14; Col. 2:9 John 1:3; Col. 1:15-17 John 2:19, 10:17 Col. 1:27 Matt. 28:20 John 16:30; 21:17 Heb. 2:11 John 1:3; 5:21 1 Cor. 1:9 Micah 5:1-2 Luke 22:42 Luke 5:20; 7:48 Eph. 5:25 Rev. 2:23 John 17:6 2 Tim. 1:10; Titus 1:4; 3:6 Col. 3:24 John 14:1 John 15:11 John 5:21,30	HOLY SPIRIT  Acts 5:3-4  Job 33:4, 26:13  Rom. 8:11  John 14:17  Psalm 139:7-10  1 Cor. 2:10-11  1 Pet. 1:2  2 Cor. 3:6,8  2 Cor. 13:14; Phil. 2:1  Rom. 8:11; Heb. 9:14  1 Cor. 12:11  Acts 8:29; 11:12; 13:2  Rom. 15:30  1 Cor. 2:10
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## LESSON THREE: Who is God?

If each person of God is equal in nature and value but different in role and authority, what does that mean about how we see our roles, value, and authority in relationship

NOTES	Discuss	If each person of God is equal in nature how do we tend to mistakenly see them as fundamentally different?
	God th	ne Father
	In some than it is ever se Bible al	sense, it is easier to study the Son and Holy Spirit in the Bible is to study the Father. The Bible tells us that while no one has en the Father, Jesus (the Son) shows Him to us (Jn. 1:18). The so says that no one knows the things of God unless the Holy eveals them (I Cor. 2:11-14).
	and He	her acts with authority. The Son (Jesus) obeys Him (Jn. 15:10) sends the Holy Spirit to us (Jn. 14:26). Jesus says that no one has a Father at any time.
		her glorifies the Son who, in turn, glorifies the Father. The Holy orifies both.
	The Fatl	her leads the Son, and sends the Son and Spirit.
	Because • Is lo	e His very nature is that of a father we see that God:
		ires to protect and provide ne ultimate authority
	Aim	Our experience with our earthly fathers affects the way we view the heavenly Father. For you, does this play into your personal learning question?
odles		
		How might it play into how the person or group you will share the gospel with?

with others?

#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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#### God the Son

God the Son is often called "the second person of the trinity", but this term shouldn't be allowed to confuse the fact that each person is fully and equally God in nature as we have already said. His role is that of Son in relationship to the Father. Because this is the person of the trinity who came to be born on earth as a human we know Him as Jesus.

Jesus was a man who lived about 2,000 years ago. He is a historical figure. But He is more than a man. The Bible says that He existed forever (John 1:2) before He took the form of a man. He was not created; rather, He created the world (John 1:3; Col. 1:15-17).

Philippians 2:5-11 says that Jesus, who is God, let go of His glorious position and came to earth for your sake, to save you from sin. In fact, it was prophesied that Jesus would come. You may want to look at the amazing prophecies from the Old Testament that were written hundreds of years before Jesus was born at https://alwaysbeready.com/prophecies-concerning-the-messiah/.

Jesus was not just a man or a good teacher or a skillful magician. The Bible says that He is both fully God and fully a man. This is fundamental to our belief as Christians.

GOD	MAN
He is worshiped (Matt. 2:2,11; 14:33)	He worshiped the Father (John 17)
He was called God (John 20:28; Heb. 1:8)	He was called man (Mark 15:39; John 19:5)
He was called Son of God (Mark 1:1)	He was called Son of Man (John 9:35-37)
He is prayed to (Acts 7:59)	He prayed to the Father (John 17)
He is sinless (1 Pet. 2:22; Heb. 4:15)	He was tempted (Matt. 4:1)
He knows all things (John 21:17)	He grew in wisdom (Luke 2:52)
He gives eternal life (John 10:28)	He died (Rom. 5:8)
All the fullness of deity dwells in Him (Col. 2:9)	He has a body of flesh and bones (Luke 24:39)

What does it mean that He is both God and man?

- He understands us and can help us because He's both completely powerful and able to relate to us.
- God works in the cosmic as well as the concrete, both outside of time and in the world He created.

#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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- He lived as the only sinless man, thus fulfilling the law and having no sins of His own to pay for. Therefore, He was a worthy sacrifice for us.
- He could actually die as a sacrifice for our sin. A spirit cannot be nailed to a cross.
- Humans, being made in God's image (more on this later) are by nature not completely unlike God. Jesus is made like us (Phil. 2:7) and we will be made like God. (I Jn. 3:2).

	Why is Jesus being God and man so core to our faith?
Discuss	

#### What Did Jesus Come To Do?

- To reveal the Father (Matt. 11:27)
- To be a ransom for many (Matt. 20:28)
- To serve (Matt. 20:28)
- To preach the good news of God's Kingdom (Luke 4:43)
- To bring division (Luke 12:51)
- To testify to the truth (John 18:37)
- To fulfill the Law and the Prophets (Matt. 5:17)
- To call sinners (Mark 2:17)
- To proclaim the year of the Lord's favor (Luke 4:19)
- To do the will of the Father (John 6:38)
- To preach (Mark 1:38)
- To proclaim freedom for believers (Luke 4:18)
- To atone for sin (Heb. 2:17)
- To save the world (John 3:17; Luke 19:10)
- To give life (John 10:10,28)
- To take away sin (1 John 3:5)
- To destroy the devil's works (1 John 3:8)
- To call Israel to her original purpose (Matt. 23:37)
- To give the Father's words (John 17:8)

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## LESSON THREE: Who is God?

NOTES	The Bible is the story of Jesus coming to redeem the world. We wi			
	see more of this as our course proceeds but here are some basic points of who Jesus is and what He did:			
	• Jesus is God. He said He was God, the prophecies and miracles proved it, and this is what Christians believe.			
	Jesus is the Messiah, the one prophesied throughout the Old Testament to come rescue Israel.			
	• Jesus came to earth for us. He was born as a human to go through all that you go through and ultimately to die in our place.  Hebrews 10:10 explains that a sacrifice needed to be made to satisfy God's justice and so He had to have a body in order to die for us.			
	<ul> <li>Jesus rose from the dead. This was witnessed by hundreds of people. Jesus had satisfied the requirement that sin must lead to death (He wouldn't be truly just if he just ignored wrong) and made it so that death isn't the end for us.</li> </ul>			
	He did this because He loves you! Read John 3:16. You have it in writing.			
	<ul> <li>Jesus taught us that we can be one with Him and how we should live. We should continually trust in Him and love one another as we wait for His return.</li> </ul>			
	<ul> <li>Jesus will reign on earth one day. The Bible that prophesied of His coming tells of His coming again. Then all the evil things that have been allowed will be judged and He will be gloriously in charge.</li> </ul>			
Doodles	Do you know what the person or group you want to connect the gospel with believes about Jesus? If you do, write it here. If not, what is a step you could take to find out?			
	Does what you believe about Jesus align with what the Bible teaches?			

## LESSON THREE: Who is God?

NOTES	God the Holy Spirit
	The "third person" of the trinity is the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is a person just as the Father and Son are. The Holy Spirit grieves (Is. 63:10; Eph. 4:30), loves (Rom. 15:30); can be insulted (Heb. 10:29); and wills and chooses (I Cor. 12:11).
	The Holy Spirit is first mentioned during the account of creation in Genesis 1:2. He is present in the events of the Old Testament, coming upon people at times. Soon after Jesus ascended to heaven, the Holy Spirit began to dwell in those who had been made new (more on this in a later lesson).
	But not least
	The Holy Spirit is mysterious to us we often relegate the Spirit to a lesser level of deity or think of the Spirit as an impersonal force. This is incorrect since the Spirit is as much God as the Father and Son. His role, though, is one of pointing to the Son and the Father. In the Bible, we do not see the Spirit glorified by the Father and Son. We see the Spirit move in the believers to give God glory.
	The Dible Charge that the Hely Caixit is Cod
	The Bible Shows that the Holy Spirit is God
	The Holy Spirit is called:
	• God (Acts 5:3-4)
	• Eternal (Heb. 9:14)
	• Creator (Gen. 1:26-27; Job 33:4)
	• Equal to and one with the Father (Mt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14
	• Omnipresent (Psa. 139:7–13)
Doodles	Omniscient (I Cor. 2:10)
	• Omnipotent (Lk. 1:35; Rom. 15:19)
	• We are baptized in His name along with the Father and Son (Mt. 28:19)
	Do you have a reduced view of the Holy Spirit?
	Reflect

#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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#### What Does the Holy Spirit Do?

- Anoints Jesus for Ministry (Lk. 4:18)
- Accesses to the Father (Eph. 2:18)
- Assures the believer (Rom. 8:16)
- Baptizes (John 1:23-34; 1 Cor. 12:13-14)
- Believers Born of (John 3:3-6)
- Convicts of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:9-10)
- Cleanses (1 Thess. 3:13; 1 Pet. 1:2)
- Calls and Commissions (Acts 13:24; 20:28)
- Guides in truth (John 16:13)
- Empowers (Lk. 24:49; 1 Thess. 1:5)
- Helps our weakness, intercedes (Rom. 8:26)
- Strengthens (Eph. 3:16; Acts 1:8; 2:4; 1 Cor. 2:4)
- Inspires prayer (Eph. 6:18; Jude 20)
- Gives gifts (1 Cor. 12:8-11)
- Glorifies Christ (John 16:14)
- Testifies of Jesus (John 15:26)
- Creates (Gen. 1:2; Job 33:4)
- Raises from the dead (Rom. 8:11)
- Indwells believers (I Cor. 3:16)
- Leads (Rom. 8:14)
- Teaches (John 14:26)
- Liberates (Rom. 8:2)
- Interprets Scripture (1 Cor. 2:1,14; Eph. 1:17)
- Molds Character (Gal. 5:22-23; Rom. 15:16)
- Fills (Acts 2:4; 4:29-31)
- Seals (Eph. 1:1314; 4:30)

#### God In Us

When Jesus was on the earth He was God Himself with us. One of His names (Immanuel) even means "God with us." But before Jesus ascended into heaven He had told His followers that it was actually better for them that He went away because then the Holy Spirit would come to help them (John 16:7). The last thing Jesus said involved the Holy Spirit: "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). The Spirit lives in and guides the Church.

## LESSON THREE: Who is God?

NOTES	When we that God is He create we can	is controversy in the Church over the Holy Spirit, not mainly the the Spirit is or what He does but over how He works in us. We look at the Holy Spirit working in people, let's remember od does not fit into our mental boxes and is mysterious to us, personal and relational and has interacted with people since ated us, and the Bible is clear that He lives in the believers. If affirm those things we will be better equipped to discuss the Holy Spirit works in us today.
	But onl begin a wants a	If the time we try very hard to be good and do the right thing.  by when we first give up and metaphorically die does God  a new life in us, the Bible says. We're not able to do what He  all by ourselves but with this new life of the Holy Spirit in us we  be God's children and live accordingly (Galatians 4:6; I John
	power,	se, since spiritual things are only known with the Holy Spirit's we don't have an expectation that those who do not have the pirit in them to know or be changed by Him yet (I Cor. 2:14)
	hough you. Al Jesus to could s	gh the Father is God Almighty He sent His Son to you. Alt- Christ is God Almighty He obeyed the Father and came to though the Holy Spirit is God He lives in the believers. When arned things over to the Holy Spirit we went from God we see to God who is always in us. We don't fully understand this is not miss its beauty!
	Aim	How can we answer our questions about God or help others know God if we cannot fully understand Him?
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	Do	Take time to pray and worship God for who He is. If prayer is new for you, we will discuss prayer in a later lesson.
	Aim	What is the greatest disconnect between a biblical view of God and the view held by the person you want to connect with the gospel? If you don't know, how can you find out?

#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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In the first part of the lesson, we looked at the triune nature of God and saw a brief description of what the Bible says about each person of the Trinity. In this part of the lesson we will look at attributes of our God to better know who He is.

<u>Attribute:</u> something attributed as belonging to a person, thing, group, etc.; a quality, character, characteristic, or property.

God does not fit in our human mental boxes and cannot be easily or fully described in human terms. However, we will look at the aspects of His character as described in the Bible. We begin with what may be called the "incommunicable" attributes.

These attributes are things that, for the most part, God does not share (or "communicate") with us. The technical term is "incommunicable" attributes. We may share these attributes to some extent, but they are "less-shared" than others below.

This section is largely taken from Wayne Grudem's Systematic Theology: an introduction to biblical doctrine, 1994.

In each of the attribute descriptions in this lesson we will see a brief description of the attribute of God's nature, one key verse showing the attribute, other references in the Bible, and a description of this attribute's implications for us and our relationship with God. You will see a blank line where you have the option to write in an implication you thought of that isn't listed. These are not required.

#### Unity

In God's nature there are attributes that seem to be opposites (e.g. mercy and truth, justice and grace, wrath and love, glory and humility, invisibility and beauty). Just as God is three persons united, God can be described with multiple attributes but He is all of these things in equal measure at one time. Keep in mind that our tendency will be to think of God as being partially one thing and partially another or that He changes or that each person of the trinity has different attributes. But God is all these things.

The Church also reflects this in that we are made up of a multitude of people, cultures, and experiences but can still be unified.

#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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#### Independence ("self-existence")

This means: God does not need us or the rest of creation for anything, yet we and the rest of creation can glorify Him and bring Him joy.

We see this in the Bible in: Acts 17:24-25 "He is the God who made the world and everything in it. Since he is Lord of heaven and earth, he doesn't live in man-made temples, 25 and human hands can't serve his needs-for he has no needs. He himself gives life and breath to everything, and he satisfies every need."

As well as in: Job 41:11; Ps. 50:10-12

#### For us this means:

- We can do things out of worship to God but He doesn't need us to help Him.
- We learn to receive from God.
- God is our definition of good; He is not good because He obeys someone else.

#### Unchanging ("immutability")

This means: God is unchanging in His being, perfections, purposes, and promises, yet God does act and feel emotions, and he acts and feels differently in response to different situations.

We see this in the Bible in: Psalms 102:25-27

"25 Long ago you laid the foundation of the earth and made the heavens with your hands. 26 They will perish, but you remain forever; they will wear out like old clothing.

You will change them like a garment and discard them.

27 But you are always the same; you will live forever."

As well as in: James 1:17; Ex. 3:14

#### For us this means:

- We can always trust God.
- We have a relationship with the same God every other believer does, including the people in the Old Testament.

#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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#### **Eternality**

This means: God has no beginning or end, and He sees all time equally, yet God sees events in time and acts in time.

We see this in the Bible in: Psalms 90:2

"Before the mountains were born,

before you gave birth to the earth and the world, from beginning to end, you are God."

As well as in: Ex. 3:14; Jn. 1:1-3; Rev. 1:8

#### For us this means:

- God, being outside time, is not limited like we are.
- God sees all time's events and we can trust Him.
- We can live eternally with Him.

#### **Omnipresence**

This means: God does not have size or spatial dimensions and is present at every point of space with his whole being, yet God may act differently in different places.

We see this in the Bible in: Psalms 139:7-10

"7 I can never escape from your Spirit!

I can never get away from your presence!

<sup>8</sup> If I go up to heaven, you are there;

if I go down to the grave, you are there.

and your strength will support me.

<sup>9</sup> If I ride the wings of the morning,

if I dwell by the farthest oceans,

10 even there your hand will guide me"

As well as in: Jer. 23:24

#### For us this means:

- We can never escape God.
- We can commune with God anywhere.
- God is with us everywhere.
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#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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#### Omnipotence (Power, Sovereignty)

This means: God is able to do all His holy will. "Omnipotence" means that God (and God alone) is all-powerful.

We see this in the Bible in: Mark 10:27: "Jesus looked at them intently and said, 'Humanly speaking, it is impossible. But not with God. Everything is possible with God.""

As well as in: Is. 59:1; Jer. 32:7; Eph. 3:20; Gen. 18:14; II Cor. 6:8

#### For us this means:

- God can do anything, even more than we can ask (Eph. 3:20)
- We can rely on His power.
- The only thing God "can't" do is something against who He is.

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#### We reflect this attribute of God to some extent when we:

- exercise self-control
- influence our world

#### **Omniscience**

This means: God fully knows Himself and all things actual and possible.

We see this in the Bible in: Heb. 4:13: "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable."

As well as in: Job 37:16; I Jn. 3:20; Is. 46:9-10; Mt. 10:30; Ps. 139:1 -6

#### For us this means:

- God is never surprised
- God knows us better than we know ourselves.
- · God knows what He has done for us
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#### We reflect this attribute to some extent when we:

- Learn
- Use our reason and insight
- Exercise wisdom

#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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The above attributes are those that we do not share with God and those below are ones we do share since we are made in His image. However, the breakdown is not really as simple as that. As we saw some attributes that we partially reflect, so with the "shared attributes" we don't fully share them. This is because only God is God, yet we are made in His image.

#### God's Shared Attributes

#### **Spirituality**

This means: God exists as a being that is not made of any matter, has no parts or dimensions, is unable to be perceived by our bodily senses, and is more excellent than any other kind of existence.

We see this in the Bible in: Jn. 4:24: "For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth."

As well as in: II Cor. 3:17

#### For us this means we:

- Worship Him in our spirit (In 4:24; 1 Cor. 14:14; Phil. 3:3)
- Are united with God in spirit (I Cor. 6:17) and are the temple of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 3:16)
- Know internally that we are part of His family (Rom. 8:16)
- Get to be with God after we die (Lk. 23:46; Ecc. 12:7; Heb. 12:23;
- We are not a body only, since we have a spirit

We reflect this attribute in that:

 our inner self is our spirit/soul which is why when our body dies we are not destroyed.

#### **Invisibility**

This means: God's total essence, all of His spiritual being, will never be able to be seen by us, yet God still shows Himself to us through visible, created things.

We see this in the Bible in: Jn. 1:18: "No one has ever seen God. But the unique One, who is himself God, is near to the Father's heart. He has revealed God to us."

As well as in: Ex. 33:20; 6:46; I Tim. 1:17, 6:16; I Jn. 4:12

#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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#### For us this means:

- The pure in heart will see God (Matt. 5:8), spiritually now and literally in eternity (I Jn. 3:2; Rev. 22:4).
- We do not need to see Him to have a relationship with Him.

#### We reflect this attribute in that:

• no one but the invisible One will ever fully know our invisible soul (Ps. 139:1-4).

#### **Truthfulness**

This means: He is the true God, and that all His knowledge and words are both true and the final standard of truth.

We see this in the Bible in: : Jn. 17:17: "Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth."

As well as in: Jn. 16:13; 17:3; Num. 23:19; Titus 1:2; Prov. 30:5; Heb. 6:18.

#### For us this means:

- God is our source of Truth.
- We can trust Him.
- His voice will be the most unflinchingly honest voice in our lives.

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#### We reflect this attribute when:

- we speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15), becoming a church built on truth.
- Receive God's truth in our lives.

#### Goodness

This means: God is the final standard of good, and that all that God is and does is worthy of approval.

We see this in the Bible in: Ps. 119:68: "You are good and do only good; teach me your decrees."

As well as in: Ps. 34:8; James 1:17; Matt. 7:11

## LESSON THREE: Who is God?

NOTES	For us this means:
	God is our standard of morality
	God is our highest good and reward
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	We reflect this attribute when we:
	Act like Him (Gal. 5:22)
	Declare His goodness.
	• Enjoy Him (Ps. 34:8)
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	<u>Love</u>
	military and the second
	This means: God eternally gives of Himself to others
	We see this in the Bible in: I John 4:8: "But anyone who does
	not love does not know God, for God is love.
	As well as in: John 17:24; Rom. 5:8
	For us this means:
	<ul> <li>Love is not God (and therefore the highest good) but God is</li> </ul>
	love, so we are the people who best know what love is (I Jn.
	4:7-8) .
	God loves us
	•
	We reflect this attribute when we:
Day Was	• love Him.
Doodles	accept His love for us.
	sacrificially love others based on who God is, not on who they are
	or who we are (Mt. 5:43-45, 22:37-39; Eph. 5:29).
	How does the person you want to share the gospel with
	view the concept of love?
	Aim ————————————————————————————————————

#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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#### Mercy/Grace/Patience

This means: God's is good toward those in misery and distress and toward those who deserve only punishment. God withholds punishment for a long period of time.

We see this in the Bible in: Ex. 34:6: "The Lord passed in front of Moses, calling out, 'Yahweh! The Lord! The God of compassion and mercy! I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness."

As well as in: Ps. 103:8; Eph. 4:7; II Pt. 3:9, and many other verses.

#### For us this means:

- God takes away our punishment but also gives us great undeserved blessings.
- He waits for people to be saved (II Pt. 3:9).
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#### We reflect this attribute when we:

• Have mercy, grace, and patience for others (Matt. 5:7, James 1:19).

#### Holiness

This means: God is separated from sin and devoted to His purpose of being glorified by His creation.

We see this in the Bible in: Is. 6:3: They were calling out to each other, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Heaven's Armies!
The whole earth is filled with his glory!"

As well as in: Ex. 15:1; Lev 20:26; Ps. 99:9; Mt. 5:48

#### For us this means:

- God is separate from us yet calls us to separate ourselves to Him.
- Purpose is central to who God is and who we are.
- We are called to perfection.
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#### We reflect this attribute in that:

• We are called to be holy (Lev. 19:2; I Pt. 1:15-16) by being separated to the purpose of glorifying God.

#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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#### Peace/Order

This means: God's nature and His actions are not confused or chaotic even when He does many things at once.

We see this in the Bible in: I Cor. 14:33: "For God is not a God of disorder but of peace, as in all the meetings of God's holy people."

As well as in: Gen. 1-2; Mk. 6:39-40; Rom. 14:17.

#### For us this means:

- God will not try to confuse us
- Our peace does not depend on a peaceful environment
- Our eternity with Him is called our "rest".
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#### We reflect this attribute when we:

- View His world and order our lives according to God's order
- Maintain good relationships
- Rest in His peace, ultimately in eternity with Him (Phil. 4:7; Heb: 4:1).

#### Righteousness/Justice/Wrath

This means: God always acts in accordance with what is right and just and He hates sin.

We see this in the Bible in: Ps. 145:17: "The Lord is righteous in everything he does; he is filled with kindness."

As well as in: Ps. 11:7; 90:11; Is. 61:8; Jn. 3:36; Rom. 1:18; Ps. 90:11.

#### For us this means:

- God is both merciful and just.
- God cares about those who are wronged.
- God will judge everyone.

#### We reflect this attribute when we:

- Seek to implement righteousness in our own life and justice in our world (Micah 6:8).
- Are angry at our sin and the sinful world system.

#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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#### Freedom/Will/Sovereignty

This means: God determines what will be as He sees fit, whether He chooses to reveal all His will to us or not.

We see this in the Bible in: Ps. 115:3: "Our God is in the heavens, and He does as He wishes."

As well as in: Dt. 29:29; Prov. 21:1; Dan. 4:35; Acts 4:27-28; Eph. 1:11; Rom. 9:20; James 4:13-15.

#### For us this means:

- We submit ourselves to God's plan
- We trust God's plan even when we don't know all of its details
- While God can do as He pleases; He allows Himself to be hurt by our rebellion in things that are not His will.

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We reflect this attribute in that:

• We can make free choices and should choose His ways (Josh. 24:15; Phil. 2:13).

#### Blessedness/Joy

This means: God delights in Himself and all that reflects His character. He rejoices over His children.

We see this in the Bible in: I Tim. 6:15: "For at just the right time Christ will be revealed from heaven by the blessed and only almighty God, the King of all kings and Lord of all lords."

As well as in: Gen. 1:31-2:3; Is. 62:5; : I Tim. 1:11.

#### For us this means:

- We make God happy. The believer should picture a smile on God's face.
- God desires us to have fullness of joy (Jn. 15:11; Phil. 4:4).
- Our true joy comes only from God.
- The Lord's joy is our strength (Neh. 8:10)

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#### We reflect this attribute in that:

- We delight in what He delights in, especially in Him (Ps. 16:3, 37:4, 119:174; Is. 58:14).
- We learn to enjoy things large and small as they are seen as God's gifts (James 1:17).

#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

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#### **Beauty**

This means: God is the sum of all desirable qualities. He defines beauty and creates beauty in our world for us to enjoy with Him.

We see this in the Bible in: Ps. 27:4: "The one thing I ask of the Lord—the thing I seek most—is to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, delighting in the Lord's perfections and meditating in his Temple."

As well as in: Ps. 50:2, 73:25; Is. 33:17, 60:3.

#### For us this means:

- We are handcrafted by God (Ps. 139:14; Eph. 2:10).
- We can enjoy the beauty of God's creation (Ps. 19:1).
- We will find beauty in God (Ps. 73:25).
- God cares about art and beauty (Ex. 31:1-5).
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#### We reflect this attribute in that:

- We are beautiful creations made to look more like Christ.
- We can appreciate true beauty in our world.

#### Glory

This means: God is surrounded by light and is worthy of all honor. He is awesome and of the weightiest importance.

We see this in the Bible in: Isaiah 6:3: "They were calling out to each other, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Heaven's Armies! The whole earth is filled with his glory!"

As well as in: Jn. 1:14, 17:5; Heb. 1:3; Is. 43:7; Ps. 108:5; Rev. 21:23.

#### For us this means:

- We are made for God's glory (Is. 43:7; I Cor. 10:31)
- We reflect His light in our world (Prov. 4:18; Dan. 12:3; Matt. 13:43).
- We seek God's glory and not our own (Phil. 2:3-5; Rom. 12:3).
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#### We reflect this attribute in that:

- We are made above the rest of creation.
- He gives the believers glory alongside Christ (Rom. 5:2, 8:17; II Cor. 3:18; II Pt. 1:4).

## LESSON THREE: Who is God?

R	Reflect	Do you tend to "compartmentalize" God, seeing Him not as all His attributes?
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	Discuss	What happens when we have an inaccurate view of God?
	Discuss	What does it mean to "know God"?
Doodles		
	Aim	Which of these attributes involves your personal learning question? Do you see your question any differently in the light of God's attributes?

#### LESSON THREE: Who is God?

NOTES	How could you connect a biblical picture of who God is with the person or group you desire to share with?  Aim
	Do something this week to help you enjoy God and something to reflect one of His attributes.
	Memory Verse Exodus 15:11 (ESV) Who is like you, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, awesome in glorious deeds, doing wonders?
	From Calvary Murrieta's Statement of Faith  God  There is one and only one living and true God who is sovereign, and the creator of all things. He eternally exists as three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and each of these persons is fully God and are united as one.  •Gen. 1:26   Dt. 6:4   Mt. 28:19   Ps. 45:6-7
	God is called Father because He is the Father over all creation. He is also Father by intimate relationship. He is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and He is the Father of all who believe in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.  •Eph.3:14,15   Ps.103:13   Eph.1:3   Jn.1:12
Doodles	Jesus Christ was fully God, and became fully man in one person, and will be so forever. He created all things with the Father and has existed always. He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He perfectly upheld the divine law by His obedience to it, and in His substitutionary death on the cross, He made provision for the redemption of men from sin.  •Lik. 1:35   Jn. 1:1   Jn. 1:14   Jn. 3:16   Jn. 3:34,35 Jn. 14:31  •Is. 59:21   Jn. 14:17   Jn. 14:26   Jn. 16:8
	God the Holy Spirit

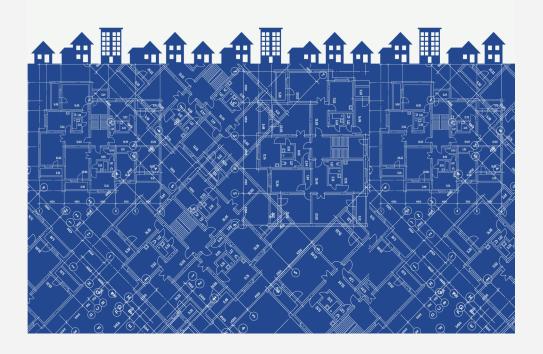
The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He exalts Christ. He manifests the active presence of God in the world, and especially in the church. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness and of judgment. He leads all mankind in what is true and empowers the believer and the

church in worship, discipleship, and service.

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### LESSON FOUR: MAN AND OUR SIN



### LESSON FOUR: Man and Our Sin

### **NOTES @** In this lesson we will look at who we are in our nature. When Read we look at mankind we see both great darkness as well as hope in God's redemption. Knowing what the Bible teaches about our human nature is crucial to understanding the gospel. Origins We see so much about the nature of humanity in just the first three chapters of the Bible. Genesis tells us that God created the first man and later from him made the first woman. God spoke all creation into existence and out of the soil of creation He formed Man. Looking at Genesis 2:7, what do you see as unique about the creation of Man? God said all He created was good except what? (Gen. 2:18) What does this tell you about human nature? What is part of God's design for Man as seen in Gen. 2:15? What is part of God's design for Man as seen in Gen. 2:19? **Doodles** Note that man was created fully formed and intelligent. He does not evolve or become what God desired him to be but begins that way,

### In God's Image

God breathed life into Adam but also crafted him in the image of God Himself. No other being in creation is created this way.

What does it mean that we are made in God's image?

- •We are above animals and are given "dominion" of the earth.
- •We are body, soul (or spirit), and mind.

later to fall away from this perfect state.

- •We have inherent value.
- •We are relational.

### LESSON FOUR: Man and Our Sin

### **NOTES** •We can relate to God. •God can become human; a human can have divine nature. •We can be represented by God. •We can represent God. We carry God's identity with us. We will discuss each of these things in class and explore their implications. Discuss Being made in God's image does not imply that God has a physical body (Jesus says that God is spirit). In fact, when we try to make God physical and make Him look like us, act like us, and we make Him small enough to understand and control we call that idolatry. How would your chosen person answer why it is wrong to harm people? How do they view human nature? Aim Male and Female Genesis says that God created people male and female. When God

### Doodles

Genesis says that God created people male and female. When God knew that it was not good for Adam to be alone He created a woman from Adam because she would be a perfect "helper" for him. The Hebrew word helper is also used of the Holy Spirit's role in our lives. In being Adam's helper "fit for him" we see that men and women are crafted to complement one another. God gave them a noble purpose of bearing His image as the crown of creation, cultivating the garden and producing generations of people to know and glorify God. In order to achieve their purpose together God created them complementary in design and roles. One is not better than the other, nor are they the same. Being different, they become one. God designed difference into gender and there is beauty in the difference.

### LESSON FOUR: Man and Our Sin

NOTES	Reflect	How does God's design for men and women being one reflect His nature in the trinity?
	Discuss	What are some ways men and women are complementary?
	Marriag	e
	In the acce have the c	ount in Genesis two of the creation of man and woman we also origin of marriage. Genesis 2:23-24 teach that men and re made of one flesh and in marriage they become one flesh.
	Purpose	
Doodles	People are given designed to serve a purpose. We are created to work, make things, extend God's kingdom authority in His world, and live in relationship with each other and Him. The Westminster Catechism of 1647 sums up our purpose by saying, "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and enjoy Him forever."	

### Calvary Murrieta's Statement of Faith on Family

Marriage is the union of one man and one woman who will live bound not by contract alone, but by a commitment in His love that should not be broken. We believe that men and women are opposite and equal to each other, and that marriage is before God, your family and all the main institutions of society, with a promise from each other to be loving, faithful, and true. The marriage union is a permanent promise that extends into the future.

•Gen. 2:18 | Gen. 1:24 | Mt .19:8 | Eph. 5:31

### LESSON FOUR: Man and Our Sin

NOTES	Calvary Murrieta's Statement of Faith on Family		
	We believe the family is unique in its ability to communicate many of the attributes of God. The family was created by God for the benefit of man and communicates the intimacy, nurturing, obedience, and permanency of the relationship that we have with God. Man was given stewardship over it and is the essential building block of human society.  •Gen. 2:24   Is. 54:5   Eph. 1:5		
	How would your chosen person for sharing the gospel perceive this?  Aim		
	Body and Soul  As God breathed life into humankind, we are created not with a body only but with an invisible soul. The Bible speaks of soul and spirit but seems to use the words interchangeably. We also speak of the mind and emotions and Christians differ on their interpretation of how human nature is organized. What is important for us to know is that we are not only physical and not only spiritual but both.  Know that our body and soul and mind are inextricably linked and will affect each other.		
Doodles	What are some implications of body and soul being connected?		

### Sin

In the next part of this lesson we will explore the doctrine of sin. Sin is bound up in the nature of Man, as we shall see, so it has been placed here in our class.

Sin is something that we need a foundational understanding of because it is something that we deal with, are surrounded by, and are corrupted by.

### LESSON FOUR: Man and Our Sin

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We act out sin, we think and feel sinful things, and we are sinful beings. To help understand how we are sinful in nature, we can think of a person sleeping. While they are not actively committing a sin, nor dwelling or thinking of sinful things, their very status is sinful. Wayne Grudem gives this definition for sin:

"Sin is any failure to conform to the moral law of God in act, attitude, or nature."

The definition of sin will become more clear as we proceed.

### Broken purpose

Adam was given rule and reign, dominion over the world. He was given authority over all of creation. When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, sin entered the world. This is where we must begin because it is in this very moment that life as God intended it ended. When God did His magnificent work of creation, He examined all that He did and declared that it was good. We can use the language that "everything was doing as it was created to do."

Everything was under Adam, he was the "head of the household" of all physically created things. When the head of the household made the decision to disobey God and rebel against Him, his decision affected all of those within the household. Adam's purpose was to reign as God's image-bearer, producing a world full of people in worshipful relationship with God.

Like a father and husband given leadership authority to relocate his family, Adam's decision relocated us into the enemy country as those who hate God. While that may not sound fair, it is actually a blessing in disguise as it is by this very same reasoning that we are able to be accepted into the household of Christ which will be discussed in another lesson.

When sin entered the world, everything stopped doing what it was supposed to do, it all became corrupted. Where things once glorified God, they blasphemed Him; once whole, now broken; once clean, now dirty; once for God, now against God.

God breathed life into humankind. Sin leads to death, and God promised that the day Adam and Eve ate of the tree they would die. Yet they didn't physically die that day, Adam ended up living for over 900 years! So what did God mean? In the very moment that they ate the fruit they became spiritually dead. Adam, who was not created with a sin nature, gained one and it has been passed to all of those after him.

So what is this sin nature? Sin nature is hard to define but easy to understand. It is the reason that, as Christians, even if we know something is wrong we are still drawn to or tempted by it. It is the innate desire within us against God and for ourselves.

The key to understanding sin nature is within the lies of the serpent in Eden: that Adam and Eve would "be like God." God does say that they became like Him when they chose to obey Him, but only in the sense

### LESSON FOUR: Man and Our Sin

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Doodles

that they knew good and evil. But sin seeks not to become like God but to overthrow Him and steal His throne. The chief purpose of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. But when sin entered the world, this aspect of our very nature was twisted and changed into glorifying and enjoying ourselves.

### Cause and Effect

Sometimes we think that something is wrong if it causes some harm. The world's moral standard is often that one should do what makes one happy as long as no one is hurt. We believe so-called "victimless crimes" are not crimes at all. In our legal system if someone attempts to kill another person and the person does not die, the perpetrator can be charged with only attempted murder. If the victim were to die from injuries even days later, the charge is upgraded to murder.

However, Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) that God looks not at the results of a sinful heart but at the heart itself. He says that not only is adultery a sinful act, the lust that precedes it is. Not only is murder a sin, the hate that leads to it is.

Sin is the status of our soul, not specific things we quibble over looking for loopholes, easy forgiveness, and ways we are not as bad as the people we've harmed.

Sin is not sin because of its effect but because of its cause.

Jeremiah 17:9

Slaves to Sin

The heart is deceitful above all things,

and desperately sick; who can understand it?

One of the terms that the Bible uses to describe those who are not yet saved is as a "slave to sin". This term perfectly describes our sin nature as one of bondage. Oftentimes people use the excuse that they don't want to become Christian because they like having freedom, but in actuality they have never known freedom. They do not have the strength to resist sin or temptation, they cannot do good. The heart's core motivation is for themselves. We see the true depth in this sinful perversion as we truly desired to be like God, for His very nature and core motivation is for Himself. It can be said that an unsaved person is like a wild animal. They may be able to be trained to a limited degree. They may become domesticated given enough time. But their instincts don't change. They are slaves to their desires and they act mostly off instinct. The only thing we can do apart from God is this; to indulge in our own passions and desires. There is no freedom in sin, for the only option is sin.

John 8:34

Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.

### LESSON FOUR: Man and Our Sin

# **NOTES**

**Doodles** 

Romans 6:20

For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness.

### Broken people, culture, and society

In Genesis 3:1-13 we see the profound change in human nature due to sin. Before they rebel against God, Adam and Eve are in perfect relationship with God and each other. After they rebel they immediately experience shame in that they know they are naked and seek to cover themselves and it drives a wedge between Adam and Eve. They experience fear for the first time when they hear God coming and try to hide. They experience guilt for the first time, realizing they have done something wrong and seeking to shift the blame onto others.

World cultures can be categorized according to these three paradigms of the human soul. While any culture has a mix of all three, one paradigm will stand out.

### Honor/Shame

•Identity comes from the group

Group goals are what is important

·Honor can be bestowed but not taken on oneself

•Social norms and rules are taught in environment, not written down

•One must hide what is shameful and not get caught

- •Shame must be deflected or distracted from, or, if this is impossible, one must face the full consequence of dishonor (up to exile or death).
  - Sees Jesus as taking our shame and giving us honor.

### Power/Fear

- Those in power determine social rules, but the rules do not necessarily apply to them
- •Those in power seek to stay in power but the rules change if the person in power changes
  - •One must align with the most powerful person
  - •One seeks to instill fear over others in order to gain power
- •There is a tendency to abuse those below since one cannot exert power over those above
  - •May involve a "benevolent dictator"
  - Sees Jesus as taking our fear and giving us power

### LESSON FOUR: Man and Our Sin

## **NOTES Doodles**

### Innocence/Guilt

- Rules and laws are very important and should be written down
   The needs of the individual outweigh the needs of the group
   Identity is individually formed
  - Legal rights, fairness, and consistency are highly valued
    Legal penalties deter bad behavior
    - •One desires to be found innocent at all costs
  - $\mbox{\ensuremath{}^{\bullet}}\mbox{\ensuremath{}^{Thinking}}$  tends to be critical, analytical, and cause-effect
    - One may separate legality from morality
  - Sees Jesus as taking our guilt and giving us innocence.

Sin affected the whole of society. It broke us as individuals and a society of fallen individuals is a broken society. We will discuss the world more in a later lesson but we must understand that sin is at the core of what is wrong with our society.

### A broken normal

This viewpoint on sin shows us something uniquely different and vastly more important than what we may normally assume. We can reason that if the world's natural state is sinful then bad things will naturally happen. In fact, we can ask a seemingly odd question: "If the world is evil and people are evil, why do good things happen?" and the answer is that good can only happen because of God. Good things can happen because it is part of His very nature.

We are continually surprised at how flawed we and everyone else are because our original design is to live in a good world. The fact that our existence is broken is both very normal to us and yet always seems to not be the way God intends.

The world is fallen and therefore the natural state is now a sinful state. Our reasoning also proves to be true if we take a look outside of the Bible and into our very world. People suffer and life is unfair. The most important aspects that dictate the path our lives will take happen without our control, consent, or will; those things being who our parents are, the DNA we have, and where we are born. When we see the world for what it is: fallen away from God's goodness into an evil state, we are in line with what Scripture teaches and we can better make sense of our world.

We sometimes ask, "If God is real, why don't we see Him work?" The answer is simple: God is working far more than we could ever think or comprehend. The fact that any good thing can happen is because of the grace and work of God. The fact that worse things don't happen is because of the grace and work of God. Our very existence proves two things, that God is actively working in our world, and that God has power and authority over evil.

### LESSON FOUR: Man and Our Sin

# **NOTES**

### Common Grace

We're not good but God is. In this lesson people are described in bleak terms. We may wonder then about the good that people do. Most people are not roaming around day and night committing acts of mayhem. They band together in crisis, give generously, and act kindly. How are we to understand these seemingly contradictory things about Mankind?

God created people in His image and we can do amazing things. We have intellectual capacity, emotional depth, and physical strength all given by God. He did not create us as horrendous zombies and in His grace He did not allow us to become so when we fell away from Him. We should see all people's capacity for good deeds as a grace from God. We call this "common grace": grace given by God to all people in how He designed them and in how He orchestrates things out of undeserved care for them.

However, we should not see those good deeds as redeeming souls. We cannot attempt to take away God's throne and then redeem ourselves by using our reign to help others or to politely invite them to sit on the throne as well. Good deeds do indeed help society but are often done out of a self-serving, self-saving, or self-governing heart.

The doctrine of common grace takes nothing away from the doctrine of sin. Instead it shows that even the good in our society is due to the goodness of God and not us.

<b>\P</b>

Aim

What evidence of common grace do you see in your chosen person or group? What do you think their motive for doing good

### **Doodles**

Sin is not something that is equally as powerful as God or His holiness. Sin is actually powerless in the presence of God. God did not create sin, nor does He author it. He does not cause it to happen. God cannot be tempted by sin, has not sinned and will not sin. A helpful analogy for sin and holiness is light and darkness. Light does not create darkness, rather it casts it out. A shadow is not formed because light is there, a shadow is formed because of an absence of light.

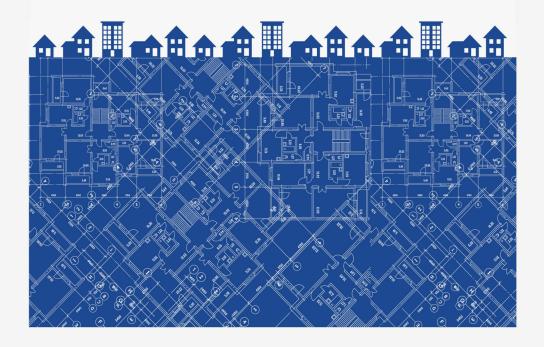
This is a heavy topic and you may be feeling the weight and the heaviness of sin. That's good. Don't undermine the gravity of sin because by making light of sin takes away the glory of God in what He had to do on the cross. ." Do not minimize sin because by doing so you directly minimize the grace of God. Yet do not focus only on sin because by doing so you insult the victory of Christ over sin. Only with an understanding of sin can we understand ourselves, our world, and the incredible grace of our God.

### FOUNDATIONS LESSON FOUR: Man and Our Sin

NOTES	In a future lesson we will see that because sin has marred our very nature and enslaved us, we need the only Free One who is divine and human, yet without sin, to come and trade natures with us, giving us a divine nature (II Peter 1:4) alongside our human one.			
	From Calvary Murrieta's Statement of Faith on Man			
	God created human beings male and female as His unique and crowning work of creation. By mankind's own choosing he rebelled against God and brought sin into the human race. The value, worth, and sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image, and in that Christ died for man; therefore we believe that every person possesses dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.			
	• Gen. 1:26,27   Rom. 5:12   Jn. 3:1			
	How does seeing the brokenness in our hearts and our society inform your personal learning question?  Aim			
	How do you personally respond to being told you are sinful?  Reflect			
Doodles				
	Genesis 1:27 Memory Verse  So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created			
	him: male and female He created them.			

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### LESSON FIVE:



## **NOTES Doodles**

In this lesson we will look at what it is to have Jesus as our Savior. Our salvation is not something we can get all by ourselves; Jesus gets it for us. Our salvation happens all at once when we come to trust Christ, but it also plays out over our lifetime. We will look at salvation in three stages: justification, sanctification, and glorification.

### **Justification**

### **Accounted Righteous**

When God justifies us He calls us right with Him. He puts righteousness in our account and views us as though we were always obedient. While He still works on the problems in our character (more on this in the sanctification section), the person who puts their total trust in Jesus is given a status of being right with God that never changes. The first example of this is Abraham but the same arrangement goes for us today: trusting belief is what God requires to make our account say "righteous." On the cross, Jesus said "It is finished," using a term meaning "paid in full." Not only is the punishment of our sin paid for by Jesus's sacrifice of Himself, He calls us righteous forever.

Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.

### Galatians 3:6

See also Rom. 4:3 and James 2:23

As a result of the anguish of His soul, He will see it *and* be satisfied; By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, As He will bear their iniquities.

### Isaiah 53:11

### Not of Us

The Bible repeatedly makes clear that our salvation is a gift from God and not something we can gain for ourselves. The Bible describes us as being dead before Christ gave us spiritual life. Nothing about our salvation is anything we can do for ourselves. A dead person cannot will themselves to life.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

### Ephesians 2:8-9

Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God.

### Ephesians 2:1-2

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We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith.

### Hebrews 12:2a

### Society and Individuals are not Good

When we learned about people and their sinfulness we saw that all individuals and all of society are wickedly bent against God and His ways. We saw that the reason society as a whole has so many problems is because it is made up of sinful individuals. We can even see mankind's evil show itself in the lives of the people described in the Bible. There are countless stories of people doing horrible things and refusing to follow God's ways with their whole hearts. When we examine our own hearts we come to see that we are prideful toward God, trying to have our way rather than His, and selfish toward others, trying to make sure we are taken care of and making life about us. This is discussed further in the lessons on Man and Our World.

### What we are saved from?

Damnation, Death, Separation from God

When the Old Testament talks about being saved it tends to mean being rescued from danger in this world. But when the New Testament talks about being saved (e.g. Matthew 1:21; Acts 2:21, 47) it means being rescued from spiritual death and punishment. While we still die when our bodies wear out, we are not.

Sin's Punishment, Power, and Presence

Another way to look at what we are saved from is to say that we are first saved from sin's punishment, then throughout our lives from its power over us, and when we die and enter God's presence, we are saved from sin's presence as it will no longer be a factor in our existence.

Self

We can also say that when we follow Christ we are saved from ourselves. Our natural inclination is to set ourselves up as the authority in our lives. We seek to have our way and to get glory for ourselves. But we will find that no one but God can fill that role. We will rule our lives and seek to rule in other people's lives in a tyrannical way. We even tyrannize ourselves! To be saved by Jesus is to be saved from our own brokenness in exchange for His perfect rule in our lives.

8	Would your understanding of your need for salvation differ from this in some way? How much has your culture fed into your
Reflect	idea of salvation?

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### The Great Exchange

God is holy and His nature defines good and evil (Is. 6:3; Ex.3:14). We try to define right and wrong according to what we think and want but we are not God. When Adam and Eve originally disobeyed God it was to try to take on His role and be like Him. But after rebelling against Him they become separated from Him and have a marred relationship with God and each other. Our sin separates us from a holy God (Rom. 5:10). Since we failed to be like God by taking His place, God came from His place to take ours (Philippians 2:6-8). Jesus lived the life of a man but did it better than any of us, being sinless and loving others completely. He represents God the Father to us and also represents us before the Father. Jesus went to the cross not only for us but as us. He represented us on the cross. Jesus takes on our identity as sinners to give us His identity as the Righteous One (II Cor. 5:21). We are given the righteous status of Christ, a standing of grace (Rom. 5:2). When we learned about our broken nature, we saw that world cultures fall into categories of one of three emphases: Honor/ Shame, Innocence/Guilt, and Power/Fear. Each has a human difficulty that we see enter our nature at the Fall.

Jesus, on the cross, exchanges our shame for His honor, our fear for His power, our guilt for His innocence. He exchanges His position for ours.

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

### 2 Corinthians 5:21

### What do we do to be saved?

As we saw above in this lesson, there is a sense in which we don't do anything to be saved, God does the saving. However, we are responsible to respond. The Bible talks about "obeying the gospel" (Rom. 10:16; II Thess. 1:8; I Pt. 4:17). How do you obey "good news"? You believe it and respond with action. Our belief of the gospel message becomes an action response when we:

- Believe (John 6:29). Believing in Christ is putting a desperate trust in Him to save us. For someone to be saved they do not need to understand everything about the Bible, but to believe that Jesus is all of who He says He is (John 6:29). We trust God first for salvation but still continue to be called to trust Him with all areas of our lives.
- Repent (Rom. 10:9-10). Repentance is the act of turning from my own
  way to follow the way of Christ. Our salvation comes when we first
  repent, but we also will have times throughout our life following Christ
  when we will need to turn back toward Him after straying away,
  whether in small or large ways.
- Confess (Rom. 10:9-10). Confession is declaring your faith in Christ openly, agreeing with God that you need His salvation, and letting others know of your new allegiance to Him. This does not mean that someone is not saved until they share with others about Jesus. Instead, it means that we acknowledge to the Lord our need for and faith in Him and are saved right away. Later, we do share with others also.

NOTES	Like belief and repentance, we confess our ne to be saved but will also continue to confess si God and trusted people in the church as our w
	Have you ever cast yourself at Jesus' in Him?  Reflect
	How do we show our salvation?
	<ul> <li>Baptism. Baptism is a way to show others to gone and God has made us new and that we follow Christ now. Baptism is a form of confort of our need for Christ. We are baptized not proclaim how Christ has made us new create.</li> <li>Works. Good works do not lead to salvation good works (Eph. 2:10). We live a life of refus and in us (Phil. 2:12; Col. 1:10; Matt. 3:8)</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Words. Our words show what is in our hear should be gracious (Col. 4:6).</li> </ul>
	• Character. Those who are saved are transful (Rom. 12:2) and God develops our character more like Christ (Gal. 5:22-23). More on this sanctification.
	Judge Not
Doodles	Only year of Cod law on the state of years he art

ed for Christ the first time n issues in our heart to alk with Christ continues.

feet with a desperate trust

- hat the old us is dead and e want to tell the world we ession since it tells others to be saved but to publicly tions (Rom. 6:4).
- n but salvation does lead to sponse to what God did for
- rts (Matt. 15:18). Our words
- formed into a new person er so that we are more and s in the section on

Only you and God know the state of your heart and sometimes we can even get confused ourselves and need God to show us where we stand. The matter of someone's salvation is not for us to judge. In fact, we are not judges, there is only one judge.

However, we do look for fruit in the lives of those claiming to be true followers of Christ. A truly transformed person will show love and gratitude for God's forgiveness by forgiving and loving others. They will serve others genuinely, without needing to be praised and thanked. They will look more and more like Jesus. Someone can go to church and live a good life and not have given their life to follow and be transformed by Jesus. We can look at what the Bible calls, "fruit" in someone's life. Jesus says that a good tree does not bear bad fruit and a bad tree does not bear good fruit (Mt. 7:17). While we all have bad days and even some longer times when we are not as in line with Christ, someone who really does not show the "fruit of the Spirit" (Gal. 5:22-23) may not be a true follower of Jesus. Just remember that ultimately it is not our place to judge their soul.

NOTES		ne, who gave the law, is the Judge. He alone has the power to sav o destroy. So what right do you have to judge your neighbor?
		<b>James 4:12</b> See also Matt. 7:1; 15:11,16-20
		Can we discern someone's salvation without passing judgment? In other words, how do we know if someone is saved?
	Discuss	
	Assura	ance of Salvation
	we know	the most difficult things that many Christians grapple with is how w if we are truly saved. When we talk about those who go I the motions and yet do not have a true saving faith in Jesus, we
	can bed several	come concerned that this may describe us as well. There are ways we can be assured of our salvation. Our assurance of in should be a mix of these things.
	By our l	ives

### **Doodles**

### By trust

you should consider why.

In one way, we have assurance of salvation by stepping back and believing what the Bible says. Jesus tells us that we must believe in Him (John 6:29, 14:6). Do you trust Christ and His promise of salvation to the point that you have stopped trying to be acceptable to Him and simply believed what He says? If you are still holding onto your doubt, your ways, your own goodness, or even what you can see, you are not fully committed in faith in Christ. Trusting what the Bible says is extremely simple and extremely difficult. But we can rest assured in what is written in the black and white for us in Scripture.

God is a person and when we get to know Him more and more we are changed. Our mind, words, and actions are transformed. When we are renewed by God we will see His work in our lives and others should see

it as well. The longer we follow Him, the more we will see His faithfulness, answers to prayer, and changing of our character and perspective. If no one else sees the change Christ has made in your life,

### By the Spirit

Romans 8:16 says, "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." This means that God the Holy Spirit lives in us and assures us that we are indeed God's children because He has grace for us. As we live with the Lord, we get to know His voice which affirms our relationship with Him. If you are in doubt about your salvation, ask the Lord to speak to you.

### LESSON FIVE: Salvation

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	Doodles	

### By the resurrection

The Bible never asks for empty belief. Jesus' resurrection is proof to us that we also will not be demolished by death but have eternal life with God to look forward to. See the appendix for reasons why we can believe in the resurrection of Christ. The resurrection is our way of seeing that "salvation works". Otherwise, Jesus would simply have died and we would have no hope when we look at our own death.

But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.

I Corinthians 15:20

The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God

Romans 8:16

### What we are saved for

Relationship with God

We are saved to have a relationship with God. The Bible classifies people as either in rebellion against God and trying to have their own way (even if their way appears well-behaved) or children of God. While anyone who knows children knows that they are not always obedient, we are given a relational status with God the Father. We are made to be His children who can always approach Him and get to know Him more and more.

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both

have access in one Spirit to the Father. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

**Ephesians 2:13-22** 

## **NOTES Doodles**

### Unity with the Church

By becoming God's children, we are siblings with each other in the church. All of us have been forgiven and must forgive one another. All of us have a special design and purpose and must serve one another in love. We will discuss these things further in the lesson on the church.

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

### Ephesians 4:1-7

### Good Works

The word "sanctification" means to set something aside for a special purpose. Part of God's sanctifying of us is giving us new purpose in Him. God will use your personality and experiences along with His Spirit empowering you to have a purpose for the good of others. This is also a way that we get to know God better: by living a life of sacrificial love like Christ lived, we experience Christ's heart more clearly and become more like Him.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

### Ephesians 2:10

- Sanctification is the ongoing process in a believer of becoming more like Christ.
- Sanctification is the constant deepening of our relationship with God and our knowledge of Him. Because we have already become like Christ in our standing of righteousness, we go through a process of being made like Him in our character.
- Sanctification is our calling (I Thess. 4:3; Eph. 2:10).

"In efficacious grace we are not merely passive, nor yet does God do some and we do the rest. But God does all and we do all. God produces all, we act all. For that is what produces, viz. our own acts. God is the only proper author and fountain; we only are the proper actors. We are in different respects, wholly passive and wholly active."

### -Jonathan Edwards

### **LESSON FIVE: Salvation**

NOTES	Do you tend to be overly active in your sanctification and not letting God do His work or overly passive, failing to be part of the process?
	New Creation  When we are saved, we are saved from being who we were. We are made a new creation and the old us is dead and gone. This is why Jesus says we must be "born again" (John 3:3, see also I Pt. 1:3). We begin to love a new, full life that will last forever, but we don't wait until we die (John 10:10). We become human in a whole new way, by having a divine nature alongside our human nature (II Pt. 1:4). God takes our personality and gives us a new purpose; making us a new version of ourselves. So being redeemed by Jesus means that we are made new in ways beyond our own power.
	Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.  II Corinthians 5:17
	"Lord and Savior"  Throughout the Bible, God is called our "Lord and Savior" (Is. 43:11; 45:21; 49:26; 60:16; Hos. 13:4; Lk. 2:11; Phil. 3:20; II Pt. 1:11; 2:20; 3:2, 18). When we are saved we will relate to Him as both of these things in our lives. Without Christ, we will try to make someone or something else our lord and savior.
Doodles	What does it mean to have Jesus as our Lord and Savior?  Discuss

The Kingdom

two things:

The Bible often speaks of the gospel (the good news) in terms of the Kingdom. But what does that mean? Throughout the Bible's storyline, God is working to establish godly leadership over His people. The problem is that human rulers are human, and therefore are flawed by sin. Ultimately, the King we need is God Himself (Ps. 5:1-2; 11:4). Part of the good news of the gospel is the announcement that a righteous King has come and we can live under His loving rule. When Jesus talks about His Kingdom, it means

### **LESSON FIVE: Salvation**

NOTES	In the present: Living under the way of Jesus and helping others find and live under His loving authority.  In the future: Jesus will come again and rule completely over all the world. Putting our trust in Him as Lord and Savior allows us into His Kingdom now and also in the future.		
	For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.  II Peter 1:11		
	Redemptive Suffering		
	For the person who does not follow Christ, suffering may teach some life lessons and the Lord may use it to show them their need for Him. But for the believer, suffering is to be expected (John 16:33), rejoiced over (James 1:2); endured (I Cor. 13:7). Trials produce Christlike character and are a part of our sanctification process (James 1:3-4; Rom. 5:3-4.)		
	It is important to remember that for the believer, God will allow suffering in our lives sometimes to discipline us as a loving Father must (Heb. 12:7). We cannot assume that suffering is from God's anger and punishment (John 9:1-3; Luke 13:4).		
	As followers of Christ we can expect to follow Him in suffering (Matt. 16:24; Rom. 8:17). We are a "living sacrifice" (Rom. 12:1)		
	How does suffering play a role in our sanctification process?  Discuss		
Doodles			
	What are some ways God has used suffering to mold you?  Reflect		

### Healing

We all have pain in our lives. Part of being sanctified is that God begins to heal our emotional wounds. He helps us forgive those who have hurt us, gain new perspectives on our troubles, and use our experiences to better connect with and help others. God transforms our pain by making it part of His meaningful purposes in our lives.

NOTES	Need for Community
	Justification happens between you and God alone. It is an individual matter. But sanctification happens in the church community. You need the church and the church needs you. What part does community play in our sanctification process?
	Reflection: we get to know ourselves most fully when we know how we reflect God and affect others.
	Accountability: we find healing as the church speaks the truth in love.
	Learning: We can experience and obey God's word only in relationship.
	Opportunity: We are molded by the community when we use our gifts to serve the church.
	Identity: We identify with Christ when we identify with His church body.
	Who in your life do you have fellowship with to the extent that they play a role in your sanctification? If you don't have a relationship like that, what is a step you could take toward forming one?
Doodles	"We know all too well that maturity takes time. We know less well that it also takes our sisters and brothers in Christ. It's a process that is revealed in the 'each other' language of the New Testament: Love one another,
	forgive each other, regard each other more highly than yourselves. Teach and correct each other, encourage each other, pray for each other, and bear each other's burdens. Be friends with one another, kind, compassionate, and generous in hospitality. Serve one another and submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. This list just scratches the sur-
	for a but it is amount to remind up that we need the community of faith to

grow up in Christ."

-Howard Macy

## **NOTES Doodles**

### **Keys to Sanctification**

Humility and submission are two of the most important attributes that a Christian must have. In fact, they must become a state of our spirits. Humility recognizes that we need a Savior; submission puts us under His care and training. Humility and Submission are so closely tied together that they are two parts of the same thing.

### Humility

We can act or be humble in action without having a spirit of humility, but you can never have a spirit of humility that doesn't act in humility. Having a spirit of humility comes from acknowledging that God is who He says He is. It grows by having a personal relationship with God. Having a spirit of humility comes from being confident in our identity in Christ. When we come to know our identity in Christ, we are humble without being humiliated (Ps. 34:5). We learn to carry ourselves as children of God Himself which allows the confidence that comes from knowing our value and royal status.

"Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less."

- C.S. Lewis

If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

John 13:14

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

### Philippians 2:5-8

"Knowing whose you are, who you are, and what you are for, settles basic issues about how you live."

-Sinclair B. Ferguson

### Submission

True obedience is a matter of the heart which is submitted to Christ. Anyone can make an outward show of obedience but it must come from a place of submission to be genuine.

Having a spirit of submission can only come after having a spirit of humility. It requires acknowledging that we need God, and then handing over our life to Him.

### **LESSON FIVE: Salvation**

NOTES	<ul> <li>Rely on the Spirit instead of yourself for strength</li> <li>Allow God to be in control of your life</li> <li>Accept the promises of God such as "My yoke is easy and my burder is light."</li> <li>Changing in Christ flows from humility and submission. It is something we have to strive to keep at the forefronts of our minds so that we can remain with a spirit of humility and submission. The more we say no to the Holy Spirit, the easier it becomes. Likewise, the more we say yes to Him, the easier that becomes.</li> </ul>		
	How surrendered are you to God? What is something you are holding back?		
	Once a Sinner?		
	One of the greatest difficulties the follower of Christ faces is the question of what it means that we still sin after salvation. Some say that if we would only try hard enough we can live without any sin. In Romans 7:13-25 Paul expresses his inner turmoil over his sinful tendency to rebel against wha he knows God would have him do.		
	While we are already saved from the penalty of sin when we are justified and are being saved from the power of sin as we are sanctified, it will not be until we are glorified that we are saved from the very presence of sin.		
Doodles	The Bible does not call the follower of Christ a sinner, but rather a saint. While this does not mean that we no longer commit acts of rebellion against God, it means that we have been given a status as holy, righteous children of God. But as saints, we live separated to God's purposes which do not include sin. We still struggle against sin. Every Christian will have a different set of sins that are particularly difficult. Yours may not be the same as someone else's. The point should be that we strive to be like Christ and participate in His work to change us from the inside out.		
	Keep in mind that because of the believer's justification, our sins do not mean that we are at risk of God's wrath (Rom. 5:9), although He may discipline us (Heb. 12:6). While the Bible instructs us in righteousness (II		

Tim. 3:16), Jesus defends us when we sin (I Jn. 2:1).

Reflect \_

What areas of sin have been the most prevalent in your life? How are you struggling for obedience in these areas?

### **LESSON FIVE: Salvation**

NOTES	How Ca	n I Grow as a Christian?	
	Growing in Christ is a lifelong journey. There is no magic button to grow spiritually; it takes hard work, painful sacrifice, multiple disciplines, and the transforming work of God. Here are general ways we can grow—you will need to seek out the specifics for your life:  Connect with church community Get to know God in the Bible Spend time in prayer Serve others Endure suffering Take in Christian teaching Remember that these are ways to grow, not ways to be more accepted by God, which is taken care of already by Jesus.		
	Discuss	How much can we do in our lives to become more like Christ?  Are there other things you would add to this list?	
	Reflect	What is most difficult for you to understand or accept about what we've learned about sanctification?	
Doodles	Aim	Do you tend to try to change the behavior of the person or group you want to reach with the gospel? Why or why not?	

## **NOTES Doodles**

### Glorification

God gives us a status of honor when we are justified. We are welcomed into His presence and His family. Subsequently, in our sanctification, we are made more like Jesus and therefore more honorable and glorious. Our glory, like Jesus' while He was on earth, does not come in the form of making ourselves look great but in humble service. After we die our souls enter God's presence and we receive the glory God has waiting for us. This comes in the form of a further change to our nature (I Jn. 3:2).

### Seeing God as He is

- Our salvation has come as we believed Jesus is who He says He is and we became righteous children of God.
- Our sanctification comes as we more clearly see who He is and become like Him.
- Our glorification will come as we see Him as He is and are made like Him (I John 3:2).

We could say that justification is the initial coming to know or meet God, believing He is who He says He is and responding in trust. Sanctification is getting to know God as we see Him work throughout our souls, lives, relationships, and world. Glorification is knowing God more intimately than we ever imagined.

Dear friends, we are already God's children, but He has not yet shown us what we will be like when Christ appears. But we do know that we will be like Him, for we will see Him as He really is.

### 1 John 3:2

For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

### 1 Corinthians 13:12

### Coming Alive

We are dead in our sins until we are "born again" (Jn. 3:3), "regenerated" by God (Titus 3:5), made alive in Christ (Eph. 2:5). This happens at our justification. Christ gives us fullness of life (Jn. 10:10), allowing us to come alive and live a more and more meaningful life. We should consider our old self dead since we are a new creation (II Cor. 5:17). Now we are "dead to sin and alive to God (Rom. 6:11). In fact, we are given a divine nature alongside our human nature (II Pt. 1:4). We look to Jesus' resurrection to show us that we, like Him, can live again (I Cor. 15:20). When we die our soul will continue to live with the Lord (II Cor. 5:8) and one day when He

### **LESSON FIVE: Salvation**

NOTES	that we	He will resurrect our bodies to be joined again with our souls so live again on a renewed earth (I Cor. 15:42). We could say that we id before Christ makes us spiritually alive, we live more fully in until we are made to live again forever. Se I Cor. 15 and I Thess. 4.
	Reflect	What are some things about you that have changed since you began following Jesus?
	Reflect	What is something in your life right now that you are capable of changing to be more like Christ? What is something in your character you need God to change in you?
	For his childre togethe share h	Memory Verse  Spirit joins with our spirit to affirm that we are God's  n. And since we are his children, we are his heirs. In fact, er with Christ we are heirs of God's glory. But if we are to his glory, we must also share his suffering. Yet what we suffer hothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later.
Doodles		


### LESSON SIX:



LESSON SIX: Church

NOTES	

**Doodles** 



Read

In this lesson we will look at what the Bible teaches about the Church. We will discuss the dynamics of applying biblical principles in different church contexts and learn about Calvary Murrieta's mission, vision, and values as a local church.

### The Beginning of the Church

Although we learn much from the lives and events described in the Old Testament, it is important to understand that the Church did not exist during this time. Likewise, while Jesus spoke at times about the Church before it really was in place, the Church was founded at the Day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came to the disciples of Jesus. They quickly began forming church communities. The Church's story began with the Holy Spirit empowering and guiding believers to, as a family, reach global cultures with the Gospel and this continues today.

The book of Acts gives the story of the early church expanding from Jews to Gentiles, and from Jerusalem to Rome.

### Definitions:

<u>Church:</u> The community of all true believers around the world and throughout time.

<u>Local church:</u> A community of believers taking spiritual responsibility for one another under the headship of Christ, the power of the Spirit, and godly servant leaders.

<u>Denomination:</u> A collective of local churches sharing doctrine and leadership.

\*Note: When "Church" is capitalized, we mean the whole Church around the world and throughout history. When it is not capitalized we are referring to a local church community.

### The Spiritual Definition of the Church

- A spiritual community (Matthew 16:18)
   "Church" in Greek is ekklesia, meaning community
- Family of Faith (Galatians 6:10)
- Body of Christ (Romans 12:5)
- Bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:25; Revelation 19:7)
- Temple of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:19)

### LESSON SIX: Church

## **NOTES Doodles**

### Principles vs. Practices

- The Bible gives us much of the principles of God's church but little in terms of practice. There is much freedom given in how to apply the principles given to us in scripture.
- Church transcends/crosses time and place (culture). The principles of a biblical church will be and have been practiced differently depending on time and place but the principles should always line up with the Bible.
- We must learn to ask, "Is this practice wrong or just different?" and, "How would someone from a different culture apply this?"
- We look to Jesus to see how He lives out and teaches a principle rather than assuming we understand it or looking to our culture to define it for us.

What is an example of a biblical principle that may be applied in various practices?

Discuss

What is an example of a principle that Jesus would define very differently from our culture's definition?

Discuss

### Variety in the Church

The Church has a variety of:

Styles

- People and cultures
- Strengths and weaknesses
- Ministries and spiritual giftings
- Passions and priorities

### The Body of Christ

The Church is often called "the body of Christ" or just "the body". This is because each individual has a function as part of the whole (like parts of a body). Also, Jesus is not on earth anymore but He lives in the Church and we are His "hands and feet" to the world.

NOTES	
Reflect	What is your particular passion? Does it promote the life of the church? Do you appreciate other people's passions as well?
whole or a hi Minist: Churc with a	se the local church is a community it must serve the needs of the body. A local church cannot serve only a certain type of person ghly specific need (e.g. homelessness, education, or missions). ries that exist to serve one particular group or need of the h are called parachurch organizations. A church can partner parachurch organization for mutual help but a church is a unity and cannot be limited to serving one specific need.
Discus	What should a church consider when including something as a ministry?
<b>Doodles</b> Majo	r and Minor
Remer interp we all should taken	mber that we are all one Church but we will disagree on certain retations of things the Bible says. Some things are so important must agree on them while others may be seen differently and dn't divide us. Calvary Murrieta's Statement of Faith should be as our church's description of major teachings we ask all in ry servant-leadership to agree upon.
Discus	What is an example of a major issue upon which we must agree? What is an example of a minor issue we can disagree on?

# **NOTES**

**Doodles** 

### What makes a healthy church?

- Proper doctrinal teaching •
- Proper use of sacraments
- Proper use of discipline
- Genuine worship
- Effective prayer
- Effective witness
- Effective fellowship
- Spiritual power
- Biblical church government
- Holy lives of members
- Care for the poor
- Love for Christ

From Wayne Grudem's Systematic Theology

### Sacraments

Sometimes called "ordinances"

 Outward representations of inner grace (represent and show changes God made in our lives because of a change in status with Him).

### Communion

- Commemorates Christ's sacrifice for us and making a new covenant of faithfulness with us.
- Identifies us with Christ.
- Symbolizes receiving Christ as our Bread of Life (spiritual food that truly sustains and satisfies).
- Reminds us of our spiritual blessings in Christ
- Done over and over.

### 1 Corinthians 11:26

For every time you eat this bread and drink this cup, you are announcing the Lord's death until he comes again.

### **Baptism**

- Represents our figurative death with Christ and rising as a new creation.
- Identifies us with Christ and the church.
- Done once.

### Matt. 28:19

Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

# **NOTES**

**Doodles** 

### **Gifts**

Christ's people are driven by the Holy Spirit. While all people have talents, abilities, and skills, and you had these before you came to Christ, God gives spiritual abilities to His Church. These may change in a person, be short or long-term, and different people will have different ones. They are mysterious even to those who have them. We should ask God to give us whatever gift He will. Remember that they are always for the purpose of serving the Church.

### Gifts described in the Bible:

- **Apostleship** (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11): Originally meaning "sent ones". Refers to the special ministry of founding the church given to the 12 apostles from Jesus.
- **Prophecy** (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:10; 14:1–40; Eph. 4:11): the ability to speak from God on the future or present.
- Miracles (1 Cor. 12:28) and Healings (vv. 9, 28, 30): abilities to
  do things otherwise impossible. These are linked here because
  it seems that after Jesus, the only miracles that carried on were
  those for healing purposes.
- Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues (1 Cor. 12:10): The
  ability to speak in or interpret a language one has not learned in
  order to either communicate with God in a special manner or to
  speak things to the church, showing God's power.
- **Evangelism** (Eph. 4:11): Ability to connect the message of God with those who do not have the Spirit of God in them.
- Lead/Shepherd/Pastor (Eph. 4:11): The ability to disciple others to follow Christ in their lives.
- Serving (Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:12): The ability to help others in a broad sense.
- Teaching (Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11): The ability to connect the things of God to those who lack understanding of Him.
- **Faith** (1 Cor. 12:9): The ability over and above the measure of faith held by all believers to trust God.
- Exhortation (Rom. 12:8): The ability to encourage, stir, comfort, or admonish the church.

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#### Spiritual Gifts

Holy Spirit-given abilities for communing with God and serving the Church. E.G. Speaking in tongues

#### Natural Gifts or Strengths

Broad ways you tend to function best in your world; capabilities you will apply in any given situation in which you find yourself. E.G. Learning

#### **Abilities**

General talents you are born with. E.G. Learning languages

#### Skills

Specific capabilities that must be learned and practiced.

E.G. Speaking French

## **Differing Views**

As with some other areas of biblical teaching, the subject of spiritual gifts is one of some disagreement within the Church. Part of this is due to the fact that the Bible does not give us a great amount of information on spiritual gifts. Part of it is because anything to do with the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives will be difficult for us to neatly organize and understand. Also, because some churches have gone so far to one side that they believe that while the Spirit may indwell believers, it is the Scripture alone that God uses to shape our lives and give us wisdom and power. Others on the other end of the spectrum will trade in biblical teaching for an "experience of the Holy Spirit" that may be only subjective, emotional, or against biblical teaching.

One part of the controversy is the question of whether or not the Holy Spirit still acts in these ways in our day or if the Bible is merely describing a way He acted in believers at the time of the Bible's writing. At Calvary Murrieta we teach the gifts as still active today but we see a great need to interpret them only in the light of what the Bible teaches about them, to not see something as coming from the Holy Spirit that disagrees with the Bible, harms the church community, glorifies ourselves, is done for profit, implies we direct God's power or sovereignty, or does not exhibit the fruit of the Spirit outlined in Galatians.

#### Natural or Supernatural

- Some spiritual giftings are more practical or "down-to-earth" and some more miraculous. However, just as there is a constant unifying of divine and human, cosmic and concrete, the gifts of the Holy Spirit overlap in their natural and supernatural character.
- Spiritual gifts are different from talents, abilities, or skills.
- While all people have natural abilities, only all believers have spiritual gifts.
- Spiritual gifts do not depend on specific circumstances or a job or role.
- All are for the blessing of the Church.
- There is a variety of gifts in the Church.
  - No one believer has all the gifts.
  - We need each other's gifts and should celebrate them without jealousy or insecurity.

# LESSON SIX: Church

# **NOTES**

**Doodles** 

## Unity in the Church

The Bible constantly teaches that we must strive for unity in the Church. This applies both within a local church and among the universal Church of true believers.

Preferences and priorities differ. Your personal styles and passions will not be the same as others' in your church. If there is an area you find yourself desiring to change, God may be putting that area on your heart to get involved in service. While everyone should find their place in serving their church community, not all should serve in the same way. Don't let this be a block to unity.

#### I Cor. 1:10

I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions in the church. Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose.

#### I Cor. 12:26-27

If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad. All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.

## Some things to keep in mind:

- Every Christian is at a different place in a race.
- Every Christian is different
- Followers of Christ are not Christ, therefore we are all imperfect.
- Some of us are weird.
- Some in the church are not true believers.
- Unity must be fought for.
- Jesus gives us His plan for church conflict resolution in Matthew 18.

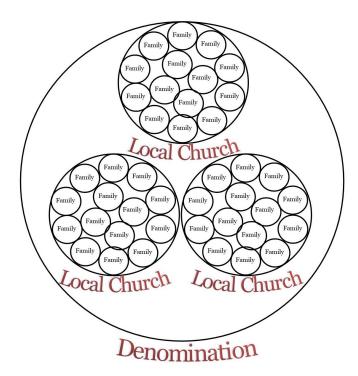
#### The Household of Faith: the Church as family

The model the Bible uses for the church is not one of a business, social club, government, school, or other institution. The family is the model of the church and it may be said to be a family of families or an extended "clan".

# **NOTES Doodles**

Therefore, whenever we have the opportunity, we should do good to everyone—especially to those in the family of faith.

#### Galatians 6:10



# Servant Leadership in the Church

The Bible describes two primary divisions of authority in a church. These are defined and operate differently based on the particular structure of any given denomination or local church. These responsibilities are usually function in more complex ways than two distinct categories. Every local church should have godly, biblical leaders who take responsibility for the needs of the church community.

**Elder:** responsible to provide oversight. Teaches and guides the church spiritually. Some churches consider a pastor to be an elder, other churches see elders as spiritual leaders who come alongside pastors but who are not themselves ordained.

**Deacon:** responsible to provide spiritual service. Generally, assists elders in practical care for people through ministries.

NOTES	
Doodles	

Servant leadership is Christ's model for the church. But the leaders are not the only ones who serve. We all are part of the family and we should:

receive what we need: you are responsible to make your needs known or to take advantage of what your church offers you.

#### and

 give what we have: you have something to offer your church community and being part of it means participating in serving in some way.

"Basic to Christian life, whether of leaders or other Christians, is service. To be a Christian is to minister, and that means "to serve".

-James Boyce

8	What can you do for your church?
Reflect	

#### The "One-Anothers"

These are some simple things the Bible tells us to do to or for one another in the church.

- •Love (John 13:34-35)
- •Serve (Galatians 5:13)
- •Bear burdens (Galatians 6:2)
- •Forgive (Ephesians 4:31-32)
- •Confess to (James 5:16)
- Comfort (I Thessalonians 4:18)

#### The Global Church

- While each has many sub-divisions, the largest church designations are Catholic, Protestant, and Orthodox.
- Each of these types of churches contributes certain things to the global church and our understanding of the Gospel.
- Each type of church may present certain challenges to people having faith in Christ.

LESSON SIX: Church

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**Doodles** 

 Each of the three main churches see themselves as the closest inheritor of the earliest church in Acts. But the goal of the Church is not to go back to the first century but to the past but to go out to the world.

#### Marks of Evangelicalism

A church like ours is an "evangelical" church. This term is used in different ways but we will define it along the following lines:

- Belief that the Bible is God's inspired word to us.
- Belief that God invites us to have a personal relationship with Him
- Belief that each person must have their own faith in Christ for salvation.
- Belief that the Church must share the Gospel so that others may be saved.

Perhaps the two summary differences between evangelicals and other Christians are:

- Belief in the priesthood of all believers (only Jesus makes us able to approach the Father - we do not need a human intercessor).
- Belief in the authority of scripture over tradition (we look to the Bible as our unchanging guide rather than to historical church leaders).

#### The Invisible Church

How are we to make sense of the idea that the global Church is one church and yet we sometimes discuss other churches almost as though they are of a different faith? How do we make sense of people we meet in our own local church that may not show any fruit of a relationship with Christ?

Remember that our definition of the Church is all true believers for all time. As we learned in a previous lesson that we are saved through faith in Christ, anyone in any church who has faith in Christ is part of the global Church.

We use the term "invisible church" which means the true believers in Christ inside any given church organization or version of Christianity.

 Not all in a church truly have faith in Christ and not all in a given church do not.

# LESSON SIX: Church

# **NOTES**

**Doodles** 

- Which church one belongs to is not the definition of salvation, faith in Christ is.
- We cannot judge individual souls

#### Ephesians 4:5-6

There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all.

#### Hebrews 12:23

You have come to the assembly of God's firstborn children, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God himself, who is the judge over all things. You have come to the spirits of the righteous ones in heaven who have now been made perfect.

#### The Global, Persecuted Church

#### Some facts:

- More Christians were martyred in the 20th century than in all other centuries combined [christianity.com]
- It is claimed that 105,000 Christians are martyred for their faith each year [Deseret News, 2011]
- Currently over 100 million Christians are being persecuted worldwide [Reuters, 2013]

You can learn about your persecuted family members from:

- Voice of the Martyrs: persecution.com
- International Christian Concern: persecution.org
- Open Doors International: opendoors.org

Our church has a group that prays together every Saturday specifically for the persecuted Church.

Remember those in prison, as if you were there yourself.

Remember also those being mistreated, as if you felt their pain in your own bodies.

Hebrews 13:3

# LESSON SIX: Church

NOTES	
	As a believer, we need to be helping others move forward in their walk with Christ, teaching them to look to Him and, in turn, training others to follow Christ. This functions on an individual, group, and even national level (Titus 2:3-6; Mt. 28:19). As we've seen in the
	Great Commission lesson, a believer can disciple a non-believer toward Christ or disciple a believer to follow Christ more fully.  When we begin our walk with Christ we tend to focus primarily on ourselves and our wants and needs. But as we grow in Christ we become ready to help another person in their walk with Christ.  Discipling another person is a mark of maturity as a Christian.
	The process of discipleship can look many different ways and as long as we are accomplishing its purpose we shouldn't argue over methods.
	Discipleship: the ongoing process of pursuing a relationship with others and helping them follow the leading of Jesus as Lord and His command to make disciples themselves.
	How might you go about discipling someone? Is there someone you have an opportunity to disciple?  Reflect
Doodles	Our Local Church

As part of Calvary Murrieta, you should know what we are about.

To know us, you need to know our heart. You must understand our mission, which is who we aim to be, and our motto, which are a sim-

You also need to know our vision which looks out into the future and defines what we want to be; it's our aspiration and goals. And finally you must know what we value, which is how we desire to live; things we'll be intentional about; our principles and standards; it's our DNA.

plified set of rules we aspire to live by.

# LESSON SIX: Church

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**Doodles** 

#### **Mission**

- To love God completely
- To love people authentically
- To make disciples globally

#### Motto

- To live the Great Commandment (Mark 12:28-34)
- To fulfill the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20

#### Vision

- We see a united body of worshipers enjoying God, loving unconditionally, giving freely, and attracting their neighbors to Jesus
- We see disciples making disciples in sustainable national churches around the world
- We see the Father enjoying the passionate worship of His people.

#### **Values**

- Instruction: Experiencing God as we believe, read, share and live His Word
- Participation: Encouraging all believers to discover and use their unique ministry gifts
- Character: Honoring God as our character is transformed resulting in genuine fruit
- Stewardship: Serving God with generous hearts as we invest our time, talent, and treasure in building His kingdom
- Relationship: Encountering God as we center our affections on Christ, sharing His grace and mercy with all people

Reflect	Which part of our church Mission, Vision, Motto, and Values are you most passionate about and/or capable of moving us forward in? Which part is hardest for you to get behind and/or help with?

NOTES	
NOILO	From Calvary Murrieta's Statement of Faith
	The Church
	The church is both local and Universal. The Universal Church is the community of all true believers for all time. The local church is a faith filled community of worshipers who are united as an intentional community of disciples who are learning and living out the gospel together.
	• Acts 2:42   Heb. 10:25   Eph. 5:25   Rev 5:9,10   Heb. 12:23
	Baptism
	Baptism is the public declaration of a believer's faith, pursuing obedience to the teachings of Jesus, and sharing in Christ's burial and resurrection. We believe it symbolizes death to your old life and announces your new life in Christ, which celebrates your inclusion into God's family.
	• Mt. 28:19   Acts 8:36-38   Rom. 6:3,4
	Communion
	The bread and cup of Communion is remembered and celebrated when we look back to Jesus' life, death, burial, and resurrection. We look inward by examining our own heart in light of the cross, and look forward to drinking the cup new with Him in His Father's Kingdom.
	• 1 Cor. 11:23-26   Lk. 22:17-19   Mt. 26:29
Doodles	
Dodies	Visit persecution.org/take-action/ and find a persecution situation to pray for or a letter to write.
	Take a prayer request from class and pray for it this week.  Do
	What do you expect from your church?  Reflect

# **LESSON SIX: Church**

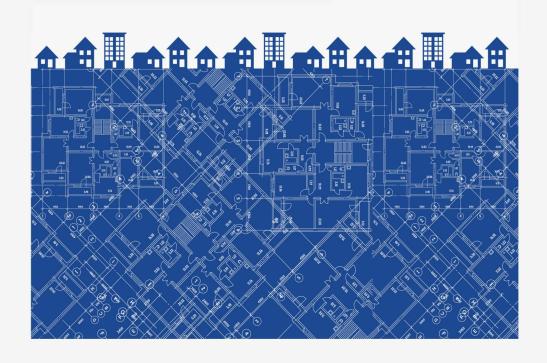
NOTES	
Discus	What should we do when our church doesn't meet our expectations?
Aim	How does the person you want to share with perceive the Church? What would help them connect to a church?
Doodles	Does your experience with church factor in to your personal learning question? How?
I Co	Memory Verse rinthians 12:26-27

If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad. All of you together are Christ's

body, and each of you is a part of it.

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# LESSON SEVEN: WORSHIP AND PRAYER



# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

NOTES	

**Doodles** 



Read

In Lesson Seven we studied the Church. In this lesson we will look closer at an aspect of the life of the Church, worship. We often think of worship as only the act of singing praise to God but it is much broader than that.

Worship is all the activities of the Church community, anything we organize ourselves to do in order to glorify God. Ultimately, the life we live following and serving Christ is a life of worship. We can and should live in such a way that we are worshiping God every day.

- Worship is an encounter with the living and holy God (Ex. 3:1–6)
- Worship is reserved for God alone (Ex. 34:14)
- In worship, we ascribe to the Lord the glory due him (Ps. 29:1–2)
- We can worship because of Christ's sacrifice on our behalf (Heb. 10:1-10)
- We should worship with reverence for God (Heb. 12:28)
- When we draw near to God, he draws near to us (James 4:8)
- Worship honors God for who He is and what He does (Dt. 10:21)
- Worship brings us to God's presence (Ps. 100:2,4)
- Worship takes us outside ourselves (I Pt. 4:10)
- Worship brings us together (Ps. 122:1)

"The inner essence of worship is to know God truly and then respond from the heart to that knowledge by valuing God, treasuring God, prizing God, enjoying God, being satisfied with God above all earthly things. And then that deep, restful, joyful satisfaction in God overflows in demonstrable acts of praise from the lips and demonstrable acts of love in serving others for the sake of Christ."

-John Piper

# Worship in the Old Testament

In the Old Testament, God told the people where, when, and how He expected them to relate to Him in worship. He did this through the Law given to the Jews through Moses (in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy).

The reason the Old Testament Law for Israel covered life in sometimes exacting detail is that all aspects of one's life are a response to who God is.

# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

NOTES
Doodles

Worship is the proper response to who God is, therefore, all aspects of life involve worship. The Law described what worship was proper, therefore the Law involved all aspects of one's life. The heart of the Law was to spell out how love for God and one another should play out in everyday situations. The Law was given in the Wilderness as God took His people out of Egypt to begin forming them from being only His chosen people to being the people who reflected Him to all other peoples.

God's people were to show the nature of their God through the lives they lived and the organization of their community. Their worship was their witness.

The Old Testament commands are summarized in the Ten Commandments. These can be divided into commands about a proper relationship with God and with others.

In the New Testament, Jesus and Paul say that all the commandments (and even all the Old Testament) can be summarized in these two:

- Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength (Deut. 6:5; Matt. 22:37).
- Love your neighbor as yourself (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:39; Rom. 13:8-10).

The core of the Law of God is to rightly relate to Him by rightly relating to others. This is the meeting place of Law and worship.

All of our lives as followers of Christ can be brought under the banner of worship to Lord and our lives and communities witness to the world. Because we do not follow the structure of the Old Testament Law that outlines lives for us, we are moved by the Holy Spirit and guided by the New Testament to live lives of worshipful obedience. But the principle that all of our lives can be worship remains the same.

So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 10:31

If we looked at the context of this verse, we would see that it isn't talking only about doing all small things as an act of worship to God, but to worry less about fleeing the effects of the world and more about making choices based on faith for the good of the Christian community.

# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

NOTES	In the Old Testament, when Israel's king Saul made a sacrifice to God that was outside the way God had prescribed, the prophet Samuel confronted Saul, saying,
	1 Samuel 15:22  "What is more pleasing to the LORD: your burnt offerings and sacrifices or your obedience to his voice Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice, and submission is better than offering the fat of rams."
	Likewise, Jesus tells His then Jewish listeners that they should wait to bring an offering to the Lord if they had a broken relationship with someone they could proactively be restored with.
	Matthew 5:23–24 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.
	Worship is a matter of relationship, and our relationship with God is bound to our relationship with others.
	"[I]f you are right with Him you will inevitably be right with all your fellow-creatures, just as if all the spokes of a wheel are fitted rightly into the hub and the rim they are bound to be in the right positions to one another."  -C.S. Lewis
	How are your relationships? What does how you handle them show about your God?
Doodles	
	A Matter of the Heart

The first and tenth of the Ten Commandments (to have no other gods and to not covet) are like bookends to the others because they show that worship is an internal matter of the heart.

When Jesus was speaking to a woman asking His opinion on the correct location of worship, He responds that worship is not a matter of proper locations (or any other rule) but a matter of the spirit.

# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

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	"Right wo
	Reflect
	Worship
Doodles	Throughou Him. We a worship. U

Many religions have sacred places where worship is to be conducted (this was the perception of the Samaritan woman in John 4). But for followers of Christ, we collectively (as the Church) are the temple of the Holy Spirit. We are the proper place of worship and we do so in our souls, in community, and wherever we go.

#### John 4:24

For God is Spirit, so those who worship him must worship in spirit and in truth.

We worship in spirit as opposed to worshiping only physically, emotionally, or intellectually. We worship from our souls.

We also worship in truth. Our view of God must be accurate in order to worship Him for who He really is. We also worship in truth when we worship genuinely and not to try to convince ourselves, God, or others how spiritual we are.

"Right worship, good worship, pleasing worship depends on a right mental grasp of the way God really is."

- John Piper

Is your worship to God primarily emotional, intellectual, physical, or is it really a mixture of these from the soul?

#### Worship is our purpose

Throughout the Bible we see that God calls all people to worship Him. We are built for worship and all people find something to worship. Ultimately we worship either God or ourselves because to choose to worship anything else is to say that we will have our way over God's way.

"There can only be two basic loves... the love of God unto the forgetfulness of self, or the love of self unto the forgetfulness and denial of God."

-Augustine

Our fallen nature is a corrupted version of how God made us. Idolatry is making God (or gods) in our image (thus putting ourselves at the highest place of worship. But God who made us in His image desires to make us more like Christ, the only unfallen man.

We become like what we worship. We will become either a distortion of how God created us or we will be conformed to the image of Christ (Col. 3:10).

# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

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	Door		

How do you know what you worship? Ask yourself:

- What guides your choices?
- What do you most fear?
- What do you most cling to?
- Whose opinion is most important to you?
- What do you most enjoy?
- What happens when you are wronged?
- What happens when you are wrong?

When we find what has the place of ultimate authority in our lives we have found our god. When we are that god, we see anyone who comes against as committing a kind of blasphemy against us. We then, seeing ourselves as God, choose to either bring our judgment on them or, in what we see as our incredible magnanimity and mercy, dole out grace as we see fit. When we see ourselves in the place of God we try to solve all problems and do not know what to do when we find ourselves to be wrong (it is confusing and debilitating when your god fails you, even if that god is you).



Reflect

If you are able to answer the above questions, what or who is your god/God? Don't rush to answer if you don't yet know.

The Bible tells us that we become like what we worship.

Psalm 115:3-8 (NLT)

<sup>3</sup> Our God is in the heavens, and he does as he wishes.

<sup>4</sup> Their idols are merely things of silver and gold, shaped by human hands.

<sup>5</sup> They have mouths but cannot speak, and eyes but cannot see.

<sup>6</sup> They have ears but cannot hear, and mouths but cannot breathe.

<sup>7</sup> They have hands but cannot feel, and feet but cannot walk, and throats but cannot make a sound.

<sup>8</sup> And those who make idols are just like them, as are all who trust in them.

"What people revere, they resemble, either for ruin or for restoration."

-G.K Beale

# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

NOTES
Doodles

Our world tells us to be more like other people and to be ourselves (yes, this is a contradictory message). When we seek to conform to our world or to be our "true self" we dishonor God by not conforming to Him. We will also find ourselves gravely disappointed. If we want to find our life, we find it only in trading our life for one with the Life-giver (Matt. 16:25). After all, He traded His life for ours.

Worship ought to encompass not only all of our individual lives but also the collective life of the Church. One definition of worship is all the activities of the Church community, anything we organize ourselves to do in order to glorify God. Ultimately, the life we live together following and serving Christ is a life of worship.

- Learning
- Fellowship, including meals
- Lord's Supper (Communion)
- Prayer
- Reverence
- Spiritual activity
- Joy
- Generosity

We don't see music/singing in the list but we know that Jesus and His disciples sang hymns (Mk. 14:26). It is interesting for us in the 21st century Church that the main thing we think of as "worship" is not even in this list!

#### Function and Form

The particular practices (forms) of worship are not to take precedence over the heart (function) behind the worship. The life of the Church looks differently across time and culture but the standard of worship remains the heart's response to God.

Because worship can come in many forms, we shouldn't be afraid of rituals or programmed worship if they do not distract us from a true heart of worship. After all, God commanded the Israelites to worship in ritualistic ways.

#### Modes of worship

Now that we have seen that the function of worship is more important than the form, let's discuss some general forms of worship. We glorify God in all these ways.

- Enjoyment (Neh. 8)
- Obedience (I Sam. 15:22-23)
- Singing (Ps. 100:2)
- Service (Heb. 13:16)
- **Giving** (II Cor. 9:7)
- **Learning** (Ps. 19:7-11)
- **Prayer** (Ps. 16:2)

# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

Reflect	Are any of these "modes of worship" surprising and/or challenging to you?
	Looking at the list of questions to find who our god is, how would you answer on behalf of the person or group you are seeking to reach out to?
Aim	
Aim	If you are able at this point to answer those same questions for yourself, does that answer inform your personal learning question? How?
Do	Choose a "modes of worship" and use it this week in glo- rifying God. If you can't decide, consider how you can do enjoy something God has given you and thank and praise Him through that experience.

# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

NOTES	Read	In this part of the lesson we will learn about prayer. Prayer is a part of worship but we will look at it on its own. Prayer is not complicated but it is difficult. Most of us wish we spent more time in prayer, knew what to say when we pray, or saw clearer answers to our requests.
	Reflect	What is most difficult for you about prayer?
	Prayer this with through We say we will people When we directly in the B	is Prayer? is simple to define. It is communicating with God. We can do h our thoughts, with our words, or even in a wordless groan h the Holy Spirit. "Communicating with" rather than "talking to" God because, as see, prayer is a two-way conversation between God and . we pray, we are exercising a privilege granted to us to speak y with the God of all the universe; the same God we read about tible, and He desires to commune with us. This should set the or a discussion of prayer.
Doodles	We pra elemen people • We	do we pray?  Any for a number of reasons that all revolve around a core on the Bible's message: God desires to commune with His and the Bible's message:  A so we pray because:  A can. We have an invitation into God's presence and we have the ear of the Almighty. We must not take the gift of prayer for

granted.

deemed

Jesus did. We read in the Gospels that Jesus was constantly praying to the Father and He regularly did so during long nights alone. Jesus said that He did nothing but what He heard from the Father.

As we saw in Lesson One, the persons of the trinity have

relationship with one another. If even the Son of God prays, we who have been brought into relationship with God pray also. We must: not in the sense that we grudgingly obey a biblical command to pray but in the sense that anyone who has been re-

# **LESSON SEVEN:** Worship and Prayer

NOTE	
son pra tell beg imp and like	I has the Holy Spirit in them have had our very nature changed. We ust" pray in the sense that we "must" breath or "must" spend time in one we love. We have a beautiful need for communicating with Beloved.  God desires to answer. Jesus teaches that God, our good Father, actually desires to give gifts to His children and wants us to come ask Him for what we need. God is actually glorified when we go to Him as our Provider and Parent. The sething that we should note when studying the Bible's teaching on yer is that, unlike what we may assume, the Bible doesn't so much us to pray as it assumes we pray. Teachings on prayer usually gin with phrases like, "when you pray" or "if you pray". These oly that people are praying but need to be instructed on how to pray a what the effect of their prayers will be. Even a "prayer command" of "pray without ceasing" is really assuming we do pray and need to be encouraged on the "how" and "why" of prayer.
	What makes prayer difficult?
Discu	ass
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	des of Prayer e are several general ways, or "modes" of praying. Each is for a

#### Doodles

somewhat different purpose. We may use any or all of these modes in a time of prayer. Modes are different from methods, which are specific ways of praying and will be discussed later.

#### **Adoration**

A prayer of worship to God. This is speaking the truth about who God is, enjoying Him and reminding yourself of the nature of your God.

#### Psalms 71:23

My lips will shout for joy, when I sing praises to you; my soul also, which you have redeemed.

# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

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	What makes prayer difficult?
	Discuss
	Modes of Prayer

#### **Doodles**

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# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

#### **Doodles**

#### Psalm 38:17-18

For I am ready to fall, and my pain is ever before me. I confess my iniquity; I am sorry for my sin

#### **Petition**

Petition is bringing our requests to God. It is telling the truth about your need. Remember that we are told to ask God for what we need and that we honor Him when we come to Him as our source. We need not be concerned that we are being selfish in asking for our own needs. We should pray for ourselves more, not less.

#### Matthew 7:11

If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

NOTES	Intercession Intercession is praying alongside or in the place of another person. It is telling the truth about what someone else needs. Intercession requires wisdom because sometimes what people ask for prayer for is not biblical or necessarily wise or helpful.  Intercessory prayer also requires great persistence since we tend to be more motivated to pray for our own personal needs. We also can be less patient with others' lack of change or improvement that we are with our own.  Intercessory prayer is a serious task and we should not tell people lightly that we are going to pray for them.
	I Timothy 2:1  I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them.
Doodles	Listening A listening prayer is quieting the soul to hear from the Holy Spirit. In this mode of prayer you are not telling any truth but rather being ready to hear the truth. This is probably the most difficult mode of prayer. It is difficult to quiet our minds and souls to be ready to hear from God. It is difficult to delineate God's voice from our own. For this reason, listening prayer is not only difficult but dangerous. We can believe the Holy Spirit said something to us that may be only our own inner voice. Remember that God speaks to us primarily through His word in Scripture and nothing we believe He says to our heart will contradict Scripture. Also, God will not always speak to us internally during prayer. More often He will move us through understanding His word, listening to godly advice, and orchestrating our circumstances after we've prayed for guidance. God will move us over time as we pray over time more often than give us specific words of direction during prayer, however, a prayer of listening is pausing long enough to listen if He does choose to speak to our hearts.
	Ps. 38:15  For I am waiting for you, O Lord.  You must answer for me, O Lord my God.
	Tou must answer for me, O hord my God.

# **LESSON SEVEN:** Worship and Prayer

NOTES	We should note that these "modes of prayer" are not necessarily outlined in the Bible the way they are in this lesson. You may think of others and some may be combined or may overlap (like petition and intercession or adoration and thanksgiving). Prayer should not always consist of the same element. We can use all of these modes of prayer when we communicate with God.
	Which of these modes do you often use in prayer? Which could Reflect you use more?
	<ul> <li>Other types or times of prayer</li> <li>Corporate         <ul> <li>Corporate prayer is prayer together as the church community.</li> <li>Jesus says that wherever two or more are gathered in His name</li> <li>He is there with them (Matt. 18:20). Corporate prayer is often intimidating to newer believers but it is an excellent way to learn to pray and to connect with the church.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Daily/standard prayer         <ul> <li>We have the opportunity to spend time with the Lord in prayer each day. Don't concern yourself with a specific amount of time but rather with having a focused time where you can fully be in prayer.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Ouick/emergency</li> </ul>

#### **Doodles**

Sometimes we have only a second to quickly call out to God for help. This doesn't need to be in the midst of crisis; it may be before an unexpected conversation or confusion.

#### Extended/dedicated

At times we feel drawn to pray for an extended period. We may need to get away and pray for an hour or part of a day. Sometimes we wake up at night and the Lord may be beckoning us to pray. Sometimes we plan to have times like this but have no daily habit of prayer. Extended times of prayer should be in conjunction with daily prayer but not replace it.

#### Methods of Prayer

Methods of prayer are different from modes of prayer. Modes of prayer are kinds of prayer or postures of prayer. Methods are ways we pray. You may resonate with certain methods and not others. These are not a matter of right and wrong but of preference and practicality. We can be creative with prayer methods.

# **LESSON SEVEN:** Worship and Prayer

NATES		
NOTES		What are some methods of prayer?
	Discuss	
	The Bib Christia on noth none of ceasing	r without Ceasing le talks about praying without ceasing (I Thess. 5:17). Some ans have taken this to mean that they should ideally spend time ing but prayer. However, God wants us to live and think and us can actually pray every waking moment. Praying without really means to continue to pray about things without giving up. raying and see what God may do in your situation and your
	are con	The method of prayer we will look at specifically is fasting. Some fused or uncomfortable with the idea of fasting, yet we see it as a practice in the Bible. Jesus Himself fasted and prayed.

#### **Doodles**

Fasting is the act of denying ourselves something in order to focus on God in prayer. Typically and traditionally this is the denial of food.

Fasting is not magical or a mystical secret formula for more successful prayer. So what does fasting do?

- Sets aside our flesh for a time so we can to focus the spirit. This may be for the sake of time but is more so about exercising rule over our flesh so that our appetite doesn't direct us. We walk a spiritual and not a physical walk and fasting is a way to remind ourselves of that. Fasting may make someone feel physically weak and tired which can draw us into a humble place of being conscious of our need for the Bread of Life, Jesus Christ, the Father who gives us our daily bread, and the Spirit who sustains our life.
- Creates a constant reminder to pray. When we fast we feel constantly hungry, especially after awhile, it's like a ribbon tied to your finger to help you remember your purpose of praying, no matter how busy you may be.

# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

NOTES	a	to the second se
	of r in ti are that with Fasting kept pr sympat It shoul reason food. A many p We can sleep, c order to	rves as a spiritual mourning over a situation. At times of sin or rrow (whether our own or someone else's) we might fast as an act mourning and seeking God. We are not wallowing or despairing this act of mourning but are being honest about a difficulty and e setting aside life-giving food to prayerfully address a situation at has spiritually or physically brought death in order to speak the the Life-giver.  If shouldn't be done to show how spiritual you are and should be rivate in order to curtail our tendency to show off or seek thy (Matt. 6:16-18).  Idn't be done to the risk of your health. If you have a medical to eat a certain way, consider fasting in a way other than with also, going without water for an extended time is dangerous and be people drink water during a fast.  In fast from things other than food such as TV, social media, music, or anything that we may need to disentangle ourselves from in to be more free to seek God.  Is not a correct amount of time for a fast, however it should be
	long en If you h on othe Remem morally	nough to make you hungry and give you time to pray.  have made a decision to fast for a time, don't force that decision ers. Allow them to choose whether or not to fast along with you.  haber that fasting is a temporary break from something that is not y wrong but that you are exercising mastery over. Sinful activities to be fasted from temporarily but permanently removed from
	our live	
	Discuss	Are there "right" and "wrong" ways to pray?
Doodles		

# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

NOTES	Praying in Jesus's name Jesus tells us that if we pray in His name He will do it (John 14:13–14). What does it mean to pray in Jesus's name? It is much more than tacking a spiritual flourish onto the end of our prayers. Remember that we are given full and confident access to God's presence in prayer because Jesus has granted us His status as Children of the Father by trading identities with us at the cross (II Cor. 5:21, Eph. 3:12; I Jn. 3:1). We bear only the image of God but the name (identity) of Christ. To pray in His name, then, is to pray what He would pray, according to His will (I Jn. 5:14–15). We pray to the Father the same way Jesus would, submissively and obediently (Mk. 14:36; Jn. 8:28). His requests are for things that are within the Father's will (Jn. 17). We have a custom of saying, "In Jesus's name I pray" at the end of a prayer and there is nothing wrong with that, but we need to realize that it is not a magic phrase to make our prayer "work" or just the proper way to "sign off". Praying in the name of Jesus is actually a great grace in our lives since we are welcomed in to God's presence with all the rights Jesus Himself has to pray to the Father. We should remember as we enter into prayer that we are praying in Jesus's name and we should make our requests as we see Jesus doing.
	Look up at least one thing the Bible specifically tells us to pray for and write it and the verse reference here.
Doodles	<ul> <li>What about our prayers that don't seem to be answered?</li> <li>Sometimes we wait a long time but God still answers (Lk. 8:41-56).</li> <li>God may be showing us that His grace is enough (II Cor. 12:7-10).</li> <li>Even Jesus got a "no" to a request but submitted to the Father's perfect will (Mark 14:36).</li> <li>God may be doing more than we see (Jer. 29:1-23).</li> <li>Persistent prayer keeps us looking to God (I Chron. 16:11; Lk. 18:1-8).</li> <li>Ask if you are praying for something in God's will (I Jn. 5:14-15; Mk. 14:36).</li> <li>Some things we pray for God to do can be done by us.</li> <li>God may be answering "no" or "wait" but those are still answers.</li> </ul>

Prayer changes us.

Sometimes God answers yes and we never notice or remember.

# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

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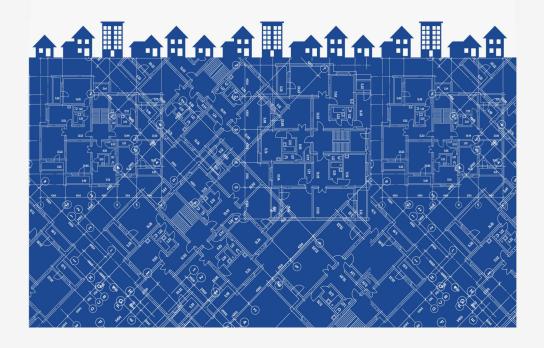
# LESSON SEVEN: Worship and Prayer

NOTES	Meditation The Bible speaks about meditation in addition to prayer. Prayer and meditation are different in that prayer is direct communication with God while meditation is focused and deep thinking about the truths of God's word, His commands and promises (Ps. 119:48, 148) and His works (Ps. 77:12).  Our meditations are to be righteous ponderings on godly things (Ps. 19:14; Phil. 4:8).  Meditation in a Christian sense is not to empty the mind but rather to fix it on God, not to center our minds on ourselves but on God, not to erase the self but focus it on Another. Meditation may be the simple act of thinking about God and His ways or it may be a very deep spiritual-mental focusing on what we know to be true and right. It is not to be something odd but pure and God-focused.
	Does the person or group you are aiming the gospel at pray? Why or why not? If so, to whom and how?  Aim
	Has your personal learning question become a hindrance to praying? Have you prayed about your question?  Aim
Doodles	If you have never attended a prayer meeting (corporate prayer) visit one in the next two months. If you have never prayed out loud in corporate prayer do so even once.
	Memory Verse  John 4:24  God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."
	Memory Verse Colossians 4:2

Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.

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# LESSON EÏGHT: OUR WORLD



# LESSON EIGHT: Our World

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We have looked at the nature of God who created the world and His creation of people in His image. In this lesson we will look at the rest of God's creation and explore two meanings of "world" in the Bible.

The word *cosmos* in the Greek New Testament translates in English as "world" but has several meanings in Greek. We will use these meanings to discuss the Bible's teaching on the world. In this lesson we will examine two and discuss a third meaning in a later lesson.

#### The First Meaning of "Cosmos"

The first meaning of "cosmos" (world) refers to the created, ordered, natural world around us. This is the earth and can include the entire created universe.

God is creative and He is a God of order, as we saw in Lesson Two. He made the world out of nothing and organized it and made it beautiful. He created the whole universe and all life.

The Bible tells us that God's creation shows His glory (Ps. 19:1). When we look at what He made we can see that it did not appear by chance. It was made by God and is varied and beautiful. In fact, the earth is clearly designed for us to live upon (scientists refer to this observation as the anthropic principle). Therefore, creation shows His glory in that God is creative as well as loving.

"Each of the things that have been made fulfills its own particular purpose in creation... Not a single one of these things is without worth, not a single thing has been created without a reason... [R]ecognize greatness even in small things, adding continually to your wonder and causing your love for the Creator to grow."

-Basil of Caesarea (330-379 AD)

## Cosmic and Concrete

We often emphasize the spiritual over the physical but (like we saw in the nature of man) the physical and the spiritual are always linked in the Bible. The one has a direct impact on the other.

For instance, the obedience of Israel to God is constantly linked to their land being blessed. When they are disobedient, God curses their land or removes them from it.

# LESSON EIGHT: Our World

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	Likewise, Jesus came in the flesh to live a physical life on earth. The Bible tells us that when God makes a new heaven and earth for His eternal Kingdom it is a physical place with actual dimensions. Our idea of eternity and heaven often fails to take into account that God has from the beginning used his physical created world to dwell with us and will do so again.  In Greek philosophy the physical world is an imperfect version of a cosmic reality.  In Eastern thought the physical world is an illusion.  In Christianity the Creator is incarnated in His creation. In the same vein, we who have the Holy Spirit live out our spiritual faith in very real and physical ways.
	Do you tend to see your world through a more physical or more spiritual lens, or do you bring the two together?
Doodles	Our Respons(ibility)  The physical world is made by God and is not some separate realm from spiritual things. Therefore, it is important to God and should be important to us.  God cultivates and enjoys His creation. We reflect Him and fulfill a part of His purpose for humankind, when we who are redeemed do the same.  We cultivate creation by tending and using it. We have a responsibility to take care of God's world by:  Treating animals kindly  Maintaining healthy environments  Stewarding environmental resources  Maintaining order among chaos in nature  Feeding people  Preventing damage or recovering from natural disasters.
	<ul> <li>Healing the sick</li> <li>Furthering scientific discovery</li> </ul>
	Does caring for creation seem a Christian or secular pur-

suit to you?

Reflect

#### FOUNDATIONS

# **NOTES Doodles**

#### **Enjoying Creation**

God rested on the final day of creation, seeing that all was good. God does not grow tired, so His "rest" in one of satisfied enjoyment. We enjoy creation when we:

- Appreciate its beauty
- · Enjoy learning about it
- Marvel at God's glory behind it
- Enjoy food
- Enjoy outdoor activities
- Find joy in the work of cultivation

#### The Effect of the Fall

Another way that the physical and spiritual are linked is seen in the curse God gave after Adam and Eve rebelled against Him.

When God made the world, He made all things good. Adam and Eve were given the command to be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it. This first meant having children, naming the animals, and enjoying the fruit of the land.

When Adam and Eve rebelled against God, He cursed them in direct relation to the original command. Where God told them to be fruitful and multiply, God added pain to childbirth. Where God had told them to be subdue the earth, He added the punishment of weeds, toil, and fruitlessness.

Likewise, as a direct result of the first sin, there were immediate internal results in Adam and Eve (shame, guilt, fear as discussed in session 3) as well as external results. They turned to nature (fig leaves) to cover their shame and God gave them animal skins to cover themselves further. Thus, Man's sin directly affected nature.

Because God's world was ordered and free of death before the Fall, we can see things like disasters and diseases as a result of sin.

In order to punish the increasing wickedness after Adam and Eve had more children, God eventually responded by bringing creation back to a chaotic state when He flooded the earth.

After the Flood, God repeated His command to be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. The original intent of God for us in the earth did not change, but the earth and humankind had.

#### FOUNDATIONS

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Doodles	

#### Jesus, Lord of all the Earth

Jesus, as part of the Trinity, created the world (Jn. 1:3) and holds all things together (Col. 1:17).

While Jesus was among us He truly subdued the earth by exercising authority over the sea, sickness, water, food, and death. His miracles show a glimpse of an unfallen world to come.

After His resurrection, Jesus was among us in a glorified body, free from sickness and death and able to come and go in wmiraculous ways. He still ate and bore His scars and was not only a spirit.

While Jesus subdued the earth, He did not yet heal it. At the end of time He will first establish His Kingdom in which all will again be good and ordered rightly under Him. Eventually Jesus will make all things new, creating a new heaven and earth. Paul says that all creation, not just people, awaits its redemption (Rom. 8:19-23).

#### **Angels and Demons**

Now that we have studied God's creating of the physical world, we will take a moment to look at part of God's non-physical creation: angels and demons.

#### Angels

- Angels were created by God (Neh. 9:6).
- They curiously observe God working to redeem people and rejoice when a person is saved (Eph. 3:10; I Pt. 1:12; Lk. 15:10).
- They are messengers for God (e.g. Lk. 1:11-19; Acts 8:26).
- They act as "soldiers" bringing punishment or protection (II Sam. 24:16-17; II Chron. 32:21; Rev. 16:1; Gen. 3:24; Dan. 3:13).
- They are invisible but appear visibly to people on a temporary basis
- Angels can appear as people (strangers) (Gen. 18:2-5; 19:1-3; Heb. 13:2).
- There is at least one "archangel" (Michael) who leads other angels (Jude 9; Dan. 10:13; Rev. 12:7-8; I Thess. 4:16).
- They are more powerful than people (II Pt. 2:11; Heb. 2:7).
- They do not marry (Matt. 22:30).

#### FOUNDATIONS

# **NOTES**

**Doodles** 

- They can be in only one place at a time and are bound by time and place (Dan. 10:12-14; Lk. 1:26).
- There is an unknown but very large number of angels (Dt. 33:2; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 5:11).
- Some people see what the Bible calls "cherubim", "seraphim", and "living creatures" as types of angels and some see them as a creation different from angels.
- Angels are sent to protect believers and children but the Bible does not say that we each have a particular "quardian angel".
- The Bible does not say that we become angels when we die.
- Angels are not to be prayed to or worshiped (Col. 2:18; Rev. 19:10; 22:9).
- We will one day rule over angels (I Cor. 6:3).
- Angels do not receive mercy for sin (II Pt. 2:4).

#### **Demons**

- Demons are by nature angels. They are the angels who rebelled against God. This is why they are alternatively referred to as "fallen angels" or "evil spirits".
- Because demons are by nature angels, we need not go into as lengthy a description of them. We should see them as having the same abilities and inabilities as angels but using those abilities against God's purpose and people rather than for them, as angels do.
- They are bound by space and time (Dan. 10:12-14) and are not all-powerful or all knowing. The Bible does not say that demons read our thoughts. They, like angels can observe our actions.
- They can oppress people emotionally and physically (I Sam. 16:14; 18:10; 19:9; Mk. 5:2-5; Matt. 17:14-18; II Cor. 12:7).
- They can control people to the point we called it "possession" but a believer is already indwelt by the Holy Spirit who will not dwell with a demon (Mk. 5:2-5; II Cor. 6:14-16).
- The Bible distinguishes between natural illness and illness caused by demonic attack (Matt. 4:24).
- There are different types and/or powers of demons but we are not given details (Matt. 17:21; Rev. 19:11).
- Demons know God and fear God but hate Him (James 2:19; Mk. 1:24).

**NOTES** 

#### LESSON EIGHT: Our World

		worship in the Bible is said to be the worship of demons (Dt. 6-17; I Cor. 10:20).
	• Den	nons can teach people doctrines (I Tim. 4:1).
		evers are given some measure of authority to rebuke ions in Jesus's name (Lk. 10:19; James 4:7; Jude 9).
		nons will ultimately be cast into hell forever (II Pt. 2:4; Matt. ; Rev. 20:10).
	Satan	
		an" means "adversary" and the Bible says that his original e was Lucifer. He is also called "the devil".
	• Sata	n is a real being, not a metaphor for evil.
	agai	Bible describes Satan as the father of lies and first to sin nst God who seeks to tempt and destroy those made in 's image (Jn. 8:44; I Jn. 3:8; I Pt. 5:8).
	• Sata	n tempts people (Eph. 6:11; Mk. 4:1; I Thess. 3:5).
	• He r	nasquerades as an "angel of light" (II Cor. 11:14).
	We	allows Satan opportunities to tempt and oppress people. don't fully understand why, but God is in control (Job 1:6-12; 20:7-8).
	equa with	n, being a demon and therefore of angelic nature, is not the al and opposite of God. He will ultimately be judged along all demons (Rev. 20:10). He is not all-knowing, all-powerful, verywhere.
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	Reflect	Knowing what the Bible does and doesn't teach, how should we view satanic/demonic activity in our world?

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#### Second meaning of cosmos

We have seen the first meaning of *cosmos*/"world" as God's ordered, physical universe.

A second meaning of cosmos is the world system. The world system is corrupted by sin. It is this sense of "world" we refer to when the Bible tells us not to love the world or the things of the world.

Just as individual people are corrupted by sin, so the societies they create are corrupted.

Reflect	What are some things worldly powers and societies pursue?

As you read the Bible, notice how instances of God (often through His people, especially kings, prophets, and Jesus) interacting with the people running the current power structures of the world are very important passages. These interactions may at times involve God's people defeating the worldly powers or being subjugated under them. It may involve a warning of God's judgment or an undeserved blessing. Much of what we think in the Bible is one individual interacting with another individual is actually God, through His people, interacting with an opposing kingdom.

As God uses and arranges His natural world, so He uses the world system for His purposes. The Bible talks about God using Egypt to protect and grow the Israelites and using Pharaoh to show how powerful God is. He uses Babylon to preserve a faithful portion of His people in exile and uses a Persian emperor to bring His people back to their lost land (more on the events of the Bible's story in a later lesson). While corrupt in their humanity, this world's governments and power structures are allowed authority by God (John 19:11).

#### Not of this World

During Jesus's ministry, various groups, even among His disciples, expected the Messiah to come overthrow Rome and establish God's Kingdom on earth. But they were too earthly in their thinking. Jesus said that His Kingdom is not of this world. It would not function like every corrupt world power system. It is not established by force but by martyrdom, the sacrifice of Jesus and His people. In fact, while Jesus's followers thought that He would overthrow Roman power and establish a Jewish Kingdom. His would be a kingdom to overthrow the rule of sin and the devil and welcome all peoples into Christ's good reign.

LESSON EIGHT: Our World

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At the height of His popularity the Jews tried to make Jesus a king but He refused. When faced with the Roman and Jewish powers of the time, He allowed Himself to be overcome by them and be crucified but through His sacrifice He redeemed the fallen humanity that put Him on the cross in the first place.

Following Jesus's teaching, we who are subjects of His Kingdom:

- Do not seek to attach ourselves or the Church as a whole to the world system.
- Do not see any human political entity as God's Kingdom.
- Do not fear corrupt power but trust our King.
- Do not look to the world for direction but to our Lord.
- Are not surprised by persecution but expect it.
- Are not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:21).

#### The Kingdom: Already Here and Not-Yet Come

In the Old Testament the best government Man could manage was the kingdom under David and Solomon but this was brief in the larger scheme of history. We see in studying the Bible that David is a foreshadowing of the Promised Messiah who was to establish God's true Kingdom that was corrupted after David.

When Jesus arrives as that Promised Messiah, He said He was bringing God's Kingdom and called Israel to enter it. When He died, rose, and ascended to heaven without having defeating Rome, Jesus's Kingdom did not seem to have come; however He established it on earth by His coming, sacrifice, and giving His authority to the Church and promised to return to establish the Kingdom fully and forever. It may seem that Jesus didn't change things, but He began a whole new way of life, uses us whom He's given new life to so we can be part of changing the world, and He will fully establish His reign in the future.

We live between Christ's first and second coming. Because the Messiah has come, we are redemptive in our world. Because He is coming again, we know we will not ultimately be its redeemers.

"We overcome, not because we're a moral majority or a righteous remnant, but because we're blood-covered sinners who know that if the gospel can change us, it can change anyone."

-Russell D. Moore in Onward: Engaging the Culture without Losing the Gospel

#### FOUNDATIONS

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#### The God of Justice

God's Law for His people established the rules of a proper relationship with Him and its practical implications for right relationships among all people.

In the Bible, peace, charity, and righteousness are all linked in the idea of justice. God continually confronted His people on their lack of justice for the poor and oppressed.

As long as we view a human government, political party, or country as the representative of Christ and His Kingdom on earth we will be forced to justify its actions.

But, when we view Christ as the King of Kings we:

- Do not need to pretend human governments do no wrong.
- Take responsibility to enact God's justice in the world, while leaving judgment to His authority.
- Work alongside worldly governments to establish justice.
- Exercise our legal rights when necessary while we are also able to lay down our rights.

Regardless of the type of government, justice is the hallmark of good governing. But justice is defined by the true God.

The Church ought to be a resource to the governments around her, working within the laws, and serving her community.

The Church is instructed to obey (Rom. 13:1-7) and pray for (I Tim. 2:1-4) civil leaders.

We operate within laws that do not force us to disobey God, but finding the line on this takes wisdom and should be decided as a church body. We must pray for the persecuted believers who deal with this question daily.

#### **Dual Citizens**

We are citizens of this world and of our country and we are taught in the Bible to obey our earthly governing authorities (Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:1-7).

We are also citizens of heaven, subject ultimately to Christ as King (Phil. 1:27; 3:20; I Tim. 6:15). This creates a tension for the Church that will challenge our worldview, our safety, and our comfortability.

Who is the greatest authority in your life?

Reflect

#### LESSON EIGHT: Our World

NOTES		
NOILS	Guardi	ng Ourselves
	the value	ld system is not only in the governments of the world but in e system of the world. The Church must guard herself against e system that is not from the Bible.
	gerous a with. Am	nind that the unbiblical value systems that are the most dan- are the ones you are likely the most comfortable and familiar derican cultural values and church cultural values may or align with the biblical Gospel.
	Kingdon consumi	Id system pursues money and power, the subjects of God's a pursue justice and redemption. The world is cannibalistic, and others to feed themselves, while Christ is sacrificial, givelef for the good of others.
		ext session we will talk about a third meaning of /"world" and how we engage our world with the gospel.
	Reflect	What is an American value that is not a gospel value?
	Reflect	Look at your list of things the world pursues. Do you pursue the same things?
Doodles		

"We can learn to be pilgrims again, uneasy in American culture, as we should have been all along. But we are not pilgrims cringing in protective silos, waiting for the sound of trumpets in the sky. We are part of a kingdom, a kingdom we see from afar (Heb. 11:13) and a kingdom we see assembling itself all around us in miniature, in these little outposts of the future called the church."

— Russell D. Moore in Onward: Engaging the Culture without Losing the Gospel

#### LESSON EIGHT: Our World

NOTES		
	From	Calvary Murrieta's Statement of Faith
	Social	Justice
	cannot His just childre	ves justice. He commands His children to speak for those who speak for themselves. Additionally He chooses to accomplish ice through the awareness, advocacy and action of His n, who work for justice in actively loving all vulnerable, alized and afflicted people.
	• Is. 6	51:8   Prov. 31:8,9   Prov. 24:11,12
		How do we successfully live as "dual citizens"?
	Discuss	
Doodles		
		·
		How does your chosen person view the world system and role of government?
	Aim	



NOTES	
Doodles	



Do something this week to care for or enjoy God's creation.



Look up a few officials who represent you in government and pray for them. Pray also for believers and missionaries living under repressive regimes.

#### Memory Verse

I John 2:17

And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

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## LESSON NINE: THE GREAT COMMISSION



#### LESSON NINE: The Great Commission

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	Doodle	



Read

In Lesson Four we saw two meanings of "world": the created universe and the corrupt world system of power. In Lesson Five we learned what salvation is. In this lesson we will discuss our mission to take that offer of God's salvation to the whole world.

The third meaning of cosmos ("world") is the people of the world. The Bible tells us not to love the world or the things of the world and it also tells us that God loved the world (John 3:16). We are not to love the world system, as we saw in Lesson Four, but we are to love the people of the world. It is the people that God loves and gives Himself for.

We are commanded to love those who persecute us and use us. God loves the world and us because He is love. We act like His children when we love not because of who others are, and not even because of who we are, but because of who God is. A divine nature is born in us when we come to faith and we cannot love the people of the world without the Holy Spirit in us.

#### Are People Good and Society Bad?

If we are not to love the world system, but the world system is built by corrupt people, how can we then love corrupt people? It is often said that people are naturally good but society is bad. However, if you put good people together you don't get a corrupt society.

We do not separate the world system from the individuals in it to the extent that we see them only as good victims of a bad society. Society is corrupt because it is made up of corrupt individuals who harm one another in various ways.

#### Should We Hate the Sin but Love the Sinner?

Just as it is impossible to really separate the people of the world from the value system of the world, it is impossible to separate sin from people who are sinners.

A small view of sin comes from a small view of God and leads to a small view of His grace.

We tend to look for loopholes for why sin is not such a big deal in God's eyes. We looked at the sin nature of all Mankind in Lesson Three and we must understand the seriousness of sin.

#### LESSON NINE: The Great Commission

Doodles	

"Sin is not an offense against the magistrate, or against the law, or against some conventional standard; sin goes farther and means more and strikes God in the heart, and thus shakes the universe. What it means in all the fullness of its significance we shall know in eternity. Meanwhile, I say of my Saviour, He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him. How, why, I know not: but I feel that it being so the sinner may call upon him too, and thus be saved."

#### -Joseph Parker

A God who doesn't mind sin doesn't mind sinners. A God who doesn't mind sinners doesn't actually love sinners. Think of sins committed against you or others. Would you be able to call God good if He didn't care about those things? Would He be good if He didn't care that we all in our own ways have tried to kick Him off His rightful throne and put ourselves there as our own rulers? Could He be truly loving if He didn't care that it will rob our lives if we run our lives and that when we run our own lies we inevitably find ways to suck the lives out of others without even the self-awareness to notice or care?

If God is good, He cares about sin and is wrathful toward sinners. It would be completely inaccurate and unbiblical to see God as passive about sin or only loving toward sinners.

In fact, Psalms 5:4-5 and 11:5 even use the word "hate" to describe God's wrath toward those whose rebellion against Him makes them arrogantly act like they deserve to stand before God and commit violence against others made in His image. Some of us have a very difficult time seeing God this way but we must understand two things: First, God does not hate irrevocably in the sense that He desires anyone's destruction. When a sinner's purpose is against God, His purpose will be against them. However, He ultimately desires their good, which comes only in their submission to Him.

Second, God does not owe anyone forgiveness and love. In Lesson Four we saw that angels/demons are not granted forgiveness after once rebelling against God. The fact that people do receive an offer of forgiveness is only because God is merciful in His nature. Some of us are surprised by His wrath but we should be much more surprised by His mercy. So, in one sense God's purpose is against sinners. In another sense His purpose is for them. He did not wait until they repented to love and make a sacrifice for them. Let's look at a few verses.

#### Romans 5:8

But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.

#### Romans 5:20-21

God's law was given so that all people could see how sinful they were. But as people sinned more and more, God's wonderful grace became more abundant. So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, now God's wonderful grace rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### LESSON NINE: The Great Commission

NOTES		
	our selv bring th When I include God wh desires "Love th try to se seeks to	e see God and His righteousness directly affects how we see ves and our world. These, in turn, affect how we will seek to he gospel message of salvation to our world.  I more fully understand the gravity of the world's sin, which es my own, I am more shocked by the grace of a righteous ho sends redeemed sinners to a sinful world because He is to redeem them from their sin.  The sinner, hate the sin" is well-meaning motto but while we eparate a person from their sin in our opinion of them, God o separate the two in actuality. In order to not overlook our not destroy us, God the Father poured our sin and His wrath is.
	Reflect	Is it more difficult for you to come to terms with God's mercy or God's wrath?
Doodles	Discuss	How should we biblically view our sinful world?
	Aim	Does a full discussion of God's wrath and love help inform your personal learning question?
	Aim	How can you help give a full view of God's wrath and love to the person you will seek to share the gospel with?

#### LESSON NINE: The Great Commission

NOTES	
Doodles	

Note: When we say "The Great Commission" we often refer to Matt. 28:19-20 but there are four other instances of Jesus telling His disciples to take the Gospel to the whole world: (Mk. 16:15-16; Lk. 24:44-49; Acts 1:8).

#### Be Fruitful and Multiply

God's original command and intent for Mankind was to fill and subdue the earth. Adam and Eve gave up that privilege when they rebelled against God. Yet God repeated the command after the flood. His intent for us had not changed (we saw this in the context of the earth in the last session). When Jesus gave His disciples the command to make disciples in what we call the Great Commission, there is an echo of the command to be fruitful and multiply, although now we are to multiply disciples of all the nations of the earth teaching them submission to Christ's authority rather than subduing the natural world under our authority.

The Great Commission is not something Jesus came up with at the last minute or something that entered God's plan after Jesus's resurrection. It is woven throughout the entire Bible from Mankind's first rebellion against God to God using His people to be a light to all who didn't know Him to sending Jesus to be that light when God's people failed.

Jesus gave those who follow Him the same mission God has been accomplishing all along: to bring the whole world under His perfect Kingdom rule.

#### Genesis 1:28

And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth."

#### Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

The Great Commission is the part of the Bible's storyline we live in. God is using us, the Church to extend His Kingdom by inviting all people into the truth. That is our mission and opportunity!

#### LESSON NINE: The Great Commission

NOTES	
	Do you consider the Great Commission your commission?  Reflect Why or why not?
	Make Disciples
	Discipleship is helping others follow Jesus along with us. This can mean a believer who is learning to walk with Christ more closely of it can mean the process of using a relationship with a person who doesn't follow Christ to teach them His ways, inviting them to follow Him themselves as they see the Christian walk demonstrated in us.
	What strengths and weaknesses do you have in the area of helping others follow Jesus? Do you have an opportunity with anyone?
Doodles	
	Does seeing discipleship as evangelism change the way you would approach your person with the gospel? Why own why not?

#### LESSON NINE: The Great Commission

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#### Of all Nations

Jesus's command to make disciples does not reference individuals but all the "nations". In Greek, the word is *ethne* (from which we get our word "ethnicity") and refers not to countries but cultures or "people groups". The Bible refers to the nations throughout its story and God desires them to bring their unique forms of worship into His Kingdom.

#### Revelation 5:9-10

And they sang a new song with these words: "You are worthy to take the scroll and break its seals and open it. For you were slaughtered, and your blood has ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. And you have caused them to become a Kingdom of priests for our God. And they will reign on the earth."

#### Revelation 7:9-10

After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. And they were shouting with a great roar, "Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!"

As God called the Jews to enter His Kingdom and only some accepted, He told them to go and call the Gentiles (nations). This purpose is woven from the beginning to the end of the Bible and is our mandate as the Church.

#### Across Time and Place: Contextualization

Because God desires the worship that each culture brings into the Kingdom, we must strive to preserve the cultures we introduce to the Gospel. Missionaries must help them find how their culture worships God and lives as the Church and also what aspects of their culture need to be changed by the Gospel. This is very difficult and takes great wisdom and care.

The Bible gives us much in the principles of being the Church but very little in the practices (see session 9). In planting churches in other cultures we should not ask them to adopt our culture or our church style, but find their own way using the principles of Gospel life.

Likewise, other cultures have something to teach us about how to understand the Gospel and be the Church.

#### LESSON NINE: The Great Commission

NOTES	
	What is the difference between exporting our culture and exporting the gospel?  Discuss
	Do Missionaries Help or Hurt?
	Some have accused missionaries of damaging the places they go. But the data shows a different picture:
	<ul> <li>Missionaries have promoted mass education, printing, and medical care.</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Missionaries mobilized reform of unjust colonial practices.</li> <li>Missionaries resisted racist views that were deemed scientific.</li> </ul>
	Adapted from Robert Woodberry's "The Social Impact of Christian Missions"
	While many missionaries have disregarded the culture of the people they are witnessing to, God uses humans to do His will around the world.
	"If missionaries hurt cultures, we would expect conditions to be worse
	where they've had more influence; but we find exactly the opposite."
	-Robert Woodberry, University of Texas
Doodles	

We should also be aware that not all aid is helpful in the mission field since developing societies and empowering them is a better, though more complicated and slow, approach then doing for them what they will one day need to do for themselves.

#### Evangelism Near and Far

"Missions" and "The Great Commission" are not terms found in the Bible. However, the example of missions in Acts is one of going out cross-culturally with the Gospel message to plant reproducing church communities. The Great Commission passages have Jesus telling his disciples to go to the nations of the world. From this we see that missions is not everything the Church does to be a witness to the world but the focused, strategic effort to reach the nations.

#### LESSON NINE: The Great Commission

- 10% of the world believes Jesus is their savior and share with
- 33% identify as Christians but may not have any relationship with Jesus.
- 53% of the world has never heard the gospel.
- 30 times more missionaries are sent to areas where the gospel is easily accessible than areas that have never heard it.

"Evangelism" is a term from the Bible. Evangelism can be anything we do to spread the Gospel message anywhere. All missions is evangelism but not all evangelism is missions. We should be evangelizing our nearest neighbors (the "unchurched" but there are people around the world who will never hear the Gospel if no one goes to them (the "unreached").

#### In But Not Of The World

Since its earliest days, the Church has struggled with what it means to be among the wider world while maintaining its witness and obedience to Christ.

We must neither become like the world by watering down our message nor hide the message behind a wall of irrelevancy.

NOTES	We must learn the language, mentality, and needs of the world around us (and adapt as these change over time).  We must also care for others because they are made in God's image and we are His followers, not simply as a means to "getting them saved." We must love authentically, but our greatest act of love is to introduce them to Jesus.		
	Reflect	Do you find yourself more attached to the world or in Christian "bubble"? What could you change?	
	Aim	How well do you understand the language, mentality, and needs of the person you want to reach with the gospel?	
	Discuss	How do we engage our world without compromising our faith?	

Discuss	How do we engage our world without compromising our faith?
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#### LESSON NINE: The Great Commission

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	Styles of Evangelism
	We are all different as are the people and situations we find ourselves evangelizing in. If you are sharing the truth in love, there is not necessarily a wrong way to share your faith. Consider trying one of these methods. Remember that it's ideal to build a relationship but this is not always an option.  Find your style and fear not!
	<ul> <li>Confrontational (Acts 2:36-39): sharing possibly uncomfortable spiritual truth directly.</li> </ul>
	Intellectual (Acts 17:16-34): using logic to compare worldviews
	Testimonial (John 9): sharing what Christ has done in your life
	Relational (Mark 5:1-20): building friendships with the hope of engaging
	<ul> <li>Invitational (John 4:29-30, 39-42): offering someone to your home or with you to a church gathering</li> </ul>
	Serving (Acts 9:36-43): taking care of someone needs to show Jesus's heart.
	Adapted from Out of the Salt Shaker and Into the World by Rebecca Pippert.
Doodles	
	Which of these sounds most like your style?
	Reflect
	Which of these would connect best with the person you are trying to reach? What can you do if it's not your style?
	Aim

#### LESSON NINE: The Great Commission

NOTES	
	Your Global Reach  As a part of the church you have opportunities to pray, give, learn, or go globally. Consider taking the Preparing to Go or Pathlight to Global Awareness classes offered at our church. Remember, God calls us into His bigger story! Take a step and see what's in store.
	From Calvary Murrieta's Statement of Faith  Missions  We believe all followers of Jesus will commit to His instructions, by living intentionally in their participation of the mission of Christ to make disciples who in turn make disciples of all nations. Our passion and ideal is to go to where the gospel is not being communicated by a local church. We pursue authentic relationships with sensitivity and awareness of all culture and customs. We believe the Bible instructs Jesus' disciples to model Christ's love, humility, and mercy, which demonstrate the gospel with our words and our lives.  • Rev. 5:9,10   Mt. 28:19,20   1 Thess. 2:8   Rom. 15:20
	Reflect  Is your view of evangelism overly global or overly local?
Doodles	Of Honor/Shame, Innocence/Guilt, and Power/Fear, which best describes the mentality of the person or group you want to share the gospel with?
	Go to calvarymurrieta.com/ministry/missions-ministry to learn about Calvary Murrieta's heart on missions.

Do

least this week.

While there choose one missionary and pray for them for at

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### COURSE



#### **COURSE CONCLUSION**

As we conclude our Foundations class, the instructors and mentors want to commend you for investing several months in introducing yourself to the teachings of the Bible. We hope you have grown in your knowledge of God and, built relationship with someone in class, and moved forward in your personal learning goals.

8	What was the most valuable thing you feel that you learned?
Reflect	What do you want to learn more about?
	Have there been any changes in your heart or life since the beginning of the class?
	What area(s) might God be calling you to trust Him to grow you in?
	Now that you won't have the Foundations mentors working with you, what relationships in your life will be a godly relational help to you after this class?
Aim	How have you moved forward in addressing your personal learning question?
Ann	
	What will help you move forward to address this question now that the class is finished?
Aim	How have you moved forward in finding how you could connect the gospel to someone in your life?



#### **COURSE CONCLUSION**

How can you move forward in this now that the class is finished?

You will not be done discovering who God is and what a life of following Christ is until you live with Him forever. In this life we live as disciples, finding ourselves more greatly hungering for our God and more greatly trusting Him to satisfy us. You are not done learning, living, being challenged, suffering, and growing.

Look for other Calvary Classes in the future and may our God bless you and may you journey on with Him in new and beautiful ways.

#### **COURSE CONCLUSION**

#### Resources for Further Study



Ultimate Bible Guide, Holman Bible Publishers



Visual Theology, Tim Challies and Josh Byers



Major Bible Themes, Lewis Sperry Chafer and John Walvoord



The Bible Knowledge Commentary



Knowable Word, Peter Krol



Search the Scriptures, Alan M. Stibbs, ed.



30 Days to Understanding the Bible, Max Anders





blueletterbible.com





carm.org
Christian Apologetics and Research Ministry





alwaysbeready.com Always Be Ready Apologetics Ministry





biblica.com





openbible.info





desiringgod.org



Beginner Resource



**Advanced Resource** 



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Website

Note: These recommendations do not mean that we agree with each and every viewpoint in these resources.

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