

Study Guide

History of Christianity in a World Culture



Jay Don Rogers

SUNSET
International Bible Institute



HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY IN A WORLD CULTURE



INTRODUCTORY NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES

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Arranged for study by
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SUNSET INTERNATIONAL BIBLE INSTITUTE
SUNSET INSTITUTE PRESS
3710 34TH Street
Lubbock, Texas 79410
(806) 788-3280/1 or (800) 687-2121
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History of Christianity in a World Culture

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DISCLAIMER

The textbooks used with this course were selected because we consider them to be the best available. They were written by conservative authors. A *Newcomer's Guide to the Bible* by Michael C. Armour. College Press, Publisher. *Rock Solid Faith, Vol 2* by Bert Thompson and *How We Got The Bible* by Neil R. Lightfoot. will be an important part of the course itself. These book will re-enforce the teaching you will receive from viewing the recorded lessons by J. Don Rogers. As with all books there may be some things with which you and I would not agree. The principle, "use whatever is good and discard what is not good" applies to all textbooks used with our courses. Please be wise enough to discard any and all teaching that is not biblical.

Instructions and Requirements for Level III Students

(Bachelor Degree or Certificate of Advanced Biblical Studies)

Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the video tape or the audio tape. Listen to the lecture on the tape as you follow along in the course Study Guide book

Reading: Three books are required; *A Newcomer's Guide to the Bible* by Michael C. Armour. College Press, Publisher. *Rock Solid Faith, Vol 2* by Bert Thompson and *How We God The Bible* by Neil R. Lightfoot. Write a one (1) page evaluation of each book. Submit the evaluations with your Final Exam. (This will be 10% of your grade.)

Memory verses: You may do your memory verses in two ways. You are asked to either write your verses from memory on your test in the presence of the administrator or quote them to the administrator. If you quote the verses to your administrator, he will keep track of the verses completed and report them to us. If you write the verses out, after turning in your test, correct the verses with a different colored pen. Please be diligent in doing your memory work. All memory work must be completed to pass this course. You will have forty-one (41) verses to memorize. **(This will be 10% of your grade).**

Due with the Mid-term exam: (19 verses)

Genesis 3:15; Psalm 9:1-2; John 20:30-31; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Hebrews 1:10-12; John 8:31-32; 5:39-40; Isaiah 7:14; Romans 1:16-17

Due with the Final exam: (22 verses)

John 8:46; 11:47-48; Matt.7:2 8-29; 17:5; 20:26-28; Mark 16:20; Hebrews 4:15; 10:3-4; Luke 4:32; Romans 3:23-24; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Please indicate which version of the Bible you are using in your memorization if written out!

Test: There will be two major tests to complete for this course. The mid-term test is to be done at the end of lesson twelve (12) and the final will at the end of the study, after lesson twenty-four (24). All assignments must be finished by the time of your final test. Each test must be passed with a 70% or better to pass this course. **(This will be 80% of your grade.)**

Self Exams: All Self-Exams are to be completed at the end of each lesson. All assignments must be completed and turned in at the time of the final exam to pass this course. Your total average grade for the course must equal 70% or above to pass this course.

Grading:

Reading and evaluation papers	10%
Memory work	10%
Exams	80%
TOTAL	100%

Instructions and Requirements for Level II Students

(Certificate of Basic Biblical Studies)

Each lesson is built around the instruction on either the video tape or the audio tape. Listen to the lecture on the tape as you follow along in the course Study Guide book.

There are self exam questions at the end of each lesson. You may preview each lesson by reading these questions first.

Tests: There will be two tests to complete for this course. The mid-term test is to be done at the end of lesson twelve (12), the final test will be after lesson twenty-four (24). Along with these two tests all the “Self-exam” questions must be answered in your Study Guide book. **(These tests will be worth 90% of your total grade.)**

Memory Work: You may do your memory work in two ways: You are asked to write your verses from memory on your test in the presence of the administrator. After you have completed the test, and given your test to the administrator, correct your memory work with a different colored pen and give it to your administrator. Or you may quote your memory verses to the administrator during the course. He will keep track of the verses completed and report them to us. Please be diligent in doing your memory work. All memory work must be completed to pass this course. You will have nineteen (19) verses to memorize. **(This will be 10% of your total grade).**

Due with the Mid-term exam: (9 verses)

Genesis 3:15; Psalm 19:1-2; John 20:30-31; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

Due with your Final exam: (10 verses)

Hebrews 1:10-12; John 8:31-32; 5:39-40; Isaiah 7:14; Romans 1:16-17

Assignments:

- All the Self Exams in the Study Guide must be completed.
- All the memory verses assigned must be completed, either written or quoted.
- Level II must obtain a 70% or better on each test to pass this course.
- All assignments must be completed and turned in at the time of the final to pass this course.

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LESSON ONE:

How to Use the Bible

INTRODUCTION:

The Bible was written to be read and understood. More Bibles have been sold than any other book. It is a powerful and practical book. It is powerful in that God reveals Himself to us through its pages. It is practical because through it God teaches us how to live. Therefore it is very important to understand how to use and understand the Bible.

One of the reasons so many people do not want to study the Holy Scriptures is stated well by William Bradford, the governor of the Plymouth Colony of pilgrims. He insisted, “Those who believe in the Holy Scriptures are bound to observe its teachings. Those who do not are to be bound by its consequences.”

LESSON AIM: To acquaint the student with the Bible and furnish some guidelines on how to use the Bible.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Discover some important facts about the Bible and its origin.
 2. Learn the makeup of the Bible and the character of its writing.
 3. Understand the divisions of the Bible and something about the nature of its writings.
-

SOME IMPORTANT FACTS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE BIBLE

A. About 40 Different Writers Wrote the Bible Over A Period of Some 1600 Years. These Writers Were Inspired by God

B. They Lived in about 10 Countries Covering 6,000 Miles

C. The Bible Was Written in Three Languages

1. Hebrew – Nearly all the Old Testament was written in Hebrew.
2. Aramaic – A small portion of the Old Testament.
3. Greek – The New Testament was written in “koine” Greek – the language of the common people.

D. The Bible Is a Book Consisting of Several Books

1. It contains a total of 66 books, 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament.
2. It covers law, history, poetry, prophecy, biography and letters – written and sent to both churches and individuals.

E. The Bible Covers a Variety of Subjects

1. Origins.
2. Purpose of life, prayer.
3. God.
4. Love.
5. Relationships.
6. Divine authority.
7. The Church.
8. The Christian life.
9. Having a happy family.
10. Understanding trials.
11. What one must do to be saved.

F. It Contains A Cast of Some 2,930 Different Characters and Personalities

G. The Bible Has but One Main Story-line – JESUS

IMPORTANT GUIDELINES TO UNDERSTANDING AND USING THE BIBLE

A. The Organization of the Bible

1. The Bible is divided into **two major sections** called the Old Testament and the New Testament.
 - a. The word “**testament**” means a covenant, a pact or will.
 - b. The Old Testament describes God’s relationship with humanity before the birth of Christ.
 - a) It provides a personality portrait of a Holy God.
 - b) It provides examples for us today.
 - c. The New Testament describes God’s relationship with humanity since Christ’s birth.
2. An examination of each section.
 - a. The Old Testament is much larger than the New Testament?
 - b. The first book of the Bible is Genesis, the book of beginnings.
 - c. The first book of the New Testament is the Gospel of Matthew.

B. The Old Testament Consists of 39 Separate Writings or Books

The Bible is divided into sections. It helps our understanding when we get a general picture of these sections.

1. **The first five books** (sometimes referred to as “the books of law”) describe God’s relationship:
 - a. With humanity from our very beginning.
 - b. Then with Abraham and his descendants – the Hebrew family.
 - c. Then with the Israelites – the Hebrew nation.
2. **The History books** record primarily the history of Israel how they:
 - a. Conquered the promised land (Canaan).
 - b. Set up the kingdom in the promised land.
 - c. Was taken captive to Assyria and Babylon and lived in captivity.
 - d. Then returned to the original land of promise.

3. **The wisdom and poetry books** include the honest emotions of writers telling what they have learned from life, from love, and from their relationships with God.
4. **The prophets – God’s spokesmen to His people:**
 - a. Warned Israel of the consequences of turning away from God and His promises. Their task was to point people back to the Law of Moses.
 - b. Made major predictions about Israel’s future and the long-promised great deliverer, the Messiah.
 - c. Prophesied the end of the Jewish system.

C. The New Testament Consists of 27 Separate Writings

1. **The first four New Testament books** are:

Matthew	Mark
Luke	John

 - b. Written from the unique perspective of four men who loved Him, followed Him and documented His life, death, and return to life.
2. **Acts** tells how the Christian church began and spread into all of the known world.
3. **The books or letters – Romans to Jude.**
 - a. Were written by the apostles and prophets – early Christian leaders.
 - b. They discuss the teachings of Christ and how they impact our relationship with God – and our relationship with people around us.
4. **The book of Revelation** reviews spiritual history and its final end and lets us know that those who belong to Christ are the ultimate victors.

D. How to Find Book, Chapter, and Verse

1. Note that each book in the Bible (39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament) is divided into **chapters**.
 - a. Open to any part of the Bible and observe the main chapter divisions.
2. Each chapter segment is divided into **verses**.
 - a. The verses are comprised of a complete thought one, two or more sentences in length.
3. So, if the student wants to locate something in a section he/she:
 - a. First locates the particular book,
 - b. Locates the chapter in the book, and
 - c. Finds the verse under investigation.

E. The Two Major Divisions of the Bible

1. The **Old Testament**, beginning with the book of **Genesis** and ending with the book of **Malachi**.
 - a. Contains the beginning of mankind, the account of the Flood and God’s covenant with His chosen people, Israel, the Law of Moses. The Law of Moses was made only with ancient Israel (**Deuteronomy 5:1-3**). Moses summoned all Israel and said: *Hear, O Israel, the decrees and laws I declare in your hearing today. Learn them and be sure to follow them. The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. It was not with our fathers that the LORD made this covenant, but with us,*

with all of us who are alive here today.

- b. Its conditions (such as the Sabbath, circumcision, feast days, animal sacrifices) are NOT binding today.
2. The **New Testament**, (ie. New Covenant) beginning with the Gospel of **Matthew** and ending with the book of **Revelation**.
 - a. This new covenant is made only with Christians, and binding on those today who follow Christ's teaching.
 - b. **John 20:30-31**, *Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.*

F. The Theme of the Entire Bible is Christ

1. Some have described it this way. **Someone is coming – Someone has come – Someone is coming again.**
2. The Someone of course is Jesus. He is the central theme of the Bible. The Bible characters relate to His history and ancestry, His birth and life, and His following.

THE READER MUST UNDERSTAND THE RELIGIOUS USE OF THE BIBLE

A. The Bible is Not A Scientific Textbook

However, whenever the Bible encounters an area of history, science, or any of the arts, it is reliable. This will be discussed in the next three studies.

B. The Bible Has but One Main Objective: to Bring People to God

1. World religions have one central thrust – man trying to find God. Christianity is the story of God finding and redeeming man.
2. Conclusion.
 - a. We have learned several things from this presentation:
 - b. The necessity of becoming more familiar with the Bible.
 - c. To help you locate and use the Bible more effectively, you are encouraged to memorize the books of the Bible in order.
 - d. Become acquainted with its general divisions and theme.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ONE:

1. About how many writers were involved in writing the Bible? _____
2. How many books are in the Bible? _____
Old Testament? _____
New Testament? _____
3. What is the main story-line of the Bible? _____
4. What are the two major sections of the Bible?
1) _____
2) _____
5. How many books are accounts of the life of Christ? _____
Name them:

6. What is the main objective of the Bible?

***BEGIN NOW TO MEMORIZE THE BOOKS OF THE BIBLE IF YOU HAVE
NOT ALREADY MEMORIZED THEM.***

LESSON TWO

Trustworthy Ancient Documents (1)

INTRODUCTION:



Every country has a history. There are historical facts that people believe are true. How do we know that they are true? We have to trust reliable historical documents left to us by our forefathers and the science of archaeology which digs and discovers evidence from the past. These reliable historical sources are fundamental to the study of any historical person, event or place. These evidences help us to be confident in the reliability of this great book, the Bible.

LESSON TEXT: Genesis 1-11

LESSON AIM: To establish in the student the confidence that the ancient biblical documents from which our Bible is translated are reliable.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Study material which will reveal that Jesus recognized and trusted the Old Testament scriptures as reliable.
 2. Examine evidences from the book of Genesis and other writings which present strong evidence for the reliability of the Bible.
-

JESUS RECOGNIZED AND TRUSTED THE OLD TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES AS RELIABLE HISTORICAL TEXT

- A. **He Expressed His Trust in the Old Testament Scriptures (John 10:34 -35).** *Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your Law, 'I have said you are gods'? If He called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came--and the Scripture cannot be broken."* Jesus here expressed His confidence in the Old Testament writings.
- B. **Jesus Believed That the Old Testament Was and Continues to Be Preserved (Matthew 5:18).** *I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished.*
- C. **Recent Discoveries – Dead Sea Scrolls.** One of our more recent archaeological discoveries, the Dead Sea Scrolls, confirms Jesus' belief of preservation.
 1. The group of ancient manuscripts, known as the Dead Sea Scrolls were found in some caves near the Dead Sea.
 - a. These are a thousand years older than the then-oldest-known Hebrew texts of the Bible.

- b. Many of the Dead Sea Scrolls were written more than 100 years before the birth of Jesus.
- 2. One of the most important contributions of the Dead Sea Scrolls is the numerous Biblical manuscripts which were discovered.
 - a. Until those discoveries at Qumran in the southern mountains of Palestine, the oldest manuscripts of the Hebrew Scriptures were copies from the 9th and 10th centuries AD by a group of Jewish scribes called the Massoretes.
 - b. Now we have manuscripts around a thousand years older than those.
 - c. *The amazing truth is that these manuscripts are almost identical!* Here is a strong example of the tender care which the Jewish scribes down through the centuries took in an effort to accurately copy the Scriptures.
 - d. We can have confidence that our Old Testament scriptures faithfully represent the words given to Moses, David, and the prophets.

EVIDENCES FROM THE PRE-FLOOD HISTORY OF GENESIS Chs. 1-5 (5000 – 3000 B.C.)

- A. The Bible Pictures of Highly Civilized Man.** *His brother's name was Jubal; he was the father of all who play the harp and flute. Zillah also had a son, Tubal-Cain, who forged all kinds of tools out of bronze and iron. Tubal-Cain's sister was Naamah* (Genesis 4:21-22).
- B. The Bible Presents the Idea That Man Was Created with Intelligence and Marvelous Creativity.** History teaches us that when men and women leave God their morals and civilizations digress.
- C. The Ice-Man of Australia**
 - 1. The discovery of the “**Ice Man**” (dated about 3300 B.C.) in the Australian Alps give us an indication of the advancements of man much earlier than the theory of evolution suggests.
 - 2. His copper axe and expertly designed bow and flint-pointed arrows prove that early man was advanced and that the Bible picture of early man is reliable. (Leon Jaroff, “Ice Man,” New York, Time, Inc., October 26th, 1992), pp. 62-69.)

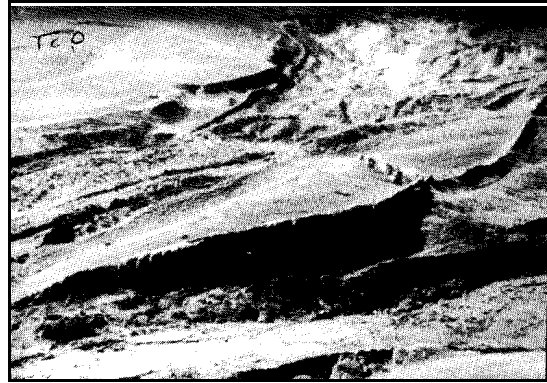
EVIDENCE FROM THE FLOOD STORY OF GENESIS Chs. 6-8 (3000 – 2400 B.C.)

- A. God Sent a Flood to Destroy Wicked Man.** Noah was asked by God to build a large boat so that animals and his family would be saved.
- B. The Dimensions of Noah's Ark.** Noah's ship – 140 meters long/515 feet (300 cubits) / 23 meters wide/85 feet (50 cubits) / 13.5 meters high/51.5 feet (30 cubits)
 - 1. The dimensions of the Ark have been used as the standard for seaworthy ships though the ages.
 - 2. The way God designed the ship is totally in keeping with sound design to withstand the large waves in the huge worldwide flood which ensued.

C. Ancient Flood Stories among Nations All over the World. The Hebrews, Hindus, Muslims, Micronesians, Chinese, Cherokees, from the steps of Siberia, the Aborigines, the Eskimos, the Mayas and the Incas all record a world-wide flood in their histories.

D. Evidence in The Gilgamish Epic

1. The Babylonian account of the flood has many similarities with the Bible account. This tablet is one of the thousands discovered in excavations at Nineveh beginning in 1848.
2. The **Sumerian King List** – This is a list of Sumerian Kings which comes from about 2,200 B.C. Fantastic ages are attributed to these Sumerian Kings and then it says, “Then the flood swept over the earth.”



Ark-site at Doomsday Mt. in the Mts of Ararat.
(Picture taken by Virgil Yocham)

E. Numerous Geological Evidences of a Great Flood Are Found Throughout the World

F. Discoveries of the Remains of Noah's Ark¹ This is a picture of the ark site surveyed by archaeologist Ron Wyatt. (Mr. Wyatt died in 1999) He believed he had discovered the Ark site in Turkey and the Turkish government agreed. It is located in the mountains of Ararat.

EVIDENCE FROM THE TIME OF THE TOWER OF BABEL TO THE TIME OF ABRAHAM (2400 – 1950 B.C.)

A. After the Flood God Commanded Mankind to Multiply and Fill the Earth (Genesis 9:1)

1. The descendants of Noah settled in the area of the ark landing and moved out from there. They built villages and cities. At this time all men spoke the same language (Genesis 11:1)
2. The Tower of Babel. Because of their evil intent God chose to confuse their language. God scattered them over the earth, thus developing different languages and nations (Genesis 11).
3. The **King's List of Kish**, dated at about 2,200 B.C., substantiates this Bible story by **telling of a golden age when all spoke but one language, confirming Genesis 11:1.** William Hallo, The Ancient Near East: A History, op. cit., p. 39.
4. An ancient ziggurat found in Iraq shows the design of some of these cities.

B. Genesis 10 Contains the Most Complete List of Nations Ever Written

¹ Videos of this exploration site can be ordered from Sunset International Bible Institute, extensionschool.com

1. These nations are traced back to Noah's three sons.
2. **In testimony of the accuracy of the Bible list**, most of these nations are found in the ancient inscriptions of *Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Ur and Kish*.

EVIDENCE FROM THE TIME OF ABRAHAM IN GENESIS 12-20 (1950 – 1780 B.C.)

A. Abraham Would Be the Father of Many Nations, Including Israel

1. God also promised him that Israel would possess the land of Canaan, and produce Jesus Christ, who would bless all nations (Genesis 12:1-3; 15:13-21; Galatians 3:6-8, 16-17).
2. The discovery of the Ebla tablets and the Mari tablets found in Nuzi and Mari of Syria, dated the 18th century B.C. validate the description of Abraham's culture as recorded in the Bible to be accurate.²

B. Sodom and Gomorrah Became So Wicked, God Destroyed The Cities with Burning Sulfur (Genesis 18-19)

1. Many believe the Bible account to be a myth.
2. A recent exploration near Massada, west of the Dead Sea, uncovered the ash remains of ancient cities burned with sulphur balls that had fallen from the sky.³
3. The **writings of Josephus** a Jewish Historian writing about 75 to 95 AD also confirm the accuracy of this account.

EVIDENCE FROM THE TIME OF JACOB, JOSEPH (1780 – 1530 B.C.)

A. Abraham's Son Isaac Had a Son Named Jacob

1. His name was later changed to Israel.
2. Jacob's 12 sons became the 12 tribes of Israel (Genesis 21:5; 25:21-26; 35:9-12; Exodus 1:1-6).

B. Joseph, a Son of Jacob, Was Sold into Egyptian Slavery by His Brothers

1. Joseph later became the second in command to the King of Egypt in about 1666 B.C. (Genesis 37, 39-41).
2. Joseph, in his great wisdom, saved Israel from a seven year famine by moving his brothers to Egypt (Genesis 42-47). Large underground granaries have been found in Egypt which support the idea of the grain storage that the Bible describes.
3. Later, about 1530 B.C., a new king enslaved Israel and murdered the nation's infants.

EVIDENCE FROM MOSES AND THE EXODUS (1527 B.C.)

² P.W. Gaebelein Jr., "Mari," *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, Full revised, Editor, Geoffrey Bromiley (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), III. 245-248.

³ Ronald Wyatt, *Discovered: Sodom and Gomorrah* (Nashville, Tennessee: Wyatt Publishing, 1993).

A. Biblical Account of Moses and the Exodus. Moses was born about 1527 B.C.

1. The Bible says he was hidden in a basket-boat in the Nile River, to escaped a death threat by the new king of Egypt.
 - a. He was found by Pharaoh's daughter, adopted and educated in the king's palace (Exodus 1-2).
 - b. The Israelites were in slavery and were forced to make bricks. A wall painting from Thebes, in the Tomb of Rekh-mi-re shows slaves making bricks, this may be a depiction of Israelite slaves.
2. Due to the threat to his life Moses escaped to **Midian (in modern day Saudi Arabia)**, only to be sent back by God to force Egypt's king to free Israel from slavery (Exodus 3-6).
3. God sent 10 plagues upon Egypt to force Pharaoh to free His people (Exodus 7-13).
4. First, Pharaoh let them go, then changed his mind and pursued them to the Red Sea.
5. Keeping His promise God used an East wind to open the waters making possible Israel's escape.
6. The Egyptian forces were pursuing Israel through the waters when the sea closed – destroying the army.

B. Archaeology Verifies the Biblical Account

Archaeologists have discovered in Egyptian documents the entire Biblical history from Joseph to Moses.

1. This evidence included: **the famine, Israel's enslavement, the ten plagues, the destruction of Pharaoh's army.**⁴
2. An amateur archaeologist recently identified the Red Sea crossing site by discovering **ancient chariot parts** at the bottom of the sea.⁵

⁴ Ted Stewart, Solving the Exodus Mystery, Volume I. Discovery of the True Pharaohs of Joseph, Moses and the Exodus, Publisher: BibleMart.com, 1999

⁵ Ron Wyatt, Discovered: Noah's Ark, op. cit.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWO:

1. Jesus expressed His trust in the reliability of the _____ scriptures.
2. What discovery confirmed the reliability of the Old Testament texts?

3. History teaches us that when we leave God our _____ and _____ digress.
4. What is the name of the Babylonian account of the flood? _____
5. What do the Ebla tablets and the Mari tablets confirm?

6. What two things confirm the reliability of the Bible story of Sodom and Gomorrah? _____ and _____

LESSON THREE

Trustworthy Ancient Documents (2)

INTRODUCTION:

In our last lesson there was a number of evidences presented from archaeology which show strong proof of the Bible's trustworthiness. The time period examined of Bible history was from the beginning of time till Israel left Egypt. This lesson is a continuation of that evidence. Many more discoveries which confirm the reliability of the ancient documents called the Bible will be examined. These evidences are extremely important and help a person understand the trustworthy and reliable nature of the Bible. It's so valuable. The Bible, is a very precious book, but it is also a very accurate strong history.

LESSON TEXT: None

LESSON AIM: To investigate several areas of evidence for the trustworthiness of the Old Testament documents.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Examine evidences presented from the Exodus including the Law given at Sinai, the wilderness wondering and the conquest of Jericho and Canaan.
 2. Consider evidences from the period of the Judges and the monarchy which verify the Old Testament.
 3. Discover outstanding archaeological discoveries which confirm the events from the periods of the divided kingdom, Judah alone and finally from the Babylonian Exile period.
-

EVIDENCES FROM SINAI AND WANDERING IN THE DESERT (1447-1406 B.C.)

A. Evidence of Superior Medical Practices. Moses received God's Law on Mount Sinai (Exodus 19 – Leviticus 27).

1. In the Law are excellent medical practices which have been used by the medical profession for many years.
2. The Egyptian medical book called "The Papyrus Ebers" reveals the common medical practices of Egypt in about 1552 B.C.
 - a. The Israelites left Egypt about 1446 B.C., some 150 years later. Some of these Egyptian medical practices are very strange. For example:
 - 1) "To prevent hair from turning gray, anoint it with the blood of a black calf which has been boiled in oil, or with the fat of a rattlesnake."

- 2) “When hair falls out, one remedy is to apply a mixture of six fats, namely those of the horse, the hippopotamus, the crocodile, the cat, the snake, and the ibex. . .”
- 3) “To remove embedded splinters apply worm’s blood and ass’ dung.”
- b. Though Moses was reared in the house of Pharaoh, and was educated like any king’s son, not one of the strange medical practices of the Egyptians ended up in the writings of Moses.
 - 1) His information had come from a higher source.
 - 2) The Bible says it came from God.

B. Evidence for the Location of Mount Sinai in Saudi Arabia

1. Mount Sinai, called also Mount Horeb, was located, according to the Bible, in the land of Midian (Exodus 2:15; 3:1).
2. Josephus placed Midian on the eastern side of the Gulf of Aqaba in **Saudi Arabia**.
 - a. Archaeological excavation reveals **NO** Midianite culture on the Sinaitic peninsula, where Sinai is commonly believed to be located.
 - b. New and old digs show Midianite culture on the eastern side of the Gulf of Aqaba.⁶
 - c. Paul the apostle also says that Mount Sinai is in Arabia (Galatians 4:25).
 - d. Explorer Ron Wyatt identified Jebel El Lawz, a volcanic mountain in Saudi Arabia as Mount Sinai.
 - e. It has a large valley of 5,000 acres of grass in front of the mountain peak, sufficient for 3 million Israelites to camp.
 - f. The Biblical description of boundary marks, an altar, and twelve pillars, and much pottery have all been found at the site.⁷

EVIDENCE FROM ISRAEL’S CONQUEST OF JERICHO AND CANAAN (1407-1397 B.C.)

A. The Conquest of Jericho under Joshua: Book of Joshua

B. Archaeology and Science Confirm That Jericho Fell as Described in Joshua Chapters 2-6

1. Scientific dating methods have confirmed the 1407 B.C. biblical date.
 - a. Walls show that an earthquake twisted the foundation of the walls so that the walls fell outward instead of inward. Earthquakes are called “acts of God.”
 - b. Evidence also shows that houses were built into walls as Joshua 2:15 says.⁸
2. Joshua chapter 3 says Jericho was destroyed at harvest time.

⁶ Frank Cross, “An Interview On Israelite Origins,” *Bible Review*, August, 1992, pp. 24-25.

⁷ (*Discovered Noah’s Ark*, pp. 42-48. See Mr. Wyatt’s video of this site – available from Sunset International Bible Institute).

⁸ Bryant Wood, “Did the Israelites Conquer Jericho?” *Biblical Archaeology Review*, March/April, 1990.

- a. The Jordan river stopped flowing to allow Israel to cross into Canaan.
- b. Much wheat conserved in jars were found in Jericho's ruin.

C. Archaeological Excavation Confirms That All Canaan Was Conquered During the Same Period That Jericho Fell (Joshua 7:15).⁹

EVIDENCE FROM THE PERIOD OF THE JUDGES (Judges, 1 Samuel – 1400-1050 B.C.)

A. For 350 Years Israel Lived in Canaan as Twelve Divided Tribes, Led by “Judges” Rather than “Kings”

1. During these 350 years Israel enjoyed **peace** when they obeyed God and experienced **oppression** when they sinned. After Joshua conquered Canaan, Canaanites re-entered many large cities and occupied them (Joshua 15:63; 16:10; 17:11; 19:40-48; Judges 1:8; 21, 27-35; 3:3-4).
2. The Israelites were called “Hebrews” because of their Hebrew language (Genesis 14:13; 39:14,17; 41:12; Exodus 1:15-19; 2:16-13; 3:18; 5:3; 7:16; 1 Samuel 4:69; 13:3,7,19; 14:11,21; 29:3).

B. Historical Proof That the Israelites (Hebrews) Occupied Canaan During the Period of the Judges

1. Irdrimi lived with the “Habiru-people” (Habiru=Hebrew) before becoming king. Irdrimi reigned when Pharaoh Thutmose III reigned.¹⁰
2. Thutmose III and Amenhotep II encountered and captured Hebrews (Habiru) in Canaan.¹¹
3. Though scholars date these two Egyptian kings in the mid sixteenth century, their carbon-14 related dates indicate that they lived from 1200 to 1110 B.C. during the period of the Judges.

EVIDENCE FROM THE HEBREW MONARCHY (1 & 2 Samuel, 1 Kings – 1051-931 B.C.)

A. Saul Was Israel's First King (1 Samuel 9-15) – c. 1051 B.C.

1. Saul led Israel to fight the Philistines who lived along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, in Canaan according to 1 Samuel 14, 17-18, 31.
2. Kings of cities on the coast of Palestine wrote Pharaoh Amenhotep III, requesting aid against the Habiru (Hebrews), who were attacking their cities.¹²
3. Amenhotep III's carbon-14 related date allows him to be, a contemporary of Saul in 1050 B.C.

B. David Replaces Saul as King (According to Many Psalms) – 1011-971 B.C.

1. David re-conquered Palestine and made Jerusalem his new capital (2

⁹ Kathleen Kenyon, *Archaeology in the Holy Land*, 5th Ed., p.177.

¹⁰ *Ancient Far Eastern Texts*, Princeton Univ. Press, 1969, p. 557.

¹¹ *Ibid*, pp.22, 247

¹² *Tel El Amarna Letters*, Trans. H. Winckler: Letters 54, 55, 56, 57, 59, 60, 65, 67, etc..

Samuel). An Israeli archaeologist has recently discovered a monument in Syria which refers to the “**house of David**” confirming David’s historical reality.¹³

2. A Canaanite king also wrote Akhenaten, son of Amenhotep III, seeking aid to fight the Habiru (Hebrews=Israelites). Abdu-heba, the king of Jerusalem, wrote that the Habiru (Hebrews) conquered all of Palestine’s large cities including Jerusalem.¹⁴

EVIDENCE FROM THE DIVIDED HEBREW KINGDOM (931-722 B.C.) (1 Kings 12:1 – 2 Kings 17; and 2 Chronicles 11-28)

A. The Kingdom was Divided After the Death of Solomon – 931 B.C.

B. Archaeological Discoveries Which Confirm Events of this Period

1. The **Mesha Stele** or **Moabite Stone** confirms 2 Kings 3:4-5 about Kings Omri and Ahab oppressing King Mesha of Moab.¹⁵
2. Shalmaneser III of Assyria mentions the Israelite kings Omri, Ahab and Jehu and the Syrian kings, Hadadezer (Ben-Hadad) and Hazael, all listed in (1 Kings 16 – 2 Kings 8).¹⁶
 - a. This obelisk tells about Jehu King of Israel paying tribute to Shalmaneser III.
 - b. The obelisk shows a contemporary portrait of Shalmaneser and Jehu.
3. 2 Kings 7:5-7 says Egyptians and Hittites were allies in the reign of King Ahab (874-873 B.C.). The Hittites were once thought to be a Biblical legend, until their Capital and records were discovered at Bogazkoy, Turkey.
4. Isaiah 20:1-6 says Sargon conquered Ashdod.
 - a. It was once claimed that there was no Assyrian king named Sargon as this passage says. Then, Sargon’s palace was discovered in Khorsabad, Iraq, and *Ancient Records of Assyria* II.30, also confirm these Biblical statements. In fact the very event mentioned in **Isaiah 20**, his capture of Ashdod, was recorded on the palace walls.
 - b. Excavation of Samaria confirms its destruction by the Assyrians.¹⁷
5. The Bible says that King Shishak of Egypt “took the fortified cities of Judah and came as far as Jerusalem” according to 2 Chronicles 12:4.

EVIDENCES FROM THE KINGDOM OF JUDAH ALONE (722-586 B.C.) (2 Kings 18-25; 2 Chronicles 29-36)

- #### **A. The Northern Kingdom Destroyed.** When the Assyrians destroyed Samaria and northern Israel, the kingdom of Judah in the south became the only kingdom of Israel.

¹³ *Time*, 8-16-93, p.19.

¹⁴ *Ibid*, Letters 146, 1457, 154, 170, 179-185.

¹⁵ *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 1986, III. 327-328.

¹⁶ (Luckenbill, Tran., *Ancient Records of Assyria*, I.563, 611, 659, 681, 672).

¹⁷ Avraham Negev, Ed., *Archaeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Land*, Nelson Pub., 1986, 335-336).

B. 45 Biblical Characters, Places & Events of this Period Are Confirmed by Historical and Archaeological Evidences

1. Sennacherib, king of Assyria, conquered Lachish and 40 other Judean cities, confirming **2 Kings 18:13-15**. He “caged” Hezekiah in Jerusalem, but did not capture him or Jerusalem, confirming **2 Kings 18-19**. Sennacherib also named Tirhakah of Egypt and Merodach-Baladan of Babylon, confirming 2 Kings 19:9 and 20:6, 12.¹⁸
2. The **Siloam Tunnel** of Hezekiah spoken of in 2 Kings 20:20 was discovered with a Hebrew inscription dated to Hezekiah’s time.¹⁹

EVIDENCE FROM THE BABYLONIAN EXILE (605-535 B.C.) (2 Kings, 2 Chronicles, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel)

A. The Bible and Babylonian Records of the Exile

1. Jeremiah 25:8-14 predicted that the Babylonian exile would last 70 years. Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah in 605 B.C. and Cyrus conquered Babylon in 539 B.C. Ezra 1-3 says that within a few years the Jews returned and began rebuilding Jerusalem, fulfilling Jeremiah’s 70 years prediction.²⁰
2. Another king who was in doubt was Belshazzar, king of Babylon, named in Daniel 5. The last king of Babylon was Nabonidas’ son who served as co-regent in Babylon. Thus, Belshazzar could offer to make Daniel “third highest ruler in the kingdom” **Daniel 5:16**, the highest available position. Excavated archives prove Belshazzar was ruling Babylon and was killed when the city fell. His father, Nabonidas, who did not live in Babylon, was spared.

B. Babylonian Records Name King Jehoiachin and His Sons as Present in Babylon During the Exile.²¹ Kings 24:15-17 says the Judean king **Jehoiachin** was exiled to Babylon.

CONCLUSION:

The entire period of Old Testament history is thus confirmed by amazing historical and scientific evidence. Even the Old Testament predictions of future events are fulfilled with remarkable accuracy. The Bible is truly worthy of acceptance as a reliable source of ancient history.

¹⁸ *Ancient Records of Assyria*, II.142-43, 270-1; 313-15).

¹⁹ *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, 1988, IV.510-511).

²⁰ *Ibid*, pp. 230, 248-50.

²¹ *Ibid*, III.2.232.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THREE:

1. Concerning the location of Mt Sinai:
 - Also called Mt Horeb and located in the land of Midian according to the Bible.
 - Josephus placed Midian on the Sinai Peninsula.
 - Archaeological Excavation reveals Midianite culture on the Sinaitic peninsula.
 - Paul says that Mount Sinai is in Arabia.
 - New and old digs show Midianite culture on the eastern side of the Gulf of Aqaba.

2. List two things from the fall of Jericho which verify the trustworthiness of the Old Testament.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____

3. Give evidence that the Hebrews actually live in Canaan during the period of the Judges.

4. The black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III mention what three Israelite kings?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

5. What does this Obelisk show about Jehu, King of Israel? _____

6. How many biblical characters, places and events are confirmed by historical and archaeological evidences during the time of Judah alone?

7. Based upon the evidence presented in this lesson, what can be said about the trustworthiness of the Old Testament?

LESSON FOUR:

The New Testament Documents

INTRODUCTION:



Since the evidence for Jesus' deity is furnished by the New Testament, it is obvious that these documents must be considered as historically reliable sources of information.

We are totally dependent upon the New Testament for our information about Jesus Christ. No one can say what Jesus did or said without appealing to the New Testament. Therefore it is important that we view Matthew, Mark, Luke and John as verifiable history books.

LESSON TEXT: Matthew 1-3; Luke 1-3; Acts 1

LESSON AIM: To explore historical documentation which will show that the New Testament was written as a historical as well as spiritual record.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Be able to illustrate that the New Testament was written as a historical document using examples from the New Testament itself.
 2. Examine writings from extra-biblical writers showing that the New Testament was existent early in the second and third centuries.
 3. Compare the New Testament to Classical Histories which will verify the authenticity of the documents.
 4. Examine manuscript evidence for the New Testament and the testimony from modern historians.
-

THE NEW TESTAMENT – A HISTORICAL AND A SPIRITUAL RECORD

A. The New Testament Was Not Written as a Myth

1. A myth happens, "once upon a time."
2. Myths are in "a far away place."
3. The statements of myths cannot be verified in a space-time dimension like history is verified.

B. The New Testament Was Written as Accurate History

1. It was written in a space-time dimension.
2. It tells of specific times, persons, places, events, which can be verified.
3. Archaeology has added its findings to confirm the testimony as reliable.

C. Contemporary with the People of the Time

The New Testament documents were written in the same generation in which the events took place and circulated among the very people about whom they speak while they were still alive to deny them (if they were not true), but there is no such denial.

ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT

A. The Gospels and Acts

1. One of the great illustrations of historical context is in Luke as he opens his account of the life of Christ to Theophilus, the Roman official.
 - a. “Most excellent” – showing the importance of Theophilus.
Luke 1:1-4 assures Theophilus that he carefully researched the things he wrote, so that they could be checked out.
 - b. The same title, “Most Excellent” is applied to Festus (Acts 26:25); and Felix (Acts 23:26; 24:2-3) who were Roman officials.
2. Luke 2:1-7 – speaks of the birth of Jesus. The decree of Augustus at this time can be verified.
3. Luke records facts about the ministry of John the Baptist, (Luke 3:1-2 Matthew 3:1ff); after Augustus’ decree. Herod knew John and if Luke had said something wrong, he would have been rejected by those of his time as an untrustworthy historian.
4. Look into Luke’s record of the life and ministry of Christ.
 - a. Many persons, places, events, weddings, temples, valleys, mountains, rivers, feasts, cities, all defining a historical setting.
 - b. Cf. Luke 3:1ff as an example.
5. The beginning and spread of the church of Christ is also historically verifiable.
 - a. Acts traces the church from Jerusalem to Rome.
 - 1) It was opposed by the Jewish hierarchy.
 - 2) It was helped by the Roman proconsuls like Sergius Paulus and Gallio.
 - 3) Roman governors like Felix and Festus, gave Imperial decrees concerning Christianity. (cf. **Acts 18:1-2**)
 - b. Christianity’s threat to idolatry in Greece is recorded in **Acts 19**.
 - c. It was described as a religion that was everywhere spoken against (Acts 28:22).

NOTE: All of these historical facts could have been checked out and verified by anyone wanting to challenge the text of these documents.

B. The New Testament Documents Are Not Myths – they are history which can be verified.

1. Their writers ask us to accept their accounts as being true (John 19:35; 20:30-31; 2 Peter 1:16; 1 John 1:3).
2. Until proven to be fake, we must accept them as historically reliable.

EXTRA-BIBLICAL EVIDENCE

A. The Writings of the Apostolic Fathers

1. These were a collection of writings circulated between A.D. 90-160.
2. All of these writers lived close to the lives of the apostles, either by having sat at their feet or of those who did.
3. These writings quote large portions of the New Testament, very nearly reproducing it.
4. Their value is two-fold:
 - a. First, their early date shows the New Testament books were written by the end of the first century.
 - b. Second, they reveal the great respect early Christians had for the New Testament.

B. The Testimony of the Early Apostolic Fathers

1. **Clement of Rome** (ca. A.D. 96), written to the church in Corinth. Clement's letter to the Corinthians is the only extant work from him which is accepted as genuine. It was written about A.D. 95 or 96. In it he tells of the martyrdom of Paul and Peter. Significantly, he also quotes from Matthew, Mark, Luke, and Acts, as well as 1 Corinthians, 1 Peter, Hebrews, and Titus.
2. **The Didache** (ca. A.D. 100); **The Teachings of the Twelve**.
 - a. A type of church manual written toward the end of the first century. It quotes from the Sermon on the Mount and the Lord's prayer, and gives instruction based on material in the gospels.
 - b. The Didache provides evidences that the early church, within seventy years of the crucifixion, believed that the gospel accounts were accurate descriptions of the life of the historical Jesus.
3. **Ignatius** (ca. A.D. 115).
 - a. Quotes from Matthew, John and Acts as well as many of Paul's letters, and James and 1 Peter.
 - b. His martyrdom around 135 A.D. was reported by Polycarp which says he was thrown to the lions in the Colosseum at Rome for the amusement of the people.
 - c. Tradition calls him a disciple of Peter, Paul and John.
4. **Polycarp** (ca. A.D. 120).
 - a. A disciple of John, he maintained a relentless devotion to Christ and the Scriptures.
 - b. His famous or infamous death as a martyr demonstrated his trust in the accuracy of the Scriptures.

COMPARISON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT TO CLASSICAL HISTORIES

A. Caesar's Gallic War, Written by Julius Caesar ca. 58-50 B.C.

1. We have copies from about the 9th Century A.D.
2. This leaves a gap of some eight hundred years between the original and our best copy.

B. The Roman History of Livy: ca. 59 B.C. – A.D. 17

1. There were 147 books originally written.
2. Only 35 have survived in some twenty manuscript copies.
3. The oldest copy comes from about the 4th Century; a gap of some three hundred years.

C. The Histories and Annals of Tacitus: ca. A.D. 100

1. Four and one half books survive the original fourteen books.
2. Only ten survived the sixteen books of his Annals.
3. One manuscript from the 9th and another from the 11th Centuries. Gaps from eight hundred to one thousand years.

D. The History of Thucydides, ca. 460-400 B.C. Comes from eight manuscript copies, the earliest being from about A.D. 900. A gap of some 1300 years.

E. The History of Herodotus, written about 480-425 B.C. Same manuscript attestation as that of Thucydides. Another gap of some 1300 years.

NOTE: In no case can the copies of these histories be compared with the originals so as to determine absolutely the accuracy of the copies in our possession.

F.F. Bruce observes, "Yet no classical scholar would listen to an argument that the authenticity of Herodotus or Thucydides is in doubt because the earliest MSS of their works which are of any use to us are 1300 years later than the originals."

MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE FOR THE NEW TESTAMENT – FAR GREATER THAN THAT OF CLASSICAL HISTORY

A. Codex Sinaiticus: Dates from about A.D. 350

Designated by *aleph*, the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Contains entire New Testament as well as a large portion of Greek Old Testament. To the New Testament is appended the epistle of Barnabas, a portion of the Shepherd by Hermas. Found by Constantine Tischendorf in the Convent of St. Catherine, at the foot of traditional Mt. Sinai, 1859. Now in the British Museum, London. Dated about 350 A.D. Additional pages of the Sinaitic MSS of the Old Testament have been discovered, but have not yet been made public.

B. Codex Vaticanus (B): Dates from about A.D. 350

Originally contained entire Greek Bible. Now lacks Genesis 1-46, 32 of the Psalms and the New Testament ends at Hebrews 9:14. It was placed in the Vatican library shortly after its establishment in 1448. Dated to about 350 A.D.

C. Codex Alexandrinus (A): Dates from the 5th Century

Well-preserved. Usually ranked after Sinaiticus and Vaticanus in importance. The Codex was presented to the Patriarch of Alexandria Egypt, in 1073; taken to Constantinople in 1621, and shortly thereafter presented to King James I of England. It is now in the British Museum.

D. Codex Bezae (D): Dates from the 5th or 6th Century

This is the oldest known bilingual MS of New Testament (Greek and Latin). It was written in southern France or Italy. Discovered in 1562 by Theodore Beza.

Housed at Cambridge.

E. *Codex Ephraemic* ©): Dates Also from the 5th or 6th Century

(Some think this belongs to the 4th century.) Brought from Egypt to Italy about 1500 A.D. Now in the National Library, Paris. New Testament lacks 2 Thessalonians, 2 John and parts of other books. It is a “palimpsest (rubbed out, erased) rescriptus” (rewritten). The text was erased in order to make a place for the sermons of a 4th century Syrian father named Ephraem. The Biblical text was first read successfully in 1840-41.

F. There Are Also Thousands of Fragments. One is called the *John Rylands Papyrus*. It was discovered in 1920 and is a copy of John made between 100 and 150 A.D. and is the oldest known manuscript of any part of the New Testament.

G. Codex from 1931. The discovery of this codex in 1931 provided a text at least a century older than the Vatican and Sinaitic codices, the oldest authorities on the text that had previously existed. Displayed are the opening paragraphs of the Epistle to the Hebrews, preceded by the last line of the Letter to the Romans.

1. In view of the evidence from classical writings, how much more should we receive the New Testament as authentic?
2. F. F. Bruce states (with tongue-in-cheek), “If the New Testament were a collection of **secular** writings, their authenticity would generally be regarded as beyond all doubt.”

MODERN HISTORIANS

A. H.G. Wells, *Outline of History*, writes much about Jesus and the apostles. He uses the New Testament as his primary source.

B. Will Durant, Columbia University, who has written a series of books called *The Story of Civilization*, along with his wife, was so impressed with the documents that he titled his Volume 3 *Caesar and Christ*.

C. Arnold Toynbee, University of London, *The Crucible of Christianity*, page 14 uses quotes of Christ which are taken from Matthew 27:4 and Mark 10:18-19.

D. David Flusser, Hebrew University, Jerusalem, “Jesus was an historical figure—a man.” Therefore He is not a mythological character of Jewish legend.

E. Sir William Ramsey, Great Britain, University of Aberdeen, Scotland: went to retrace Paul’s steps to disprove them. Was forced to believe the New Testament because of its accuracy when compared to his archaeological discoveries.

CONCLUSION:

The evidence that Jesus is the Son of God is written testimony of six men: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter and Paul. It is a mistake to think they wrote to assert Jesus is divine without pointing to historical evidence. They do not use emotionalism, but appeal to our intelligence. They ask us to read their writings and weigh the evidence and conclude with a decision toward accepting Christ as Lord.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOUR:

1. Give some examples from the New Testament that it was written as accurate history.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____

2. What extra-Biblical evidence also confirms that the New Testament documents were written at the end of the first century and were highly respected by the early Christians?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____

3. What is the significance of the gaps between the original writings and the earliest manuscripts?

4. What are five of the major manuscripts.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____

Comparison Chart of Ancient Documents

Table 1				
Author	When Written	Earliest Copy	Time Span	No. of Copies
Caesar	100-44 B.C.	900 A.D.	1,000 yrs	10
Livy	59 B.C. – A.D. 17			20
Plato (Tetralogies)	427-347 B.C.	900 A.D.	1,200 yrs	7
Tacitus (Annals)	100 A.D.	1100 A.D.	1,000 yrs	20
Tacitus (Minor works)	100 A.D.	1000 A.D.	900 yrs	1
Pliny the Younger (History)	61-113 A.D.	850 A.D.	750 yrs	7
Thucydides (History)	460-400 B.C.	900 A.D.	1,300 yrs	8
Suetonius (De Vita Caesarum)	75-160 A.D.	950 A.D.	800 yrs	8
Herodotus (History)	480-425 B.C.	900 A.D.	1,300 yrs	8
Horace			900 yrs	
Sophocles	496-406 B.C.	1000 A.D.	1,400 yrs	100
Lucretius	Died 55, 53 B.C.		1,100 yrs	2
Catullus	54 B.C.	1550 A.D.	1,600 yrs	3
Euripedes	480-406 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1,500 yrs	9
Demosthenes	383-322 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1,300 yrs	200*
Aristotle	384-322 B.C.	1100 A.D.	1,400 yrs	5+
Aristophanes	450-385 B.C.	900 A.D.	1,200 yrs	10

**All from one copy*

+Of any one work

Table 2:

Author/Book	Date Written	Earliest Copies	Time Gap	No. of Copies	Total
Hindu, Mathabharata	13th Century B.C.				90
Homer, Iliad	800 B.C.			643	95
Herodotus, History	480-425 B.C.	c.A.D. 900	c. 1,350 yrs	8	?
Thucydides, History	460-400 B.C.	c.A.D. 900	c. 1,300 yrs	8	?
Plato	400 B.C.	c.A.D. 900	c. 1,300 yrs	7	?
Demosthenes	300 B.C.	c.A.D. 1100	c.1,400 yrs	200	?
Caesar, Gallic Wars	100-44 B.C.	c.A.D. 900	c.1,000 yrs	10	?
Livy	59 B.C. -	4th Century (partial)	c. 400 yrs	1(p)	?
History of Rome	A.D. 17	Mostly 10th Century	c.1,000 yrs	19	?
Tacitus, Annals	A.D. 100	c.A.D. 1100	c.1,000 yrs	20	?
Pliny Secundus, Natural History	A.D. 61-113	c.850	c.750 yrs	7	?
New Testament	A.D. 50-100	c. 114 (fragment) c. 200 (books) c. 250 (most of N.T.) c. 325 (complete N.T.)	+50yrs 100 yrs 150 yrs 225 yrs	5366	99+

WORK	WHEN WRITTEN	EARLIEST COPY	TIME SPAN	NO. OF COPIES
<i>Homer (Iliad)</i>	900 B.C.	400 B.C.	500 yrs	643
<i>New Testament</i>	40-100 A.D.	125 A.D.	25 yrs	over 24,000

Early Church Fathers Quotations of the New Testament

WRITER	Gospels	Acts	Pauline Epistles	General Epistles	Revelation	Total
Justin Martyr	268	10	43	6	3 (266 allusions)	330
Irenaeus	1,038	194	499	23	65	1,819
Clement Alex.	1,017	44	1,127	207	11	2,406
Origen	9,231	349	7,778	399	165	17,922
Tertullian	3,822	502	2,609	120	205	7,258
Hippolytus	734	42	387	27	188	1,378
Eusebius	3,258	211	1,592	88	27	5,176
Totals	19,368	1,352	14,035	870	664	36,289

Conservative Dating

Paul's Letters	A.D. 50-66	Hiebert
Matthew	A.D. 70-80	Harrison
Mark	A.D. 50-60 A.D. 58-65	Harnak T.W. Manson
Luke	early 60's	Harrison
John	A.D. 80-100	Harrison

Liberal Dating

Paul's Letters	A.D. 50-100	Kummel
Matthew	A.D. 80-100	Kummel
Mark	A.D. 70	Kummel
Luke	A.D. 70-90	Kummel
John	A.D. 170 A.D. 90-100	Baur Kummel

LESSON FIVE

God's Eternal Purpose

INTRODUCTION:

In this lesson we are going to be talking about the eternal purpose of God. I can't imagine anything more exciting than knowing that the God of this universe had a plan for eternity and that I can be a part of that plan. This is one of the great assertions of the Bible. God is affirmed. His purpose is pointed out. Someone tries to hinder His purpose, but God works out His plan in spite of the adversary.

God's eternal existence is affirmed in the Bible. It is affirmed in the prayer of Moses recorded in Psalms 90:1-2. Notice as Moses speaks of the everlasting nature of God: *Lord, you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations. Before the mountains were born or you brought forth the earth and the world, from everlasting to everlasting you are God.* The phrase "from everlasting to everlasting" expresses the idea that God had no beginning and no end.

LESSON TEXT: All the scripture references in the lesson guide.

LESSON AIM: To see that God's eternal purpose cannot be thwarted by the sin of mankind even though it did hurt God's initial design.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Learn that God always had a purpose and design for man's good.
 2. See that human sin hurt God's design but did not destroy God's plan and purpose.
 3. Understand that God purposed that man's sin problem would be solved in Jesus Christ.
-

GOD HAS ALWAYS HAD A PURPOSE FOR THE PHYSICAL UNIVERSE

A. Two Qualities of God Are Manifested by the Physical Creation (Psalms 19:1-2)

1. His glory.
2. His work.

*The heavens **declare the glory of God**; the skies proclaim **the work of his hands**. Day after day they pour forth speech (speak of it); night after night they display knowledge (tell of it).*

B. Men Are Without Excuse (Romans 1:20). – For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his *eternal power and divine nature*--have been *clearly seen, being understood from what has been made*, so that men are without excuse (NIV).

C. God Is “Clearly Seen” in the Design of Creation. Illustrate with a WATCH and Tolstoy’s, War and Peace. They both show design and a designer.

D. Man’s Attempt to Explain the World Without God

1. The purpose of Darwin’s “On the Origin of the Species,” was to explain the existence of the world “without” God.
2. This theory fell right in line with men trying to define their society “without” God.

GOD’S DESIGN AND DESIRE WAS MAN’S GOOD

A. Man Was Created in “The Image of God” (Genesis 1:26 NIV). *Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness,”*

1. The image was spiritual not physical.
2. The Hebrew word for “image” is “deep shadow”.
3. Man bears the rational, discernment, intellectual and freedom quality characteristics of God.

B. Man was placed in an Earthly Paradise, Called Eden. Five things which illustrate that God’s design for man was good:

1. **God was pleased (Genesis 1:31).** *God saw all that He had made, and it was very good..*
2. **God assigned man and woman tasks (Genesis 2:15).** *The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.*
3. **God planned for man and woman to reproduce (Genesis 1:26-28).** *God blessed them and said to them, “Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it.”*
4. **Man was to rule over the creation (Genesis 1:26-28).** *Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground.*
5. **Marriage was a part of God’s plan and purpose (Genesis 2:21-25).** *Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib He had taken out of the man, and He brought her to the man. The man said, “This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called ‘woman,’ for she was taken out of man.” For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.*

HUMAN SIN HURT GOD’S DESIGN BUT DID NOT DESTROY GOD’S PLAN AND PURPOSE

A. Man’s Sin Degraded His Personal Life and the Physical World

1. Satan’s punishment – cursed above all other animals. **Genesis 3:14-19,** *So the LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike His heel.”*
2. Woman’s punishment – increased pain in childbearing and subservient to husband. *To the woman He said, “I will greatly increase your pains in*

childbearing; with pain you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”

3. Man’s punishment – the ground cursed and more difficult work situation. *To Adam He said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat of it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat of it all the days of your life. It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field. By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”*
 - a. Sin brought pain and suffering to mankind and a break in the relationship of man with God.
 - b. Sin brought hardship (thistles) to the world. Remember this was not God’s original desire for mankind.
 - c. Sin brought a promise to Satan that one day the seed of woman would crush his head (destroy him).

C. Old Testament History and God’s Eternal Purpose. All Old Testament history from Eden to Christ is God working out His will to accomplish His ultimate purpose for mankind.

1. From Adam until Moses God reveals Himself through human dreams: the flood, Tower of Babel, Sodom, Gomorrah, plagues in Egypt.
2. He was selecting and refining the family that would bring Christ into the world.
 - a. In Eve the promise was **general**. **Genesis 3:15**, *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike His heel.”*
 - b. In Abraham it was **family**. **Genesis 12:3**, *I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”*
 - c. In Judah it was **tribal**. **Genesis 49:8-10**, *The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between His feet, until He comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his.*
 - d. In Israel it was **national**. **John 4:22**, *You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, **for salvation is from the Jews.***

GOD PURPOSED THAT MAN’S SIN PROBLEM WOULD BE SOLVED IN JESUS CHRIST

A. His Life, Death, and Resurrection Is the Basis of God’s Eternal Purpose

1. Remember God’s purpose in Eden (Genesis 3:15).
2. Purposed before the creation of the world (1 Peter 1:18-20). *For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake.*
 - a. Christ’s role was to restore our relationship to God.
 - b. Note God planned this before the creation of the world.

B. In God's Purpose Something Had to "Cover" Man's Sins

1. Christ the atoning sacrifice (Hebrews 2:17-18). *For this reason He had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, **that He might make atonement for the sins** of the people.*
2. Two things would qualify Him for this task (Acts 2:23-24).
 - a. His vicarious death. . . . *with the help of wicked men, put Him to **death** by nailing Him to the cross.*
 - b. His resurrection from the dead. *But God **raised Him from the dead**, freeing Him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him.*
3. Paul calls this "good news" (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). *Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance : that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,*

C. Those Covered Became Gathered into His Church (Ephesians 3:10-11, 20-21)

1. God's wisdom manifested in the church. *His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to His eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.*
2. God's eternal purpose reaches out to all generations (Ephesians 3:20-21). *Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

GOD'S PLAN IS COMPLETED WITH MAN BACK IN HIS PRESENCE

- A. A Right Relationship with Him (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).** *For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. **And so we will be with the Lord forever.** Therefore encourage each other with these words.*
- B. Sin Is Stripped of its Power to Separate (1 Corinthians 15:50-58).** *The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

CONCLUSION:

With God's eternal purpose completed, both the saved and lost will have their reward, the creation will have served its purpose.

- A. 2 Peter 3:8-13,** *But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a*

*day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, **not wanting anyone to perish**, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with His promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness.*

- B. **Hebrews 1:10-12**, *He also says, “In the beginning, O Lord, you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. You will roll them up like a robe; like a garment they will be changed. But you remain the same, and your years will never end.”*

A REVIEW BRIEFLY STATED

- A. Through the *material creation*, God is glorified.
- B. Through His *death for humanity*, Jesus Christ is glorified.
- C. Through Christ's *bringing humanity back to God*, man is glorified, both here and after this life.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIVE:

1. What two qualities of God are manifested by the physical creation in Psalms 19:1-2?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
2. What was the purpose of Darwin's "On the Origin of the Species"?

3. List five things which illustrate that God's design for man was good.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
4. In selecting and refining the family that would bring Christ into the world what are the four points of progression in accomplishing this?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
5. What are the three statements in the review which show that God's eternal purpose was achieved?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

LESSON SIX

The Promised Messiah

INTRODUCTION:

In this session we are going to be talking about the promised Messiah. There are many terms used in reference to Jesus and as we as Christians or as people who have studied the Bible, look to the Bible we will find a number of those terms that are very meaningful to us. An example of some of the terms might be like the word “Emmanuel” which means “God with us.” Jesus was called Emmanuel or Holy God, Prince of Peace, King of kings, Wonderful Counselor, Redeemer, Son of God, Son of man, Good Shepherd, Lamb of God, Lord of lords, the Rock of Ages. *And all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and the rock was Christ* (1 Corinthians 10:4 NRSV).

But one term that is used in the Bible that we need to really understand and see it in how it relates to the promise of God is the term Messiah or Christ. It was strongly associated with the promises of God. In our last lesson we talked about the promises of God and we talked about how God had made promises to Adam and Eve and then to Abraham and how those promises came on down. The term Messiah really relates to that. It actually means “the anointed one,” or “the anointed of God.” The term was almost entirely used in reference to kings. Some of you may remember in some of the places in the Bible where we deal with kings. For example, the first king of Israel, Saul. A prophet by the name of Samuel was asked by God to go and anoint Saul as king and when he did, he came to Saul and he anointed his head with oil. And this became a symbol of the anointed one, the one that God has chosen, the one that God has decided will do His work. Well Messiah is used this way.

LESSON TEXT: The texts listed in the outline

LESSON AIM: To be convinced that the promised seed in Genesis 3:15 and 12:1-3 is Jesus of Nazareth and that this Jesus is the promised Messiah.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Study the antiquity of the promised Messiah as seen in Genesis 3:15 and 12:1-3.
 2. Learn that the people before and in the lifetime of Christ expected the coming of the Messiah as shown by Simeon and Anna.
 3. See that Jesus Himself knew He was the Messiah in His early life and in His ministry.
 4. Discover that the Lord proclaimed Himself as the Messiah after His resurrection.
-

THE INITIAL PROMISE MADE TO ADAM, EVE AND THE SERPENT

A. The Promise First Spoken to Satan in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:15)

1. The concept of the promise.
2. *“And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike His heel.”*
 - a. Whoever it was that was going to be involved in this besides the woman and besides Satan was called ‘he’ and it says that He would be hurt a little bit but Satan would be damaged drastically by Him. He would crush his head.
 - b. This is the initial promise that is found in the Bible that is so valuable to us as we begin to look forward to that person who is coming.
 - c. Who is that “he” that is being talked about.

B. Spoken to Abram in Genesis 12:1-3

“The LORD had said to Abram, “Leave your country, your people and your father’s household and go to the land I will show you. “I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.”

C. The Promised One Identified as Messiah

1. The Jewish people wanted to know constantly who this promised person would be and they called this son of promise – Messiah.
2. They looked forward to the one who would be coming, who was going to be anointed by God, who would crush Satan. And down through the ages people looked for and longed for the Messiah.

B. The Messiah Was Expected by the People in Israel

1. The common people expected Him and would recognize Him.
 - a. Not the scholars who were the ones most familiar with God’s word.
 - b. But mostly it was the very simple people who were expecting the Messiah.
2. Simeon, an old man expected Him (Luke 2:25-32). The Lord had promised him that he would see the Messiah before he died. *Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the (Messiah) Lord’s Christ.*
3. Simeon recognized that the important thing that this Messiah was going to do was to take care of the problem of sin.

E. Jesus Knew That He Was the Messiah

1. Early in His life when He was about twelve years old (Luke 2:46-50).
 - a. He went to the temple with His parents and it says, *After three days (they had been looking for Him, of course and) they found him in the temple courts, sitting among the teachers, listening to them and questioning them. When His parents saw him, they were astonished as well. His mother said to him, “Son, why have you treated us like this?*

Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you.” “Why were you searching for me?” He asked. “Didn’t you know I had to be in my Father’s house?” But they did not understand what He was saying to them.

- b. Jesus knew His relationship with the Father. He knew that He was the one sent from God. He knew what He had to do. And that His primary mission was to accomplish the purpose of God.
2. In His ministry in Matthew 11:3-5.
 - a. He claimed to do the work of the Messiah. *“Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor.”*
 - b. John the baptizer’s question: *“Are you the One?”*
 - c. Jesus quoted Old Testament prophecy reaffirming to John that He was the Messiah. See Isaiah 29:18-19; 35:4-6.
 - d. John 10:34-38: *Why do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, ‘I am God’s Son’?*

F. Others Recognized Jesus as Messiah

1. Andrew: John 1:41.
2. The apostle John: John 20:31.
3. The Samaritan woman at Jacob’s well: John 4:25-26. *“I who speak to you am he.”*

IMPORTANT SCRIPTURES ABOUT JESUS, MESSIAH

A. Old Testament Scriptures Testify of Jesus

1. **John 5:39-40**, *“You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.”* (Cf. Luke 24:44-46)
2. The prophets and Moses (Acts 26:22; Acts 10:43; Acts 18:28; 28:23).

B. The Resurrected Lord Proclaimed Himself Messiah

On the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:25-27). *And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.*

C. The Promise to Abraham in the New Testament is Called the Gospel

1. **Galatians 3:8**, *The Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and **announced the gospel** in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.”*
2. **Galatians 3:29**, *If you belong to Christ, then you are **Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.***
3. **Romans 1:2-3**, *the **gospel He promised beforehand** through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding His Son, who as to His human nature was a descendant of David,*
4. **Titus 1:2**, *a faith and knowledge resting on **the hope of eternal life**, which God, who does not lie, **promised** before the beginning of time,*
5. **Hebrews 6:13-20**, *When God made His promise to Abraham, since there*

*was no one greater for Him to swear by, He swore by himself, saying, "I will surely bless you and give you many descendants." And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised. Men swear by someone greater than themselves, and the oath confirms what is said and puts an end to all argument. Because God wanted to make the unchanging nature of His purpose very clear to the heirs of what was promised, He confirmed it with an oath. God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope offered to us may be greatly encouraged. **We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure.** It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, 20 where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. He has become a high priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek.*

CONCLUSION:

Now we have talked a lot about Jesus being the promised Messiah. A decision we must make is, do we believe that or not. If we say that Jesus Christ was **not** the promised Messiah, the one that God was sending into the world through His eternal promise, then we are suggesting that Jesus Christ was a fraud. We need to examine the evidences carefully, look at the scriptures, see what they say about Him. Because your eternal destiny and my eternal destiny will depend upon how we respond to that. We need to look and see and say, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah, the one that was related to Abraham and He brought salvation from sin into the world. He was not a fraud. He is the one who gives me eternal life."

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SIX:

1. At what point in history is the first promise made concerning a coming Messiah? Give the scripture reference.

2. What elderly man reflected the expectation of the Jews of the coming Messiah?

3. Give an illustration that shows that Jesus knew He was the Messiah in His early years.

4. Give one illustration of Jesus' claim to be the long expected Messiah.

5. Give one scripture reference where the resurrected Lord proclaimed Himself to be the Messiah. _____

LESSON SEVEN

The Birth and Childhood of Jesus

INTRODUCTION:

In this lesson we are going to be talking about the birth and the childhood of Jesus Christ. First of all there will be a focus on some of the events that were connected with the birth of Christ. Nothing in history has any significance on our world compared to the birth of Christ.

LESSON TEXT: Those listed in the lesson outline

LESSON AIM: To see how the birth and childhood of Jesus relates to the history of Christianity.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Look at several meaningful events connected with the birth of Christ.
 2. Examine some reasons why Jesus was born into the world.
 3. See four things concerning the birth of Christ which gives meaning to Christianity.
 4. Learn some things about the childhood of Jesus that indicate His uniqueness.
-

EVENTS CONNECTED WITH THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

A. Events Before His Birth

There are several events that took place before His birth that were extremely significant, especially there were numerous prophecies of the birth recorded 500 to 1000 years before His birth.

1. Numerous prophecies of His birth.
Can you imagine someone 500 to 1000 years before you were born prophesying and saying where you were going to be born and how you were going to be born and the events concerning your birth. Well that is what happened with Jesus Christ.
 - a. **Isaiah 7:14**, *"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."*
 - b. **Micah 5:2**, *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."*
 - c. The prophecies became very specific, like *"a virgin will conceive and bear a son"* and like, *"he would be born in Bethlehem"*.
2. Preparations: Annunciation to Mary.

After the prophecies there came the time where preparations began to be made concerning the birth of Jesus Christ.

- a. Announcement by an angel. *“In the sixth month, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin’s name was Mary”* (Luke 1:26-27).
- b. After Mary received the news she went and visited with her cousin, then she made other preparation.
3. The trip to Bethlehem where Jesus would be born. It’s amazing these people lived in Nazareth and yet the Bible had prophesied that it was going to be in Bethlehem.
4. Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem.

In Luke 2:1-7, the scripture says, *“In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. (This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”* Now you see how that relates to Micah 5:2. He was going to be born in Bethlehem and so the Caesar, not knowing that he was fulfilling the will of God, issued a decree that everyone would have to go back to their own town and so Joseph and Mary go back to Joseph’s hometown, because he was of the lineage of David, to Bethlehem.

B. Events After His Birth. After His birth there were a number of other very significant events.

1. There was rejoicing in Heaven at the birth of Jesus Christ.
2. The angels appeared to the shepherds, bringing them this good news about the Savior born into the world. *But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord* (Luke 2:10-11).
3. The shepherds visited Jesus. They saw Joseph and Mary and they saw the baby. They glorified and praised God (Luke 2:20).
4. Visit of the wise men (Matthew 2:1-2).
 - a. The wise men did not come right after Jesus was born.
 - b. By the time they came, Joseph and Mary had already moved into a home and they came to that home to visit the Christ child.
5. Flight into Egypt (Matthew 2:13-23). Because of the wise men’s visit, Herod found out about the birth of Jesus and his intent was to kill Him. He wanted to destroy Jesus.
 - a. God warns Joseph and Mary. *So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son* (Matthew 2:14-15).
 - b. Going to Egypt fulfilled the prophecy of Hosea 11:1 that God would

call His Son our of Egypt. God, through His prophets, made known beforehand what was going to happen.

6. Return from Egypt (Matthew 2:19-23). They came back to the city of Nazareth where Jesus would grow up in His childhood.

WHY JESUS WAS BORN

There is a tremendous need for us to understand why Jesus was born into the world.

A. He Was Born to Reveal God to the World (John 1:1-18)

No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father's side, has made him known. (John 1:18).

1. Christ came to reveal the nature of God the Father. If you want to know about God the Father, you need to come to know Jesus Christ. You will learn the characteristics and the heart of the Father through Jesus Christ.
 - a. God is infinitely holy and will put away sin.
 - b. God is merciful and will forgive sin.
 - c. God is just and will punish sin.
 - d. God is love and is loving toward the sinner. *"This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins"* (1 John 4:9-10).
2. He came to reveal the will of God to us.
 - a. **John 8:31-32**, *"To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*
 - 1) If you know the truth, the truth will set you free.
 - 2) Now many people today are looking at that and saying that Jesus is that truth, and certainly Jesus is truth the Bible says.
 - 3) He is also talking about a body of truth, a teaching of truth, and He says that if you learn and obey my teaching, then that will set you free, that will change your life and that is part of the purpose for Jesus Christ coming into the world.
 - b. **Romans 1:16**, *"I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile."*

NOTE: If we learn and listen to the word of God, we can find salvation for our souls. Christ didn't come into the world to rearrange all the political systems, to heal every single person that He came in contact with, to right every wrong that was in the world. Those kind of things are still in the world, but one thing that Jesus Christ did come to deal with and He could deal with in an individual's life, He came to save a person from sin.

B. He Was Born to Save the World From Sin

1. The testimony of Gabriel and Jesus. *"She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins"* (Matthew 1:21). *"For the Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost"* (Luke 19:10).

2. The testimony of Paul. *"Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners--of whom I am the worst"* (1 Timothy 1:15).

C. He Was Born to Conquer Death

1. Jesus defeated Satan in His death on the cross (Hebrews 2:14-16). *"Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil-- and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants."*
2. Jesus conquered death by His resurrection. *"I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades"* (Revelation 1:18).

D. He Was Born to Set a Perfect Example

1. Christ set an example in service (John 13:15). *"I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you."*
2. Christ set an example in suffering (1 Peter 2:21-22). *"To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth."*

SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRIST'S BIRTH

A. It Proves His Incarnation. He came into the world by the gracious means of God.

1. The word incarnation means the gracious voluntary act of the Son of God in assuming a human body and human nature.
 - a. He came and He became a part of us.
 - b. He took on human form. That is the idea of incarnation.
2. He would be called "Immanuel" according to Matthew 1:23. *"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a Son, and they will call him Immanuel"* --which means, *"God with us."* That expresses the idea of Him coming into the world to take on the form of man.

B. It Also Demonstrates His Deity

1. *"God sent forth his Son, born of woman..."* What relationship did Jesus Christ have with God? It says that Jesus Christ was God's Son.
 - a. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God"*
 - b. The Word came and made His dwelling place among us. That was Jesus Christ. He was God
 - c. *"But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons"* (Galatians 4:4-5).
2. This divine "Word" that "was God" was made flesh (John 1:1-3). *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made without Him nothing has been made."*

- a. Jesus' relation to creation. Jesus Christ was involved in the creation of the world; it was by His hand that these things were made.
- b. Jesus' relation to humanity. *"And the Word became flesh and made His dwelling place among us."*
- c. Jesus' relation to the Father. *"We have seen His glory, the glory of the one and only who came from the Father, full of grace and truth."*

C. It Makes Possible for Him to Be the Savior

- 1. Jesus is Savior because of His deity and His coming into the world. Jesus *"came into the world to save sinners."* That was His purpose (1 Timothy 1:15). His coming into the world was essential in the mind of God to save the world from sin.
- 2. When born, Christ was announced as "a Savior" (Luke 2:11).

D. It Brings Great Joy to the World. The reason there is great joy is because of what Jesus was going to accomplish in His life.

- 1. When born, the angels pronounced that Jesus had brought *"Good tidings of great joy to all people"* (Luke 2:10). Abraham was told that his seed, someone born in his line, would be a blessing to all the earth.
- 2. At His birth, all worshiped and adored Christ (Luke 2:13-14). We are happy when Christ saves us.

HIS GROWING UP YEARS

The birth of Christ was significant to us, but He also had a childhood that was very special.

A. His Childhood Is Basically Passed over with Little Mention

From age 12 through 30 Jesus was learning and growing. He was being respectful of and honoring His earthly parents and His heavenly father.

B. Some Things He Was Learning

- 1. He was learning and developing like other children. *"And the child grew and became strong, He was filled with wisdom and the grace of God was upon Him"* (Luke 2:40). *"Then He went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them, but His mother treasured all these things in her heart and Jesus grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and men"* (v. 51). Jesus was growing in a really very well rounded life.
 - a. He grew in wisdom in His intellectual nature. He was growing strong in His ability to reason and to understand and to make good decisions.
 - b. He grew in stature. He was growing physically the way He should.
 - c. He grew in relationship to God; He grew religiously.
 - d. He grew in relationship to man; He grew socially.
- 2. He was learning in other ways as well.
 - a. He had learned to read (Luke 4:16). Jesus was accustomed to getting up in the synagogue and reading the scriptures before the people.
 - b. He learned to write (John 8:6).
 - c. He was learning a trade. His father, by trade, was a carpenter. Jesus grew up as a carpenter's son, (Mark 6:3), and thus was learning the trade of His father.

- d. He was learning to observe His world.
 - 1) He talked about a number of things like the fox in Matthew 8:12.
 - 2) He talked about the lilies of the field and how they grow (Luke 12:27).
 - 3) He talked about farmers using them as an example to us in Luke 8.
 - 4) He watched neighbors and saw them lose things and used that as an illustration how a woman would lose a coin and how precious it was to her and how she would sweep the whole house (Luke 15).
- 3. He was learning to live in a family, being obedient to His parents (Luke 6:3).

NOTE: We need to learn the value of family and parents and children getting along. We can find direction and encouragement in our lives if we will look at the model childhood of Jesus Christ. So many of us want to go on out and live our lives the way we want to live instead of taking direction from the one who is the Savior of the world, the one who knows exactly how to live. I would encourage you to look at the life of Jesus Christ, understand His childhood, understand His birth and learn to know more about Him.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SEVEN:

1. What two prophets among others prophesied Jesus Birth?

2. Did the wise men visit Jesus in the stable? _____ If not where?

3. Jesus was born to:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

4. The significance of Christ's birth was:

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

LESSON EIGHT

Jesus' Sinless Humanity

INTRODUCTION:

If you were a person who was perfect, who had never sinned, then I could trust you in every thing you said and did. I do not have anyone in my personal acquaintance who is this way nor do you. This is one of the unique things which is true of Jesus. He was completely righteous in all He did and said. This has some incredible implications about Jesus, about the Bible, and about what you and I can trust and believe.

LESSON TEXT: The scriptures listed in the study notes.

LESSON AIM: To see that although the Christ became flesh He claimed to be the Son of God and sinless in His humanity.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Take note of three groups of people/beings who testify to the sinless nature of Jesus Christ.
 2. See that a sinless sacrifice was necessary to accomplish the eternal purpose of God in reconciling man back to Himself.
-

THE SINLESS NATURE OF JESUS CHRIST

A. Christ Testified to His Sinlessness

1. The confidence Jesus had in His sinless life (John 8:46). *"Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?"* This is such a unique statement. I could never ask this of my enemies or my friends for they know and can point out sin in my life.
2. Satan had no hold on Christ (John 14:30). *"I will not speak with you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on me."*
3. Jesus never had to ask for pardon because He never sinned. He never had to repent of personal sins.
 - a. If Christ was not sinless, then all of His claims are invalid.
 - b. If Christ is not sinless, then the claims of the Bible concerning Him are false.
4. While dying on the cross He prayed, "Father, forgive them," but never, "Father, forgive me."
5. The challenge flung out to His carping critics by the Lord still remains unanswered. His sinlessness was unimpeachable or they would have brought a charge against Him. Even hell could bring no accusation.

B. Christ's Enemies Testified to His Sinlessness. Six witnesses to the sinless nature of Christ.

1. **The Pharisees** tried for three years to find fault with Jesus.
 - a. They could find no sin in His life or flaw in His character.
 - b. They themselves had to sin in order to convict Him. They resorted to lying and perjury in order to get Him.
2. **Pilate and his wife** (Matthew 27:19, 24).
 - a. The declaration of Pilate's wife (Matthew 27:19). "*Don't have anything to do with that **innocent man**, for I have suffered a great deal today in a dream because of him.*"
 - b. Pilate's unanswerable question (Matthew 27:23). "*Why? **What crime has he committed?***" asked Pilate."
3. **Judas** (Matthew 27:4). "*I have sinned,*" he said, "*for **I have betrayed innocent blood.***"
 "*Nothing deserving death has been done by him*" (Luke 23:15).
4. **Herod** (Luke 23:14-15). "*and said to them, 'You brought me this man as one who was inciting the people to rebellion. I have examined him in your presence and **have found no basis for your charges against him. Neither has Herod, for he sent him back to us; as you can see, he has done nothing to deserve death.***"
5. **Centurion** (Luke 23:47). "*The centurion, seeing what had happened, praised God and said, '**Surely this was a righteous man.***'"
6. **The demons** (Mark 1:24). "*What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are--**the Holy One of God!***"

C. The Followers of Jesus Testified to His Sinlessness

1. **John the Baptist** (Matthew 3:14). "*But John tried to deter Him, saying, '**I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?***'"
2. **The apostle Peter** (1 Peter 2:22). "***He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.***"
3. **The apostle John** (1 John 3:5). "*But you know that he appeared so that he might take away our sins. **And in him is no sin.***"
4. **The apostle Paul** (2 Corinthians 5:21). "*God made **him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.***"
5. **The Hebrew writer** (Hebrews 4:15). "*For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--**yet was without sin.***"
Hebrews 7:26, "*Such a high priest meets our need--**one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens.***"

THE NECESSITY OF JESUS' SINLESS NATURE

A. His Sinlessness Allowed Him to Atone for Sin

1. An unblemished sacrifice required. The law of God concerning sacrifice always required an unblemished sacrifice (Exodus 12:5). "*The animals you choose must be year-old males **without defect**, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats.*"
2. Christ was an unblemished sacrifice (Hebrews 9:14). "*How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit **offered himself unblemished to God**, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!*"

NOTE: Sin is offensive to our God, and He required a sinless offering to atone for man. God not only required such, but He was His own demand.

B. The Significance of Christ's Sinless Nature. If Jesus had not been sinless:

1. He would not have fulfilled Old Testament passages concerning the Messiah (Isaiah 53:1-12).
2. Christ would have destroyed God's purposes and plan. He would have needed to be saved instead of being the atonement for others.

C. His Sinlessness Is the Example Man Can and Should Try to Follow

1. Paul told Christians to imitate his example only as long as he imitated that of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).
2. The perfect example of Christ inspires us to higher heights. Could we be totally satisfied in following an imperfect example?
3. The steps of Christ are our guide (1 Peter 2:21-22).

CONCLUSION:

- A. Jesus was sinless. He did not lie. The Bible says that God does not lie (Titus 1:2). *"a faith and knowledge resting on the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time."* That being the case look at some of his claims:
 1. **Jesus claimed to be the Son of God** (John 10:36). *"what about the one whom the Father set apart as his very own and sent into the world? Why then do you accuse me of blasphemy because I said, 'I am God's Son'?"* Was He a liar?
 2. **God claimed Jesus was His Son** (Matthew 17:5). *"While he was still speaking, a bright cloud enveloped them, and a voice from the cloud said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased. Listen to him!'"* Was God a liar?
 3. **Jesus claimed to be the only way to the Father** (John 14:6). *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."* Was Jesus a liar?
- B. If Jesus was sinless and He told no lies. Then we must pay attention to His claims. Paul says in **Romans 3:23** *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."* All men have sinned but Jesus claimed to be and was **THE SINLESS SON OF GOD**.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON EIGHT:

1. List three people/groups who testified to the sinless nature of Christ.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

2. List six people/beings who did not believe in Christ and yet testified to his sinless nature.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____

3. What are two consequences if Christ is not sinless?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____

3. What is the implication of Jesus claiming sinlessness?

4. What is the significance of His enemies admitting sinlessness?

LESSON NINE

Miracles Beyond Description

INTRODUCTION:

In this lesson we are going to be talking about miracles beyond description. Many noted "Christian" scholars have questioned or denied the miracles of Jesus. Many non-believers have done the same thing. They say, "Well I don't believe in the miracles of Jesus, but He was a great man and teacher." The problem is they do not realize the implications of what they are saying. Let's look at the miracles of Jesus and in viewing them we will see the problem of making such assertions.

LESSON TEXT: The scriptures in the study notes.

LESSON AIM: To see the miraculous environment in which Jesus demonstrated His deity and showed proof that He was the Son of God.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Learn of three different groups of people who verified that Jesus really did perform miraculous deeds.
 2. See the extent of His miraculous powers demonstrated in the variety of miracles He did.
 3. Consider the implications of the statement made by unbelievers that: "Jesus was a good man but was not the Son of God."
 4. Remember four purposes of miracles performed by Christ and His apostles.
-

CHRIST PERFORMED MANY MIRACLES WHILE HE WAS UPON THE EARTH

A. The Proof of His Miracles

1. They were testified to by **His disciples and friends**.
2. They were admitted by **His enemies**.
 - a. The chief priests and Pharisees (John 11:47-48). "*Here is this man performing many miraculous signs. If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, and then the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.*"
 - b. They assigned the power to do miracles to Satan (Matthew 12:24). "*But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, 'It is only by Beelzebub, the prince of demons, that this fellow drives out demons.'*"
 - c. They were not denying the miracles of Jesus. They were admitting that those miracles did take place.
3. They were admitted by people who were basically **neutral to Jesus**.

- a. Nicodemus (John 3:1-2). *“Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.”*
- b. This man wasn’t an enemy of Jesus, neither was he a friend/disciple, but he acknowledges that Jesus Christ was performing these miracles.

B. The Variety of His Miracles

1. He **healed people of disease** (Matthew 8:1-4; 9:1-6; 9:20-22).
2. He **opened blind eyes** (Matthew 9:27-31; 20:30-34; Mark 8:22).
3. He **unstopped deaf ears** (Mark 7:31-37; Matthew 11:5).
4. He **unloosed dumb tongues** (Mark 7:31-37; Matthew 15:30-31).
5. He **caused the lame to walk** (Matthew 11:5; 15:30-31).
6. He **fed the hungry** (Matthew 14:15-21; 15:32-39).
7. He **calmed the storm** (Matthew 8:23-27; Mark 4:35-41).
8. He **cast out devils** (Mark 1:23-27; 3:10-12).
9. He **healed withered hands** (Mark 3:1-5).
10. He **caused those stooped to stand erect** (Luke 13:11-17).
11. He **raised the dead** (Matthew 11:5; John 11:43-44; Luke 8:49f, 7:11f.).

NOTE: Jesus performed miracles publicly, before both friend and foe, and on many occasions. Thousands were able to examine His miracles closely and friend and enemy alike, admitted that He performed them.

C. The Implications of His Miracles. If Christ did not perform miracles:

1. **His character and integrity are destroyed.**
 - a. He is an **imposter**.
 - b. He is a **deceiver**. He claimed to perform miracles but didn’t?
 - c. He is a **liar**. He said that He performed miracles but did not. When a person says He did not perform miracles, they need to understand the implications of what they are saying?

NOTE: The clear truth is if Jesus claimed to be the Son of God and do these things and did not do them He is neither a good man nor a reliable teacher.

2. **The New Testament is discredited.** It repeatedly says that Christ performed miracles. If the New Testament is wrong on this, it is unreliable on all that it teaches.

NOTE: We cannot, as the Modernist says, “accept the teachings of Christ” and then deny His miracles.

THE PURPOSE OF CHRIST’S MIRACLES

A. To Prove His Identity and Deity

1. The intent of His miracles – to convince people that He was the Christ the Son of God (John 20:30-31). *“Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,*

and that by believing you may have life in his name.”

2. The results of His miracles – many people believed.
 - a. *“Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many people saw the miraculous signs he was doing and **believed in his name**” (John 2:23).*
 - b. *“Then the father realized that this was the exact time at which Jesus had said to him, “Your son will live.” So **he and all his household believed**” (John 4:53).*

B. To Confirm the Word of God

1. Jesus combines miracles with His teaching and preaching in order to convince people that what He said came from God. *“Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people” (Matthew 4:23).*
2. When the apostles went out preaching, they confirmed the word by miracles. *“Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it” (Mark 16:20).*
3. Why did God’s word need confirming?
 - a. The New Testament gospel was not yet revealed. It had to be authenticated as true to convince people that it was a divine message from God.
 - b. If we lived in Old Testament days, without 1,900 years of Christian teaching and history behind us; if we, like the Jews of Christ’s day, were looking for the Messiah to appear; would we be convinced that a certain person was the Messiah if He had no miracles to prove His deity and confirm His Word?

C. To Reveal the Character of Christ

1. In His miracles, we see the compassion, tenderness, concern, love, sympathy, and consideration for human need that was such a great trait of Christ’s life.
2. In His teachings, Christ tells us what He was; in His miracles, He shows us what He was.

D. To Illustrate the Power of Christ

1. Jesus’ power over the wind and sea (Mark 4:35-41). Demonstrated His **power over nature**.
 - a. What could men do in this storm? (Mark 4:37).
 - 1) What began to happen to the boat?
 - 2) What was the disciples reaction?
 - b. What did Jesus do to help? (Mark 4:39-41).
 - 1) What happened when Jesus said, “Quiet, be still”?
 - 2) How did the disciples feel?
 - c. Who is this, that even the wind and sea obey Him? (Mark 4:41).
 - 1) If Jesus can do things that man cannot do, He must be more than a man.
 - 2) If Jesus really could help His frightened disciples, would it be possible to believe that He can help us too?

2. The power of Jesus over the demon possessed man (Mark 5:1-20). Demonstrated His **power over the spirit world**.
 - a. What did men do to help this demon-possessed man? (Mark 5:3-4).
 - 1) Men had chained him in the tombs.
 - 2) Were the men able to tame him?
 - b. What did Jesus do to help? (Mark 5:6-15).
 - 1) What did the man do when he saw Jesus?
 - 2) After Jesus sends the demons out, the man is found sitting (not running), clothed (not naked), and in his right mind (not crazy).
 - c. Who is this who even has power over demons?
 - 1) If Jesus can do things that man cannot do, He must be more than a man.
 - 2) If Jesus really could help this miserable man, would it be possible to believe that He can help us too?
3. The power of Jesus over the in-firmed woman (Mark 5:25-34). Demonstrated His **power over sickness**.
 - a. What could men do to help this woman? (Mark 5:25-28).
 - 1) She had spent all of her money on doctors and was worse.
 - 2) What did she do when she saw Jesus?
 - b. What did Jesus do to help? (Mark 5:29-34).
 - 1) When she touches Jesus, she is cured.
 - 2) What does Jesus say about her cure? Her faith had made her whole and she was now freed from her suffering.
 - c. Who is this, who even has power over disease?
 - 1) If Jesus can do things that man cannot do, He must be more than a man.
 - 2) If Jesus could really help this ill woman, would it be possible to believe that He can help us too?
4. The power of Jesus to raise the dead girl (Mark 5:35-43). Demonstrated His **power over death**.
 - a. What could man do for this dead girl? (Mark 5:35-40).
 - 1) The mourners had already come to weep.
 - 2) What did they do when Jesus said she was just asleep?
 - b. What did Jesus do to help? (Mark 5:41-42).
 - 1) What happened when Jesus told the girl to “get up”?
 - 2) How did her parents feel?
 - c. Who is this, who even has power over death?
 - 1) If Jesus can do things that man cannot do, He must be more than a man.
 - 2) If Jesus could really help this dead girl, would it be possible to believe that He can help us too?

CONCLUSION:

Notice again John 20:30-31: “*Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. 31 But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*”

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON NINE:

1. List three groups of people whose testimony give proof of the veracity of Jesus' miracles.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____

2. What two things are true if Jesus did not perform miracles?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____

3. Give four statements which show the purpose of Jesus' miracles.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____

4. Explain how Jesus' teaching was confirmed and why it needed to be confirmed.

5. What four illustrations does the teacher use to show the power of Christ/
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____

6. Over what four things does this demonstrate the power of Christ?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____

7. What are the implications of saying: "I believe that Jesus is a good man and a good teacher but I do not believe He is the Son of God"?

LESSON TEN

Compassion, What the World Needs

INTRODUCTION:

Iwant you to now look at the idea of compassion, what the world really needs. A Siberian University professor once said: “Compassion is a sign of inward spirituality.” Sometimes people look at compassion and they think that compassion is a weakness. But it really is not. It is really a strength within people, especially strength in their spirituality. “Compassion is a virtue . . . that comes very close to the very heart of moral awareness, to seeing one’s neighbor as another self.” That was a quote by William Bennett in The Book Of Virtues, in 1993. Compassion is something that is very vital to our lives, to our country, to our families. “Compassion (is) a natural feeling . . . that hurries us without reflection to the relief of those who are in distress.” (Jean-Jacques Rousseau) We need to be willing to always be compassionate people.

Jesus, was a man of compassion! He was sinless, but at the same time, He did not allow that sinlessness to leave Him without compassion toward other people who were sinners. Who is the most compassionate person you know? Well when you think about and reflect upon that person that you think is a very compassionate person, ask yourself the question, “Do you see that person’s compassion as weakness or do you simply see it as tenderness and caring?” Jesus’ compassion was not a weak tenderness. It was often the response of deep sympathy stirred by anger and love. Sometimes it was anger at the mistreatment of other people, even at times looking at some of the religious people of His day. He would look at them and see the way they were mistreating people and He would become angry because He felt compassion for those people. Anger at disrespect for the personhood of people was a part of what Jesus saw. Anger at the lack of love some had who called themselves religious people. The question: Is it enough to be angry when we see people hurt and in need? Anger is an energy which should motivate us to help the people who are suffering.

LESSON TEXT: The passages listed in our study notes.

LESSON AIM: To illustrate the great need of compassion in the world and the nature of a compassionate God and Jesus Christ.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Learn that the compassion of God is clearly demonstrated in the life and actions of His Son, Jesus Christ.
 2. See that the compassion of Jesus was directed toward the down and out, those who were desperately in need of compassion.
-

JESUS REVEALED THE COMPASSIONATE NATURE OF GOD

A. The Importance of a Correct View of God

1. Many people have a distorted view of God?
 - a. When you look through the wrong end of a telescope you suddenly see everything very small, with a distorted view.
 - b. When you look in the right end of a telescope, it makes everything very large and gives you a distorted view of things.
 - c. People see God maybe totally as a God who is a judge; but they don't really see God for who He really is.
 - d. You may see Him looking that way as a very weak God. You may see Him very small. You may see Him as one who seemingly doesn't care or who can't care for people.
 - e. Whenever you view Jesus, it helps to get a better view and to see a very crisp and clear view of the Father.
2. Your view of God affects your life. That is why Jesus is concerned about people having a correct view of the Father.

B. Jesus Illustrated the Compassion of God in Parables (Luke 15:11-20)

1. Daymon Runyan, the modern short story writer said this story "moved me to tears." Was it because he saw in it the incredible compassion of God?
2. What Jesus teaches us about the Father through this parable.
 - a. The Father was approachable (v. 11).
 - b. The Father released what He loved (v. 12b).
 - c. The Father's love was unconditional (v. 20b).
 - d. The Father's love was extravagant (vs. 21-23).
3. What Jesus teaches us about the lessons the son learned?
 - a. He learned that he was following his own youthful wisdom (vs. 11-12).
 - b. He learned by experience that wrong decisions have consequences (vs. 13-16).
 - c. He learned the hurt of having to change (vs. 17-19).
 - d. He learned that life without the Father is no life at all (vs. 20).
4. A quality which is very close to compassion is mercy.
 - a. The root word for mercy means "womb"; "to climb inside the skin of another."
 - b. It is used to depict the deep compassion a mother has for her child.
 - c. God's nature is to act towards people, in deep compassion, expressed outwardly in a helping action.

JESUS DEMONSTRATED THE COMPASSION OF GOD

A. Through His Desire to Understand What We Go Through

1. Jesus experienced the weakness of humanity. *"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin"* (Hebrews 4:15).
 - a. Is it a sign of weakness to cry?
 - b. Through the years, what have you learned from your tears?

2. Through the historical Jesus coming in flesh, He understood the suffering, futility, hurt, grief and hardship of mankind.

B. Through the Way He Lived among Us. *“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, 19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor” (Luke 4:18-19).*

1. He is interested in people! The man with economic burdens, political hardships, social strugglers, physical disease, and spiritual starvation.
2. Jesus tells us through this parable to care about the struggles of others.
*“But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hands of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. **But a Samaritan**, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he **saw him, he took pity on him.** He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’ “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, **“Go and do likewise.”**” (Luke 10:29-37).*

JESUS HAD COMPASSION ON SINFUL PEOPLE

A. We Need to Imitate the Compassion of Jesus. How do we treat people who have made poor decisions and have done foolish things. What is the easy way to treat these people that cost the least amount of involvement?

1. Punish them or ignoring them by “passing by on the other side”?
2. Become their friend, counseling them and helping them recover?
3. What would YOU do?

B. Jesus’ Compassion Toward A Woman Caught in Adultery

1. The occasion: *“At dawn he appeared again in the temple courts, where all the people gathered around him, and he sat down to teach them.*
2. The conspiracy. *The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to Jesus, “Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?” They were using this question as a trap, in order to have a basis for accusing him.*
3. Jesus’ response. *But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, “If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.” Again he stooped down and wrote on the ground.*

4. Guilt and conviction. *At this, those who heard began to go away one at a time, the older ones first, until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there.*
5. Compassion and instruction. *Jesus straightened up and asked her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" "No one, sir," she said. "Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. "Go now and leave your life of sin" (John 8:2-11).*
6. Note the difference in treatment of this lady by Jesus and the Pharisees.
 - a. Pharisees:
 - 1) brought her as a captive.
 - 2) regarded her as an end to their goal (trapping Jesus.)
 - 3) saw the wrong of her past.
 - 4) were eager to stone her.
 - 5) had wrongs in their own lives.
 - b. Jesus:
 - 1) questioned her as a free person.
 - 2) respected her as a human being.
 - 3) saw hope for her future.
 - 4) wanted to save her.
 - 5) sinless, He forgave her.

CONCLUSION:

God is compassionate. He looks for those who need Him and for those who think they don't need Him. Jesus, God's Son, was truly a man of compassion reflecting the very nature of God.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TEN:

1. What teachings of Jesus especially illustrated the compassion of God?

2. How did Jesus demonstrate compassion?

1) _____

2) _____

3. How did Jesus view sinful people?

4. What four things did Jesus teach about the compassion of God in Luke 15:11-20?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

LESSON ELEVEN

The Master Teacher

INTRODUCTION:

Jesus Christ is truly the master teacher. He never went to school to learn teaching techniques, and yet He could hold audiences spellbound. Jesus had perfect knowledge of the subject on which He spoke. He also had perfect knowledge about the people to whom He spoke. Cf. John 6:38; 17:3-4; 19:30; 2:25. A good teacher strives to know the needs and wishes of his students. Teachers today should strive to imitate Christ's methods of teaching.

Christ was described by Nicodemus as a "teacher sent from God" (John 3:2). Christ's greatest witness to what He taught was His own life. A teacher has to live what he teaches. Christ proved His teachings by His life.

Jesus believed what He taught. A teacher must be convinced of what he is teaching or his pupils will see right through him. Jesus knew the Scriptures, and this was His source of power. He depended on God's word, not man's opinion. We need to follow this example of trust in God's word. Jesus loved His students. "People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care."

LESSON TEXT: Scriptures in the Study Notes

LESSON AIM: To learn that Christ is a master teacher and gives us a pattern for us to follow in our teaching.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Discover that Christ taught on the level of the understanding of the people.
 2. See that Christ used every opportunity to teach in all circumstances and in every place.
 3. Come to know several different methods Christ used to teach people.
 4. Finally, you will learn of the results Christ had when He taught.
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CHRIST TAUGHT ON THE LEVEL OF THE PEOPLE

A. Jesus Taught in a Simple Way. He did not try to overwhelm them with His perfect knowledge.

1. He kept His teaching simple so that people could understand.
 - a. **Matthew 21:45**, "And when the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, *they understood* that He was speaking about them."
 - b. **Luke 20:19**, "And the scribes and the chief priests tried to lay hands on Him that very hour, and they feared the people; for *they understood* that He spoke this parable against them."

2. There is an evident, clear, direct simplicity in His teaching.
3. His teachings dealt with the reality of Life. Examples:
 - a. A man who thinks of nothing but his barns (Luke 12).
 - b. A glutton who has no feeling for the hungry outside his door (Luke 16).
 - c. A youthful man who ignores his father's wisdom, takes his inheritance, disgraces his father's house by his wild living (Luke 15).
 - d. A lazy worker who buries his master's investment (Matthew 25).
 - e. A heartless priest who ignores an injured man (Luke 10).

B. Jesus Taught as One Having Authority

1. He spoke with authority (Mark 1:22; Matthew 7:28-29).
2. His word was with great authority (Luke 4:32). *"They were amazed at his teaching, because **his message had authority.**"*

CHRIST USED EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO TEACH

A. Jesus Was Constantly Teaching People

1. **Matthew 4:23**, *"Jesus went throughout Galilee, **teaching in their synagogues**, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people."*
2. **Mark 1:39**, *"So he traveled throughout Galilee, **preaching in their synagogues** and driving out demons."*
3. **Mark 3:1**, *"Another time **he went into the synagogue**, and a man with a shriveled hand was there."*
4. **Matthew 26:55**, *"At that time Jesus said to the crowd, 'Am I leading a rebellion, that you have come out with swords and clubs to capture me? Every day **I sat in the temple courts teaching**, and you did not arrest me.'"*

B. Jesus Taught People under All Circumstances and in Many Different Places

1. In the synagogue (Matthew 4:23; Mark 3:1; Luke 4:16, 20).
2. From a mountain-side (Matthew 5:1-2).
3. While in a boat (Matthew 8:23).
4. While walking through a grain field (Mark 2:23-28).
5. In desert places (Mark 6:31-34).
6. In the temple (Mark 12:35; Luke 19:47; John 8:2).
7. In homes (John 3:1-2).
8. By a well (John 4:6-30).
9. He taught whenever and wherever people would listen.

CHRIST USED MANY DIFFERENT METHODS WHEN HE TAUGHT PEOPLE

A. Jesus' Teaching Methods

1. He used a sermon in Matthew 5-7.
2. He alluded to history (Matthew 11:20-24).
3. He taught by referring to things people understood (Matthew 13:3ff).
4. He used parables (Matthew 13).
5. He used the method of illustration (Matthew 18:1ff).

6. He employed the question and answer method (Matthew 21:23-27; 22:15-22).
7. He taught by asking questions (Mark 11:28-33; 12:35-37).
8. He referred to tradition (Matthew 15:1-20; Mark 7:1-13).
9. He used contemporary events (Luke 13:1-5).
10. He told stories (Luke 15).

B. Jesus Used the Method of Teaching That Was Best Suited to the Person to Whom He Was Speaking. He realized all people cannot be taught the same way.

1. He openly exposed and condemned hypocrites (Matthew 23).
2. He used compassion and love on some (Mark 6:34).
3. He taught as people were able to understand (Mark 4:33).
4. He taught some by comparison (Luke 7:44-46).
5. He talked about the “water of life” to the thirsty (John 4:7-15).
6. He talked about the “bread of life” to the hungry (John 6:31-35).
7. He talked on the dangers of riches to those who were covetous (Luke 12:13-21).
8. He spoke of the “new birth” to the moral man (John 3:1-8).
9. Jesus always told people what they needed to know.
 - a. Not what they especially wanted to hear.
 - b. He never told a person he was alright when the person was not right in the sight of God. Cf. 2 Timothy 4:3-4.

CHRIST HAD RESULTS WHEN HE TAUGHT

A. People Were Astonished at Him

1. **Matthew 7:28-29**, “*When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law.*”
2. **Matthew 13:54**, “*Coming to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. ‘Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?’ they asked.*”
3. **Matthew 22:33**, “*When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching.*”
4. **Mark 11:18**, “*The chief priests and the teachers of the law heard this and began looking for a way to kill him, for they feared him, because the whole crowd was amazed at his teaching.*”
5. **Luke 4:32**, “*They were amazed at his teaching, because his message had authority.*”
6. **John 7:46**, “*No one ever spoke the way this man does,*” the guards declared.

B. People Paid Attention to the Teachings of Jesus

Luke 19:48, “*Yet they could not find any way to do it; because all the people hung on his words.*”

C. People Were Silenced by His Teaching (Matthew 22:34, 46; Mark 12:34;

Luke 20:40)**D. People Praised His Teaching (Some Reluctantly)**

1. **Matthew 13:54**, “Coming to his hometown, he began teaching the people in their synagogue, and they were amazed. **“Where did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers?”** they asked.”
2. **Mark 12:28**, “One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had **given them a good answer**, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”
3. **Luke 20:39**, “Some of the teachers of the law responded, **“Well said, teacher!”**”
4. **John 7:15**, “The Jews were amazed and asked, “How did this man **get such learning without having studied?**”
5. There was never a time when Jesus did not answer a person well.

CONCLUSION:

1. Christ was indeed a teacher come from God.
2. It is too bad that all of mankind will not listen to what He has to say.
3. Will you listen to Jesus?

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON ELEVEN:

1. What two things characterized the teaching of Jesus which reflect the fact that He taught on the level of the people?
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
2. List at least eight different places Jesus taught people.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
 - 7) _____
 - 8) _____
3. List five examples that reflect the fact that Jesus dealt with the reality of life.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____

4. List eight different places and circumstances where Jesus taught.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
 - 7) _____
 - 8) _____

5. Give 10 methods by which Jesus taught people.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
 - 7) _____
 - 8) _____
 - 9) _____
 - 10) _____

6. List nine (9) things which shows that Jesus always taught what was best to the people He was teaching.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
 - 7) _____
 - 8) _____
 - 9) _____

LESSON TWELVE

The Ethics of Jesus

INTRODUCTION:

How do we solve problems today. Problems like: A family discovers that their son has been buying clothing because he has been getting money from items he has been stealing from work. A father paces the floor nervously. He is ringing his hands. He has just been informed that his 15 year old daughter is pregnant and she is not married. What went wrong? A single parent is distraught because her son is using vulgar language. Upon what basis can she ask him to stop? Where can she draw the line? A couple want a divorce on the ground there is no more love in the relationship. On what basis would you counsel them to stay together and work things out? Upon what basis is a thing determined as moral or immoral--ethical or unethical? Who determines what is right and what is wrong? Society? The government? A ruler? Perhaps, man himself? **Jeremiah 10:23, *I know, O LORD, that a man's life is not his own; it is not for man to direct his steps. Shall the one who is looking for guidance become his own guide?***

Today too many people believe that ethics are only for the weak. Listen to this quote that a college junior, Michael Moore, wrote in "Cheating 101." "Ethics? What's that? Our world is a fast-paced survival-of-the-fittest working zoo where the fast on their feet survive while the ethical perish. Successful people in any profession make the necessary steps, moves, and decisions to get the job done. They separate ethics from duty. You must do the same." These people live by the "**I Deserve It**" Creed: Whatever I want, I need. Whatever I need, I deserve. Whatever I deserve, I have a right to have – and I'll do anything to get it. Jesus not only taught ethics, He showed us the source of ethics and lived ethics in His life as our example.

LESSON TEXT: The scriptures listed in the notes.

LESSON AIM: To instill in a person the critically important characteristics of moral purity and ethical honesty.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Learn a working definition of "ethics" and see that it involves commitment from an individual to do what is right.
 2. Discover that there are two things which motivate human behavior.
 3. Consider that Jesus gives the only standard of morals and integrity that is constant and right.
 4. See that man is capable of making moral choices and expected by God to follow His example of making right choices.
-

ETHICS DEFINED AND EXAMINED

- A. A Simple Definition of Ethics?** “Standards of duty and virtue that indicate how we should behave.”
- B. There Are Two Aspects of Ethics**
 - 1. The **ability to discern right from wrong**, good from evil.
 - 2. **Commitment to do what is right**, regardless of temptations and pressures to do otherwise.

NOTE: Ethics are not about the way things are, but about the way things **ought** to be. Ethics are about right and wrong and how an honorable person should behave.

MOTIVATIONS FOR HUMAN BEHAVIOR

- A. Two Things Which Motivate Human Behavior**
 - 1. Concern for the **negative** consequences.
 - a. Will I be punished? Will I suffer as a consequence? Lose my job?
 - b. Our motivation or reason for behavior is determined by FEAR.
 - 2. Concern for **positive** consequences.
 - a. A child who obeys expecting a reward.
 - b. An employee who does not steal because he wants a better position.
- B. A Solid Belief System is Another Motivation for Moral Choice**
 - 1. A solid belief system – based on moral convictions or moral values. There is right and wrong.
 - 2. Jesus teaches that there is a higher power behind ethics. God is the reason why we do what we do. Jesus sets our example.

THE CHRISTIAN MODEL OR PARADIGM

- A. Definition of Paradigm:** Greek – “To show by example or model; an accepted or authorized standard.”
- B. What Makes the Difference in the Model People Follow?**
 - 1. The moral character of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the Christian’s model in morals and ethics.
 - 2. Not His commands or teachings alone.
 - a. His commands or teachings separated from Him lose all meaning.
 - b. His commands and teachings are rooted in His person. See: Matthew 5:11; 10:22.
 - c. He stands before the Christian as a moral standard.
 - d. Since Christ is Lord, then His words are authoritative. But, **His words were never meant to displace Him and become an external moral code.**
 - e. **Apart from Him, His words control us...Speaking to us in His person—they transform us.**

3. Transformed lives are the goal (Romans 12:1-2). *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship. **Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed** by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*

C. Only God and His Will Is a Reliable and Unchanging Standard

1. Holiness, light and love are inherent in His nature (1 Peter 1:16; 1 John 1:5-7; 1 John 4:8).
2. He is the ultimate authority (Romans 13:1). *“Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.”*
3. He is unchanging (Malachi 3:6; 2 Timothy 2:13).
4. He cannot lie (Hebrews 6:18).

D. Christ is the Only Perfect Example (1 Peter 2:21-22). *“To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. 22 “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”*

E. Christ Has ALL Authority (Matthew 28:18-20). *“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”*

F. The Basic Difference Between Most World Religions and Christianity

1. Christ is not concerned with controlling the ones converted to Him. He is concerned with transforming them into His image.
2. Transformation is the result of conversion – the change of moral character.
3. It is not simply a new outlook on life. It is a new birth! (John 3:3-5).
4. It is as radical as death! (Romans 6:3-4). It is an “into Christ” experience!
5. The Christian’s moral standard is a person!
6. A true Christian in his ethics and morals is one who displays the moral behavior of Jesus Christ.

MAN’S CAPABILITY OF MAKING CHRIST’S MORAL CHOICES

A. Man Was Made in the Image of God – Both Spiritually and Morally

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them” (Genesis 1:27).

B. Choices Made Determine the Kind of Life Lived. God did give us the right of choice. Everyone of us can choose to do good or chose to do evil. Choose to do right or choose to do wrong. It’s up to you.

1. God is distressed when we make wrong choices in our lives because He knows what would be better for us. He probably grieves at times.

2. God is thrilled when people make right choices.
 - a. Learn in your life to make right choices.
 - b. Wrong choices start a downward spiral and lead to other wrong choices.
 - c. Example: Lying does not stop at just one lie. Invariably, it takes us continually downward because we have to tell another lie to cover up another lie, or cover up another lie, or cover up another lie. Whereas, if we had made the choice to tell the truth and do what was right to begin with we wouldn't have had to do all this cover up down the line.
 - d. God is wanting us, and Jesus is wanting to teach us to have good, high ethical standards.

C. Jesus Taught and Lived Some Very High Ethical Standards (Matthew 5-7)

1. Becoming like God (5:3-8).
 - a. Blessed are the poor in spirit.
 - b. Blessed are those who mourn.
 - c. Blessed are the meek.
 - d. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.
 - e. Blessed are the merciful.
 - f. Blessed are the pure in heart.
2. Behaving like God (5:9-12).
 - a. Blessed are the peace makers.
 - b. Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness.
3. Living the way God does.
 - a. Murder (5:21,22).
 - b. Adultery (5:27-29).
 - c. Revenge (5:38-42).
 - d. Hating enemies (5:43-47).
 - e. Doing good things (6:1ff).
 - 1) Giving (6:2).
 - 2) Praying (6:5).
 - 3) Fasting (6:16).

CONCLUSION:

Many young people are turning to a higher standard of morals and ethics. I see them using these letters “**WWJD**” frequently on necklaces, t-shirts, etc. It’s meaning helps us to set the high standard we need in our society. It stands for “What Would Jesus Do?” To make choices on this basis you need to know Jesus and His teachings.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWELVE:

1. What are two aspects of Ethics?
1) _____
2) _____

2. Name two things which motivate human behavior and indicate which is the higher motivation.
1) _____
2) _____

3. Who/what is the Christian model/example for the correct behavior?

4. Complete the following sentences:
1) Since Jesus is Lord, then His words are _____
2) Apart from Him, His words _____, Speaking to us in His person they _____.
3) Only God and His will is a _____ and _____.

5. What great truth indicates that man is capable of making moral choices?

6. Illustrate the fact that wrong choices start a downward spiral and lead to other wrong choices.

7. What passage of scripture gives a summary of the high ethical standards give by Christ?

LESSON THIRTEEN

The Servant Philosophy

INTRODUCTION:

Jesus, in His teaching, turned many of the common teachings of the world upside down. Teachings like, hate your enemies. Jesus said in Matthew 5:43-44 *“You have heard it said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy,’ But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.”* Or the teaching on revenge. In Matthew 5:38-39 Jesus says, *“You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.”*

Man has always prided himself in his own wisdom but God’s wisdom is different and superior. Man thinks in terms of “winning at all costs,” “doing whatever is necessary to get ahead,” “power is supreme,” or “I would much rather be the one in charge than the lowly servant.” Man would never have come up with the idea of providing Christ as the perfect sacrifice for sin. That was God’s wisdom in doing that, and it was different than man’s wisdom. First Corinthians 1:21-25 says: *“For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe. Jews demand miraculous signs and Greeks look for wisdom, but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than man’s wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man’s strength.”*

In this lesson we want to look at one of the great teachings of Jesus – the Servant Philosophy. In it Jesus really reveals to us what we should be doing as far as leadership is concerned.

LESSON TEXT: Philippians 2:1-11; Matthew 20:20-28; Luke 22:24-27; John 13:1-17; Exodus 21:2-6.

LESSON AIM: To show that Jesus came as a servant and wants us to follow Him.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Discover true greatness is in “servant leadership”.
 2. Look into the life and teaching of Jesus to find out what He thinks of lording it over others.
 3. Learn that Jesus’ type of leadership is different from that of the world.
-

JESUS CAME AS A SERVANT (Philippians 2:1-11)

A. The Fact of His Servanthood

1. The Servant serving. Our attitude should be the same as that of Jesus (v. 5).
 - a. He did not consider greatness (equality with God) something to be held on to (v. 6).
 - b. He emptied Himself and became a servant to mankind (v. 7).
 - c. He was even willing to become obedient to death in order to save mankind (v. 8).
2. The Servant glorified. God glorified Him because of His obedience as a servant.

B. The Philosophy of Jesus on Being Servants

1. Jesus turned the concept of leadership upside down.
2. Most ideas of leadership teach Lordship.
 - a. "I am over you."
 - b. "You are my servant."
 - c. "You obey what I say."

C. Jesus Says the One Who Is Great Is the Servant of All

1. **Matthew 20:20-28**, *"Then the mother of Zebedee's sons came to Jesus with her sons and, kneeling down, asked a favor of him. 'What is it you want?' he asked. She said, 'Grant that one of these two sons of mine may sit at your right and the other at your left in your kingdom.' 'You don't know what you are asking,' Jesus said to them. 'Can you drink the cup I am going to drink?' 'We can,' they answered. Jesus said to them, 'You will indeed drink from my cup, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared by my Father.' When the ten heard about this, they were indignant with the two brothers. Jesus called them together and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'"*
2. **Luke 22:24-27**, *"Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, 'The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.'"*
 - a. Jesus said that He came as one who serves.
 - b. Jesus style of leadership is servant leadership not Lordship.

CHRIST IS OUR EXAMPLE

John 13:1-17, *"It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time*

had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love. The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean. When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them."

A. Jesus Takes the Opportunity to Teach His Disciples

1. The example of the slave's towel. Comes in with a towel and bowl.
2. Washes their feet like a common servant. He serves with the service of the towel and not the robe.

B. Understand What Is Taking Place

1. The creator of the world is now washing the feet of the created.
2. The Son of God is stooping down to serve sinners.

C. We Should Follow His Example

1. Verse 15, "*I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.*"
2. Any leadership that is not servant leadership is not what Jesus wants.

OUR VOLUNTARY SERVANTHOOD

- A. Concept of Servanthood (Exodus 21:2-6).** *"If you buy a Hebrew servant, he is to serve you for six years. But in the seventh year, he shall go free, without paying anything. If he comes alone, he is to go free alone; but if he has a wife when he comes, she is to go with him. If his master gives him a wife and she bears him sons or daughters, the woman and her children shall belong to her master, and only the man shall go free. "But if the servant declares, 'I love my master and my wife and children and do not want to go free,' then his master must take him before the judges. He shall take him to the door or **the door post***

and pierce his ear with an awl. Then he will be his servant for life.”

1. Voluntary service given to a good master. Piercing of the ear.
2. We need to give ourselves to the Lord and become His servants.

B. Become a Slave of Righteousness (Romans 6:15-23). *“What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means! Don’t you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey--whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness? But thanks be to God that, though you used to be slaves to sin, you wholeheartedly obeyed the form of teaching to which you were entrusted. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves to righteousness. I put this in human terms because you are weak in your natural selves. Just as you used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness, so now offer them in slavery to righteousness leading to holiness. When you were slaves to sin, you were free from the control of righteousness. What benefit did you reap at that time from the things you are now ashamed of? Those things result in death! But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves to God, the benefit you reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

1. We become slaves of whatever we serve.
2. If we serve sin we become slaves of sin.
3. God wants us to become slaves of righteousness.

CONCLUSION:

- A. We have a choice.
 1. We can follow man’s concepts and philosophy of leadership or we can commit ourselves to follow what the God of this universe suggests.
 2. Do we have more wisdom than He?
- B. Notice the words of a contemporary song, “Make Me A Servant.”

Make me a servant, Lord, make me like You,
 For You are a servant, make me one too.
 Make me a servant, do what You must do,
 To make me a servant, make me like You.

To love my brother, to serve like You do,
 I humble my spirit, I bow before You.
 And through my service, I’ll be just like You,
 So make me a servant, make me like You.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON THIRTEEN:

1. What was Jesus willing to give up to become a servant?

2. What did Jesus insist would not be a part of His disciples?

3. Who is the greatest among Jesus disciples?

4. Why was washing the disciples feet such a great example of servanthood?

LESSON FOURTEEN

Jesus' Death on the Cross

INTRODUCTION:

In the History of Christianity, Jesus coming into the world, living, teaching and dying are what everything else revolves around. Without an understanding of His purpose we cannot understand Christianity's History. Its sense is dependent upon knowing why He came into the world. The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus is the heart of Christianity. So in the next two lessons we will be discovering the heart which we also call the Gospel.

Everything this far leads to this point. All of Old Testament history, the creation and the fall of mankind, the saving of Noah and his family, the promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the choosing of David as King, the prophets, and the birth and life of Christ lead to this point.

The giving of the Law of Moses, the Passover, the sacrifice of a lamb that is without spot or blemish, all gave Israel and us a lesson on the perfect, sinless, sacrifice that would be made by Jesus at the cross.

LESSON TEXT: The scriptures listed in the notes.

LESSON AIM: To discover Jesus real mission on earth and learn the meaning of the cross.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will . . .

1. See that Jesus knew His mission on earth.
2. Learn that the cross was not an afterthought but intended and planned by God.
3. See that the cross has a wonderful meaning and blessing for us today.

JESUS AND HIS MISSION

A. He Was Aware as a Child of His Mission

1. His early understanding (Luke 2:41-50). As a boy of 12, Jesus was taken to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. When Mary and Joseph left to return to Nazareth, Jesus was nowhere to be found. When Jesus was found He was "sitting among the teachers" of the law and they were amazed at Him. Jesus' parents had been searching for Him. Jesus asked them "*Why, didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?*"
2. **Jesus understood He had a mission on earth.** He did not come to do His own will but the will of His Father. The will of His Father was to provide salvation for mankind.

B. In His Adult Ministry His Forum Was the Cross

1. He always **understood His mission**. In Jesus' adult ministry an early reference to His death is found in **Mark 2:20**. "*Jesus knew the time would come when He no longer would be with the apostles. Jesus knew that He would be taken away from them.*"
2. After the ministry of Jesus had begun the apostles were prepared by Jesus for His death and departure.
3. He taught specifically about His death. In **Mark 8:31-33**, the Scripture says **Jesus taught specifically about His suffering and rejection by the rulers** of the Jewish nation.
4. **The disciples did not understand** Jesus had to die. When Jesus mentioned this suffering again, **Mark 9:30-32**, the Bible says "they did not understand." In the earlier instruction Peter took Him aside to rebuke Him. Jesus told Peter that he did not have the things of God in mind. The apostles were puzzled at Jesus' mention of death and suffering.
5. Jesus was not puzzled over the idea that He would suffer. When Jesus started out for Jerusalem the last time before His death **He told His apostles and followers that in Jerusalem He would be betrayed, condemned, mocked, spat on, flogged and killed (Mark 10:32-34)**. When Jesus headed for Jerusalem His resolution to get there and do what had to be done was high (**Matthew 17:22-23**).

C. His Name Indicated His Mission

1. The name "**Jesus**" indicated His mission. At Jesus' birth the angels of God named Him. His name said He would be "**Savior**" (Matthew 1.21). God used His angels to announce to the world that the birth was not just another male child.
2. This birth marked by the star in the sky and the gifts of the shepherds was the birth of our **Jesus which means Savior**.
3. John the baptizer called Him the Lamb of God (John 1:29). "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "*Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!*"
 - a. John takes us back to the Old Testament. He brings up the image of the Passover Lamb, but relates it to Jesus' mission, taking away the sin of the world.
 - b. You see everything was leading to the sacrifice . . . the cross.

THE STORY OF THE MISSION FULFILLED

A. Several Events Happened Before the Actual Crucifixion

1. Jesus was put on trial before the Jewish leaders Annas and Caiaphas. He was falsely accused since they had no real charges to bring upon Him (Matthew 26:57-68).
2. He was formally condemned by the leading council of the Jews, the Sanhedrin (Luke 22:66-23:1).
3. He was taken to Pilate the Roman Governor. Here He was accused of treason (Matthew 27:11-14). Pilate found no fault in Him (John 18:38). So he sent Him to Herod Antipas (Luke 23:5-12). But Herod sends Him back to Pilate.

4. Pilate tries to release Jesus but the crowds want Barabas released instead. Pilate has Jesus beaten. Then tries to release Him again but the crowd cries crucify Him.

B. The Animosity and Viciousness of the People (Luke 23:21-49)

1. Three times Pilate tried to release Jesus.
2. The people insistently demanded that He be crucified even though He was pronounced innocent by Pilate.
3. A lacerated back from the whip could not satisfy their thirst for His death.

THE MEANING OF THE CROSS

A. The Cross Revealed Graphically the Sin of Man

1. Here was a sinless man put to death by sinners. Here was the Creator being put to death by the fallen created.
2. The Bible tells us that all have sinned and are in need of Christ's great sacrifice. **Romans 3:23-27**, "*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith.*"
3. Man's greatest need is not wealth, health, food, or power but forgiveness of sin. Wealth, health, food, etc. will only give us temporary pleasures upon this earth but God was looking out for what we needed eternally.

B. The Cross Revealed God's Great Love for Humanity

1. Jesus' attitude toward the people who crucify Him. "*Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing"* (Luke 23:34).
2. How can we love those who are doing wrong to us? God did! "*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life*" (John 3:16).
3. God's love placed His Son on the cross for us. He took the punishment that we deserved.

C. The Cross Gave Us the Perfect Sacrifice for Sin

1. In the Old Testament the sacrifice was a Lamb without defect. "*There he is to present his offerings to the LORD: a year-old male lamb without defect for a burnt offering, a year-old ewe lamb without defect for a sin offering, a ram without defect for a fellowship offering*" (Numbers 6:14).
2. This lamb was given as a sin offering, but that sin offering was only to remind Israel of the horrible nature of sin, not to forgive sin. "*But those sacrifices are an annual reminder of sins, because it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins*" (Hebrews 10:3-4).
3. Jesus Himself became the sacrifice of God to take away the sin of the world (Hebrews 9:26-28). "*But now he has appeared once for all at the end of the*

*ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so **Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people**; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him."*

4. I am so thankful that I do not just remember my sins to know how terrible they are but that now with Jesus perfect sacrifice I can be forgiven of my sin. God's love is great.

CONCLUSION:

1. God, because of His love for all mankind sent Jesus into the world to die (John 3:16; 1 John 2:1-2). Isaiah the prophet, inspired by God, foretold of the event hundreds of years before (Isaiah 53:10-11). Jesus' death was done in the mind of God before the foundation of the earth (Revelation 13:8). It was the will of God for Jesus to die since He loved His world so much. Jesus' death is the great demonstration of the love God has for a world gone wrong (Romans 5.8). Jesus did His part by voluntarily giving up His place as Deity and living and dying for all humans (Philippians 2:1-11).
2. The apostles who felt abandoned, the crowds who turned on Jesus, the Jews who prompted His trial, and the Romans who carried it out, were all people who did not know the will of God regarding the cross.
3. The apostles, except for Judas, returned. All the Jews, Romans, and populace were offered forgiveness. The love of God reached them and called them to repent (Acts 2:1-38).
4. The cross is about God and people. About holiness and forgiveness. In the history of Christianity too often the cross has become a symbol and for many its real meaning lost. Listen to this poem by George MacLeod.

I simply argue that the cross be raised again
 at the center of the market place
 as well as on the steeple of the church,
 I am recovering the claim that
 Jesus was not crucified in a cathedral
 between two candles:
 But on a cross between two thieves;
 on a town garbage heap;
 At a crossroad of politics so cosmopolitan
 that they had to write His title
 in Hebrew and in Latin and in Greek...
 And at the kind of place where cynics talk smut,
 and thieves curse and soldiers gamble.
 Because that is where He died,
 and that is what He died about.
 And that is where Christ's men ought to be,
 and what church people ought to be about.

-- George MacLeod

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FOURTEEN:

1. What did Jesus say He had to do repeatedly?

2. What does the name “Jesus” mean?

3. What are at least three things the cross teaches us?

1)

2)

3)

LESSON FIFTEEN

The Resurrection of Jesus

INTRODUCTION:

The Resurrection is mentioned at least 104 times in the New Testament. It is the foundation rock of the Christian religion. Atheists, Skeptics, cry out “myth.” But Myths cannot be located: In time; geography; history, science; or topography. A myth says, “Somewhere, some time, some unknown person.”

Paul affirms in 1 Corinthians 15:20, “*But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.*” It is written **as historical** not mythical. It is the miracle of miracles. If then Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, **two things must logically follow.**

He IS the Son of God. The apostle Paul made this incredible statement about the resurrection: Romans 1:3-4, “*regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness **was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord.***” Paul says that if Jesus was raised from the dead, then He is the Son of God. If He was the Son of God then **all that He said was true.** It then does not matter what men may say. If it is contrary to what Jesus says, I will trust Jesus.

Today leading scoffers, skeptics, and modernists have to admit at least 4 grand facts. 1) That Jesus lived. 2) That Jesus died, and was buried. 3) That on or before the third day, A.M. His body disappeared from the tomb. 4) That the apostles and disciples came to firmly believe that He arose from the dead.

John wrote: **John 20:30-31**, “*Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.*” One third of the Gospel of John is devoted to the last 24 hours of His life. John considered the death and Resurrection essential in “believing.”

LESSON TEXT: John 20:1-7, Mt. 27:62-66, John 20:10-29

LESSON AIM: To see the power and proof of the resurrection.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Examine several convincing proofs of the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.
 2. Study the implications of His resurrection.
 3. Reason logically from the evidence presented that Jesus is who He claimed to be – God incarnate.
-

THE EMPTY TOMB PROCLAIMS THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

John 20:1-7, “Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene went to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the entrance. So she came running to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said, “They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don’t know where they have put him!” So Peter and the other disciple started for the tomb. Both were running, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent over and looked in at the strips of linen lying there but did not go in. Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus’ head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen.”

A. The Tomb Was Open and Empty (John 20:1)

1. The all-important question. Who did it?
 - a. **The friends of Jesus or the disciples? (Matthew 27:62-66).** “The next day, the one after Preparation Day, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate. “Sir,” they said, “we remember that while he was still alive that deceiver said, ‘After three days I will rise again.’ So give the order for the tomb to be made secure until the third day. Otherwise, his disciples may come and steal the body and tell the people that he has been raised from the dead. This last deception will be worse than the first.” “Take a guard,” Pilate answered. “Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how.” So they went and made the tomb secure by putting a seal on the stone and posting the guard.” Notice the preparation to keep the grave secure.
 - 1) The request: “make it secure until the third day” (v. 64).
 - 2) The permission: “Go, make the tomb as secure as you know how” (v. 65).
 - 3) “Secure,” “to make secure for one’s self or for one’s own advantage” (Thayer 82)
 - 4) The tomb was cut out of the rock (Matthew 27:60).
 - 5) A large stone was rolled in from of the door to seal the tomb (27:60, 66). Mary worried that the stone would be in her way (Mark 16:3). “and they asked each other, “Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?”
 - 6) The “posting the guard” (27:66). A Roman guard consisted of several well trained soldiers who understood that their lives depended upon the security of what was guarded. They were equipped with two weapons one of which was a spear 6 ft. in length with a razor sharp point. Gibbon describes it this way. “Besides a lighter spear, the legionary soldier grasped in his right hand the formidable pilum, a ponderous javelin, whose utmost length was about six feet, and which was terminated by a massive triangular point of steel of eighteen inches.” Gibbon’s Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Book 1, page 34.

CONCLUSION: FRIENDS COULD NOT HAVE DONE IT!!!

- b. **The enemies of Jesus and Christianity? (Matthew 27:62-66).**

- 1) Made the tomb secure (v. 66). They took every precaution to keep the body of Jesus in the tomb.
- 2) Posted the guard (v. 66).
- 3) They wanted the body to remain there.
- 4) When the apostles taught that Jesus had risen, all they would have had to do was to produce the body.

CONCLUSION: *ENEMIES WOULD NOT HAVE DONE IT!!!*

B. If Friends Couldn't and Enemies Wouldn't Who Did?

1. **Grave robbers?** – Rob for treasure and Jesus had nothing.
2. **Swoon theory.** This is a theory that suggests Jesus just swooned or fainted on the cross. He later awoke in the coolness of the tomb and escaped. But look what Jesus went through.
 - a. A trial where He was slapped, spit on, and humiliated..
 - b. He was scourged with a whip which was made with a 2 to 3 foot handle with several straps of leather, with lead balls on the end or pieces of bone. Then a strong soldier beat Him. Many died from this alone..
 - c. Then He was crucified and His side pierced with a spear.
 - d. He was then buried according to Jewish burial custom which included being wrapped in heavy linen.
 - e. He awoke, wiggled out of the wrappings, moved the stone, fought or scared off the well trained soldiers. This is one of the weakest arguments ever!.

JESUS HAD TO BE DEAD! NO ONE SUSPECTED OTHERWISE!!!

WITNESSES TESTIFY TO THE RESURRECTION (John 20:10-29)

A. The Testimony of Mary (20:11-18)

1. Mary was weeping on her way to the tomb (v. 11).
2. She saw two angels (v. 12) – where Jesus body lay.
3. Then she saw Jesus and supposed Jesus to be the gardener.
4. She was convinced someone had taken the body of Jesus away (v. 15). “*Tell me where thou hast laid him and I will take him away. . .*”
5. What changed her? “Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and said unto Him, Rabboni, which is to say, Teacher” (v. 16). When she heard Jesus she believed.
6. She caught hold of Jesus (v. 17).

B. The Testimony of The Disciples

1. At the death of Jesus the disciples became scattered.
2. Peter had denied but now ran to the tomb (v. 4).
3. John saw and believed (v. 8).
4. All gave their life for Christ now, why? because Jesus had risen.

C. The Later Testimony of Thomas

1. Thomas' statement of doubt (John 20:25). Thomas said he had to put his finger in nail prints.
2. Jesus shows Himself to Thomas (John 20:26-27).
3. Thomas' statement of belief (John 20:28). "My Lord and My God."

D. The Testimony of Many More. Besides these the Bible tells of many more, including over 500 who saw Him at one time, who verify the resurrection.

CONCLUSION: J.N.D. ANDERSON "The proof of the resurrection from the witnesses would stand so tall in a court room that by this evidence alone one would have to declare 'He is risen'" Professor of Oriental Laws at the University of London.

EVIDENCE OF THE OPEN TOMB**A. The Open Tomb Speaks! Why was the tomb open?**

1. It was open to show that Jesus had risen. (conquered) (Luke 24:5-7). *"In their fright the women bowed down with their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, 'Why do you look for the living among the dead? 6 He is not here; he has risen! Remember how he told you, while he was still with you in Galilee: 7 'The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, be crucified and on the third day be raised again.'"*
2. It was not open to let Jesus out. It was no problem for Him to simply go through a wall.
3. It was open to let the disciples in and see something very special (John 20:6-8). *"Then Simon Peter, who was behind him, arrived and went into the tomb. He saw the strips of linen lying there, 7 as well as the burial cloth that had been around Jesus' head. The cloth was folded up by itself, separate from the linen. 8 Finally the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went inside. He saw and believed."*

B. The Grave Cloths Speak (John 20:3-7)

1. The grave clothes were still in their folds as if a body were in them but they were empty.
2. **John 19:40**, *"Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs."*
3. **John 11:44**, Lazarus came forth. "Bound hand and foot with grave clothes." He couldn't walk. He floated out of the tomb. Then Jesus said "loose him and let him go".
4. John believed when he saw the empty tomb and the empty grave clothes (John 20:8). ***What a sight to behold!***

CONCLUSION:

1. The empty and open tomb declares that Jesus is God.
2. The Witnesses testify to the resurrection of Jesus.
3. We have no choice but to believe that Jesus arose and we must have the faith to take this message to the world as the apostles did.
4. These last two lessons have given us what Paul calls the Gospel. (1 Corinthians

15:1-6). “Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. 3 For what I received I passed on to you **as of first importance** : that **Christ died** for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he **was buried**, that he **was raised** on the third day according to the Scriptures, 5 and that he appeared to Peter, and then to the Twelve. 6 After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of whom are still living, though some have fallen asleep.”

- a. Paul says that this is of first importance to the Christian.
- b. In future lessons we will see how it ties in with the obedience of our lives to Christ.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON FIFTEEN:

1. What two things are true if Jesus was raised from the dead?

1) _____
 2) _____

2. Why wouldn't the friends of Jesus steal the body?

3. Why wouldn't the enemies of Jesus steal the body?

4. List as many witnesses as you can think of?

5. Why was the tomb open?

LESSON SIXTEEN

The Two Covenants

INTRODUCTION:

Through our earlier lessons we have talked about some of the lessons from the Old and the New Testaments. The Old Testament contains the information and history of the first covenant that God made with a specific group of people. The New Testament contains the new covenant God made with all people. The Old Covenant made with the children of Israel was given for the purpose of bringing Christ into the world. It taught people the awfulness of sin, the need for a remedy for sin, and lead people to a realization of their need for Christ. The New Covenant gives us a permanent remedy for mankind's sin problem and draws all people, Jew and anyone not a Jew, into the covenant.

The problem is that many people do not understand the differences in the two covenants. Many groups are still worshiping on the day Jesus was still in the grave because of a misunderstanding of the covenants and the Sabbath law, rather than on Sunday, the day of the resurrection, as the early Christians, under the guidance of the apostles, did. Many groups are still holding on to some of the laws and ceremonies such as a special priesthood, incense, etc. because they are still maintaining the Old Covenant practices along with some of the New, not understanding the difference between the two. Some are still trying to be forgiven by keeping the Old Covenant or Old Law. Listen to what Paul says in Galatians 5:1-4. Paul says don't go back under that "yoke of slavery." He says that if we keep part of that Old Law we are "under obligation to keep the whole law." He also says by doing this we have been "severed from Christ," and "have fallen from grace." Are you willing to go back to animal sacrifices? Consider carefully the distinction of the Old and New Covenants.

LESSON TEXT: Numerous scriptures listed in the lesson.

LESSON AIM: To learn about the differences in the two covenants. This is very important to understanding the whole Bible.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Learn to whom the first covenant was given.
 2. Study some prophecies that state that the Old Covenant would be replaced.
 3. Learn at least twelve things about the Old Covenant which will show its inadequacies and its ultimate end.
-

THE OLD COVENANT WAS A COVENANT MADE ONLY WITH ISRAEL (Hebrews, Jewish Nation)

A. The Old Covenant Was Made With Israel At Horeb (Deuteronomy 5:1-3)

“Moses summoned all Israel and said: Hear, O Israel, the decrees and laws I declare in your hearing today. Learn them and be sure to follow them. 2 The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb. 3 It was not with our fathers that the LORD made this covenant, but with us, with all of us who are alive here today.”

1. “Moses called all **Israel**.”
2. The Lord made a **covenant with Israel** at Horeb.
3. The covenant was not with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (our fathers) but with Israel.

B. The Covenant Involved the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 4:13)

“He declared to you his covenant, the Ten Commandments, which he commanded you to follow and then wrote them on two stone tablets.”

1. This covenant involved the “Ten Commandments.”
2. This covenant also included the other laws and commandments of God (Leviticus 26:14-16). *“‘But if you will not listen to me and carry out all these commands, 15 and if you reject my decrees and abhor my laws and fail to carry out **all my commands and so violate my covenant**, 16 then I will do this to you: I will bring upon you sudden terror, wasting diseases and fever that will destroy your sight and drain away your life. You will plant seed in vain, because your enemies will eat it.”*

THE OLD COVENANT WAS PROPHESED TO BE REPLACED BY A NEW COVENANT

A. The New Covenant Prophesied by Jeremiah (Jeremiah 31:31-34)

“The time is coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. “This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the LORD. “I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest,” declares the LORD. “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.”

1. The Lord will make a **NEW** covenant.
2. Not like the Old. It will be different.
3. Will write it on their hearts. It would be a heart covenant not a covenant written on stone.
4. Shall not teach brother to know the Lord. Rather than being born into a family of Jews, as under the Old Covenant, under the New a person is taught to know that Lord before he or she is born again.
5. Sin will be forgiven. This would be a key element to the New Covenant.

B. It Is Described in Hebrews 8:6-13 as a “Better” Covenant

1. The New Covenant is superior to the Old Covenant.
2. The New Covenant has better promises.
3. Jesus is the giver of the New Covenant but His life was lived while the Old Covenant was still in effect. So He still kept the Old Covenant before giving to His apostles and us the New Covenant.
 - a. **Hebrews 9:16-17**, *“In the case of a will, it is necessary to prove the death of the one who made it, because a will is in force only when somebody has died; it never takes effect while the one who made it is living.”*
 - b. **Galatians 3:19**, *“What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator.”*
 - c. **2 Corinthians 3:7-10**, *“Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory, fading though it was, will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? If the ministry that condemns men is glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! For what **was glorious** has no glory now in comparison with the surpassing glory.”*

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE FIRST COVENANT?**A. It Was Declared OLD**

Hebrews 8:13, *“By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.”*

B. It Was Made OBSOLETE

Hebrews 8:13, *“By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.”*

C. It Soon DISAPPEARED

Hebrews 8:13, *“By calling this covenant “new,” he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.”*

D. It Was CHANGED

Hebrews 7:12, *“For when there is a change of the priesthood, there must also be a change of the law.”*

E. It Was SET ASIDE

Hebrews 7:18-19, *“The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.”*

F. It Was WEAK AND USELESS

Hebrews 7:18-19, *“The former regulation is set aside because it was weak and useless (for the law made nothing perfect), and a better hope is introduced, by which we draw near to God.”*

G. It Was a SHADOW

Hebrews 10:1, *“The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming--not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship.”*

H. It Was SET ASIDE to Establish the Second

Hebrews 10:9-11, *“Then he said, ‘Here I am, I have come to do your will.’ He sets aside the first to establish the second. And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.”*

I. It Was CANCELED

Colossians 2:13-14, *“When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, **having canceled the written code, with its regulations**, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross.”*

J. It Was NAILED TO THE CROSS

Colossians 2:13-14, *“When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, **14 having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, **nailing it to the cross.****”*

K. It Does Not JUSTIFY OR IMPART LIFE

Galatians 3:10-11, *“All who rely on observing the law are under a curse, for it is written: ‘Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.’ **11** Clearly no one is justified before God by the law, because, ‘The righteous will live by faith.’”*

Galatians 3:21, *“Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.”*

L. We Are NO LONGER UNDER the Old Covenant

Galatians 3:23-27, *“Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, **we are no longer under the supervision of the law.** You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.”*

CONCLUSION:**1. We are now under the superior covenant of Christ.**

- a. It is a covenant of grace, forgiveness and freedom.
- b. It deals with heart issues not the letter of the law.

Matthew 5:21-22, *“You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, ‘Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.’ But*

I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca, ' is answerable to the Sanhedrin. But anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell."

Matthew 5:27-28 *"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."*

2. Do not let anyone bind you again to that OLD covenant.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON SIXTEEN:

1. To whom was the first covenant given?

2. Were non-Hebrews under this covenant?

3. What did Jeremiah prophesy would happen to the first covenant?

4. List at least 5 things which happened to the first covenant?

- 1)

- 2)

- 3)

- 4)

- 5)

- 6)

LESSON SEVENTEEN

The Kingdom of God

INTRODUCTION:



very new idea that has ever burst upon the world has had one **central master thought**. Usually it is a word or phrase, which describes its mission. Islam: “God is God and Mohammed is His prophet.” French Revolution: “Liberty, equality, fraternity.” Democracy: “Government of the people, by the people, for the people.” In Christianity one phrase used by Jesus a lot was: “The kingdom of God”

It was the basis of **Christ’s first and last sermon**. First sermon: **Mark 1:15** – “The time is fulfilled...the kingdom of God is at hand. Last sermon: **Acts 1:3** – “...things pertaining to the kingdom of God.”

The expressions “**kingdom of Heaven**” and “**kingdom of God**” mean exactly the same. Matthew uses “kingdom of Heaven” 30 times, and “kingdom of God” 3 times. Mark uses “kingdom of God” 16 times. Luke uses “kingdom of God” 32 times. Neither Mark nor Luke uses “kingdom of Heaven” at all. Notice how the phrases are used the same in reference to the “rich” and their difficulties of getting into the “kingdom.” Matthew 19.23 – “...*harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom of Heaven...*” Mark 10.23; Luke 18.24 – “...*hard for those who have riches to enter the kingdom of God.*” Too, note Matthew’s statement in the very next verse (24) – “kingdom of God.” Clearly **the two expressions are interchangeable**.

LESSON TEXT: Isaiah 2:, Daniel 2:, Matthew 16:13-20, Acts 2:

LESSON AIM: To learn about God’s kingdom.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Look at some prophecies concerning the kingdom and how those prophecies were fulfilled.
2. Learn the definition of “kingdom” as used in some of Jesus’ teaching on the kingdom.

DEFINITION OF THE TERM KINGDOM

A. General Understanding of the Word Kingdom

In modern speech we speak of a:

1. **Territory**; an area of land. Illustration:
 - a. Territory of Great Britain; belonging to the Kingdom of Great Britain.
 - b. It involves more than just a territory. It also speaks of a **king, subjects, law**.
2. In the Bible Jesus says this concerning His Kingdom. (John 18:36)
“Jesus said, “*My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants*

would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.”

- a. There is something very unique about the Kingdom that Jesus speaks about.
- b. He says that it is not of this world. It is spiritual not physical.

B. The Bible Usage of the Word Kingdom. Has similar ideas such as, territory (the land is not physically of this world), **a King**, (Jesus) **subjects** (the people) and **a law** (the New Covenant) – all of which are (not of this world).

PROPHETS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT PROMISED THIS KINGDOM WOULD COME

A. Isaiah’s Description of the Kingdom of God

1. **Isaiah 2:2-3**, *“In the last days the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and **all nations will stream to it**. Many peoples will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, **so that we may walk in his paths**.” The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from **Jerusalem**.”*
 - a. It will be for all nations – verse 2.
 - b. They will walk in God’s paths – verse 3.
 - c. **Jerusalem** would be the beginning place.
2. **Micah 4:2**, *“Many nations will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.” The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”*

B. Daniel’s Prophecy Concerning the Kingdom (Daniel 2)

1. A “stone” will be cut out of the mountain, but not by human hands.
 - a. This is the Messiah and the growth and power of His kingdom (v. 44).
 - b. **Daniel 2:44-45**, *“In the **time of those kings**, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but **it will itself endure forever**. This is the meaning of the vision of the rock cut out of a mountain, but not by human hands--a rock that broke the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold to pieces. The great God has shown the king what will take place in the future. The dream is true and the interpretation is trustworthy.”*
2. It will “never be destroyed” (v. 44) consequently it stands in contrast to human empires.
3. Daniel speaks of 4 kingdoms. The last of those kingdoms is Rome and he says that: *“In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed.”*
4. This is exactly the time that Jesus came into the world. During Roman times.

C. The Kingdom in the Preaching of John the Baptizer

John was the last prophet of the Mosaic era.

1. He declared that the “kingdom of heaven was near” (Matthew 3:1-3). *“In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: “A voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”*
 - a. He says that this announcement was given to him (Isaiah 40:3).
 - b. Therefore, the kingdom was near but not yet here.

D. The Messiah’s Teaching Concerning the Kingdom

Matthew 16:18-20, *“And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*

1. “I will build my church...” and “I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom...”
2. “The gates of hell shall not prevail against it...”
This kingdom, like Daniel’s description (2:44) is eternal in endurance and spiritual in nature.
3. It is important to note that “church” and “kingdom” are used as synonyms. The church in its design and plan was to be a part of the Kingdom of God.
4. Notice that He also said, *“I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power.”* (Mark 9:1).

HISTORICALLY, THESE DIVINE PREDICTIONS WERE FULFILLED ON PENTECOST AFTER THE RESURRECTION (Acts 2)

A. The Church/Kingdom Began on Pentecost. A miracle occurred (vs. 1-13).

1. Remember, miracles were for confirmation of the Word of God (Mark 16:17ff).
2. A sermon was preached (vs. 14-42).
 - a. The miracle was explained (vs. 14-41).
 - b. Jesus (Messiah) is “accredited” by God (vs. 23-24).
 - c. Jesus is vindicated by the teachings of the prophets (vs. 25-36).
3. The sermon had its effect:
 - a. They enquired about an appropriate response (v. 37).
 - b. They were given the correct way of obedience (v.38).
 - c. 3000 obeyed the “warning” (vs. 40-41).
4. For the first time the church was established, worshiping and following the apostles’ teachings (vs. 42-47).

B. After the Church Was Established the Kingdom Is Spoken of as Having Come. *“For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins”* (Colossians 1:13-14).

JESUS’ TEACHING ABOUT THE KINGDOM

A. Jesus’ Explanation of the Kingdom

1. The Kingdom is... **spiritual, not physical** or political (Matthew 5.3-12; John 18.36). *“My Kingdom is not of this world.”*
2. The Kingdom is... **invisible and internal** (Luke 17:20-21). *“The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, 21 nor will people say, ‘Here it is,’ or ‘There it is,’ because the kingdom of God is **within you**.”*
3. The Kingdom ...**grows and spreads** (Mark 4:26-29). *“This is what the kingdom of God is like. A man scatters seed on the ground. Night and day, whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed sprouts and grows, though he does not know how. All by itself the soil produces grain--first the stalk, then the head, then the full kernel in the head. As soon as the grain is ripe, he puts the sickle to it, because the harvest has come.”*
4. The Kingdom is ... **entered by being born again and becoming like a little child** (John 3.3-5; Matthew 18.3-4).

B. The Value of Being In The Kingdom. Jesus said the “kingdom” **should be pursued at all costs.**

1. It should be the object of intense, strenuous effort.
2. Men are told to **“seek” it** (Matthew 6:33). *“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”* Greek: ZETEIN – “Make the kingdom the object of your endeavor.”
3. The kingdom is so important that it would be **better to lose an eye** than to lose the kingdom of God (Mark 9:47).

CONCLUSION:

The Kingdom of God is here and it is important. God makes it possible for men to become citizens of His kingdom.

SELF EXAM ON LESSON SEVENTEEN:

1. Define the term “kingdom” as used by Jesus. _____

2. Where was the kingdom to begin? _____
3. What did John teach concerning the kingdom? The kingdom is _____
4. What was fulfilled in Acts 2?

5. When Paul wrote Colossians 1:13-14 had the kingdom come? Explain.

LESSON EIGHTEEN

Citizenship in the Kingdom

INTRODUCTION:

Citizenship is a very precious thing in the kingdoms of the world. Citizenship gives us certain rights and privileges but it also brings us responsibility. There are basically two ways to gain citizenship. By birth -- when we are born in the country or by parents who are citizens of the country. Or naturalized -- when a non citizen can study, take a test, and be sworn in as a citizen of the country. If, as we saw in the last lesson, God has a kingdom. Could I or would I want to be a part of it? Can I become a citizen? How can I become a citizen? We will answer these questions in this lesson.

LESSON TEXT: The scriptures listed in the notes.

LESSON AIM: To understand how one becomes a citizen in the kingdom.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

Learn about the nature of the kingdom, what is required for citizenship, and see examples of those who did obey Christ.

CITIZENSHIP IN THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST

A. Citizenship In The Kingdom Is A Matter of Choice. First you need to understand that **Jesus will never force you** into His Kingdom.

1. Obedience to the truth the way to citizenship (John 18:36-37). *Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place." "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."*
2. Christ's kingdom was not a political kingdom with military power?
 - a. His desire is not to bring people into His kingdom by force but by truth. You have a choice to seek and obey His truth.
 - b. If someone tries to force you into the kingdom they are not of the kingdom of Christ.

B. Jesus' Instruction Concerning Expansion of the Kingdom. After His death **Jesus told His disciples what to do** to expand His kingdom.

1. Go make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20). *Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them*

to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

2. Go preach to every creature (Mark 16:15-16). *He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.*
3. Jesus wanted people to come to a belief or trust in Him and then obey. The belief came through teaching the message of the Good News of Jesus.

C. The Requirements of Those Who Would Enter the Kingdom of God

Every kingdom in the world has a ruler and subjects, but it also has kingdom laws which govern citizenship. The same is true in the spiritual kingdom of God.

1. Those who believe and receive Jesus (John 1:11-13). *He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband’s will, but born of God.*
2. Those who do not believe and receive Jesus cannot be citizens in His Kingdom.

REQUIREMENTS OF JESUS FOR CITIZENSHIP IN HIS KINGDOM

A. Throughout the History of Christianity Many Religious Groups Have Developed Requirements to Become a Part of Their Particular Group

1. We have no right to require anything more or anything less than the King of the kingdom required and taught.
2. Some groups teach less than what Jesus said was necessary.
3. Others add much more than what Jesus required. It is important to look carefully at what Jesus taught. If He tells us to do something, we must obey. If not, we have no right to add to His teaching and the teaching of His apostles.

B. A Desire on Our Part Is Required

1. **Matthew 6:33**, *But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.*
2. **Matthew 7:7-8**, *Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.*
3. **Hebrews 11:6**, *And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.*

C. Faith (Trust) and Repentance Required

1. **Mark 1:14-15**, *After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!”*
2. **Repentance** means **to change** one’s mind about his life by deciding to quite sinning and to live right (Acts 26:20).
3. **Faith** means **to trust** in Christ’s life and death on the cross, not in one’s own life of good works (John 3:16-18; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Ephesians 2:8-9).

4. We **must be willing to confess** to others our trust in Christ and our love for Him (Romans 10:9-11). *That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*

D. An Additional Requirement: Baptism

1. **Mark 16:15-16**, *He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. **Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.***
2. What blessing did Jesus promise in Mark 16:16 to those who met His requirements? Some say that baptism is not necessary. Remember what we said about following what the King says.

E. The Word Baptism Defined

1. Greek word means "immersion."
2. The element required for baptism.
 - a. **Mark 1:9-10**, *At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the **water**, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.*
 - b. **John 3:23**, *Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because **there was plenty of water**, and people were constantly coming to be baptized.*

F. Spiritual Meaning of Baptism: (Romans 6:1-7)

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.

1. Notice how baptism relates to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.
2. Note also verse 7. Anyone who has died (been baptized) has been freed from sin.

PEOPLE WHO BECAME CITIZENS IN CHRIST'S KINGDOM

A. Jews in Jerusalem (Acts 2:36-41)

Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call." With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt genera-

tion.” Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

B. Conversion of an Ethiopian Official (Acts 8:34-38)

The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. Why shouldn’t I be baptized?” And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

1. Starting with Isaiah 53:7-8 (Old Testament Prophecy) what did Phillip preach to the Ethiopian? The good news about Jesus.
2. What did the Ethiopian want to do after hearing Phillip’s lesson? He wanted to be baptized.

C. Conversion of a Jailor in Philippi (Acts 16:25-34)

About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everybody’s chains came loose. The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted, “Don’t harm yourself! We are all here!” The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved--you and your household.” Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his family were baptized. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God--he and his whole family.

1. Notice that Paul commanded the jailor to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. After Paul explained about what it meant to believe in the Lord Jesus, what did the jailor and his family immediately do? They were immediately baptized.

CITIZENSHIP IN CHRIST’S KINGDOM BY THE NEW BIRTH

A. Citizenship in Earthly Kingdoms Occurs by Natural Birth

B. Citizenship in God’s Kingdom Occurs by a Spiritual Birth

1. Jesus’ instruction to Nicodemus (John 3:1-6).

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, “Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him.” In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.” “How can a man be born when he is old?” Nicodemus asked. “Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother’s womb to be born!” Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom

of God unless he is **born of water and the Spirit**. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit.

- a. Entrance into the kingdom requires a new birth.
 - b. The new birth is by water and the Spirit.
2. The new birth involves the Word of God (1 Peter 1:22-23).
Now that you have purified yourselves by obeying the truth so that you have sincere love for your brothers, love one another deeply, from the heart. 23 For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.
 3. The first people to be born again (Acts 2:38).
Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off--for all whom the Lord our God will call."
 Question: When the Jews accepted the seed of God's word by believing, repenting and being baptized in water, what gift did they receive? The Holy Spirit.

CONCLUSION:

1. If a seed of wheat is planted in a new location or a thousand years later, it comes up and it is still a wheat plant.
- B. The same thing is true of the word of God. In the first century when it was planted into the hearts of good and honest people they became Christians. If that same simple pure seed, the word of God is planted in peoples' hearts today what do they become? Christians just as they did in the first century.
3. The same thing that made those early Christians citizens in the Kingdom of God, is the same thing still today.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON EIGHTEEN:

1. What were the disciples told to do to expand the kingdom?

2. What is required to be a part of the kingdom?

3. What does baptism signify?

4. Name four (4) examples of conversion in the book of Acts.

LESSON NINETEEN

The Church of Christ

INTRODUCTION:

The term “church of Christ” or “churches of Christ,” not only is a Bible term (Romans 16:16), but it is also very appropriate because it describes who the church belongs to. There are a number of terms used in the New Testament to describe the church, “the church,” “the way,” “the church of God,” “the church of the first born.” The most common phrase is “the church” and then is given a description “in a certain city.”

Jesus made it clear in Matthew 16:18 that He would build HIS church. “*And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.*” Peter was to be a vital part of the church but the church belongs to no human.

One of the main reasons you see so many “denominations” today is that men have changed Christ’s teachings, made new laws, rejected some of the clear instructions of Jesus, and called themselves after men who have been some of their strongest leaders.

Others have rejected being a part of “a church” because of abuses they have seen men do in the name of “church” or feel that they do not need to be a part of a local church to be a “Christian”.

There are fundamental teachings in the New Testament which tells us what the church is and why the church is needed. How should we view the church?

LESSON TEXT: Various scriptures listed in the lesson.

LESSON AIM: To help us understand the idea of the church.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. Learn several descriptive terms applied to the church.
 2. Discover the great blessings provided by God in His church.
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WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

A. The Church Is God’s Spiritual Household

1 Timothy 3:15, “*if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God’s household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth.*”

B. The Church is Part of God's Kingdom

1. **Matthew 16:18-19**, *"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."*
2. **Hebrews 12:22-29**, *"But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks. If they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, how much less will we, if we turn away from him who warns us from heaven? that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens." The words "once more" indicate the removing of what can be shaken--that is, created things--so that what cannot be shaken may remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire."*

C. The Church is The Bride of Christ

1. **Ephesians 5:25**, *"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her"*
2. **2 Corinthians 11:2**, *"I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him."*

D. The Church is The Body of Christ

1. **Ephesians 1:22-23**, *"And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way."*
2. **Colossians 1:18**, *"And he is the head of the body, the church;"*
3. **Colossians 1:24**, *"Now I rejoice in what was suffered for you, and I fill up in my flesh what is still lacking in regard to Christ's afflictions, for the sake of his body, which is the church."*

E. The Church is The World-wide Body of Christians

1. **Hebrews 12:22-23**, *"But you have come to Mount Zion, to the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect,"*
2. That's all the people in the whole world whose names are written in heaven.

F. The Church is The Local Gathering of Christians

1. **Acts 11:22**, *"News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch."*
2. **Romans 16:1**, *"I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the*

church in Cenchrea.”

3. **Romans 16:5**, *“Greet also the church that meets at their house. Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia.”*

BLESSINGS GOD GIVES US IN HIS CHURCH

- A. The Church Is Where One Finds Fellowship with God!** The church doesn’t save – it is the saved.

1 John 1:3, *“We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ.”*

- B. The Church Is Where One Finds Fellowship with Other Believers**

1. **1 John 1:7**, *“But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.”*
2. **Hebrews 10:24-25**, *“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”*
3. What is the purpose of our fellowship and our meeting together.
 - a. **Strengthening and mutual encouragement.**
1 Corinthians 14:26, *“What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.”*
 - b. **Edification.**
1 Corinthians 12:14-27, *“But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, 25 so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.”*
 - c. **Sharing of joys and burdens.**
 - 1) **Galatians 6:2**, *“Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.”*
 - 2) **Romans 12:9-16**, *“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.”*
 - d. The church helps **sustain the individual believers faith.**
 - 1) **Ephesians 4:11-13**, *“It was he who gave some to be apostles,*

some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."

- 2) **Colossians 3:16**, "*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.*"
- 3) "If you love and believe in your country," said Fosdick, "a noble, spirited and patriotic gathering will help you believe in and love it more."
 - a) Assemblies help us re-focus ourselves on who we belong to and who our family is.
 - b) Our songs remind us of our blessings, our hope and our God.
 - c) Our supper remind us that we are all here by grace in this body.
 - d) The church assembly in the New Testament was not elaborate but simple. They sang, prayed, preached, shared the Lord's Supper, and gave from their hearts. It was so simple that it could be done each Lord's day (Sunday) anywhere the disciples gathered.
- e. The church assembly provides us **opportunity for group praise of God**.
 - 1) **Ephesians 5:19**, "*Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord,*"
 - 2) **Romans 15:5-6**, "*May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*"
- f. It gives us an opportunity to **prepare for ministry**.

Ephesians 4:12, "*to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.*"

 - 1) Service to the Body (Romans 12:9-15).
 - 2) Service in outreach to the world (Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Peter 2:9).

SOME THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE CHURCH

A. The Head of the Church Is Christ

Colossians 1:18, "*And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.*"

B. The Authority of the Church Is His Word

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

C. It's Fruit Should Be Produced by the Spirit

Galatians 5:22-25, *"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit."*

d. It Should Have a Quest for Unity in Truth

Ephesians 4:3-6, *"Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit-- just as you were called to one hope when you were called-- one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."*

CONCLUSION:

1. People in the church are not perfect, just forgiven.
2. The church is not a hotel for saints but a hospital for sinners.
3. The church will live on whether I'm living or not! I am not God's gift to the church. You are not God's gift to the church. The church is a part of God's gift to us.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON NINETEEN:

1. Who does the church belong to? _____
2. What are some phrases which describe the church?

3. What are some of the blessings found in the church?

4. Who is the head of the church? _____

LESSON TWENTY

The Family of God

INTRODUCTION:



One of the wonderful things about the early church is that they considered themselves to be a family. They considered God as their Father and each other as brothers and sisters. They realized the need for each other and the family devotion they should give to each other.

The apostles taught that each Christian was a part of the family and a part of the body of Jesus Christ. This helped them realize the need for unity and care. Quality families enjoy being together, caring for each other, and realize the importance of **FAMILY**.

Jesus taught that when we have a relationship with Him we should call God our Father. **Matthew 6:9**, *“This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.’”*

Notice also that Jesus had a special view of His family. **Mark 3:31-35**, *“Then Jesus’ mother and brothers arrived. Standing outside, they sent someone in to call him. A crowd was sitting around him, and they told him, ‘Your mother and brothers are outside looking for you.’ ‘Who are my mother and my brothers?’ he asked. Then he looked at those seated in a circle around him and said, ‘Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does God’s will is my brother and sister and mother.’”*

LESSON TEXT: Acts 2:36-47, John 1:12-13, Eph. 5:1-14

LESSON AIM: To show that we become members of the family of the Eternal God.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

See some historical references and passages which teach that we are sons of God and thus brothers and sisters in Christ. This will help us understand how we are to relate to one another.

HISTORICAL REFERENCES

A. The Beginning of a New Entity – the Church (Acts 2:36-47)

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.” With many other words he

warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation." Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."

1. 3000 were baptized including some of the ones who crucified Jesus.
2. Their immediate activities as a body. They Devoted themselves to:
 - a. Learning the apostles teaching.
 - b. Fellowship.
 - c. Breaking of Bread. (The Lord's Supper)
 - d. Prayer.
 - e. Sharing their material things with the needy in the group.
 - f. Eating their meals together.
3. The one word describing how they are treating each other is FAMILY.

B. The Character and Make-up of This New Group

Many of these people had been enemies of Jesus calling for His crucifixion and some were His friends. Why do you think they were treating each other now as "family?" Was it because of money? Because of power? Because of pride? No it was because of a new relationship with the Lord and with each other.

SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF GOD

A. The Birth of a Child of God (John 1:12-13)

"Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God-- children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God."

1. Note 3 ways that a person cannot become a child of God.
 - a. Not by normal human birth.
 - b. Not by the decision of any other human being.
 - c. Not by the decision of human parents.
2. How does a person become a child of God? Born of God.

Galatians 3:26-27, *"You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ."*

B. The Development of a Child of God (Ephesians 5:1-14)

"Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God. But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be

sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person--such a man is an idolater--has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret. But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

1. A child imitates his father.
2. Here are four (4) things that a child of God should not do or be, if he wants to imitate His Father
 - a. Sexual sin.
 - b. Evil deeds.
 - c. Greedy.
 - d. Evil talk.

C. When We Become Christians We Become a Part of the Family of God

Think about it. Family of the God of the Universe! Not only the greatest kingdom but the greatest family as well.

THE BROTHERS AND SISTERS

A. Treatment of Family Members. In any family the father teaches his children how to treat each other. It is the same in the family of God.

B. God's Instruction On Family Life

1. **Romans 12:9-18**, *"Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."*
2. **1 Corinthians 13:4-7**, *"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."*
3. **Galatians 6:1-5**, *"Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. If anyone thinks he is something when he is nothing, he deceives himself. Each one should test his own actions. Then he can take pride in*

himself, without comparing himself to somebody else, for each one should carry his own load."

4. **Ephesians 4:25-32**, "Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. "In your anger do not sin" : Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."
5. **Philippians 2:1-8**, "If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!"
6. **Colossians 3:12-14**, "Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity."
7. **1 Thessalonians 5:12-18**, "Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other. And we urge you, brothers, warn those who are idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else. Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus."

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY:

1. How does a person become a member of the family of God?

2. How does God want His children to behave toward each other?

3. What treasure do we have as a part of the family of God?

LESSON TWENTY ONE

Post Apostolic Changes

INTRODUCTION:



One of the major reasons for so many denominations today is that men have been content to follow departures rather than stick with the basic teachings of Jesus. In this lesson we will get a glimpse into the problem of departures and changes from the intent of the Lord. These departures were predicted by the Lord, seen early in the history of Christianity, and have continued to our time.

There were changes brought about early by false teachers. Major changes took place from near the end of the 1st century A.D. to the 13th, changes that still affect us severely. We want to look at some of these changes, and what the Lord thought about the teaching which departed from His own. The organization of the church that resulted from these changes was sharply different from the church as seen in the New Testament.

LESSON TEXT: Scripture listed in study notes.

LESSON AIM: To show that there was departure from the faith.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

1. See that departure from the truth was predicted by Jesus and the New Testament writers.
 2. Learn of early examples of departures and the resultant apostasy.
 3. Examine several areas of departure from the original teaching of the New Testament writers.
-

JESUS AND HIS APOSTLES PREDICTED CHANGES WOULD COME

- A. The Rise of False Prophets (Matthew 24:24-25).** *“For false Christs and false prophets will appear and perform great signs and miracles to deceive even the elect--if that were possible. See, I have told you ahead of time.”*
- B. Changes among the Elders Themselves (Acts 20:27-31)**
“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them.”
- C. Changes in the Doctrine Taught by the Apostles, Causing Divisions (Romans 16:17-20)**
“I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put

obstacles in your way that are **contrary to the teaching you have learned**. Keep away from them. For such people are not serving our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. By smooth talk and flattery they deceive the minds of naive people. Everyone has heard about your obedience, so I am full of joy over you; but I want you to be wise about what is good, and innocent about what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.”

1. Immature Christians would be led away from the Lord (Ephesians 4:14).
“Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.”
2. A falling away – an apostasy – would occur (1 Timothy 4:1-7).
*“The Spirit clearly says that **in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons**. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.”*
3. Tradition would become the standard rather than God’s word (Mark 7:6-9).
“He replied, ‘Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you hypocrites; as it is written: “‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain; their teachings are but rules taught by men.’ You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men.” And he said to them: “You have a fine way of setting aside the commands of God in order to observe your own traditions!”
- 4.. All these predictions are now matters of history. The differences of the church in the 12th and 13th centuries from that of the church in the New Testament is astounding.

AN EARLY EXAMPLE AND WHAT JESUS THOUGHT

A. One of the Early Examples of Departure and False Teaching Is Recorded by Eusebius in His Church History

B. Nicolaus and the Sect Named after Him. Eusebius wrote:

“At this time the so-called sect of the Nicolaitans made its appearance and lasted for a very short time. Mention is made of it in the Apocalypse of John. They boasted that the author of their sect was Nicolaus, one of the deacons who, with Stephen, were appointed by the apostles for the purpose of ministering to the poor. Clement of Alexandria, in the third book of his Stromata, relates the following things concerning him. “They say that he had a beautiful wife, and after the ascension of the Savior, being accused by the apostles of jealousy, he led her into their midst and gave permission to any one that wished to marry her. For they say that this was in accord with that saying of his, that one ought to abuse the flesh. And those that have followed his heresy, imitating blindly and foolishly that which was done and said, commit fornication without shame. But I understand that Nicolaus had to do with no other woman than her to whom he was married, and that, so far as his children are concerned, his daughters

continued in a state of virginity until old age, and his son remained uncorrupt. If this is so, when he brought his wife, whom he jealously loved, into the midst of the apostles, he was evidently renouncing his passion; and when he used the expression, ‘to abuse the flesh,’ he was inculcating self-control in the face of those pleasures that are eagerly pursued. For I suppose that, in accordance with the command of the Savior, he did not wish to serve two masters, pleasure and the Lord. But they say that Matthias also taught in the same manner that we ought to fight against and abuse the flesh, and not give way to it for the sake of pleasure, but strengthen the soul by faith and knowledge.” So much concerning those who then attempted to pervert the truth, but in less time than it has taken to tell it became entirely extinct.”

Eusebius: Church History from a.d. 1-324:.p 242

Translated with Prolegomena and Notes by Arthur.
Cushman McGiffert, Ph.D.

C. Notice Jesus’ Reaction to this Early Departure

1. To the church at Ephesus the Lord says: **Revelation 2:6**, “*But you have this in your favor: You hate the practices of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.*”
2. To the church at Pergamum the Lord says: **Revelation 2:15-16**, “*Likewise you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 16 Repent therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.*”
3. Do you get the impression the Lord was indifferent to these departures? Absolutely not!!

CHANGES IN ORGANIZATION

A. The Organization of the Church in the First Century Was Confined to Local Churches

1. The term “**ekklesia**” (**church**) is used more than 90 times in the New Testament. Most of these refer to the local body of believers who are obedient to Christ.
2. The church is **PEOPLE – not buildings**. The early Christians had no church buildings for many years after the days of the apostles.

B. The Church Universal Consisted of All Believers

1. At that time, the only universal “organization” was the common commitment of the believers in the local churches to Christ, “the head of the church” (Ephesians 5:23).
2. All Christians were committed to Christ and to the apostles (inspired men such as Mark, James, Luke, and Jude) who brought God’s word to men.
 - a. Paul affirmed that his words were not words taught by the wisdom of men but by the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 2:12-13).
 - b. **Ephesians 2:19-20**, “*Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. The New Testament church was not built on human teaching or human traditions but on the foundation of the apostles and prophets and Jesus.*”
3. The New Testament contains no provision for successors to the universal

officers: Christ, the apostles and prophets. Christ continues to provide guidance for His church through the teaching of the New Testament, given through those apostles and prophets.

THE ORGANIZATION OF THE MEDIEVAL CHURCH HAD DEVELOPED GRADUALLY

A. At the Beginning, the Bishops (Also Called Elders and Presbyters) Were Equal

1. After apostolic times some bishops began to exalt themselves above their fellow bishops. A prime example is Ignatius of Antioch, who wrote about 107 A.D. “See that ye all follow the bishop, even as Christ Jesus does the Father, and the Presbyters as ye would the apostles” (Epistle to the Smyrneans, Chapter 8).
2. In Acts 20:8 the Holy Spirit inspired Paul to speak to the elders in Ephesus as being the bishops and pastors – they were all equal. (Acts 20:17-31).
 - a. Called elders in verse 17. “*From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church.*”
 - b. Called overseers and shepherds in verse 28. “*Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.*”
 - c. **1 Peter 5:1-3** uses forms of all three of these words in addressing the elders.
 - a. From the time of Ignatius onward the bishops took more power; some became “**metropolitan**” in their rule until at last there was a supreme bishop who was known as the pope.
 - b. This was hundreds of years after New Testament times, and totally contrary to Scripture.

B. The College of Cardinals

1. Although these officials rank next to the pope in Catholic power today, **there were no such officers in the New Testament Church**, even as **there was no pope**.
2. This “college” was at first a small committee of priests in the churches in Rome, who acted as an advisory council to the pope.
3. The Lateran Council of 1059 approved this “college” which by then had become international. Since then Cardinals have been in every Catholic country where the church had enough power to appoint them.
4. They have often influenced politics, including treaties with kings and feudal lords. They bear no resemblance to anything of biblical origin.

DOCTRINAL DEPARTURES

As the centuries went on, more additions to God’s word were made by the Catholic authorities. Some of these doctrinal developments included:

A. Sprinkling Instead Of Immersion

1. About 250 A.D. a man named Novation was said to be too sick to be immersed. He was sprinkled; then he recovered. But he was never allowed

to hold any church office. This was called “clinic” baptism.

2. The oldest church buildings in Italy have baptisteries – for example, at the famous Leaning Tower of Pisa, a baptistery is close by, showing that immersion was still the practice at that date.

B. Transubstantiation. This is the doctrine that when the priest gives thanks for the bread and the fruit of the vine in the communion, they are changed into the literal body and blood of Jesus.

1. This doctrine was given official sanction by the Lateran Council in 1215 A.D. It is not a New Testament doctrine.
2. Many other doctrinal departures which were in use by the medieval church could be cited. Each student may pursue his own studies. Remember the words of Jesus: “*Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth*” (John 17:17).

CONCLUSION:

What have we learned?

1. Jesus and the apostles predicted change would come.
2. Jesus was not pleased with false teaching and change in doctrine.
3. Changes have continued to be made over the years. These that we have mentioned are only a few.
4. We need to get back to what the Bible taught and what the early church practiced.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY-ONE:

1. What did Jesus and the apostles predict would happen?

2. Who was one of the earliest examples?

3. What was Jesus reaction to this departure?

4. Name two other departures.

5. **True/False:** The office of Pope has always existed in the church. _____

LESSON TWENTY TWO

Reformation Attempts

INTRODUCTION:

The changes to the simple teachings of Jesus to the doctrines of men have resulted in much abuse of Christianity. Many of these abuses have hurt people, caused things to be done in the name of Christianity that Christ would never have approved of, and have caused many honest church leaders to cry out for reform.

There have been reform movements in countries all over the world. Many of these reform leaders have put forth great effort to bring people back to Christ only to be followed themselves.

In studying the History of Christianity we need to learn about some of these men. What caused them to want change? Who were some of these leaders and what can we learn from them today?

LESSON TEXT: None

LESSON AIM: To learn the history of the Reformation and some of the things which caused the Reformation.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

Learn about what reform means, about some causes of the reformation, and something about some of the early reformers.

DEFINING REFORM

A. “Reform” Suggests That Something Is Bad, Wrong, or Corrupt and Could Be Changed

B. Departure from the Truth of the Bible Set the Stage for Reform

After the first century the church made departures in organization and doctrine, creating also a life for its ministers (who became known primarily as “priests”) which led to a “follow me without question” attitude.

1. The Bible became a book not for the people but for the church. It no longer was the guide for religious practices but men took that place.
2. The church adopted practices that caused a loss of respect among many people.
3. As trade and travel widened between the East and the West, the level of learning and self-reliance increased. As many discoveries of old copies of the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts of the Bible came to light, more Bible study was evoked.

4. Comparing the Bible with the medieval church brought some to see the corruption of both morals and teaching that had crept in through the centuries. It was startling to compare the church of New Testament days with the church of the 13th to 16th century.
5. The call for reform grew from a few concerned voices to a crescendo heard throughout Europe.

CAUSES OF THE REFORMATION

A. The Misuse of Wealth and Power

In some centuries in Europe, the church owned one third of the land. Its wealth was displayed in magnificent cathedrals and the lavish life-style of many of its leaders. All this sharply contrasted with the poverty of the common people. This unethical style of the church was based on corrupt means of raising money.

B. The Authority Claimed for the Roman Pope

Innocent III said that earthly, secular rulers must be subject to the pope and derive their powers from him. He said that as the Sun was brighter than the Moon, so the pope had more authority than any secular ruler. Note the arrogance of the statement called UNAMSANCTUM. Those are the first two words of an official statement issued by pope Boniface VIII against the King of France in 1302 A.D. "Furthermore we declare, state, define and pronounce that it is altogether necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff." This enraged King Phillip the Fair. He invaded Italy and put Boniface in prison. After the death of Boniface, Phillip put Clement V in the office of the pope. The papal office was transferred to Avignon in France, where it remained for seventy years. Later there was a period in which three men claimed to be the pope, saying the others were "illegitimate." That schism was not resolved until the council of Constance in 1415 A.D.

C. Vices of the Clergy

1. Wicked lives of Catholic clergy led Innocent III to say, "The prelates in southern France are the laughingstock of the laity." Other practices that caused rebellion against the church included.
 - a. Celibacy of the priests – the requirement that ministers (called "priests" by the Roman church) must not marry.
 - b. Simony – the sale of high church offices (bishops, archbishops, for example) to raise money for projects at the building of St. Peter's cathedral in Rome.
 - c. Indulgences – promising the removal of a penalty for sin imposed by the church. Certificates of indulgence were sold to benefit both the living and the dead.
 - d. Hagiolatry – veneration of the saints, often represented in church buildings by statues or images.
 - e. The list could go on, but many people saw that the religion of the Lord Jesus had been replaced by something far different. They saw an authoritarian institution controlling the people through erroneous doctrine and practices of a priestly system that had lost the respect of the people.

REFORMATION LEADERS

A. **John Wycliffe (1320-1384) Was Called the “Morning Star of the Reformation”**

He rightly criticized the church of his time for its false teaching and immoral practices. Believing the church had left its Biblical roots, he opposed church authorities by wanting the Bible in English so the people could read, in their own language, the word of God for themselves. He devoted his life to translating the Bible into English. His students would go among the people and read the Bible to them in their own tongue. His followers were called Lollards, a term of unknown origin. Perhaps through Wycliffe’s students his writing were carried to Bohemia, the home of John Hus.

B. **John Hus (C.1369-1415) Was the Spokesman for Reformation in Bohemia**

He too criticized the church’s errors, and openly taught his beliefs. He was burned at the stake on July 6, 1415, by order of the Council of Constance. This council also ordered that the bones of Wycliffe be exhumed and burned.

C. **Martin Luther (1482-1546) Opposed the Sale of Indulgences by John Tetzel, a Dominican Monk.** Tetzel’s message to the people is summarized in this verse: “As soon as the money clings in the bottom of the chest, the soul springs out of purgatory into heavenly rest.”

Angered by such tactics, Luther posted ninety-five theses, or statements, on the church door in Wittenburg. He wanted to debate these issues with the Catholic scholars. The Latin document was translated by some into German, and was circulated everywhere. Luther agreed with some of the writings of John Hus, and his criticism of the church grew. His opponents tried to silence him. His life was endangered. Frederick (“the wise”) of Saxony took him to Wartburg castle where he lived incognito for almost a year. Here he translated the New Testament into German, and continued his writing. Returning to Wittenburg, he married and continued his efforts at Reformation. His followers (against his own advice) come to be known as Lutherans. The Lutheran church became the established church of much of Germany.

D. **Other Reformers Included John Knox, in Scotland.** His Work Resulted in the Presbyterian Church. John Wesley, in England, who is considered the founder of the Methodist church. These efforts at Reformation seemed to end not in a return to the New Testament, but in building some new denominations.

E. **Some Principles Behind Reformation Are Worthy of Further Study**

1. **A recognition of the Bible as the supreme standard for life and doctrine:**

- a. Luther’s eloquent words at the Diet of Worms (over which Emperor Charles V presided) are to the point. Church authorities demanded that he recant. Luther replied, “Unless I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture, or by clear reason. I cannot and will not recant, for it is neither safe nor honest to act against one’s conscience. God help me. Amen.”
- b. Reformers believed that human authority (exercised through popes and councils) had replaced the words of the Bible – the Word of God. Now

the question was “What does the Bible teach?” It was no longer a question of what was acceptable to church authorities.

2. The reformation exalted personal freedom and responsibility. This was emphasized in the principle referred to as the priesthood of all believers.
 - a. God’s people do not depend upon an official priesthood for salvation. Each individual has personal responsibility for his relationship to the Lord and to his fellow man.
 - b. No longer did believers see themselves as dependent on a system outside of themselves and the Bible for spiritual needs.
 - c. The New Testament taught then and does today that each true follower of Christ is a priest himself, and offers his own service to God (1 Peter 2.5-9; Revelation 1.5).
 - d. The acceptance of personal responsibility then brought a sense of dignity.
 - 1) It emphasized the need of personal accomplishment, which had been repressed by an authoritarian religious system.
 - 2) This rediscovered sense of self-awareness carried over into all areas of human endeavor.
 - 3) This helps to explain the great economic and educational progress made even today in free societies.
3. Educational heritage.
 - a. Since the Bible was believed to be God’s word, man’s standard of authority, it followed that each person is responsible to obey its teaching. One can understand why the reformers wanted the Bible in the languages of the people. Each person could then read it for himself.
 - b. It then followed that children should be taught to read so they could understand the Bible. The first public schools in America were established for this purpose. From this background America’s educational system developed, with its emphasis on excellence and the education of every child.
4. Moral and ethical benefits.
 - a. Where the Bible has been accorded respect as the word of God, its moral and ethical teaching has influenced standards for human conduct.
 - b. Many Christians in America are greatly concerned that these standards have been compromised in recent years.

CONCLUSION:

1. What have we learned? We have studied some doctrines and practices in the Roman church which caused it to lose respect among many. Some of these were:
 - a. The church’s abuse of wealth and power.
 - b. The pope’s religious leaders.
 - c. The unbiblical requirement of celibacy for all its ministers/priests.
 - d. The sale of church offices.
 - e. The sale of indulgences, which many saw as purchasing the forgiveness of sins.
 - f. Veneration of saints, which often took the form of kneeling before their statues.
2. We have learned the names and deeds of some outstanding reformers.
3. We have learned some of the principles and benefits that resulted from efforts

at reformation.

- a. Recognition of the Bible as the supreme standard for both life and doctrine.
- b. Emphasis on the priesthood of all believers.
- c. Educational benefits.
- d. A strong basis for moral and ethical practices.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY-TWO:

1. List 6 departures that caused reformers to see the need to change.

2. List 4 of the reformers.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

3. What were some of the benefits of the reformation?

4. List four principles behind the Reformation Movement.

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____

LESSON TWENTY THREE

Restoration

INTRODUCTION:



any sincere efforts to reform the apostate church resulted in the starting of new churches, called denominations. These fell short of going back to the original standard of the Bible, the word of God.

Then, in many lands there arose efforts to **RESTORE** the church as found and discussed in the New Testament. A fountain may give forth pure water. As it divides into streams, they may become contaminated. The nearer to the source, the purer the stream will be. So, the New Testament is the fountain of truth, coming from Jesus who said, “I am the way, the truth and the life” (John 16.6).

Many Old Testament examples show us how restoration was needed and how it was accomplished. God gave them the law, God’s people sinned. They began to worship idols, and were taken away from the home land into captivity more than one time. Each time they needed to be restored to the way God had given them, They needed to get back to His holy word.

LESSON TEXT: 2 Chronicles 34:1-35:20, 2 Chronicles 31:20-25 and various texts in the lesson.

LESSON AIM: To learn principles of restoration.

LESSON PREVIEW You will. . .
Study 2 Old Testament reformers and learn principles of restoration from them.

JOSIAH – AN OUTSTANDING EXAMPLE OF RESTORATION

Among Old Testament examples of restoration we find the work of Josiah to be notable. When Josiah became king, the law of God was found. It was found in the house of God, which had fallen into decay because of the way God’s people had perverted the worship. As Josiah read, he saw that his people, Israel, had not kept the word of God. Learning what God wanted in worship, here are things he did to restore the worship God desired.

A. He Broke down All Idols and Images (2 Chronicles 34:1-7).

Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years. He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD and walked in the ways of his father David, not turning aside to the right or to the left. In the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David. In his twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of high places, Asherah poles, carved idols and cast

images. Under his direction the altars of the Baals were torn down; he cut to pieces the incense altars that were above them, and smashed the Asherah poles, the idols and the images. These he broke to pieces and scattered over the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. He burned the bones of the priests on their altars, and so he purged Judah and Jerusalem. In the towns of Manasseh, Ephraim and Simeon, as far as Naphtali, and in the ruins around them, he tore down the altars and the Asherah poles and crushed the idols to powder and cut to pieces all the incense altars throughout Israel. Then he went back to Jerusalem.

B. He Purified the Land and the Temple (2 Chronicles 34:8-10)

In the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign, to purify the land and the temple, he sent Shaphan son of Azaliah and Maaseiah the ruler of the city, with Joah son of Joahaz, the recorder, to repair the temple of the LORD his God. They went to Hilkiah the high priest and gave him the money that had been brought into the temple of God, which the Levites who were the doorkeepers had collected from the people of Manasseh, Ephraim and the entire remnant of Israel and from all the people of Judah and Benjamin and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Then they entrusted it to the men appointed to supervise the work on the Lord's temple. These men paid the workers who repaired and restored the temple.

C. He Renewed the Covenant to Follow the True God (2 Chronicles 34:31)

The king stood by his pillar and renewed the covenant in the presence of the LORD--to follow the LORD and keep His commands, regulations and decrees with all his heart and all his soul, and to obey the words of the covenant written in this book.

D. He Restored the Passover Feast (2 Chronicles 35:1)

Josiah celebrated the Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem, and the Passover lamb was slaughtered on the fourteenth day of the first month.

E. He Provided Pure Priests and Levites (2 Chronicles 35:2). *He appointed the priests to their duties and encouraged them in the service of the Lord's temple.*

F. He Had the Ark of the Covenant Restored to its Place in the Temple (2 Chronicles 35:3). *He said to the Levites, who instructed all Israel and who had been consecrated to the LORD: "Put the sacred ark in the temple that Solomon son of David king of Israel built. It is not to be carried about on your shoulders. Now serve the LORD your God and His people Israel.*

G. He Restored the Sacrifices Which the Law of Moses Required (2 Chronicles 35:16-20). *So at that time the entire service of the LORD was carried out for the celebration of the Passover and the offering of burnt offerings on the altar of the LORD, as King Josiah had ordered. The Israelites who were present celebrated the Passover at that time and observed the Feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days. The Passover had not been observed like this in Israel since the days of the prophet Samuel; and none of the kings of Israel had ever celebrated such a Passover as did Josiah, with the priests, the Levites and all Judah and Israel who were there with the people of Jerusalem. This Passover was celebrated in*

the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign. After all this, when Josiah had set the temple in order, Neco king of Egypt went up to fight at Carchemish on the Euphrates, and Josiah marched out to meet him in battle.

KING HEZEKIAH – ANOTHER RESTORER

Even before the time of Josiah, also a period when Israel had left the ways of the Lord, King Hezekiah began to reign. The details of the restoration he brought about are given in 2 Chronicles, Chapters 29-31. Here is a summary: **2 Chronicles 31:20-21** *This is what Hezekiah did throughout Judah, doing what was good and right and faithful before the LORD his God. In everything that he undertook in the service of God's temple and in obedience to the law and the commands, he sought his God and worked wholeheartedly. And so he prospered.*

A. Restoration of the Music God Wanted in Worship. Since all the evils brought in by wicked kings before him had caused God's appointed worship to fall into disuse, Hezekiah restored all the aspects of worship the Lord had prescribed. One of those is spelled out for us in these words: **2 Chronicles 29:25**, *He stationed the Levites in the temple of the LORD with cymbals, harps and lyres in the way prescribed by David and Gad the king's seer and Nathan the prophet; this was commanded by the LORD through His prophets.*

B. Music in New Testament Worship Is Quite Different.

There could not be acceptable worship under the Law of Moses without the instruments of music which God commanded through His prophets. What music does God want in worship in the New Testament? His commands through His apostles are also plain: *"And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit speaking one to another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord"* (**Ephesians 5:19-20**). About fourteen passages in the New Testament talk of **singing in worship**. None speaks of instrumental music in the worship of the church. Examples, when Jesus and the apostles **Matthew 26:30** *"had sung an hymn, they went out unto the mount of Olives."* **1 Corinthians 14:15** *"...I will sing with the understanding also."* The Old Testament required animal sacrifices; the New Covenant points out our sacrifice, "Christ the Lamb of God." The Old Testament required many feasts; the feast of the tabernacles; the feast of the Passover. In the New Testament we find the Lord's supper. In a similar way, the instruments of music under the Law of Moses give way to such teachings as **Colossians 3:16**, *"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, SINGING with grace in your hearts to the Lord"*.

1. As Josiah did, we must remove all idols and images that corrupt the worship of God. Our Lord Jesus said, *"God is a spirit and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and in truth"* (John 4:23).
2. To purify the temple of God now His own worshipers must return to the New Testament way for our instruction and examples. Paul said to the church in Corinth, *"For this cause I have sent unto you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, who shall put you in remembrance of my ways which are in Christ, even as I teach everywhere in every church"* (1 Corinthians 4:17). This shows that the doctrines taught and the practices followed were meant to be the same in every local congregation

of believers. When different denominations were begun long after the days of the apostles, each denomination would adopt its own creed and its own forms of worship. Peter said this about the writings of Paul: *“And account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation.”* He added that Paul had *written the same things in all his letters. Some of those writings were wrested (twisted) by those who were unlearned and unstable, who also misused the “other scriptures”* – not only those of Paul. This is explained in **2 Peter 3.15-17**. The second chapter of 2 Peter warned against false teachers who had arisen within the church and led many astray. The last part of his letter warns his readers, *“Therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on your guard so that you may not be carried away by the error of lawless men and fall from your secure position”* (2 Peter 3:17).

CONCLUSION:

1. What have we learned in this lesson?
 - a. That the reformation failed. It did not restore the apostate church to the New Testament standard.
 - b. That many sincere efforts to restore the church resulted only in beginning new denominational churches.
 - c. That many Old Testament examples show how Israel was restored when it went away from the law of God.
 - d. That restoration is appropriate today, and is done by going back to the New Testament, *“The perfect law of liberty”* James 1.25.
2. There have been many men in several centuries who have worked on restoring what Jesus wanted. They neither wanted recognition or a following with new denominations made after them. They have simply asked that we get back to the Bible and the way of Christ.
3. May the Father give His blessing in many cities and many lands where those who love the Word are working to restore the spirit and heart of what God intended.
4. We do not need new departures and more divisions. We do need a love of the word of God and a commitment to the principles of Christ the only head of the church.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY-THREE:

1. Name two Old Testament reformers.

1) _____

2) _____


2. What did they do?

c. What principles do you learn from these reformers?

LESSON TWENTY-FOUR

The Second Coming

INTRODUCTION:

etting back to God's way is imperative because the Bible tells us that Jesus is coming again. Many have tried to predict the date and the time of His coming. They have used and misused many prophecies in the Bible. They have predicted, been wrong, revised the prediction, been wrong, revised the prediction, and been wrong again. They have literally pulled ideas out of the air without Biblical foundation. This quickly tells me something about their approach to the coming of Christ. They are wrong. They are using faulty reasoning and calculations.

Let me illustrate from a book written in 1918 called "Our Lord's Return" by Carlyle B. Haynes. "Without doubt there will be some living when the Lord comes who saw the falling of the stars in 1833." He is taking this prediction from **Matthew 24:29**, "*Immediately after the distress of those days 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'*" Then he added in a time when there was a great meteoric shower on the morning of Nov. 13, 1833. (page 54) He then takes **Daniel 12:4**, "*Many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.*" Then he goes on to say that this is the time of the end. His proof: "Let the reader go to any great railroad passenger terminals and note the unparalleled running to and fro. Tens and hundreds of thousands of people are constantly coming and going. A steady stream comes in from the arriving trains, and a steady stream goes out on departing trains. And there seems to be no cessation of this great stream of travel day or night. . . . Surely this is the day of running 'to and fro,' pointed to in the Scriptures as the 'time of the end.'" This kind of reasoning on the coming of Christ has led many away from the truth.

Another example is from a book called "*Millions Now Living Will Never Die*" published in 1920 by the Jehovah Witnesses. It was written by one of their founders, Judge J. F. Rutherford. In it he says, "This does not mean the end of the trouble, but it does mean, according to Jesus' words, that the old world legally ended in 1914 and the process of removing the worn out systems is now progressing, preparatory to the inauguration of Messiah's kingdom." (page 19)

He says later on, "Based upon the argument heretofore set forth, then, that the old order of things, the old world, is ending and is therefore passing away, and that the new order is coming in, and that 1925 shall mark the resurrection of the faithful worthies of old and the beginning of reconstruction, it is reasonable to conclude that millions of people now on the earth will be still on the earth in 1925. Then, based upon the promises set forth in the divine Word, we must reach the positive and indisputable conclusion that millions now living will never die."

The vast majority of the copies of this book have been taken out of circulation and destroyed by the Jehovah's Witnesses because time has shown the teaching to be

false and Judge J. F. Rutherford to be a false prophet.²²

Many have used these same types of approach and have had to revise, rewrite, and change their work because of faulty reasoning to begin with.

There are some things we can know about the second coming of the Lord and some things which we can not predict. The things we can know are the things we should be concerned about.

LESSON TEXT: Various text throughout the lesson.

LESSON AIM: To learn about the second coming of Christ and the need to be ready at all times.

LESSON PREVIEW: You will. . .

Learn about some of the abuses in teaching concerning the second coming and then discuss some of the things we can know.

THE TIME OF HIS COMING.

A. The Exact Date Is Not Known Nor Can it Be Known. This in fact is not what we need to know.

1. **1 Thessalonians 5:1-6,** *Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. While people are saying, "Peace and safety," destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape. But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. 5 You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled.*
2. Times and dates are not important because He will come like a thief in the night. Thieves do not drop us a note to let us know when they are going to invade our home. The reason these early Christians wouldn't be surprised is because they were ready all the time, living as sons of the light.
3. **2 Peter 3:9-13,** *The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth,*

²² Copies of this book with critical remarks is available at the Sunset Book Store.

the home of righteousness.

4. Peter uses a similar expression making it clear that the important thing is that we be ready with holy and godly lives.

IT WILL INVOLVE A RESURRECTION

A. Jesus Made it Clear That this Will Involve a Resurrection. He also made it clear that it will involve life or condemnation.

1. **John 6:39-40**, *And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.*
2. **John 6:44**, *"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.*
3. **John 5:28-29**, *"Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out--those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned.*

B. Paul Also Emphasized the Importance of the Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:20-28, *But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, **so in Christ all will be made alive.** But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him. Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.*

WHAT IS REALLY IMPORTANT CONCERNING HIS COMING?

A. We Must Be READY

1. **Luke 12:35-40**, *"Be dressed ready for service and keep your lamps burning, like men waiting for their master to return from a wedding banquet, so that when he comes and knocks they can immediately open the door for him. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them watching when he comes. I tell you the truth, he will dress himself to serve, will have them recline at the table and will come and wait on them. It will be good for those servants whose master finds them ready, even if he comes in the second or third watch of the night. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming, he would not have let his house be broken into. **You also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him.**"*
2. **Matthew 25:1-13**, *"At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish and five were wise. The foolish ones took their lamps but*

did not take any oil with them. The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. "At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!'" "Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.'" "No," they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.'" "But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. "Later the others also came. 'Sir! Sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!'" "But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.' "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

B. We Must EXPECT Him

1. This is related to the idea of being ready. We do not know when He will come but we must keep expecting it.
2. **1 Thessalonians 5:4-11**, *But you, brothers, are not in darkness so that this day should surprise you like a thief. You are all sons of the light and sons of the day. We do not belong to the night or to the darkness. So then, let us not be like others, who are asleep, but let us be alert and self-controlled.*
 - a. Don't sleep.
 - b. Be self-controlled.
 - c. Maintain faith, hope and love.
 - d. **Titus 2:11-13**, *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope--the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,*

C. We Must Have PATIENCE

1. **James 5:7-8**, *Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.*
2. We must have endurance, perseverance, the ability to stick to it.

D. We Should REJOICE Even in Suffering

1. **1 Peter 4:12-13**, *Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.*
2. True joy is the result of hope.

E. We Should Be Committed to HOLY LIVING

2 Peter 3:9-12, *The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this*

way, what kind of people ought you to be? ***You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.*** That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IN THE NEW TESTAMENT CONCERNING THE MANNER OF THE LORD'S RETURN

A. It Will Be VISIBLE

Acts 1:11 “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, ***will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.***”

B. It Will Be FEARFUL For Unbelievers. Those Who Do Not Know God and Do Not Obey the Gospel Should Be Shaking with Fear

2 Thessalonians 1:6-10, God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ***He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed.***

C. It Will Be an AWESOME Coming

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, ***with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God***, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.

CONCLUSION:

1. Are you committed to Christ? Are you ready? Have you obeyed the Gospel?
2. If I am ready, the time, the day, the hour doesn't matter.

SELF EXAM FOR LESSON TWENTY-FOUR:

1. List two passages that have been abused. (There are many others.)

2. How important are the dates of the coming?

3. What will the coming involve?

4. What should our response be?

1)

2)

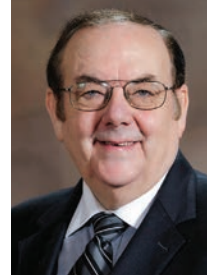
3)

4)

5)

Study Guide

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After serving with congregations in Texas and in Great Britain, he and wife Mary Lee moved to Delta, British Columbia, Canada in 1981 and worked with the church there until 2001.

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"The History of Christianity in a World Culture" course was developed specifically to provide a clearer understanding of the growth and challenges Christianity has had over the centuries, providing its historical context. It is a part of the curriculum at UBI as well as having been taught numerous times in mission congregations in Russia.

Jay Don and Mary Lee have four adult children and eight grandchildren. As of the publishing of this study guide, they have served 37 of their years in ministry on the mission field. In recognition of their service, they were awarded the 2007 Christian Service Award by Pepperdine University. In 2009 Jay Don was also honored with the Cline R. Paden Grey Eagle Award by Sunset International Bible Institute.



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