

The Complete School of the Bible Manual

Published by:
Paul E. Paino Ministries
P.O. Box 12205 • Fort Wayne, IN 46863

THIS CHRISTIAN EDUCATIONAL TOOL IS DEDICATED...

For as long as I can remember, my father, Dr. Paul E. Paino, was committed to the next generation. He is known across the country in evangelical circles as the “Sunday School Fanatic”!

This manual is the result of the passion Dad had for providing biblical instruction for children of all ages. The concept of developing a concise program whereby a child could be exposed to the Scripture in a way that would be relevant to this age is demonstrated in the material that is here presented.

Due to modern technology, twelve volumes and thousands of pages have been formatted into CDs that can be held in your hand and easily accessible around the world!

Although Dad accessed Heaven in 2005, his vision and passion for this project lives on. I am sure that this latest step in making this material available around the world joys his heart.

It is only appropriate to acknowledge those who have worked steadfastly to provide this new vehicle of sharing this material. Ann Liechty, Carol Kutzner, Alice Baxter, and Curt Monk have labored immensely to complete this challenge. It has not been without difficulties, but they have refused to give in until the work was done...and they have succeeded!

Our prayer is that, as you use this material, you will be anointed by the Holy Spirit to touch the lives of those who hear it, for eternity.

**Dr. Paul C. Paino
General Overseer-CMI**

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Introduction

The following comments and suggestions are presented to help you better utilize The Complete School of the Bible Manual.

1. The curriculum for grades 1 through 8 contains 51 lessons per grade level. There is no lesson for the 52nd week of the year. This is "Switch Week," when students are promoted from one class to the next. Due to the time involved in moving students to their new classes, we recommend using this class session to welcome the new students, to introduce teachers and workers and to acquaint students with how the class will operate.

The curriculum for grades 9 through 12 contains 52 lessons per grade level and includes an outline for "Switch Week."

2. The curriculum has been designed to be very flexible. It works equally well in graded and non-graded settings. (In a "graded" program, there is a separate class for each grade level. In a "non-graded" program, two or more grade levels are combined to make one class.)

If you operate a graded program, rotate the lessons in each class on a one-year cycle. At the end of the year, students are promoted to the next grade level and will be exposed to a new set of lessons.

If you operate a non-graded program, you can receive the full benefit of the curriculum without any reorganization of your Sunday School. Simply rotate the lessons in each class on a one-, two-, three-, or four-year cycle. For example, if students in grades one through three meet in the same class, you would rotate the lessons on a three-year cycle. The first year you use the curriculum, teach the lessons in Volume 1; the second year, lessons from Volume 2; the third year, lessons from Volume 3. Then, in the fourth year, begin again with the lessons in Volume 1.

3. The curriculum is designed to run from July through June. The starting date for Lesson 1 is the first Sunday in July. If you are implementing the curriculum at another time during the year, simply count forward from the first Sunday in July to determine the beginning lesson. For example, if you implement the curriculum on the first Sunday in January, you would begin with Lesson 26.
4. Easter lessons should be moved in your manual to begin two weeks prior to Easter Sunday. There should be three Easter lessons for grades 1 through 8.
5. You may need to adjust the lessons for other special days (Mothers' Day, Fathers' Day, Christmas, etc.) depending upon how these holidays fall in the current calendar.
6. There is no established schedule for using the life-related stories. Simply insert them into lessons where you feel they are appropriate. It is helpful to repeat the life-related stories during the year to reinforce the lessons they teach.

7. It is recommended that each teacher receive a copy of this volume, including all the instructional materials in sections one through seven. This will help each teacher to be well-informed and prepared for their responsibilities in the classroom.
8. The lesson outlines in section eight are not designed to be read in class. Teachers should use the outlines to prepare their own presentation. The curriculum manual should not be brought into the classroom and should never be used in front of the class. Instead, use the Bible as you teach. It is important that the students be aware you are teaching from God's Word and not from a manual!

Section 1

**Welcome
To Our
Ministry
Team**

To Our Co-Laborers in the Work of the Ministry

Welcome to the ministry team of the School of the Bible. To be effective leaders and ministers of the Gospel, it is important to understand these basic principles:

- CALLING:** Who we are in relation to where God has placed us in teaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- CHARGE:** Our response to the call of God on our lives.
- COMMITMENT:** Our resolve to give our whole heart to obeying that charge.
- CREDIBILITY:** Our personal and ethical qualifications to fulfill our assigned task "as unto the Lord."

We are grateful for your faithfulness in working with us, and we are committed to the task of equipping you as God enables us.

Please read and study this material carefully; fill in the blanks; and sign your name.

Our Calling

All Christians are called to be separate from the world -- to be God's people in a God-rejecting culture. We are called to be worshippers whose goal is to please God, rather than heathens who live to please themselves. (Isaiah 43:21) We are called to be God's children, His servants, His disciples, His dwelling, His bride, His body. Jesus called us the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world." God has called us to communicate the ethics and the essence of the kingdom of God in our lifestyle and love for people.

The Greek word for "church" is "ecclesia," which means "called-out ones." The root word is "klesis," a "calling or invitation." God has set us apart to live in this world unto Him and for Him, with a view to eternity with Him. God has assigned to us a specific purpose and responsibility in the work of the harvest of souls.

As God's church we are called and commissioned, both individually and corporately. Each of us must know God personally and individually and be accountable to Him as servants. We are also called together as members of a functioning corporate body. This is a practical reality. We are "partakers together" and "co-laborers with Christ." We submit to one another in the fear of the Lord, knowing that none of us has it all or sees the whole picture. God gives us special gifts to be used for building up the whole group. Each of us has weaknesses and strengths, and we need to be interdependent upon one another.

The calling of a teacher is clearly set forth in scripture as a specific commission to chosen, mature believers. This calling is not based on our ambition, but on God's sovereign choice. It is not based on our ability, for God will enable us to do the task He has appointed us to do for Him. Not all of us are called to a full-time pastoral or apostolic ministry, but our calling is just as real to the Lord. We need to recognize that our calling is from God, confirmed through apostolic authority (pastoral leadership) and by the evidence of a supernatural ability to do it well as we "grow in grace."

To serve in any calling is a wonderful privilege, and we need to recognize from God's Word that it is:

A HIGH CALLING.

"...this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 3:13-14)

A HOLY CALLING.

God "...hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace...." (2 Timothy 1:9)

A HEAVENLY CALLING.

Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him,...." (Hebrews 3:1-2)

A HOPEFUL CALLING.

Paul's prayer:

"That...God...may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation...the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe,...." (Ephesians 1:17-19)

A HUMBLE CALLING.

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called:...that no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus...." (1 Corinthians 1:26, 29-30)

Humility is the deep awareness of our constant need for God's strength and help in life's situations. People who are "gifted" with special abilities or intellect in some areas are tempted to trust in their natural talent. When they do, they become ineffective in the work of the ministry, because they are operating in the realm and resources of the flesh.

Questions To Be Considered As We Pursue A Teaching Ministry In The Local Church

Did God call me to teach?

If you believe God has called you to teach, then do it "as unto the Lord." Do not faint because of fear, weariness, or hurt feelings. Realize you are where God wants you to be; He has placed you there; and He has equipped you for the task. If you are not where God wants you to be, He will start working in you to put you where He wants you to be.

What group am I called to teach?

God has been preparing you to minister to a certain age group. Seek His direction through prayer, fasting, scripture, and counseling of your pastor. Be ready to serve. Let God open the door for you. Do not try to force it open yourself. God is responsible for the breadth of your ministry. You are responsible for the depth of it. As nearly as possible, focus on the group God has given to you and give them your heart.

Has the pastoral leadership confirmed this calling and agreed to oversee this work?

Any ministry to the flock of God must be yielded to and under the authority of the pastor of the flock. God will bear witness to your calling through the pastoral leadership of the church.

Am I called as a part of this local assembly of believers?

If you believe you have been called, then be faithful to your church and your pastor; cultivate and nurture an unshakable love for them.

Am I a team player?

When it is beneficial to the group, am I willing to step back and let someone else take a more dominant role and lead?

What part of the work am I specifically called of God to perform?

When your work is identified, then strive for excellence in it. Do it *"heartily as unto the Lord, and not unto men;..."* (Colossians 3:23)

Our Charge

Teaching is a vital part of the Great Commission to believers. We are commanded to teach all "nations" ("ethnos" -- people groups) about the Christian walk and witness. The word "teach," used by Jesus in His charge to His disciples in Matthew 28:19, is actually the word "matheteuo," which means "disciple, to enroll as a scholar." Our commission is to communicate and distribute information, to mold lives, to inform, and to inspire. We are called to teach and train disciples.

As teachers, we have the privilege of working with and for the pastor to strengthen the work of the gospel in this city, and to bless families by imparting Christian values to their children. We also see ourselves as workers with the parents, encouraging them in their role as the primary spiritual influence in the lives of their children.

In order to educate children effectively, there are several biblical principles we need to remember:

A child's life is molded and affected most by what he is exposed to every day.

In Deuteronomy 6:6-9, God, through Moses, instructed the Israelites to teach their children diligently the things of God throughout the day, and to have many reminders of spiritual truths in their homes and throughout their culture.

When the Sunday School first started in America, many Christian leaders had strong reservations about the whole program, because they were concerned that parents would tend to leave the spiritual training of their children to the Sunday School and neglect spiritual training at home. To be effective, you must inspire and influence beyond the one hour teaching session, lead children to a daily walk with God, and help impart vision to parents for daily family devotions, Christian music, and a spiritual atmosphere at home.

A good teacher will inspire more than inform.

The joy of the Lord is more caught than taught. If you have measles and teach all day on mumps, what will you be most likely to impart?

Most of the effort of a good teacher is outside the classroom.

Some of the activities teachers should pursue outside of the classroom include:

- Prayer;
- Preparation;
- Personal visitation;
- Practice (music, skits, etc.);
- Persistent Bible study;
- Purity in lifestyle as an example.

Teams are more effective than individual efforts.

"Two {are} better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him {that is} alone when he falleth; for {he hath} not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm {alone}? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."
(Ecclesiastes 4:9-12)

We are soldiers under authority.

Our purpose is to complement and strengthen the vision of this local church. We must always encourage loyalty to the church and honor to the pastor. God will give direction for the church to the pastor. It is our responsibility to support the pastor in the vision God has given to him.

Our purpose is to change lives by stimulating children with a sense of vision and destiny.

Our message is not only, "I can go to heaven when I die," but also that "God made me for a special purpose: to bless Him in my life and worship; to help other Christians; and to win lost people to Jesus."

The charge to Joshua was to love the Word.

"This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success."
(Joshua 1:8)

Paul's charge to Timothy:

- Stir up the gift of God within you. (2 Timothy 1:6-7)

God gave us spiritual enablements, but it is up to us to focus on and stimulate those gifts, because "...God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

- Be a good soldier in God's army. (2 Timothy 2:4)

Do not get entangled with the affairs of this life. Be a good businessman or worker, but do not let vocational or recreational pursuits control your life to the point that you are too "tied up" to serve the Lord.

- Flee youthful lusts. (2 Timothy 2:22)

Do not just avoid sexual temptation, run from it. Try not to expose yourself to anything that will arouse your mind to lustful thoughts.

- Pray for those in authority over you. (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

- Make a supreme effort to show yourself approved unto God. (2 Timothy 2:15)

If you are a hard worker, you will not be ashamed. A teacher who is a faithful worker will rightly divide the Word of God.

- Avoid fables, and shun profane and vain babbling. (1 Timothy 1:4, 2 Timothy 2:16)

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom,...." (Psalms 111:10) and so secular material has no wisdom to impart. Avoid worldly, fabricated heroes and stories. Communicate wisdom and understanding through Bible stories and characters, life experiences, and true-to-life stories. The purpose of secularized education is to create a perspective in children's minds that man is an end unto himself, and that God is unimportant

in the overall scheme of life. Our purpose is to communicate the truth that God is the center of our life, our hope, our purpose, and our daily walk.

- There are three basic character goals to keep in mind when you teach: (1 Timothy 1:5)

(1) Charity -- selfless love -- out of a pure heart, which is a heart that is not polluted with selfishness and willfulness.

(2) A good conscience, which is a spirit that is sensitive to motives or actions that are not pleasing to God.

(3) Unfeigned faith. This is honest faith that is not just "faith in the faith message," but wholehearted trust in God, even when we do not understand the process. Job said, *"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him:...."* (Job 13:15)

I have carefully and prayerfully read this charge, and I receive it as from the Lord. I will diligently seek to fulfill the calling and obey the charge as God gives the grace to me to do it.

Comments: _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

My Commitment

1. I will pray faithfully for the class, as I take the responsibility, as from the Lord, very seriously. Without His anointing and supernatural help, I realize I cannot be effective.
2. I will be faithful to attend at least 48 classes per year. I will arrive in the room 30 minutes before starting time to greet the students and prepare for the meeting.
3. I will be diligent to prepare myself and the lesson ahead of time.
4. I am committed to the pastor and to his vision for the church. I am a soldier under authority and a reliable member of the ministry team of this local church.
5. I will faithfully attend at least two regular services here every week, in addition to attending the Sunday School hour.
6. I am a tither. I will give the first tenth of all my income to this local church in obedience to the Lord and as a reminder that I belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.
7. I am committed to winning the lost to Jesus Christ and to teaching and training my students to remain true to God as long as they live.
8. I will regularly visit the families of the students to whom I am assigned, especially those families with special needs.
9. I regard myself as being a member of a ministry team. If I see a special problem, I will help, if I can; or, I will notify those in leadership who are qualified to minister to the need.
10. I will reach out promptly to those in my charge who are absent or hurting.
11. I will be regular in my personal and family devotions to keep my heart and house in order and my focus on the things of God.
12. As a teacher, I am eager to receive training and instruction. I trust God to build my character and skills through the insights of those He has placed over me in this ministry.
13. When misunderstandings or interpersonal conflicts arise, I will go to the person with whom I have a problem and privately and quickly make every effort to restore a good relationship. I purpose to avoid being any part of gossip or backbiting, either as a listener or a giver of negative talk about a fellow Christian.

14. I am committed to growing in the pursuit of excellence in my work for the Lord. I will seek training when I have the opportunity, and will be the best I can be at my assigned tasks.

“Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave wither thou goest.” (Ecclesiastes 9:10)

Comments: _____

Signature _____ Date: _____

My Credibility

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Birthdate: _____ Check One: Male Female

Marital Status: _____ Ages of Children: _____

Employer: _____ Work Phone: _____

1. When were you born again? _____

2. Did you experience genuine repentance and faith toward God? _____

3. When were you baptized in water? _____

4. When did you receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit? _____

5. As a Spirit-filled believer, do you pray in tongues? _____

6. Do you read the Bible and pray daily? _____

7. What is your primary vocation? _____

8. What specific skills have you developed that could benefit a Sunday School program?

9. Have you ever been convicted of any crime (other than driving or parking violations)?

Do you have a criminal record? If so, please explain on the reverse side. _____

10. What education or degrees do you have? _____

11. How long have you tithed consistently to this local church? _____

12. Are you willing to receive instruction/correction from the pastors or supervisors? _____

13. Do you know of any personal difficulty or problem that might hinder you from being effective in the work of this ministry to children? _____

My Goals As a Worker In the School of the Bible

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Section 2

Personnel Job Descriptions

Using the Personnel Job Descriptions

This manual is designed to provide instructions and helps in order to assist churches and schools in developing an effective Bible training program. The charts and lists included in this section are intended to be guidelines. Only in rare circumstances can they be duplicated exactly. The absolutes are all in the Bible. Biblical principles will work in any culture or time.

We strongly encourage developing ministry teams, rather than having a single teacher in the class. Every Bible class should have at least two members on the teaching team, even if the class is small. A team is able to generate more excitement, pray more effectively, and minister more comprehensively than one person. This is a biblical principle. Two are indeed better than one.

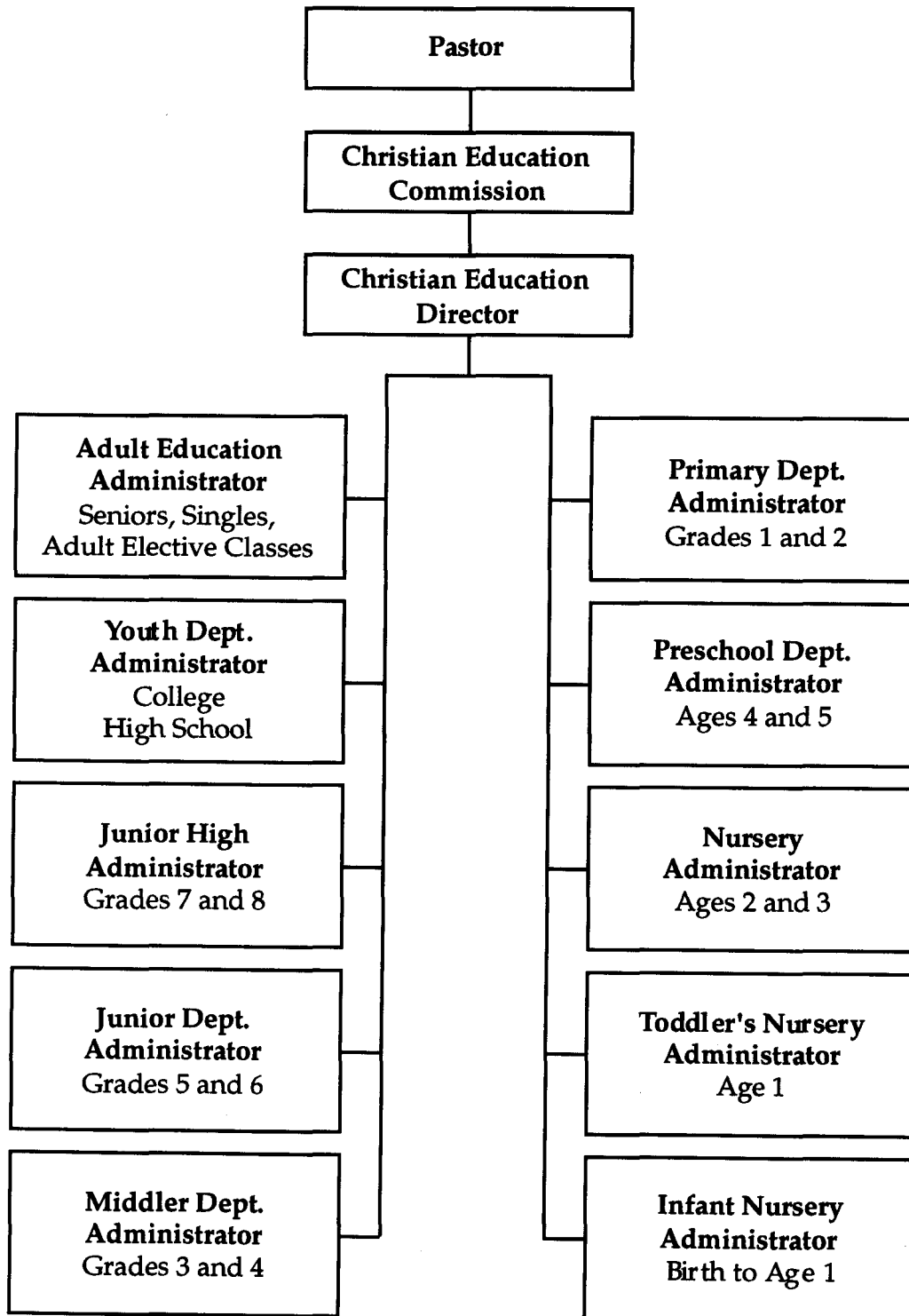
The job descriptions in this section define the responsibilities of the members of an effective ministry team. Sometimes, it may be necessary for a few people to fulfill several responsibilities in the class. However, as the class grows, these responsibilities can be delegated to new leaders as they join the ministry team.

It is also important to establish a clear line of authority in the School of the Bible.

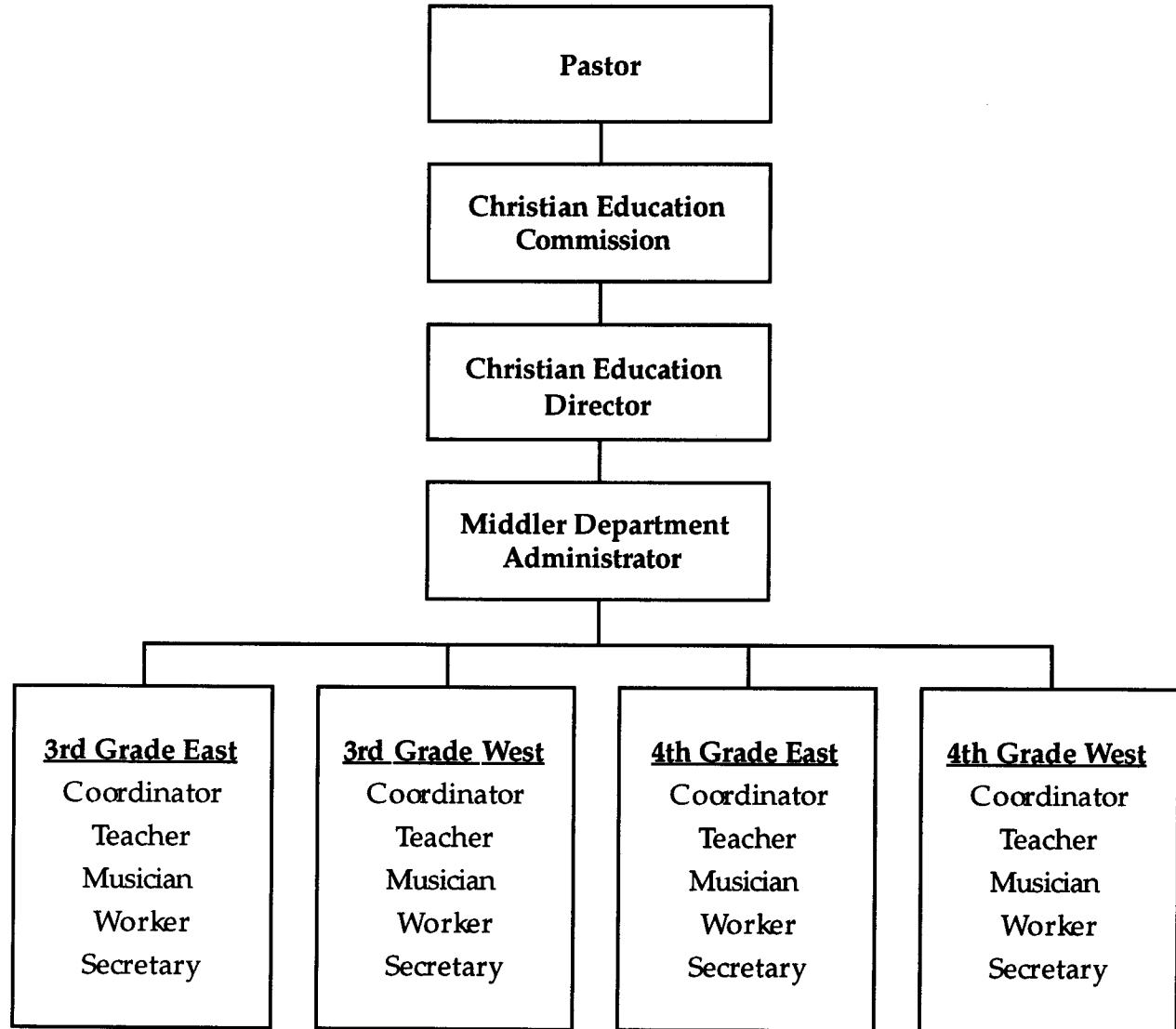
Confusion reigns when there is more than one person thinking they are in charge. The larger the body, the more responsibility needs to be delegated, and the more authority needs to be established on multiple levels. Everyone needs to know to whom they answer, and who has the responsibility to make the final decisions. The pastor is clearly the leader, and needs to have people under his direction who will take the responsibility for creating order and discipline in each class. Then, when there is a difference of opinion, these people graciously defer to him as the leader. One of the most important lessons we learn in Christian ministry is that we must have servants' hearts in order to make it work. Ambition and politics destroy the effectiveness of any ministry team.

Each of us in the family of God has a job to do. We need enough information to do it well. We also need to be a part of something that is bigger than we are; and we need help and encouragement along the way. This section is a tool for Christian leaders to help develop the specific program that will best meet the needs of the people.

School of the Bible Flowchart



Middler Department Flowchart



Administrator (Department Head) Job Description

The Administrator is responsible for the overall function of a department consisting of several classes. In order to achieve an effective and fruitful team ministry, Class Coordinators and Teachers will be under the supervision and guidance of the Administrator, with a view of strengthening the families and the general ministry of the local church.

A. Supervision.

1. Oversee the Class Coordinators.
2. Make certain that a leader for every class is present.
3. Encourage the workers to be punctual, neatly and appropriately dressed, and friendly.
4. Be in the hall 30 minutes before the classes begin to greet the teachers and students as they arrive.
5. Check around to see if there are any physical problems with the building which need to be corrected before the class begins. (Roof leaks, electrical problems, etc.)
6. Be sensitive to the needs of your teachers. Encourage and pray for any of them who are experiencing personal hardships.
7. Know each class team and be ready to step in and oversee a class if the Coordinator's post has not been filled.
8. Make sure the records are being handled correctly, and that the offerings are going to the department secretary with correct designations.
9. Take an active role in promotions and help stimulate interest and growth in the classes.

B. Teacher Training.

1. Conduct regular training sessions for your teaching teams, either as a department, or in conjunction with other departments.
2. Make every member of the group aware of the specific teaching goals of the class, both long and short term.
3. Share your ideas for improving the classes, and listen to the ideas of the Class Coordinators and Teachers with respect and appreciation.
4. Encourage friendship and fellowship among the people in your department.
5. Discuss available, new materials and teaching aids, and continually promote creativity, excitement, and the best audio-visual materials you can use.
6. Minister to the Class Coordinators under your supervision. Visit them as they visit those in their charge. Pray for and with them.

C. Discipline.

1. Be aware of any major discipline problems in the classes.
2. Be ready to handle any special discipline with which the Coordinator needs help.
3. If a child, who has become disruptive in class, is brought to you for correction, make every effort to locate at least one of the child's parents before attempting to discipline the child yourself.
4. NEVER spank or strike a child. Leave that up to the parents. Use physical restraint only if the child is a physical threat to someone. If a child is a consistent source of disruption to his class, you may find it necessary to suspend him. But, realize that disruptive anti-social behavior is a sure indication of severe personal and spiritual problems. Make sure that child is visited several times at home by teachers or others who are competent to minister to families, unless the family declines the offer of help.

Class Coordinator

(Class Leader)
Job Description

The Class Coordinator is directly responsible to the department Administrator. While having the primary responsibility for the class, the Coordinator serves as the leader of the teaching team in each classroom of the School of the Bible.

A. Attend Special Meetings of Leaders.

1. Keep informed on current developments and programs that relate to your class.
2. Share ideas and information with other Coordinators.
3. Receive information, encouragement, and ideas from the Christian Education Director, Pastor, or Administrator.
4. Pray with the other members of the teaching team.
5. Plan for the expansion and improvement of the School of the Bible ministry.

B. Supervise Training of the Teaching Team.

1. Class council meetings.
 - a. Conduct a special meeting with all of your workers at least once each quarter.
 - b. Discuss ideas for improvements in the class.
 - c. Share information from the Coordinators' meetings that is relevant to your team.
 - d. Discuss long- and short-term goals for the class.
 - e. Discuss and try to resolve any problems encountered in the class. Resolve any interpersonal conflicts quickly.
 - f. These meetings could be conducted in one of the homes with fellowship or a shared meal.
2. Assign responsibilities for each class session at least 10 days in advance.
 - a. Require each worker to report on the assignment plans and make sure each segment coordinates with the class theme.
 - b. Have each worker obtain and prepare props and teaching aids ahead of time.

3. Lead the group in goal-setting.
 - a. Attendance goals.
 - b. Offering goals.
 - c. Spiritual goals.
 - d. Visitation goals.
4. Lesson objectives.
 - a. "Quarterly objectives": Outline what you want to communicate for the quarter.
 - b. "Unit" objectives (usually 4 weeks).
 - c. Weekly aim (theme for this session).
5. Work with the team to plan special events, parties, field trips, service projects, etc.
 - a. Make specific assignments and divide responsibilities.
 - b. Fill out and submit the activity form to the Christian Education Director.
6. Lead the team in prayer before the class begins each Sunday.

C. Help Nurture the Spiritual Well-Being of Each Member of the Class.

1. Know the students personally, and be sensitive to their emotional and spiritual needs.
2. Be prepared to counsel on a one-to-one basis, if needed.
3. Set a godly example in your personal lifestyle and disposition.

D. Supervise the Care of the Classroom.

1. Never use tape, thumbtacks or nails on the walls or tape on windows. Use stick-tack.
2. In rooms with drop ceilings, light-weight objects may be hung from the ceiling grids.
3. Remove outdated decorations.
4. Turn off lights after class.
5. Make sure trash is picked up and put in the wastebasket.
6. Report maintenance problems to the Christian Education office.
7. Erase the chalkboards. Never use water on a chalkboard.
8. Arrange the chairs neatly.

E. Storage Cabinet.

1. Clean out the storage cabinet frequently.
2. Do not store food in the room or cabinet. It will draw all sorts of insects.
3. Be conscious of any fire hazard or clutter.

F. Classroom Discipline Problems.

1. The Class Coordinator is responsible for handling any normal discipline problems in the class with patience and consideration for the well-being of the group.
 - a. Never discipline a student with ridicule.
 - b. Never strike a student.
 - c. Convey love and acceptance while trying to determine the reason for the uncooperative or harmful behavior.
 - d. If possible, take a disruptive student aside and try to determine the nature of the problem. Be careful not to convey rejection by saying, "You are a bad child," or "I do not know what I am going to do with you."
 - e. Never leave a student standing or sitting alone in the hall.
2. Severe discipline problems should be referred to the child's father or mother if they are available.
 - a. If the respective parent is not in the building, the Administrator should handle the problem.
 - b. The Administrator should call the parents as quickly as possible.
 - c. The Administrator should give the child some personal attention and seek to discover the real problem behind the behavior, so he can minister to the need.

G. Coordinate and Lead the Visitation Program.

1. Assign a few of the students to each worker on the team.
2. Have each worker keep in touch with and continue to encourage each student assigned to them.
 - a. Birthday cards.
 - b. Phone calls.
 - c. Visits in the home.
 - d. Regular prayer for each one.

3. Organize regular visitations to the students.
 - a. Select a specific day, and get brief written reports.
 - b. Go with a new worker to show them how to make an effective home visit.
 - c. Make visitation an integral part of the Sunday School ministry program.
4. Be aware of absentees.
 - a. Contact missing students on a regular basis by writing, phone calls, and visitation.
 - b. If a student has been absent for more than 6 weeks, and every effort has been made to encourage them to return, contact your Administrator for approval to remove the name from the rolls.
 - c. No name should be removed without the Administrator's approval. It is the Coordinators' responsibility to keep track of extended absentees and not allow them to remain on the records, if they have not indicated that they will be returning soon.
 - d. Keep a record of the name, address, and phone number of each student whose name has been deleted and contact each one again within 3 months.

Teacher

Job Description

A. Communicate the Word of God to the Hearts and Spirits of Your Students. This Involves:

1. Planning:

a. Think ahead.

b. What response do I want to stimulate in their hearts this week?

(1) What do I want them to know?

(2) What do I want them to feel?

(3) What do I want them to do?

c. Suggested goals:

(1) Cultivate gratefulness to God as Creator, Provider, and Protector.

(2) Lead to repentance by awareness of sin, grace, faith.

(3) Combat the "me-centered" mentality of humanism and teach the joy of giving, serving, and preferring one another.

(4) Combat the temporal values system with an awareness of the second coming of Jesus, heaven, hell, eternity, and the judgment seat of Christ.

d. Biblical goals (from 2 Peter 1:5-7 in order):

(1) Faith.

(2) Virtue (character).

(3) Knowledge.

(4) Self-control.

(5) Godliness.

(6) Brotherly kindness.

(7) Charity (selfless love).

e. What are the curriculum goals this year?

2. Preparation: This involves work through the week, preparing your heart as well as your mind.

a. Read the lesson materials you have and all the related scriptures early in the week.

b. Incorporate scriptures and materials from the lesson into your daily devotions through the week.

c. Create an introduction that will stimulate curiosity and interest.

- d. Know the material thoroughly. Practice by discussing or even presenting the material to your family.
 - e. Look for, or make, props, pictures, or other visual aids which will captivate their interest and reinforce the message.
 - f. Prepare an introduction, main body, and a definite conclusion that will stimulate your students toward the lesson goal.
3. Prayer:
- a. Prepare your spirit as a servant of God. Become sensitive to the will of God and be led by the Spirit.
 - b. Pray every day for each of your students by name, and for the needs in their lives of which you are aware.
 - c. Learn from your students what their specific needs are, and let them know you are praying about those needs.
 - d. Keep notes about prayer needs.
 - e. In praying, privately and before the class:
 - (1) Always begin with thanksgiving. *“Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise”* (Psalms 100:4)
 - (2) Pray to the Father in Jesus’ name.
 - (3) Bless the Lord, and honor His name.
 - (4) Create a focus on His will, His kingdom, His purposes, and His pleasure.
 - (5) Make specific petitions for healing, provision, and spiritual growth based on His Word and purposes.
 - (6) Ask for His forgiveness for wrong attitudes and deeds and pray for overcoming grace as you come with a grateful and humble spirit. Do not recite prayers. Talk to God. Pray in the Spirit. Pray audibly whenever possible and have set times to pray.

Jesus gave a MODEL prayer to His disciples, not to recite, but to emulate. Here is a similar model:

“Heavenly Father, thank You for loving us and for sending Your only Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for our sins. We love You, and appreciate all the wonderful things You have done in our lives. Thank You for bringing us together as a group to study Your Word and learn Your ways. Thank You for Jason, Sarah, Joey, ... and for providing godly parents and a good church where we can worship You. Dear Lord, help us to understand more clearly what You are doing in our lives and what You want us to do with every precious day You give us to live. Teach us to grow in Your love by loving and serving one another; and, today, let every one of us know, without a doubt, that we are born again, changed, and walking with the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord. Help us to realize every day that Jesus is

coming soon; and anoint us to worship You in everything we do. In Jesus' name. Amen."

- (7) Start your day by reading the Bible and praying.
- (8) Include prayer at mealtimes and family devotions.
- (9) Pray together and minister to one another as a teaching team before the class.
- (10) Teach the children to pray for each other, or for a leader who has a serious need.

4. **Personality:**

- a. Communicate the Word with joy, conviction, and confidence. NEVER read a book other than a Bible to the students.
- b. Look at the students and be sensitive to their responses.
- c. Call the students by name often and encourage them to ask questions. They are more important than your presentation.

5. **Persuasiveness:**

- a. Know what this church believes.
- b. Be able to overcome the mental roadblocks that have been established in the students' minds by the world.

6. **Punctuality:** Arrive 30 minutes early, so you can quiet your spirit and help greet the students.

B. Share the Responsibility for Instruction in at Least One of These Teaching Segments:

1. Bible story.
2. Object lesson.
3. Life-related story.
4. Scripture memorization.

C. Learn to Use a Variety of Teaching Techniques and Aids Effectively:

1. Animate your lecture with body language, illustrations, props, and questions.
2. Flannelgraph.
3. Overhead transparency projector.
4. Video cassette.

5. Puppets.
6. Skits with costumes and props.
7. Chalk drawings.
8. Songs that tell or emphasize the story.

D. Learn the Material in Advance:

1. NEVER read a story or carry a quarterly.
2. Do not try to show pictures from a book to a class. Books were made to be used by individuals, not groups.

E. Carry and Read Only a Bible:

1. Make the Bible visible.
2. Encourage the students to bring their Bibles with them and read them.
3. Always teach a lesson or tell a story in your own words.

F. Pray Daily for the Students and for the Sunday Class Session.

G. Greet the Students. Make Them Feel Welcome and Loved.

H. Be Sensitive to Special Needs and Problems.

I. Honor the Class Coordinator as the Team Leader. Give that Leader Your Full Support and Cooperation.

J. Be Ready to Substitute for the Class Coordinator When Called Upon to Do So.

K. Attend at Least 48 Sunday School Sessions Each Year.

L. Be a Faithful Tither to this Local Church.

M. Attend at Least Two Other Regular Services at this Church Each Week to Strengthen Your Own Spirit.

N. Participate in the Visitation Ministry Program for Your Class. Realize That the Students' Parents Are Very Important to the Success of Your Ministry.

O. Attend Meetings and Training Sessions for the Sunday School Workers as Provided, to Develop and Enhance Your Skills and Team Spirit.

P. Be Supportive of the Overall Vision and Ministry of the Church.

1. Always be aware that we need each other.
2. The goal of a true servant is to make others successful.

Q. Be an Example of Christian Purity and Love.

1. Live the lifestyle you teach to your students.
2. Be quick to forgive and resolve offenses and misunderstandings, especially with brothers and sisters in the church.

R. Always Contribute to the Offering, In Order to Set an Example.

S. Teach the Use of Offering Envelopes.

T. DO NOT USE SECULAR MATERIAL, Such As:

1. Secular music lyrics.
2. Secular films (even though they may seem so "nice").
3. Secular books. Expose the students to Christian heroes and stories which put God in the proper perspective.

U. Be Careful to Put Nothing on the Walls Except in Designated Areas.

V. Help Keep the Room and Closets Clean.

W. Turn Out the Lights When You Leave.

Musician Job Description

- A. Strengthen the Message and Impact of the Class Session with Good, Appropriate Music.**
1. Planning:
 - a. Work with the Song Leader and Teacher prayerfully in choosing songs which will flow with and reinforce the objectives of the lessons.
 - b. Know the lesson plan and have the song list several days in advance of Sunday.
 - c. Keep looking for new songs which are biblical and fun to sing, particularly action songs.
 - d. Refer to the song list in the manual.
 2. Preparation:
 - a. Make sure you know the correct keys and chord progressions for the songs. You may need to consult one of the senior musicians during the week.
 - b. Practice the songs. Get some coaching if necessary.
 - c. Practice the songs with the Song Leader.
 3. Prayer:
 - a. Prepare your spirit as a servant of God.
 - b. Become sensitive to the will of God and be led by the Spirit.
 4. Playing:
 - a. Adjust your instrumental volume to the size of the room and the size and age of the group.
 - b. For 10 or 12 first graders, you need to play softly.
 - c. Do not play with your back to the Song Leader or group, especially if you play the guitar.
 - d. Play with skill and anointing.

B. Support the Teaching Team with Your Presence and Help During the Entire Class Time.

1. Be ready to play at other times during the class as needed for an altar call, special song, etc.
2. Smile.

C. If You Must Be Absent, Contact a Substitute During the Week and Notify the Class Coordinator.

1. Be sure the substitute is approved by the Administrator and Class Coordinator.
2. Make sure the Coordinator has the phone number of at least one substitute available in the event an unforeseen circumstance keeps you out of the class.

D. Honor the Class Coordinator as the Team Leader by Giving Him or Her Your Full Support and Cooperation.

E. Attend at Least 48 Sunday School Sessions Each Year.

F. Be a Faithful Tither to this Local Church.

G. Attend at Least Two Other Regular Services at this Church Each Week to Build Up Your Own Spirit.

H. Be Supportive of the Overall Vision and Ministry of this Church.

1. Always be aware that we need each other, and that the goal of a true servant is to make others successful.
2. We are a team!

I. Be an Example of Christian Purity and Love.

1. Live the lifestyle you teach others to live.
2. Be quick to forgive and resolve offenses and misunderstandings, especially with brothers and sisters in the church.

Worker
(Assistant)
Job Description

The general worker, one of the most flexible member of the teaching staff, is an assistant to the Class Coordinator, the Secretary, and the Teacher. This worker may be in training for a teaching ministry, or may be one who has a vision for the program, but does not feel called to carry the full responsibility as the leader. As an assistant, the general worker functions in the "ministry of helps," mentioned by Paul in 1 Corinthians 12.

A. Assist the Secretary.

1. Know the records procedures, and be able to handle the work when needed.
2. Help with attendance, offering, etc.
3. Assist the Coordinator and Teachers. Be available and willing to teach and to assist with special promotions and events.

B. Help Maintain Discipline in the Class with Firm but Loving Sensitivity, in the Event of Any Disruptions.

C. Participate in the Visitation Program.

D. Attend the Training Sessions and Planning Meetings Scheduled.

E. Be Active in Praying for the Class, the Individual Students, and for the Ministry Team.

F. Relate Personally to the Students Whenever Possible.

G. Come 30 Minutes Before the Class Begins; Stay Through the Dismissal Time; Participate in the Singing, Praying, and Activities; and Support Each of the Team Members.

H. If You Must Be Absent, Notify the Class Coordinator as Soon as Possible.

I. Honor the Class Coordinator as the Team Leader.

J. Attend at Least 48 Sunday School Sessions Each Year.

K. Be a Faithful Tither to this Local Church.

Secretary Job Description

A. Greet Each Student and Help Create an Atmosphere of Love and Joy in the House of the Lord.

1. Learn each student's name as quickly as possible, and use that name often.
2. Always recognize visitors and show a special interest in them.
3. Make name tags for the students.
4. Collect the tags at the end of the class and use them again every Sunday.
5. Introduce each new student to a worker.
6. Help make the students feel special about themselves.
7. Keep track of birthdays and, before the session, inform the Class Coordinator of current ones. Send cards to students with birthdays the following week.
8. Keep a list of absentees for visitation, cards, and calls.

B. Keep Accurate Records of Each Class Session.

1. Attendance.
 - a. Use the computer attendance sheet; mark a black letter "P" for present and a red "A" for absent.
 - b. For a new student who has just become a regular attender, fill out the blue change sheet with the class and department, the student's name, address, telephone number, birthday, parents' names and previous dates attended. A student is a "regular" when he or she has attended at least three times in a consistent manner, e.g., once a month for several months, every other Sunday, etc. Place a blue sheet inside the attendance sheet when finished.
 - c. Fill out or update a yellow form with the visitor's name, address, telephone number, birthday, parents' names, and date attending. Continue to record the dates attended on this sheet until the visitor becomes a regular. Keep the yellow form in the file box with the white permanent cards.
 - d. Total the number of class members and visitors and record it at the bottom of the computer attendance sheet.

- e. Take the completed attendance folder and offering envelope to the Divisional Secretary's office and check it over with the Secretary.
 - f. Be sure you have a permanent information card for each student on your attendance sheet.
2. Offering.
- a. The secretary is responsible for counting the School of the Bible offering and putting it in the envelope provided.
 - b. Record the total amount for the day on the envelope.
 - c. Record the total attendance on the envelope.
 - d. Keep any specially designated offerings separate, and turn them in to the Divisional Secretary with a note of explanation.
 - e. Take the completed attendance folder and offering envelope to the Divisional Secretary's office, and check it over with the Secretary.
3. Maintenance record keeping.
- a. Always check the computer visitation sheet for correct information. There may be a change of address or telephone number.
 - b. If a student tells you of a change of address or telephone number, fill out the blue change sheet, put it inside your attendance sheet, and turn it in to the Divisional Secretary.
 - c. Keep the visitation sheet each week for reference.
 - d. Keep the birthday sheet, which you will receive monthly. Fill in any birthdays not listed, and report them on a blue change sheet.
 - e. Be sure to have a white permanent information card for each student on your computer attendance sheet, and keep it in your file box. Do not forget to fill out a card for a visitor who becomes a regular attender. (Discard the yellow form used for visitors.)
4. Other records.
- a. During some promotions, records may be kept on separate forms relating to memory work, recruiting, or points for special efforts.
 - b. Occasionally, you may need some assistance from another worker to keep these extra records straight.
 - c. If an instruction sheet is delivered with additional paperwork, keep it in your attendance folder during the promotion and follow the instructions on the page.

C. Follow-Up.

1. Prepare welcome cards for new students.
 - a. Cards may be obtained from the Audio-Visual Room.
 - b. Include a little personal note. Be sure to sign your name and grade level. Do not just write, "Secretary."
 - c. Address the cards.
 - d. Take the cards to the Audio-Visual Room to be mailed.
2. Absentee follow-up.
 - a. One Sunday missed: send a "miss you" postcard.
 - b. Two Sundays missed: give the student's name and phone number to a Teacher or to the Class Coordinator, so a phone call may be made that week.
 - c. Three Sundays missed: make sure the student is visited by a Teacher or by the Coordinator.
3. Decision Cards.
 - a. These cards are available in the Audio-Visual Room.
 - b. Fill out one card for each student who responds to the salvation appeal in a class session, and turn it in to the Administrator.
 - c. Put the date and the student's name on the "Spiritual Life" form.
4. The books should be turned in to the Divisional Secretary no later than 30 minutes after the beginning of class.

Four Things Every Teacher Must Know

I. A Teacher Must Know the Student.

A. Background.

1. In what church was the student trained?
2. What is the student's cultural heritage?
3. What is the student's birth order?

B. Environment.

1. In what kind of neighborhood does the student live?
2. What school does the student attend?
3. What kind of television programs is the student permitted to watch?

C. Spiritual condition.

1. Is the student born again?
2. Has the student received the baptism in the Holy Spirit?

D. Comprehension ability.

E. Interest level.

F. Personality Problems.

1. Is the student shy, introverted, or antisocial?

2. Is the student belligerent or irritable?

3. Is the student hyperactive?

G. Family situation.

1. In what kind of home does the student live?
2. Are the student's parents divorced, separated, constantly fighting, or devoted to each other?
3. Does the family have devotions together?
4. Is the family addicted to television?
5. Are the student's parents Christians?

H. How can a teacher learn about the students?

1. There are books available which explain characteristics of children at every age level. Go to the bookstore or library for general information.
2. Study carefully the material in your manual concerning your students' development.
3. Acquaint yourself with the student. Call him by name.
4. Pray specifically for each student under your charge.

II. A Teacher Must Know Himself. Before Teaching, Ask Yourself:

- A. Am I tired or irritable?
- B. Am I discouraged? *"David encouraged himself in the LORD...."* (1 Samuel 30:6)
- C. Am I prepared -- really prepared?
- D. Am I enthusiastic?
- E. Am I friendly?
- F. Have I prayed about this class session?
- G. Are there conditions and stresses in my own life that can adversely affect my function in the class?
- H. Am I able to overlook problems and concentrate on the task at hand?
- I. Do I really believe in what I am doing today?
- J. Do I have a positive attitude?

III. A Teacher Must Know the Lesson.

- A. Start preparing well in advance of the day of the class.
- B. NEVER read your lesson or story to the class.
- C. Follow a simple outline. Present specific thoughts.

D. Use visual aids. Students will remember far more when the idea is reinforced by what they see.

E. Use illustrations.

1. From the Bible.
2. From your own life.
3. From the lives of others.
4. From Christian literature.
5. From nature.
6. Allegories.

F. Ask questions.

G. Leave the students with a desire for more. Do not overdo singing or any one segment.

H. Be sure the lesson relates to the pupils on their level. Do the insights you are sharing affect the situations they are facing in their lives?

IV. A Teacher Must Know the Overall Church Program.

- A. See yourself as part of the whole ministry team.
- B. Be faithful to the other programs and functions of the church. Attend the other services.
- C. Stay in your class when the other members of the team are ministering. Your presence is helpful and encouraging.

D. Share in the promotion of special days and general activities.

Adapted from Your Sunday School Can Grow by Dr. Paul E. Paino.

E. Make church announcements in your class.

Three Requirements for Every Teacher

The Bible has a great deal to say about teachers. Teaching is one of the special types of ministries that Christ Himself has placed in the church as a "gift." Read carefully the following scripture portion (Ephesians 4:11-16):

11 *"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;"*

12 *"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:"*

13 *"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:"*

14 *That we (henceforth) be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, (and) cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;"*

15 *"But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, (even) Christ:"*

16 *"From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."*

We discover from these beautiful verses that the Lord places teachers in the church for the following purposes:

- To Perfect the Saints.
- To Accomplish the Work of the Ministry.
- To Build Up the Body of Christ.
- To Help the Church Come Into a Unity of Faith.
- To Give Knowledge About the Son of God.
- To Exemplify a Godly Lifestyle.
- To Establish Us in Doctrine.
- To Prove the Love of God.
- To Help Believers Fit Into the Body of Christ.

The Work of the Teacher Is Important. God Demands That Every Teacher Have:

A Call. (1 Corinthians 12:26-28)

God calls people to be teachers and workers. The gifts and callings of God are without repentance. Once we are called, we do not have an option. God requires a called teacher to teach.

Compassion. (Matthew 9:36-38)

"But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd. Then saith he unto his disciples, 'The harvest truly is plenteous, but the laborers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth laborers into his harvest.'"

The Master Teacher was moved with compassion. Jesus cared. Jesus wept. Jesus was concerned, because He loved people. He had something to give that would meet their needs. Every teacher needs to have the motivation and conviction that what he has is greatly needed by the people.

When we genuinely give our heart to the Lord Jesus Christ, it naturally translates into a love for people. In loving Jesus, we please him; we become like Him; and our motivations become more and more like His. Jesus was motivated by a supreme devotion to the Father, and by a selfless love for people. He was the consummate servant: He did nothing out of a motivation for self-gratification or self-glory.

Courage. (Joshua 1:1-16)

God spoke words of encouragement to Joshua, and told him "to be of good

courage." The path to courage is to focus on God's Word and on what God has done, rather than focus on our abilities or accomplishments.

Compassion and courage go naturally together. The Apostle John said, "*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear,...*" (1 John 4:18) Fear relates to the apprehension over potential loss. When we are a true servant and focus on the needs of others instead of ourselves, we are set free from fear and can boldly proclaim the Word of God. Daniel said, "*...the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.*" (Daniel 11:32) It takes courage to lead a class and bear the burden of ministering faithfully week after week.

Every teacher must know that he has a call from God, and not just a desire to be in front of people. He must have a genuine compassion for people and a passion for souls, and not just a desire to succeed in a ministry. Every teacher must also have the courage to do what needs to be done in the work, or he will give up when there are difficulties or conflicts.

Adapted from Your Sunday School Can Grow by Dr. Paul E. Paino.

Responsibilities of a School of the Bible Worker

As a teacher in the School of the Bible, you are taking an active part in the ministry of your church. In a sense, you are a minister yourself, serving in the ministry of "perfecting (maturing) the saints." (Ephesians 4:12) As a School of the Bible teacher or worker, you are assisting the professional, ministerial staff in preparing believers to cope with this "present world." (2 Timothy 4:10) The success of a local church is not only dependent upon its pastors, but also upon every saint who is actively doing his part in the ministry of reaching others with the gospel.

What activity is more important than teaching the Word of God? The ministry of teaching is one of the most important jobs in the church. For this reason, every effort has been made to choose individuals who will conscientiously teach God's truths to every person who enters the classroom. Our greatest joy must be in sharing God's Word. Your ministry in the classroom must never be a "burden." Evaluate carefully the potential of each student. Remember that someone needs to share the love of Jesus with them. Also, remember that true ministry is impossible with human strength and wisdom alone: you need God's anointing and grace. Pray for God's anointing, and make it a habit to pray for those to whom you minister.

Responsibilities of a Teacher or Class Worker in the School of the Bible:

Be an Example.

Develop deep-rooted convictions directly from God's Word and live by them. Remember that you are an example to the young believers.

Be Faithful to the Public Services of the Church.

A teacher should be willing to attend all the services of his home church: Sunday morning, Sunday evening worship and the midweek service. As a leader in the church program, you need to be strengthened in your spirit by worship and the preaching of the Word. You also set an example by showing that you are excited about the vision you share with others.

Be a Tither.

The tithe (the first tenth of all our financial increase) is an important mark of God's ownership and one of the first principles of Christian ethics. When we hold back from God, we cannot expect anointing or blessing on our lives, and it shows up in our ministry. Tithing strengthens our commitment to the Lord and to the local church. It also helps to develop the mind-set of a servant rather than a "consumer."

Be Loyal to the Pastor and to the Church Program.

This does not mean that the teacher has to believe everything the pastor believes, or even agree fully with everything the church does. It does mean, that as long as there is no conflict with the scriptures, the teacher should be willing to cooperate with the desires of leadership and be loyal to the pastor, as he presents the program under God's direction.

The most important qualification for fellowship is loyalty. Loyalty means, "I am for you and committed to your success; and, if I have a problem with you, I will go to you first and not discuss it with others behind your back." A "murmurer" is one who voices his complaints to people who are not responsible for the decision. Instead of helping, this only creates confusion and unrest.

Be Faithful to the Class.

The teacher needs to be in his class regularly. Of course, there naturally will be times when absence will occur. Irregular attendance indicates a lack of concern for the spiritual condition of the class. Even the youngest of students can sense your concern for their spiritual needs. Show faithfulness by being prompt, prepared, patient, and pliable. Your attitude of faithfulness will make the difference.

Be Willing to Seek Lost Souls.

Use your class to lead people to Christ. Do not just tell sweet stories. Seek to transform lives. Know how to lead a student to Christ, and plan to give your

students a chance to commit their lives to the Lord.

Be Willing to Become a Member of the Church.

Membership in the local church reflects your commitment to that work. Every teacher should have his ties deeply rooted in the local body in which he teaches.

Be regular in attending the Teacher/Coordinator meetings when they are scheduled. These meetings are designed to help the School of the Bible grow. It is a time of prayer and organization for the class you teach.

Be Willing to Visit Absentees.

Every student in the class must be visited at least once each quarter (13 weeks), and those who miss more than one Sunday should be visited as soon as possible. We are concerned about attendance, because we care about the individual and his spiritual growth.

An apparent lack of concern among church leaders can be a major factor in a student's denial or rejection of the Lord in his personal life. Who knows how history may have been altered if a Sunday School teacher had been more effective in reaching out to Adolf Hitler, Charles Manson, or Madalyn Murray O'Hair?

Be Properly Dressed.

Each worker should be dressed in a manner that is appropriate to the occasion. When we are ministering the Word of God to God's children, we are in a place of honor, and should also demonstrate a

spirit that honors those who have come to grow in God.

Ten Qualifications for a School of the Bible Worker:

1. Love God supremely.
2. Love people and be concerned with the spiritual needs of the community.
3. Develop a pleasant personality.
4. Have a real desire to work for the Lord.
5. Do not be easily discouraged.
6. Be a good follower as well as a capable leader.
7. Believe in the absolute necessity of personal salvation through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.
8. Have a sincere desire to serve Christ in the church.
9. Have clear spiritual perception.
10. Be willing to sacrifice time, money, comfort, and energy for the work of the Lord.

Section 3

Student Profiles

Understanding Your Students

In order to minister effectively to any group, it is imperative that you have a working knowledge of the people you teach. Their individual circumstance and personality will affect their response to you and your ministry. Please read this material carefully as you prepare your heart to minister in any capacity to some of the most important people in the world: our children.

We are concerned that you have a working knowledge of your students in a number of ways. Young people are complex. There are some principles that apply to children at specific age levels, and some that we can all relate to no matter what our age. There are also many variables that distinguish each one as unique, with special potentials, needs, and

distinct problems. We are created body, soul, and spirit. Each part of our being is affected by our heritage, environment, and a vast array of cultural and social factors, which affect our responses and reactions.

The profiles which follow describe a child's development at different ages. The more you understand about each child, the more effectively you will be able to handle his fears, misconceptions, and behavioral problems. These profiles will give you some general insights. You will also need to become familiar with such factors as family background, birth order, school influences, television habits, and family and personal devotional life. In doing so, you will have important resources available to minister to your students.

A Profile of Fourth Grade Students

Physical Development

1. In terms of physical health, fourth graders are probably at their peak in life. This should be a happy age, with little responsibility, but with growing awareness of life and the ability to participate in it.
2. Their motor skills are developing, and they are at the prime age to begin music lessons or learn skills in art or sports.
3. They need hard physical activity, although the only practical way for a Sunday School teacher to contribute here is either to encourage him to be active, or to have an occasional activity outside of the class time.
4. Fourth graders are usually outgoing and sometimes loud. They need to be involved in discussions, as well as activities. It is difficult for them to sit quietly and listen to you talk for any length of time. Class segments should be limited to 9 or 10 minutes, with a definite change of pace, leader, and/or direction each time.
5. The girls are ahead of the boys in physical maturity, but they can be fairly even with most kinds of competition. Unless the ratio is unusually lopsided, it is usually safe to group the "girls against the boys" for some light competition, as long as we make sure to maintain respect and kindness for everyone.

6. In America, many of our children are television addicts, sitting for hours a day. This not only steals much of their valuable learning time, but also damages them physically, with a lack of exercise and the promotion of junk foods. Try to stimulate them toward more productive activities, such as music, sports, reading, and family devotions.

Intellectual Development

1. Fourth graders are probably acceptable readers by now. However, you still need to be careful about some who are slower than the others and who would be embarrassed to be called on to read individually.
2. Their vocabularies are growing. Know what words they understand, and try to teach them the meaning of at least one or two new words each week. Make sure you know the meaning of the words yourself. If you use a King James Bible, you need to realize that many words have changed in their meaning in the past 400 years or so. So, be careful. Words like "conversation," "quick," and "minister" have changed in the way they were used during that time. Words are extremely important. The way you define a word, like "grace," or "remission," can dramatically affect the way you respond to life and to God.

3. Encourage them to ask questions. In fact, a good teacher will direct the class session to stimulate the students' thinking to the point where they will ask questions, and then they will be their most attentive. Also, ask questions, and avoid asking for "anyone" to answer. Usually, the same few will give answers, and some will never volunteer a response. Be careful when students give wrong answers to your questions. It is very important to correct errors without making a student look or feel foolish or embarrassed.
 4. They are probably being exposed to many humanistic ideas, such as the doctrine of evolution and situational ethics. Teach them that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, and that truth comes from God, and not from man's intellect.
 5. They may be starting to feel the Bible is simple, and "kid's stuff," because they have heard the same stories in other classes. Do not be afraid to challenge their minds with deeper truths or less familiar Bible illustrations. It is healthy for children to see that there is more to learn and understand about the Bible, and to have a sense of wonder and awe about God.
- are extremely unresponsive or overly obnoxious usually come from homes with spiritual problems. A good leader will be sensitive to special needs or problems and seek to help, rather than react to the child as a "troublemaker."
 2. They prefer the members of their own sex. Some boys may even be into "girl-hater" clubs. While we know that this usually changes in a few years, we need to address the issue of love and kindness, and lead them into a healthier response to one another.
 3. Their world is expanding, but they still tend to be selfish. This translates into an undue emphasis on "fairness." Teach them the principles of giving and sharing, and of sowing and reaping. Let them know that life is not fair; that as Christians, our goal is to bless others, not to "get our fair share."
 4. Children in the fourth grade are learning to tease and treat each other unkindly, and they may take advantage of smaller children. Teach them the power of the tongue to heal or to hurt, and the basic Christian ethics that relate to the hurting or the helpless. The church has been too tolerant of the "practical" joker, who derives pleasure from the hurt or embarrassment of someone else.
 5. They need to be taught by precept and by example to respect authority, and to be encouraged to relate to and rely on their parents more. This is especially true in a time when parents are seriously ridiculed by a very powerful entertainment industry,

Social Development

1. Fourth grade students are more confident, assertive, and outgoing than younger children, although some of them probably have some difficult circumstances. Those who

which basically opposes Christian values and morality.

6. Lead your students away from the peer-oriented focus in our society and toward a more family-centered lifestyle. Seek to influence their parents to spend more quality time with them.

Spiritual Development

1. If a fourth grader has been in Sunday School for several years, he has heard many lessons and many appeals for salvation. It is important for the teacher to be aware of the spiritual condition of the students and of their Christian background, or lack of it. If there are some unsaved young people in the group, there will be times which are conducive for an "altar call," or at least a question about their spiritual condition, to be followed up later. If only one or two children have not made a confession of faith, rather than single them out and focus the entire group on their need, why not meet with them or their family later, and lead them to the Lord? It would probably be much more meaningful to them, and would prevent a few possible problems.

If we have an altar call every week for "churched" children,

- a. They will tend to develop the idea that the salvation experience is all there is to Sunday School, and not keep a learner's heart later on. They may be more likely to drop out, with the idea that "I already

got saved -- several times, in fact. I do not need to go back."

- b. There will be an embarrassing focus on one or two, who are known to be new or unsaved.
- c. We will miss opportunities to lead them into other experiences or into character development. This is a good age for them to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit, or to learn serving and giving.
- d. It will become a ritual (rut) and lose its effectiveness.

Listen to the Holy Spirit, in order to know when to make a spiritual appeal for salvation,

2. The spirit of a fourth grader is able to respond to spiritual truths; but, perhaps his mind cannot yet fully grasp them. Use analogies, and keep teaching and praying. The Holy Spirit is able to make truth come alive in his spirit and in his understanding.
3. They should understand the significance of water baptism, and should be encouraged to be buried in the waters of Christian baptism.
4. They need to be led to respond in the spirit, and not just focus on the social and intellectual aspects of life and religion. They should be able to hear from God and respond to Him.

Note: It is important to understand the difference between genuine salvation and religious conversion.

Religious conversion is an act of the mind and/or the emotions. A child raised in a Christian culture, which

also teaches Santa Claus and other "cute" myths, tends to mix the images and messages in his mind, and to think of God as a Santa. When he hears about God's love and desire to give to him, and about heaven, he will tend to think, "Sure. Why not?" He may learn the language and the motions, and "accept" Jesus as part of his cultural background and weekly obligations, without genuine repentance from sin and without making a covenant with God. He may notice in his teen years that there is not much difference between him and the spirit he observes in the world, and decide that Christianity is "kid's stuff," like the Easter Bunny and Santa's elves.

Genuine salvation is a work of the Spirit. It involves both faith and repentance. The Holy Spirit moves on the person's spirit and also the conscience, and "convincing of sin," while stirring in the heart the revelation of God's love and His holiness. We respond to the completed work of Christ on the cross with gratefulness and humility, recognizing our desperate need for forgiveness and healing. We respond to the covenant initiated by the shedding of His blood for us, by giving our lives to Him and receiving Him both as Savior and Lord.

Children of the '90's

What is Happening to Children in America Today? What is an Effective Teaching Strategy for Sunday School Ministry?

A. Education and Entertainment in America Today.

1. This is the most entertained generation in history: the "couch-potato-kid" culture.
2. "Sesame Street" has revolutionized education.
 - a. Quick, creative, colorful. The programs feature a rapid succession of clever, elaborate, and brilliantly entertaining segments of material with a strong humanistic bias.
 - b. To be "secular," the presentation does not have to be blatantly "anti-God." It must only exclude God. Any philosophy that excludes God is, in effect, working against a Christian world view. All education shapes values and morals. There is no such thing as a religiously neutral education.
 - c. The result is:
 - (1) American children are not easily impressed with a flannelgraph lesson or paper maché puppets.
 - (2) They have an even shorter attention span than previous generations.
 - (3) They tend to be more focused on their "rights" and less responsive to authority figures.
 - (4) They tend to be "hyperactive." In 1900 the average American consumed an average of 2 pounds of processed sugar per year. Today, our average consumption is 200 pounds per year.
 - (5) They tend to see God as less exciting than the world.

B. What Secular Education Cannot Do.

1. Television and movies cannot respond personally to the children. "Sesame Street" is strictly a one-way street.
2. They cannot hug, reciprocate, or show personal interest in their special events.
3. Secular educators and entertainers cannot give life a worthwhile purpose or clear direction. (This goes without saying. If you are not going anywhere, it does not matter how you get there.)
4. The "secular" world cannot operate in spiritual giftings and discernment by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Note: It is possible for some to operate in the satanic counterfeit, such as demon-induced psychic powers, "e.s.p.," or other aspects of witchcraft. Some "churched" children, who have had a lack of exposure to the power of the Holy Spirit, have been attracted to the occult world because of the spiritual void in their lives.

5. Secular education has no answer for basic life questions: "Where did I come from?" "Why am I here?" "Where am I going when I die?" "Does life really matter?" "Who am I?"
6. A secular education does not strengthen the family relationship. In fact, the more secular our perspective on life, the weaker our family ties become. Therefore, a secular education cannot make children emotionally or spiritually secure.
7. By excluding God from their thinking, the secular culture diminishes the basis for vision in life, and inadvertently contributes to the epidemic of teen suicide. "*Where (there is) no vision, the people perish.*" (Proverbs 29:18)

C. Keys to an Effective Sunday School in the '90's.

1. Do not monologue; dialogue.
 - a. Your effectiveness is limited when you use only the straight lecture method: "You listen; I talk." The idea that "children should be seen and not heard" is not going to be relevant today.
 - b. Get them involved in the dynamics of the lesson. As a one-way communicator, you cannot compete with the world system. If you effectively interact with them and relate personally, you have a strong advantage.
2. Be sensitive to special needs.
 - a. A child who will not sit quietly and obey has a problem -- usually at home.
 - b. He does not need to be humiliated in front of his peers.
 - c. He needs private attention, and his parents probably need ministry of some kind, too.
3. Be creative and open to new ideas and exciting ways of presenting the concepts which children need to grasp.
 - a. Dialogue is better than a monologue.
 - b. A 2- or 3-person presentation is better than a solo act.
 - c. Generally, a video is better than a filmstrip.
 - d. Children need a lot of visual stimulation, as well as audible, tangible, and spiritual stimulation.

4. Do not underestimate children.
 - a. They can memorize, even if they cannot yet read.
 - b. They can perceive things in their spirits before all their mental perception comes into play.
 - c. Expose them to the Word of God.
5. Work with parents.
 - a. Get to know the parents.
 - b. Work to make them feel that they are a part of the team, along with you.
 - c. Help them in their goal of training their children properly.
 - d. Encourage parents to memorize the verses, along with their children. This is essential for parents of pre-readers. Otherwise, the children are limited to learning only a few partial verses a month.
 - e. Give parents suggestions for family devotions which are related to the lessons. Make sure you have devotions with your own family; and, share ideas, preferably with an occasional take-home letter.
 - f. If the parents are unsaved, see their child as a key to winning the parents to the Lord.
 - g. Appeal to the parents' natural sense of responsibility. Help them see that, in order to effectively rear children and ensure their survival in these times, they need God's anointing and help.
 - h. To be secure, children desperately need two parents who love each other and who are responsive to God's authority.
6. Provide incentives and rewards for achievement. Be creative. Recognize your students' successes, and acknowledge their accomplishments and special skills.
7. Let kids have fun.
 - a. Have fun with them.
 - b. Smile.
 - c. Let them see that you enjoy the Lord and life in Christ.
 - d. Teach them to "delight themselves in the Lord," and not just in things.

8. Avoid being too simplistic.
 - a. Many people who were raised in Sunday School programs have the impression that the gospel is juvenile, or "kid's stuff," because they heard the stories of Noah and the ark and Daniel in the lion's den over and over again, without much depth or application.
 - b. Children can comprehend more in their spirits than you may realize. Include less familiar illustrations in your lessons; present your material in creative ways; and emphasize the spiritual truths in each lesson. Your excitement about the Word and the lesson will be contagious.
9. Remember that children have been exposed to a lot of humanistic philosophy, which makes them the center of their world.
 - a. With that kind of mind-set, it is possible for them to "accept Jesus into their lives," along with a pack of Muppets, Ninja Turtles, and power fantasy characters. We need to emphasize the concept of **Jesus as the center** of our lives, and repentance and faith as essentials to Christianity.
 - b. The children of today have been overexposed to the occult and to fantasy heroes, and it is not their fault. Let us expose them to the Holy Spirit and to Christian heroes.

Why Do We Lose So Many of Our Children to the World?

Some knowledgeable Christian leaders have estimated that in our evangelical and full-gospel churches, 85% of the children raised in Sunday School turn away from the church of their parents and find the world more enticing. It is time for us to take an honest, hard look at our methods and priorities and seek God for biblical answers.

Why could Joshua say, in Joshua 24:15, *"As for me and my house, we will serve the LORD,"* and we cannot? In Joshua's day and culture, the family was strongly the center of society and the life of individuals. By divine mandate, there was less exposure to heathen culture. Moses had conveyed the message from the Lord that the Israelites were not to allow their children to mix with the ungodly people of the land, in order to keep them from the influence of idolatry.

Today, our children have been exposed to far more evil than preceding generations.

The average child today watches 5 or 6 hours of television a day, and it is usually all secular. We need to understand that, although there are Christian programmers and networks, the purpose of secular media leaders is not only to entertain, but also to promote a mind-set and lifestyle that is Godless in perspective and ungodly in practice. Even the highly acclaimed educational television industry is blatantly promoting values and attitudes, which openly oppose Christianity. Not only does

the secular media waste so much time, but the commercial format is also designed to create covetousness as a way of life, and to mold us into "consumers", instead of servants.

The family is portrayed as "any group of people living together," and fathers are mocked as idiots. They are literally "turning the hearts of children from the fathers," as well as promoting witchcraft, immorality, drunkenness, and rebellion. How can a Christian father expose his son to 25,000 beer commercials in the context of sports worship, and then be surprised if the boy is attracted to alcohol as a teenager?

Parents would be far more disciplined about what they allow into their homes and minds, if they were fully aware of the deliberate motives of some powerful media leaders to effect major social change and literally destroy the family and the church. One hour a week of Sunday School, and a little family devotional in the morning, cannot compete with the attraction of endless hours of thrills, cartoons, and entertainment, which promise power illusions and pleasure at the flip of a dial.

"I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes...." (Psalms 101:3)

Today, one philosophy strongly promoted in education is that children need to be exposed to evil so they will reject it and know how to deal with it. This is a false concept. The more you

expose anyone to evil, the more they are attracted to it.

The only biblical way to conquer evil is to focus on good and be drawn to it.

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."
(Romans 12:21)

You do not win the battle over temptation by focusing on it and struggling with it. You gain victory over temptation when you live for God, obey

His commandments, and pursue good on a daily basis. The key is found in Galatians 5:16:

"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh."

Our culture promotes ungodly heroes.

Heroes are very important to children. Who were the heroes in America 30 years

<p>How Can We Develop a Taste for Spiritual Things?</p>	<p>How Are Carnal Appetites Developed?</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lead the students to genuine conversion through repentance and faith. 2. Be excited about the Word, godly character, and serving others. 3. Promote good, melodious music. 4. Read about and discuss the godly heroes of the Bible. 5. Teach the children, by example, to "delight themselves in the Lord" and to really enjoy praise and worship. 6. Help the family make God an integral part of daily life. 7. Make a covenant to put God first in your life, and be committed to three church services a week. 8. Make prayer exciting by documenting answers to prayer. 9. Become skilled in areas of service. Study about God and godly people. 10. Honor parents, pastors, and other leaders as God's servants for our benefit, and pray for them. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teach the doctrine of evolution and the basic goodness of man. 2. Focus on physical characteristics, appearance, and entertainment. 3. Allow sensual and carnal music. 4. Keep up with new movies, TV stars, and music idols. 5. Separate "fun" times from "spiritual" times, and treat church attendance as drudgery. 6. Try to take care of all the "spiritual stuff" at church. 7. Practice going to church only when you have time and when it is convenient in your schedule. 8. Try to work things out by talking or meditating. 9. Study drugs, rock music, and sex to create a mental focus on them. 10. Be critical of authority figures, and let your children hear you complain about them.

ago? The Lone Ranger, Roy Rogers, Davy Crockett. Today, children idolize a neurotic Batman, mutant turtles, sodomite rock stars, and a host of occult-based cartoon characters. Christian parents and church leaders need to be familiar not only with Bible heroes and villains, but also with the biographies of great Christians.

Most of our children develop a stronger taste for the world, than for the things of the Spirit.

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Proverbs 22:6)

This does not say, "Include some Christian training in your family life, and, after the children sow their wild oats in some years of rebellion, they will come back to the Lord when they become adults."

The word "train" comes from a Hebrew word, which means to "touch the palate." When a baby is learning to eat solid food, the mother starts putting some food on her finger, touching the roof of the baby's mouth and causing it to swallow. The analogy relates to taste. The verse really means, "Cultivate a taste for spiritual things in the heart of your child, and as he grows he will not be attracted to the inferior things of the secular world." *"Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good." (Psalms 34:8)*

It is not enough to expose children to part of the Bible message, and then encourage them to "make a decision." Our goal is to impart a thirst for spiritual things, which will continue to motivate them to seek God. A good teacher will

inspire his students to be a lifelong learner. You can be excited about teaching; but, you have not really taught until the children catch your vision. Anyone can get children to recite a prayer. Our goal is to teach them to become praying people. Anyone can recite verses; but, a great teacher inspires others to love the Word and to make it part of their lives.

In our zeal to promote love and gratefulness to God, and to encourage children to accept Christ, we have neglected repentance from sin -- a necessary biblical foundation for genuine conversion.

"Repent, and be baptized ..." (Acts 2:38)

"Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 3:2)

"And others ... save with fear." (Jude 23)

One hundred years ago, William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, said, "I fear that the day will come when men will preach heaven without hell, a crown without a cross, blessing without suffering, and salvation without repentance."

"Others save with fear." When we emphasize the love of God and unconditional security, the response of some is, "God really loves me. How can I do anything less than give Him my all?" Unfortunately, others will respond with, "God loves me; so, I am going to heaven. I can sin and get away with it." In our fear of overemphasizing the fear of the Lord, lest we be labeled "legalistic," we have

overbalanced the scale and lost the sense of awe for a holy God.

Many people who were "raised in Sunday School" seem to have a mocking disregard for the great eternal Judge of the universe. Let us be conscious of that delicate balance of truth: the God of everlasting compassion is a "consuming fire." It was God's love that sent Christ to the cross; and it was His holiness that demanded the death penalty for sin.

"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."
(Galatians 6:7)

While it is the goodness of God that brings men to repentance, (Romans 2:4) it is also because of *"the fear of the LORD men depart from evil."* (Proverbs 16:6) The fear of the Lord is not a negative thing. In fact, there are at least 31 benefits listed in scripture which result from the fear of the Lord. It is not a harsh, dark, negative aspect of faith, but rather a *"fountain of life."* (Proverbs 14:27) The fear of the Lord is the awareness that nothing is hidden from Him, and that all of our actions will be judged by a perfect and holy God. It is the understanding that we are "sure our sins will find us out," and that "God is no respecter of persons." We also need to understand that God never changes. We serve the same God that Noah and Abraham served. If we are not careful, we can overemphasize the passive aspects of grace and allow the impression that God is more like Santa Claus, than the holy God of the Bible.

Our message has often been, "Just accept Jesus into your heart."

We base that on an idea taken from Revelation 3:20, *"Behold I stand at the door and knock,..."* which, in context, has nothing to do with salvation. It is Christ's message to the church about spiritual communion. The message of accepting Jesus was important to the Jews, who understood sin, redemption, and covenant; but, their problem was that they did not accept Jesus as the Messiah they were looking for who would fulfill the covenant.

In our Christian culture, we have no problem accepting Jesus as our Savior; but, we tend to have a humanistic mind-set, which rejects His right to lordship. To believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is not to decide to accept His genuineness, but to acknowledge His ownership. *"The devils believe and tremble,"* (James 2:19) but they do not give themselves to Him.

The Bible does not tell us to "accept Jesus into our hearts." In fact, it says "We are accepted in the Beloved." (Ephesians 1:6) He is the one who accepts us into His heart, as we repent and believe. Many young people can get the false impression that Jesus is meekly "waiting patiently in line" in order to persuade us to allow Him an audience at our discretion. We accept Him into our life, to reside alongside our other beliefs, friends, affections, and habits.

In genuine conversion WE become part of HIS life. We are accepted and adopted, and we become part of His world, His domain, His body, and His army. He is the center of it all, and we become excited about pleasing and glorifying Him. In trying to make the gospel so appealing that

all we have to do is accept Jesus, we have produced many who see Jesus as another source of their pleasure, happiness, and success. Humanism makes self the center of our world and allows for religion, as long as it is not a "radical" transfer of affection and allegiance from self to Jesus.

To "accept Jesus into our heart" is not bad or untrue, but be aware of what an unregenerate mind can do with that concept, especially when there is no emphasis on sin or repentance. Remember that our children have been strongly influenced by humanism, which centers life in self and rejects accountability and authority.

The Bible calls us to "make disciples" -- to challenge the self-willed child of the '90's to "deny self," and to take up his cross daily and follow Christ. There are thousands of people in the world today, who are doing their own self-willed thing, and who at one time accepted Jesus in their heart; but, they never really grieved and repented over their sin, and never surrendered their life to Him as Lord.

We have brought sensual music into the church in an effort to attract the youth and to be "relevant."

We have swallowed the line that "all young people like sensual music," and that "it does not matter what style of music you use, as long as it says something." But music is, in and of itself, a language and a powerful communication medium. Music can touch the spirit, move the soul, and stimulate the flesh.

It is important to evaluate music on the basis of principle, and not label any "singing star" or group as ungodly, or evil.

Indeed, part of the problem is that sincere artists are resorting to sensual styles and secular methods in order to imitate the world and thereby reach people. We do not want to judge anyone's motives, especially if they are in Christian work. But we must evaluate the music and look at the fruit of the ministry. What is the long-term effect of a given type of music on the listeners? Do they tend to be mighty in spirit? Are they soul winners? Do they derive their pleasure from the music alone, or is there a genuine joy of the Lord and spiritual power expressed through their music?

Here are a few things to consider in the evaluation of music in the church.

- Taste in music is developed by exposure. Not all teenagers enjoy screaming "head-bangers" costumed in spandex, chains, and Revlon.
- Some styles are carnal, and they draw undue sensual attention to the singer. Breathly vocalizations, "bedroom eyes," and lewd dress are being tolerated in the name of "relevance;" but, what does it produce in the hearts?
- The argument that "it sells" is the doctrine of Balaam. Market share is not a biblical criteria for validity in the ministry.
- Is there an inordinate effort to imitate the sounds and appearance of the secular and satanic world of music, or is the singer responding to the Spirit in making a joyful noise unto the Lord?
- Test the spirit of the music and of the musician. Is there a smile on his face? Is there a message being communicated? Is the music a vehicle

for the Word that will move the heart, or is the music a vehicle for the musician to draw attention and admiration to himself?

- Our goal is to do all we can in order to expose youth to godly music and to cultivate a taste for spiritual things.

The Sunday School movement in America has largely ignored its greatest potential resource: parents.

The family is God's primary means for training youth. Unless parents have a vision for daily devotions, Christian music and programs, and a Christ-centered lifestyle, the little scriptural knowledge we can convey on Sunday morning will continue to be overwhelmed by a flood of secular, sensual, and satanic influences -- through movies, television, secular education, and carnal friends. Our task is to inspire young people to live a Christian lifestyle and walk daily with God, and to influence the parents to reinforce the message of God's Word during the week.

Children can memorize many times more scripture than we have expected; but, they need help from the family to do it, especially young children who do not read. Parents need to memorize along with them. When educators adopt such a philosophy, even kindergarten students memorize and quote chapters of the Bible, not just segments of verses.

To reach and influence the children of the '90's effectively, we must develop a working relationship with those parents who at least care enough to send their children to Sunday School, even if they do not bring them. We need to visit, motivate, encourage, and use written

communications to get them to work with us as co-laborers with Christ, and let them know that we are supporting them in the minds and hearts of their children.

Many Christian families do not have a strong conviction about speaking negatively about other believers.

There are many warnings and reminders in the Bible about our tendency to speak critically about each other. James 4:11 says, "*Speak not evil one of another, brethren.*" The word for "speak evil" is "katalaleo," which means "negative speaking." When we are offended or disagree, it is our nature to complain, or murmur, to people we trust. It is the most natural thing in the world to discuss the sermon or leaders in the church with our spouse. Unfortunately, many children hear these discussions, and then develop the impression that the church is "full of hypocrites," and, "you cannot trust the pastor." Many parents have tossed around their complaints in the car or at home for years; and then, they have wondered why their children were so attracted to the bar crowd, or to their secular friends.

We need to encourage each other to believe and speak the best of one another. If there are misunderstandings or conflicts, go to the person with whom we have the problem and resolve it quickly and quietly. We need to be aware of the subtle effect our grumbling has on little ears.

We cling to outdated methods and materials.

We must realize that we are in a battle for the minds and affections of children. We are up against a world system which

has at its disposal incredible, innovative, sophisticated technology, with massive budgets and manpower, producing an alluring enticement to sensuality, humanistic values, and the occult. We need to know that we have the Holy Spirit, God's love, and His creative power.

Let us be intense in our planning, preparation, and presentation of the message of a better hope, a better lifestyle, and a purpose for living through the Lord Jesus Christ. You cannot compete with the occult powers of He-man or Jem with a one-dimensional flannelgraph lesson; but, when you have an innovative, colorful, team-oriented program combined with agape love and genuine enthusiasm, along with the operation of spiritual gifts and sensitivity to their real need, you can compete with the "darkness" crowd. They have the illusion of power; we have God's power. We are in a war, and we can no longer get by without the anointing and creative skill.

The Sunday School can lapse into a routine of singing and lesson presentations, and neglect visitation and personal relationships, which are essential for effective training.

The purpose for dividing the youth department into small classes is not

limited to communicating the message on different levels. Nor is it limited to giving an opportunity for several people to teach in front of groups. Our purpose is to divide into small groups, so that there can be a more intimate and personal level of ministry to the young people. If a School of the Bible teacher sees his "ministry" as merely talking in front of a class, he does not understand ministry. Ministry means meeting needs, whatever they are.

A teacher who never visits the students, or rarely telephones them, is like a pastor who only preaches sermons and has no personal contact with the people. Children need to relate to godly adult leaders, who show that they care for them personally. They need to hear their name, and they need a listening ear, a hug, and a little present that says, "You are very special to me. Here is how you can see God's love, because I am showing you that I love you." Children, who get only a classroom diet of lessons, seldom stay long in the church. Each of us needs to feel loved, appreciated, and needed.

Do Not Send Them Away

"Send them away, that they may go into the country round about, and into the villages, and buy themselves bread: for they have nothing to eat." (Mark 6:36)

We find one of the greatest Sunday School lessons in this chapter. There are several things that every worker needs to learn from these verses:

"The day was now far spent"

(Mark 6:35)

When we look at the signs about us, we must be aware that the "day of grace" is indeed far spent. The night of God's judgment and tribulation is upon the world. We do not have a guarantee of a tomorrow for laboring in the harvest, so we must have an urgency of spirit as we relate to the work of soul winning. Jesus was stirred by the lack of time to work, and we should be as well.

"This is a desert place...."

(Mark 6:35)

Men and women are looking for something to satisfy their spiritual thirst and hunger for reality. People are flocking to the illusion of drugs and to the deceptions of cults, because they do not have the reality or hope that only Jesus Christ can bring. Young people see the phoniness, emptiness, and hopelessness of their predecessors; but, they do not know where to turn. Water is a "type" of life, and relates to the refreshing of God's Word and His presence in our life. When

we live apart from God, we dry up in every area of life. Life becomes merely existence. *"The rebellious dwell in a dry land."* (Psalms 68:6)

"Send them away."

(Mark 6:36)

The only answer the disciples had for the multitude was to send them someplace else. They could not meet the need of the people who came to them. Unfortunately, many churches are in the same condition. People come for help with spiritual problems and resulting emotional and physical troubles, and the church sends them off to secular agencies and unsaved "professionals."

When the disciples came to Jesus, they discovered that He had the answer. When we are in touch with the Master, we can meet the needs of people, because we are His servants and ambassadors. Through Christ we have the supply. The legitimate church is a "storehouse" which can meet the needs. That is what ministry is all about: find a need and fill it.

"Jesus saw much people."

(Mark 6:34)

It is possible for us to be with thousands of people and never really SEE them. We can overlook their real problems and individual needs. God's people need spiritual perception. Jesus told His disciples to *"look on the fields, for they are white already unto harvest."* (John 4:35) They were waiting for some

astounding event to initiate their ministry, or for some great public appeal for their services, but Jesus told them to LOOK. He was telling them that people are ready to hear and respond; and, if you are perceptive, you will know it.

Jesus "...was moved with compassion...."

(Mark 6:34)

The great heart of God was moved with compassion, because the people were scattered. God is by nature a Father and a Gatherer. Jesus was concerned for the people in their need. Today, there is a dearth in the land. Sin is scattering families by divorce and churches by division, and too many church leaders still work mechanically through their programs and politics. Notice that Jesus was moved by the scattered, hurting people. He had compassion, and it motivated Him to give to them whatever they needed.

"He began to teach them many things..."

(Mark 6:34)

Jesus was a teacher. Probably the greatest need in the lives of the people was a teacher, and they were hungry for the truth. Every Sunday School teacher has a tremendous responsibility to teach the truth. Truth is not just a set of ideas; but, it is also the expression of the person of Jesus Christ. *"I am the way, the TRUTH, and the life..."* (John 14:6) We are not just the ministers of the sayings of Jesus, but we are also *"the ministers of Christ...."* (1 Corinthians 4:1) We give Jesus to people. A key element in the ministry team of an effective church is God-conscious teachers,

who give themselves to the spiritual ministry of teaching.

"Give ye them to eat."

(Mark 6:37)

Jesus placed the responsibility on His followers. "YOU give them something to eat." In John 21:15, Jesus asked Peter, *"...lovest thou me? ... Feed my lambs."* Jesus saw a direct correlation between Peter's love for Him and his ministry to hungry people. "If you love me, you will bless my children."

If you and I love the Lord, we will give the world the "Bread of Life."

"...and they sat down in ranks by hundreds and by fifties."

(Mark 6:40)

It is interesting to note that Jesus separated the people into "departments," and then gave each disciple responsibility over a group. They all had a part in the ministry, and none of them was omitted.

A good Sunday School program makes it possible for every worker to have a valid and fruitful ministry. If all of us do our part and minister to our own group, the hungry multitude will be fed. "We are workers together with God."

"...He blessed and brake the loaves...."

(Mark 6:41)

Jesus gave the bread to the disciples. By the Spirit, He took what was available and made it enough to meet the need. We need to be sure that what we are feeding

people is from the Lord, and not from our own imagination, or something we gleaned from the world's "wisdom." Jesus blessed the bread and He gave it to the disciples. We need to remember that if we have any good thing to give, it was given to us by the Lord. *"Freely ye have received, freely give."* (Matthew 10:8)

"...and they took up twelve baskets full of the fragments"

(Mark 6:43)

When God is our source, He is able to supply more than enough to meet our need. He is also a God of order, and He wants nothing wasted. By multiplying the supply beyond the need, He made an opportunity for the disciples to serve as custodians. A teacher's work is not finished when the class has gone. He needs to be responsible for some maintenance and physical preparation as well.

The scripture makes it clear that the whole multitude was filled. Jesus more than met the need. He is the answer! He is the Bread of Life and the Water of Life. He is preparing us, as His disciples, to distribute the abundant life in Christ to the hungry multitude waiting to hear. Do not send them away. Feed them.

Why Unsaved People Do Not Come to Church

Jesus Christ said, *"Go ye into all the world...."* (Mark 16:15) He instructed us to "fish" for men. It is our responsibility to compel others to come in and hear the Word. We are commissioned by God to be His witnesses to a lost world; to go where men are; to reach; and to teach.

The motivating drive of Christians should be to win unsaved people to Jesus. We can only win men if we contact them where they are. If we are indifferent to soul winning, we will deteriorate into a religious club, instead of into God's mighty army. We must develop a passion to obey the Lord in His Great Commission.

We are not called to sit back and "hold the fort" until Jesus comes. We are called to be laborers in the harvest, to "occupy" until He comes. Here are some of the reasons unsaved people do not come to church. As we evaluate these reasons, it is clear that much of the blame is ours; and that, if we will respond to the Great Commission, many more people will come to Jesus and discover that He gives *"life...more abundantly."* (John 10:10)

They are not invited.

Very few of us invite people to church. We invite friends to our home. We invite neighbors to social functions. We invite people to PTA meetings, sports events, or shopping trips; but, how often do we invite unchurched neighbors or co-workers to church? Each year, one out of every five Americans changes residence. Many of them stay home on Sunday, because no Christians have shown an

interest by inviting them to their church services.

They are not welcomed.

It is very difficult for the average outsider to "break in" to the average church group. Most churches are very "close knit." It is good to be close friends with fellow church members; but, if we become exclusive, we miss the blessing of reaching out and growing personally.

We have a natural tendency to like "sameness" -- the same pew, the same songs, the same faces. Often, people who are different (foreigners, people from a different social standing, people with more needs than qualities to offer) are not enthusiastically welcomed in a church.

It is interesting that Jesus spoke of judging "church" people as dividing sheep from goats (Matthew 25:32-33), and the criteria for His evaluation is based on our response to various kinds of hurting, needy people. One major focus of Jesus is our response to the "new guy." *"I was a stranger, and you took me in."* (Matthew 25:35) A great mark of spiritual maturity is our ability to genuinely welcome new people into our lives; to make new friends; and to love the stranger.

They are embarrassed.

We often embarrass people, who come to church or to a class for the first time, by the way we introduce them or insist that they stand or talk. We need to be sensitive

to their personal response to that. Most people like to be welcomed and blessed by individuals in one-on-one conversation, as in a greeting time, or after the service. However, they are very uncomfortable about being put "on display" in front of a group of people whom they do not know.

They are not made aware of the presence of Christ.

If we are not careful, we can spend a lot of time in non-essentials and over-emphasize our programs, instead of the Lord. People today are hungry for reality. They need to see Jesus and hear the Word of God. They do not need more activity. They need a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

They are not attracted.

What is our reputation in the community? Are we known as "The First Church of the Hatfields and McCoys?" Are we seen as a bickering, feuding fellowship, or are we "known by our love?" It is important that Christians do not talk about internal problems with outsiders. The unreached have no desire to become a part of a group which forces them to take sides on issues.

It is also important to keep the building as attractive as possible. If visitors see dirty floors, an unkempt lawn, or a unclean restroom, they will tend to react negatively. The way we care for physical things does reflect the way we feel about ourselves and about our God.

We would also do well to examine our mannerisms carefully and our "worship calisthenics." We are often guilty of doing

things because of habit rather than participating in praise and worship as a true reflection of the heart.

They see too much hypocrisy.

How many times do we ignore people all year, and then invite them to attend church when there is a contest or special program? People often react negatively to Christians when they think they are wanted as a number; or, because we need their money. They also look at our own lives, and sometimes they see our preoccupation with seeking after the same temporal values for which they are seeking.

They do not see us excited about the Lord.

One Christian family was relocated to a new city, and visited a full-gospel church similar in doctrine to the one they had left. Their comment was, "It was a nice church. The preaching was good, and the people were friendly; but, most of them sat in the back pews during the service. We were near the front in a sea of empty seats. We felt self-conscious, and decided that, if they were not excited about being there, we would not be either. We settled on another church down the road."

They do not see that the church can meet their needs.

Sometimes the church becomes too focused on programs and gives the impression that it needs people to meet the needs of the church. Instead, we need to show the world that the church has answers for real problems. In some areas,

there is an exodus from Christian churches to the Mormon religion, because the Mormons are perceived to have a stronger emphasis on family values and relationships. People are hungry for that. "Teach me how to get my marriage healed, and how to handle my rebellious teenager. That is what I really need."

They do not feel that they are loved.

Do we really love outsiders? Too often, we are critical of the unsaved, instead of loving them enough to lead them to the Word of God and to the church. When we are willing to invite and welcome the lost, regardless of their weaknesses, our churches will be filled. Men are hungry for Christ. There is no other real answer to the basic needs and problems in their lives.

The Importance of Repentance

One of the basic motivations among genuinely born-again Christians is the desire to lead people to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. Heaven is so wonderful; God is so good; and hell is so horrible that we want everyone we know to be saved. We grieve over every soul who dies without knowing God. We agree that it is possible for people to become religious and not really have a spiritual new birth. How do we lead people to a genuine, supernatural, "new creature" experience that will result in a life lived in service and worship to God? How do we influence them to become disciples of the Lord?

Jesus spoke of people in the judgment who will say, "*Lord, ... have we not ... in thy name done many wonderful works?*" (Matthew 7:22-23) and He will say, "*I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*" (Matthew 7:23) There are many people who think they are going to heaven; but, they are not. They call Jesus "Lord," but they "work iniquity." In our sincere desire to see people saved, perhaps we have become too eager to persuade them to "make a confession of faith." We have brought a large number of people into the church who think they have a guaranteed ticket to heaven, because they "believed;" when all they really have done is to assent intellectually to the validity of Christ's messianic claims. Biblically, that is not enough. The Apostle James said,

"Thou believest that here is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble." (James 2:19)

God's purpose in the earth is not to create people to populate heaven. His purpose is to have a covenant people, who will live and reign with Him forever. The Bible never says that our part is only to accept Jesus. In fact, it says that He accepts us into His life. (Ephesians 1:6) There are many people who are converts to Christianity; and yet they are not living for Christ. These people have not understood their need for genuine repentance, and live their lives as if to say, "I do not love God; but, I have accepted Jesus into my heart, and I am going to heaven. I am saved by grace, and my works have nothing to do with it. So, I am going to live the way I please and enjoy the world while I am here."

The Apostle Jude warned that ungodly men turn "*the grace of God into lasciviousness...*" (Jude 4) In other words, they would say, "since grace is only unmerited favor, then I can sin and get away with it. God loves me. Therefore, I do not need to fear God."

When Charles Finney preached during the Great Awakening revival in America in the 19th century, he often preached on the fiery judgment of God. He preached that hell is hot and sin is dirty. People went forward to the "mourner's bench," often weeping and wailing as the message was finished. They were under strong conviction, and anxious to be relieved of their burden of guilt. Often, Brother Finney refused to give the altar call, saying, "if you are really sincere, think about it another day, and I will pray with you tomorrow." Historians note that over

85% of his thousands of converts became faithful church members, and served the Lord the rest of their lives. Compare that with the statistic that only 5% of Billy Graham's converts become members of local churches. When asked, "What would you do if you had it to do all over again?" Dr. Graham replied, "I would focus my energies on training leaders, as Jesus did, and not just on mass meetings."

Is it wrong to say, "accept Jesus into your life?" No, not really. That is part of it. But, if that is our only emphasis, it can be dangerous. In recent decades, mercy and love have been emphasized to the point where some have preached and taught an "easy-believism" message. They have made it as easy as possible for people to "make a decision for Christ," and have diluted or eliminated repentance and covenant.

Notice in scripture that Jesus addressed the particular needs of the people to whom He was speaking. When a rich young ruler asked Jesus for the key to eternal life, Jesus said, "give your money away," because that was his problem. He knew who God was, and the principles of covenant with Him, but he loved his money, and that was his only hindrance to following Christ.

What was the basic need of the people in Jesus' time? The Jews had the scripture, and they believed it. They understood the principles of God's lordship and His covenant. They were looking for their Messiah. The one great national problem they had was accepting Jesus of Nazareth as their Messiah. The rest was already understood. To say to a modern member of a Christian, but humanistic, culture, that "all you need to do is to accept Jesus" would be the equivalent of telling anyone

that the way to be saved forever is to give away all your money. Today, we should probably say to orthodox Jews that they need to accept Jesus into their lives. In our "Christian" culture, where Jesus is accepted by most people as God's Son -- the baby in the manger -- we have many people willing to accept Him as Savior; but, they have not repented of their sins or surrendered their lives to Him as Lord.

Today, many people in our humanistically-dominated society are "consumers." They live for themselves and for what they can get. They are "their own person." If that person is taught "just to accept Jesus and go to heaven," he probably will accept Jesus as part of his life; and then he will go on living for himself, with the sense that he does not need to repent, because everything will turn out all right for him.

Yes, there will be those who will be genuinely born again when they hear the message of God's love, and many others will take advantage of the "offer." Jude taught that for different people, you need a different approach.

"And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling {them} out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh." (Jude 22-23)

Many people will never experience true conversion until they understand the fear of the Lord.

The first word of the gospel is "repent," or "turn from sin." God's purpose is covenant, not converts. He is seeking worshippers, (John 4:23) not acceptance. Jesus died to redeem us from our sinful lifestyle, not just from hell. (1 Peter 1:18) In

genuine Christianity, we do not accept Jesus into our lifestyle. Religion is often the practice of living for self during the week, and then making some time for God on Sunday. The other days are for making money, watching TV, and worshipping sports or soaps. Jesus is seen as a gentle Santa, wanting desperately to give us happiness, standing on the perimeter of our lives, "waiting patiently in line."

God is not a gentle Santa. He is still seeking a covenant people. Most people in America will "accept Jesus," mentally or historically. Most anyone would be willing to accept Jesus as their Savior, in order to accept the free gift of eternal life. But Jesus said,

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke 9:23)

In other words, "deny self and become part of the body of Christ, finding your identity in Him and His purposes." We all want a Savior, but do we want a Lord?

Teach a gospel message to any church group and then ask, "who among you would like to be assured of a place in heaven, and would like to avoid hell?" No one wants to go to hell; and yet, Jesus said that most people are going there. When you tell people, "God loves you so much that He sent Jesus to die in your place so you can go to heaven," you are speaking truth. But consider that there are many in our "me-centered" culture who will interpret that to say, "Yes, I believe that I am very important, and that God is waiting eagerly to give me a ticket to heaven." They may accept the deal, especially if there is little emphasis on repentance or turning from their sin to serve God. Is there a legitimate spiritual

birth if there is no conviction by the Holy Spirit, genuine grief over sin, or surrender to Christ's Lordship?

John said,

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:" (John 1:12)

First of all, he is speaking specifically of the Jews, who, as a nation of God's people, rejected Christ as the Messiah sent by God. Only those who received Him had the potential to become the sons of God. Note that it does not say, "As many as received Him were the sons of God." Jesus taught us that, in order to receive the benefit from the ministry of any prophet, you first had to receive the prophet. (Matthew 10:41) Unless you acknowledge in your heart that Jesus is both Lord and Christ, your repentance will mean nothing. Secondly, to receive Christ as Lord must be more than just an act of the mind or will, because we can be born again only as God works in our spirit, and the mind and will are part of the soul. To receive Jesus Christ as Lord, you must genuinely repent from sin and turn to God. You cannot continue to "be your own person" and also become the "new creation" God wants you to be.

When you are leading an individual or group to Jesus Christ, look for and encourage genuine repentance. Is God dealing with them about their sin, and do they want to be free? The problem with most people is that we often want to be set free from the consequences of sin, but not free from sin. Our nation is working desperately for a medical cure for the disease of AIDS, and we are not crying out against the promiscuous immorality that is spreading it. We are reacting nationally

to the symptom, and refusing to address the cause. It was much the same with the Jews in Jesus' day. The Jews wanted a messiah who would set them free from Rome; but, Jesus came to set them free from sin. They wanted Him to conquer Caesar, but He came to conquer Satan.

Religion is a function of the soul -- mind, will, and emotion -- but genuine Christianity is a relationship with God through the spirit -- "...and they that worship him must worship *(him)* in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24)

Many people are led to accept Jesus emotionally or intellectually; but, that is not saving faith. It can produce good feelings about God, or stimulate hope; but, that is not saving faith. One approach to evangelism is to teach young people "just to accept Jesus," and afterward, when the converts have fears, doubts, and confusion in their lives, reassure them repeatedly that they are saved. But the Apostle Paul said,

"Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:1)

As a result of true repentance and faith, we will have peace if we have really been born again and have been genuinely justified by a supernatural work of God's grace. We will have a "witness of the Spirit" that we are the sons of God. When a "convert" does not have that peace or witness, we should check his foundation, rather than merely try to "treat the symptoms" and convince him he is saved. Was there repentance? Was there a genuine response of faith to God in the spirit? Was there a supernatural new birth? **There are numerous accounts in**

scripture of people who thought they were in right relationship with God; but, they were not. People who were right with God always knew it; and their works were a testimony to their profession of faith. (James 2:18)

If there is doubt, fear, and rebellion in our converts, perhaps we should not be too quick to minister assurance of their salvation before we check the foundation. The epistle to the Hebrews lists six "foundation stones" in chapter six. They are:

- Repentance from dead works;
- Faith toward God;
- Baptisms;
- Laying on of hands;
- Resurrection from the dead;
- Eternal judgment.

The Hebrew Christians were repeating these basics; and they were encouraged to "go on unto maturity" instead of getting saved repeatedly. Today, many people, who do not have a biblical foundation in their lives, are trying to go on to maturity.

Genuine faith will produce obedience and works. When we lead people to genuine faith in Christ, they will not just use God for "fire insurance;" they will be changed. They not only accept Christ as their Savior, but also as their Lord -- the owner, the one who has the right to make the final decisions. As we "*confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved*" (Romans 9:9) (brought to wholeness, healed, made right). The more we affirm and acknowledge His authority in our lives, the more we will walk in

victory. Sin is the result of our self-centered motivations, as we focus too much on the temporal aspects of life and neglect the spiritual. Sin is always an "I" problem. **Faith is a focus on God and His purposes.**

Genuine salvation involves a spiritual birth by the Spirit of God. There is always conviction for sin and a drawing by the Holy Ghost. Faith stirs in our hearts, and draws us to trust God with our lives, our goals, our dreams, and even our money. We make a covenant with God and seal it with obedience in water baptism. If we are genuinely born again, we would naturally have a desire to hear His Word and love His people. *"Every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."* (1 John 4:7) Religion causes people to conform to expectations. True Christianity is a supernatural **transformation**, not a reformation or a conformation. If our lives and lifestyles are unchanged, then we should examine ourselves, whether we are in the faith. (2 Corinthians 13:5)

What is our **Great Commission**?

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...." (Matthew 28:19-20)

What are the actions commanded? **"Go.... teach.... baptize.... teach."** Certainly there is a place for evangelism. Win souls, and lead them to seal that covenant in submission to God in water baptism. Then *"teach them to do what I have commanded you."* Instruct them. Build their character. Teach them to live godly lives in an ungodly world. As we nurture and train young people, they will naturally become positive witnesses to the goodness of God. People who are genuinely saved and living for God in harmony with one another will be the world's most powerful witness that the Bible message is true.

"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." (John 13:35)

Section 4

Sensational Sunday School Sessions

The Importance of Scheduling Your Class

Please read this section very carefully! If you are going to be a successful teacher and enjoy an efficient class, it will be necessary for you to schedule the activity of the class.

If you are given an hour to teach the class, take advantage of every single moment. A suggested time schedule follows on the next page. In developing this schedule, both the age and attention span of your students were taken into account. If you will discipline yourself to follow the schedule, you will be able to accomplish all the goals for the class session; keep your students' attention; and minister effectively to all in the class.

There are many advantages to scheduling your class:

1. It makes it easier for you to prepare for the class.
2. It helps you cover much more information in the allotted time.
3. It keeps the class moving and maintains the interest of the students.
4. It allows the leader of the class to involve others in helping with the class. This is one of the greatest advantages of having a schedule. When used effectively, it will help build a strong ministry team. It is also

an excellent way to train and involve new workers. To many people, the responsibility for teaching for an entire hour in Sunday School is overwhelming and intimidating. However, helping with a 5-minute segment of the class is much more appealing. Gradually involve new workers in the class. Invite them to lead the song service, or help with the memory verse, or receive the offering. Encourage them to get acquainted with the students and learn how the class operates by observing the class for a week or two before they actually minister. Then, as their familiarity and confidence builds, assign new or expanded responsibilities to them. Before you know it, you will have trained another worker for the School of the Bible!

5. A well-scheduled class will minimize discipline problems.
6. Keeping a schedule will protect the teacher from spending too much time in one area of class activity.

It is very important to acquaint yourself with all of the suggestions given in this section. Become familiar with each segment of the class and how it is to operate. In so doing, you will become the very best teacher you can be!

Fourth Grade Sunday School Class Schedule

- 8:35 a.m. Team Prayer, Greet Students, Student Crafts.
- 9:05 a.m. Song Service.
- 9:16 a.m. Offering.
Announcements, Birthdays, Promotions.
- 9:22 a.m. Catechism in Doctrine.
- 9:32 a.m. Life-related Story, Object Lesson or Project.
- 9:42 a.m. Bible Lesson.
- 9:55 a.m. Prayer and Closing.
- 10:00 a.m. Dismiss to General Service.

Preparation for Class

1. Pray for the class each day during the week as you **plan early** for your part of the class presentation.
2. On Saturday night, go to bed early to get **rested** and refreshed. Be prepared to give your very best to the Lord and to your class.
3. Arrive in the classroom **30 minutes** before the class is scheduled to begin.
4. **Pray** with your co-workers. Be especially aware of any specific needs or problems which may need ministry before the students begin to arrive. Be honest with one another. If you are "not with it;" or, if you are going through a personal struggle which will affect your ministry, ask others to pray for you.
5. **Share** together concerning the plans of each member of the team for the day. Make sure your themes and songs flow together.
6. Review the **memory verse** together. Every adult on the team should memorize the scripture verse before the class begins.
7. **Greet** the students as they arrive, and have some kind of activity or craft prepared to occupy their time while they are waiting. You may want to let them work on the activity sheet for the lessons. Gently motivate them to come early by making it a rewarding time.
8. Be **sensitive** to any child who arrives with a heavy heart. Pay attention to special problems and to things you might overhear.
9. If you see a child who is having difficulty settling down, do not feel aggravated that he might disrupt your presentation. Remember that a disruptive child usually indicates a need for special attention and ministry. He is not a fleshly interruption to your nice program. **He is the primary reason you are there.** The greatest ministry is that which can meet the greatest needs and heal the greatest hurts.
10. Prepare the room; prepare your hearts; prepare the team; and then **start on time.**

Singing with Joy

Goal: To create an atmosphere of joy and to prepare young hearts to receive the Word of God.

Focus: Lively, active songs.

Time Limit: 8 Minutes.

1. We sing to develop a focus on the Lord. Make sure your songs have a valid biblical message, as well as a happy tune and rhythm.
2. Remember to use songs the students enjoy, rather than songs that best relate to you. Slow, quiet songs should be rare for young classes.
3. Always go through the actions with them. Lead with joy and enthusiasm. Get the students involved. Have them move around with marching, jumping, and other actions.
4. Coordinate the songs with the lesson each week. You are working as a team in order to communicate a central truth with songs, Bible study, stories, and prayer. Use different songs each week.
5. See that the musician gets a list of all the songs for the day and knows the keys and chord progressions ahead of time. Make sure the musician knows the songs you want to sing.
6. If you have times when you have no musician available, soundtracks for a variety of song selections can be made and held in reserve.
7. To teach new songs, sing the song over several times for the class, and reinforce the message with a few words of introduction or a related scripture reference. It also helps to have related actions, or even a few pictures for a visual aid.
8. Generally, it is best to begin with lively, happy songs, and reserve any devotional, slow song for the end. It may also be appropriate to use a song to reinforce or conclude another segment of the class. Be sure the song is directly related to the lesson, and not just something to "fill in" or kill time.

Offering and Prayer

Time Limit: 7 Minutes.

The Offering Time.

1. It is important that young people learn the joy and importance of giving. Make the offering a joyful time in the class. Teach them to rejoice in giving to the Lord's work.
2. Set the **example**. Always contribute something to the offering yourself.
3. Let different students have the privilege of collecting the offering.
4. If you are receiving an offering for a missionary, talk about the work the missionary is doing for the Lord; and let the children share in the excitement of the ministry.
5. Occasionally, it is acceptable to let the boys compete against the girls, in raising money for missions.
6. Try to think of a way to receive the offering which will add variety and relate to the mission or to the lesson.
 - a. Example: If the offering is for Mexico, try to get a piñata or a sombrero to hold the offering.
 - b. If the lesson is on Joash, try to get some kind of chest to use to hold the offering.

Prayer Time.

1. Make prayer time meaningful by first giving an opportunity for reports and praise concerning answered prayer.
2. When prayer requests relate to students, workers, or their immediate families, make sure someone writes down the requests and asks each student during the week concerning the need they mentioned.
3. If there are several prayer requests, lead the prayer yourself. Do not embarrass a student who might forget one of the needs.

4. If you have a small class, have each student, at different times, pray a short prayer. Each student can include a prayer of thanksgiving, as well as a petition that is on his or her heart. Note any major need that is indicated, such as "God, help my parents to stay together;" and bring it to the attention of someone qualified to minister to that need.
5. Try to include each student's name in your prayer in some way. Ideally, you should know something about each of them, so that you can pray for them and not embarrass them.
 - a. Pray, "Lord, we pray that you will heal Jason's grandmother..."
 - b. Do not pray, "Lord, help Angela to conquer her mean temper;" or, "God, help Lisa with her bed-wetting." Pray that God will help Angela and Lisa with their problems.
6. Teach the children to talk to God in prayer. Let them know that God answers prayer. Whenever possible, show them the results of prayer.
7. Do not recite prayers. Teach the Lord's prayer to the children as a model of a good prayer.

Teaching with Purpose

- Goal:** To communicate the Word of God with skill and excitement.
- Focus:** One major biblical principle concerning doctrine or Christian character.
- Time Limit:** 8 Minutes.

Key Principles of Good Teaching.

1. Always know the story well, and tell it in your own words. Never read a Bible lesson to your students.
2. Memorize key names, numbers, and facts.
3. Use some kind of visual aid, such as flannelgraph, overhead, large drawings, charts, puppets, filmstrip, costume, drama, or video.
4. Relate to the students personally by asking them about facts they should know. Never say, "Who knows the answer to..." Instead, say, "Billy, who was the..." Make it a goal to use as many of their names as possible during the lesson. Remember that names are very important. Calling on specific students will:
 - a. Draw them into the lesson by anticipating that a question may be directed at them.
 - b. Avoid the answers being monopolized by a few outgoing students.
 - c. Draw out the shy member of the class, and make him feel that he is a part of it.
 - d. Make each student feel special.
 - e. Help you learn their names.
5. As you tell the Bible story, watch the students. Look them in the eye and be sensitive to their response. The temptation will be to preach to them, or to be more concerned about your lesson and delivery than about the people you are teaching. There is a difference between preaching and teaching. A good teacher will make each member of the class feel a part of the lesson presentation.

6. Always keep in mind that, behind every name and set of facts in the Bible, there is a lesson in life and character. Focus on the character strengths and weaknesses that resulted in the conflict or rewards, and show that God is always just and consistent as our judge and heavenly Father.
7. Never embarrass a student. If you are aware that there is only one student who is not born again, why have an "altar call?" Instead, why not purpose to visit the child and perhaps his family, and lead him to the Lord at home; or, talk to him at another time? Never teach a group something that applies only to one if you can minister to that person alone.
8. To receive the respect of those you teach, show respect for them as individuals. Show appreciation for their attendance and cooperation, and let them know that you see them as very special people. Also, encourage them to honor their parents and their pastor at all times.

Story-telling to Touch Hearts

- Goal:** To reinforce the central theme of the lesson with a related story.
- Focus:** A true or true-to-life story that will help create a focus on God and on godly heroes.
- Time Limit:** 8 Minutes.

Key Principles of Good Story-Telling.

1. Always know the story well, and tell it in your own words.
2. Memorize key names, numbers, and facts.
3. Whenever possible, use some kind of visual aid, such as flannelgraph, overhead, large drawings, charts, puppets, filmstrip, costume, drama, or video.
4. Instead of relying on fiction, use stories that are true. Use biographies of great Christians to illustrate the lesson and stimulate interest in godly heroes.
5. Research the geographic and cultural setting of the story. Paint a picture with words which will keep the students interested and stimulate their imaginations.
6. Be animated and expressive in telling the story. You may even want to enlist a teaching team member to help you act out a part of it; or, ask one or two of the students to help.
7. Make sure that your students can draw a definite biblical conclusion from the story you are telling.

Scripture Memorization

- Goal:** "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." (Psalms 119:11)
- Focus:** Memorize key verses of scripture in order to implant the message in the hearts of students.
- Time Limit:** 8 Minutes.

Key Principles of Scripture Memorization.

1. Many students have a far greater capacity for memorization than we have recognized in the past. Do not make it too easy, or it will not be a challenge to them.
2. It is highly recommended that you try to motivate the parents to memorize the passages at home along with the children. This will greatly increase the children's capacity to retain scripture, and it could be a great encouragement to families in their home devotions.
3. One tool in memorization is to focus on and understand the concept communicated by the verse. It is easier to memorize by visualizing the verse, rather than by trying to recite a group of words by rote.
4. Talk through the verse; explain the meaning of each major word; and review the overall meaning of the verse.
5. Whenever possible, use visual aids to reinforce the idea in their minds.
6. Repeat the verse often. Then, say it at least in one other way, in your own words. Look up the reference in several other translations, and read them to amplify the meaning.
7. Have the students repeat the verse several times as a group. You may also want to call on a few individuals to recite it.
8. Quiz them on the concepts and key words.
9. Have them meditate a few moments on the verse; that is, to visualize the verse being applied to their own lives and situations.

10. Ask for testimonies that might relate to the principle idea in the verse.

Catechism in Doctrine

- Goal:** To build a foundation of wisdom and understanding of the Word of God, *"line upon line, precept upon precept."*
- Focus:** A clear and concise answer to a basic question on Scriptural truth.
- Time Limit:** 8 Minutes.
- Catechism:** One of the Greek words in the Bible for "teach " is *"katechéo,"* which means "to sound down into the ear; to indoctrinate." Our word "catechism" means "to teach systematically with questions and answers."

Key Principles of Youth Catechism.

1. Familiarize yourself with the list of catechism questions included in this manual for this specific grade level. The objective is to systematically communicate a balanced perspective on the essential truths of God's Word, according to the vision of the pastor and the leadership of your local church.
2. It is important that we all "speak the same thing." Probably, all of us believe in the basics, as expressed in the "Apostle's Creed;" but, we will have some different ideas on less critical issues, especially if we have come from different Christian backgrounds. **Do not deliberately teach something which you know will be contradicted in the pulpit.** Even if you feel you are more accurate in your eschatology or hermeneutics, do not create confusion. Be a servant, and let the children hear a harmonious sound from their different authorities.

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and {that} there be no divisions among you; but {that} ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Corinthians 1:10)

3. Read the question aloud carefully and deliberately. You may want to read it again , or repeat the thought several times during the discussion. You may also wish to ask for a volunteer to explain his answer; but, be careful not to embarrass him or ignore his erroneous concepts, and thus give tacit approval. Usually, he will be "partly right," or "close."

4. Do your homework. Look up scripture references ahead of time in several translations, and know how to answer misinformed students. This will be more critical as you deal with older classes, especially if they have come from different backgrounds. Try to anticipate the areas where questions will be the most likely to arise in their minds, and explain them with scripture in your presentation.
5. If you have questions on a doctrinal topic that you are to present, contact one of the pastors well in advance of the class. A phone consultation will usually be adequate to clarify the position of your local church and give added insights on the topic.
6. Review related questions and answers from previous weeks in order to refresh the students' memories and help build a solid base in their spiritual foundation of truth.
7. Try to think of some kind of visual aid to strengthen their memories. For reading students, at least write the question on a chalkboard or poster, and then add a brief summary of the answer.
8. Each Administrator will be encouraged to review the concepts periodically with the class, or with individual students in order to reinforce the importance of learning basic truths. At the end of the class year, a quiz will be given to the students on the questions assigned to the teaching team for the year.

Section 5

Life-related Stories

Using Life-related Stories

These stories are to be used to supplement the lessons in the Complete School of the Bible Manual. Since neither series has to be used every week, they can be alternated with the catechism lessons. They will add color and interest to the lessons and should have a greater impact on the students than fabricated stories.

This series is not a compilation of the "best," or "greatest" in Christian history. Many of the accounts are from the lives of "everyday" people, who may not have achieved anything spectacular in life, but who did have a particular experience which illustrated an important lesson. Many people are included, because they happen to be known by the writer. Other stories come from the well-documented biographies of famous people.

We want to promote Christian heroes. All of us tend to emulate the people we focus on, and the secular world is busy promoting the popularity and success of many vain, shallow people, whose lives bear little resemblance to Jesus-Christ. When we do speak of ungodly people, we want to put them into the proper context. We not only want to know their public image and success, but also to be aware of their personal disasters and the moral failures which led to their wrong philosophies and choices.

Some of the stories come from the lives of people who were not Christians at all. As we read the Bible, we see a very comprehensive mix of people, ranging

from a sanctified saint to a surly scoundrel. We learn wisdom from both the heroes and the villains of history. We can profit by understanding both winners and losers. The key is the word *understanding*.

We have avoided trying to create another "Who's Who" in Christianity, because the topic is so subjective.

This is a collection of teaching illustrations from the lives of people. Some of them are notable, great leaders, and some are quite ordinary. The most lauded and visible people are not necessarily the most fruitful. When we get to heaven, all of us will probably be surprised to see that the greatest rewards and highest honors go to faithful "nobodies," while the rich and famous of today may have lesser positions. We seek to glean illustrations from the lives of a variety of people. We want to understand the factors that have resulted in a joyful, fruitful life for others, so that we might apply those same principles in our lives.

This collection should also serve as a model for the teacher. Each teacher can glean some stories from his own experiences, or from the experiences of people he knows. Those Christians who are in the habit of witnessing to the lost and reaching out to people will tend to have many more good stories than anyone else. Use stories you know and try to focus on real people and true stories. This takes more research and effort than fictional stories, but it is far more effective.

The Story of Billy Bray

Billy Bray was an ordinary guy. Today, he would be called a "good ol' boy." Billy was the town drunk in Truro, Cornwall, England. He was born in 1794 and lived for 74 years. He could not sing or preach, and had no unusual skills, yet he is remembered by generations of people. What made him special?

Well, for years, he was not special. He was not only a drunk, but he was given to indulge himself in immorality. He also was addicted to smoking tobacco. His father had been a Christian; but he died, and left little Billy to be raised by a grandfather who did not serve God, and therefore did not teach him how to live well in this life. Billy worked in the mines, and spent much of his time in the beer halls. Night after night, his poor wife had to come to the tavern to bring him home, because he was too drunk to make it on his own. His selfish, undisciplined lifestyle of pleasure-seeking was destroying his life, and hurting the people around him.

One day he began reading a book by John Bunyan called "Visions of Heaven and Hell." He began to think seriously about eternity. He realized that hell was a place of unspeakable torment in flames, darkness, and hopelessness, while heaven was a place of eternal joy, peace, and fulfillment in the presence of God. He became convicted of his evil life. Billy believed God's promise of justification, and he was born again.

Billy Bray's salvation resulted in a dramatic change in his life. He often danced in the street where he had before made a fool of himself for the devil. He said,

*"The Lord has made me glad,
and no one can make me sad.*

*He makes me shout,
and no one can make me doubt.*

He it is that makes me dance and leap,

*And there is no one that can keep
down my feet."*

Billy was a lousy poet, too, but his heart was right with God. Billy was a happy Christian. Even when his beloved wife died, he jumped around the room for joy, shouting, "My dear Joey has gone up to be with the shining angels. Glory, glory, glory!"

When Billy was saved, he stopped drinking, but he still used tobacco, even though he knew the Lord had said to serve Him with clean lips. One day, a good woman said to him, "Don't you think it's wrong to smoke?" Instead of being offended, he threw away his tobacco and smashed his pipe. He never smoked again. He later said, "If God had meant for men to smoke, he would have made a chimney in the back of their heads. No architect would have the smoke come out the front door."

One day, Billy was digging the potatoes out of his garden, and was tempted to resent the poor crop. He immediately began to tell the devil, "When I was serving you, I didn't have no taters at all! God has been so good to me." He said that when he started reminding the devil of all the good things God had done for him, he left him alone.

Finally, the day came when the doctor told Billy Bray that he was about to die. He exclaimed, "Glory, glory be to God! I shall soon be with God. Even if I was to go

down to hell, I would shout glory to God so much that the devil would have to get rid of me. But I'm going to heaven, and keep on shouting praise to the Lord."

The Story of Ada Buchwalter

Some unbelievers in the glossolalia go to great lengths to disclaim the possibility that the Holy Spirit can speak through a believer in a known language. They sometimes go so far as to say the miracle on the day of Pentecost was one of hearing and not of utterance. Quoting Acts 1:8, "*How hear we in our own tongue,*" they stress the word *hear* and say that the 120 on the day of Pentecost spoke in their own language, but each of the strangers present heard it in his own language. They conveniently ignore verse four, which says, "*They all began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.*"

But we must not limit the Holy Spirit. Jesus likened His activity to the wind which "*bloweth where it listeth (wishes).*" (John 3:8) The Pentecostal Evangel (June 24, 1922) records an unusual miracle of hearing.

Miss Ada Buchwalter had been working with Mr. and Mrs. Lewer (her sister) in Yunnan Province on the borders of Tibet. They traveled six days, and then Mr. and Mrs. Lewer went on to the capital, leaving her in the company of a Chinese girl. Ada was far from home, and practically alone. The Chinese girl had been saved from her former worship of idols, but had not received the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

The two young women visited about a dozen nearby towns and finally came to a

town which had all the marks of being poverty stricken. Its one narrow street was muddy and filthy. But the Chinese girl with Miss Buchwalter spoke to the women who gathered.

Most of the people of the village were from the Ming Chia tribe, and did not understand Chinese well, for their languages are different. But at the close, to the amazement of the two Christian women, the Ming Chia women said, "You spoke in our tongue."

"Oh, but I didn't," said the Chinese girl. "I don't know a word of your language."

But they insisted that she had.

The Chinese girl said to Ada Buchwalter, "Could it be that the Holy Spirit changed my words from Chinese to Ming Chia so they could hear the gospel?"

Do you not think so?

Mrs. Buchwalter later married Leonard Bolton, and they labored in Yunnan Province for many years with great effectiveness.

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The Story of Peter Cartwright

Peter Cartwright was born in Virginia in 1785. His parents, feeling the need to be more independent, traveled through dangerous Indian territory to the new land of Kentucky. With no schools or large towns available, they lived off the land and survived through the rough winters and hot summers. They worked hard, and they played hard. Peter (along with his father and brother), gave himself to horse-racing, gambling, drinking, and dancing.

When Peter was a teenager, the Cartwrights spent a day and most of the night at a wedding five miles from home. When they got home from the party, it was nearly dawn. After the horses were put away, Peter began to reflect on his rough life. He was deeply moved with conviction and anguish over his sin. He sold his race horse, burned his playing cards, and gave himself to Bible reading for the next three months.

Meanwhile, the great Cumberland revival was spreading through the country. It began in 1801 with some Presbyterian ministers. Thousands of people would gather in open air meetings, and the Holy Spirit would move in waves of glory and power. Many thousands were dramatically saved, and signs and wonders accompanied the ministry of the Word. Each meeting would last for hours, followed by more hours of praying, weeping, and rejoicing at the altar. Hundreds would fall to the ground, "slain" in the Spirit, as they were overwhelmed by the power of God.

At this camp-meeting, the big, burly teenager came, anxiously seeking God's mercy. As he prayed, he heard in his spirit the words, "Thy sins be forgiven thee."

Instantly, he was filled with overwhelming joy. He never doubted his salvation from that moment on.

Young Peter quickly became a soul-winner. He was given an exhorter's license, and he was soon organizing Bible classes. He tried to go to school for a short time, but was mocked and persecuted for his faith. He went on to serve in the ministry, an "uneducated" but dynamic young man. What he lacked in academics, he more than made up for in zeal. Many who heard his passionate testimony were won to the Lord.

One day he was asked to preach, but he felt very unqualified. He prayed, "Lord, if you want me to preach, please give me one soul tonight." He preached on Isaiah 26:4: "Trust ye in the Lord forever; for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." That night, a noted infidel who had openly opposed Christianity came forward to give his life to Jesus.

Peter Cartwright became famous as a fiery revival preacher. He was big and strong, and was known to step out of the pulpit on occasion to thrash a few fellows who were mocking and disrupting a meeting. He would then return to his sermon, having gained the rapt attention of his hearers.

One Saturday night, while crossing the Cumberland mountains, Cartwright was staying in a house where a dance was in progress. He was to preach there the next day, but nobody there knew who he was. He sat down in the corner of the room, and a lovely young lady came over to him and invited him to dance with her. Hand in hand they walked out onto the floor.

Then Peter stopped the fiddle player, and announced, "I never do anything of importance without asking the Lord's help and direction first. I want to ask God's blessing on this beautiful young woman, on all of you kind people." With that, he knelt to the floor. The poor girl could not pull her hand out of his powerful grip, so she was obliged to kneel as well.

He prayed with fervency, and with power. Soon, the people who had not fled the room were weeping, and the girl was laying on the floor, crying out to God. A mighty revival started that very night at the dance. Peter Cartwright was a great wilderness revival preacher for many years, and his life was filled with exciting adventures.

The Story of Adam Clark

Adam Clark was born in Ireland in 1762. His parents were Presbyterian and Episcopalian. As a child, Adam was not very bright intellectually. He was at the very bottom of his class in school. One day a classmate mocked him for being "dumb." Instead of becoming bitter, Adam became determined to learn. He started reading, and he became a good student out of sheer determination. In fact, Adam Clark became one of the most learned scholars in history.

In those days, there were many Methodist preachers who conducted meetings all over the British isles. They preached fiery sermons with great zeal and anointing. Adam went to hear these holy men of God, and was deeply convicted of sin. He was gloriously saved, and became a dedicated Christian. As a youth, he sought to be influenced by the greatest preachers and Bible teachers of his day. He prayed fervently, and read every book he could. He studied all of the languages of the Bible, and eventually became skilled in the use of 20 languages, including Greek, Hebrew, Latin, Samaritan, Chaldee, and the languages of Europe. John Wesley himself laid hands on the young man, and commissioned him to go out and preach the gospel.

People were sometimes surprised to see such a young boy get up into the pulpit, but they heard him explain the Bible with great skill and logic. He certainly did not seem to be the class dummy. The secret was simple: hard work. While other young people were trying to have a good time and avoid work, Adam read, and prayed, and worked. While his peers slept, Adam was reading Scriptures in ancient

languages, and thirsting to know more of God.

Adam went out to preach. His first year he preached 450 times. He had to walk to most of the places he preached, carrying all of his belongings on his back. He fervently wanted to take everyone he could to heaven with him. He deeply desired to live a life without sin, and he sought the Lord earnestly for entire sanctification. He was filled with the Holy Spirit, and lived a very godly life by the grace of God which he so loved.

Adam Clark did not seek a wife -- he sought the Lord. God, in return, blessed him with a wonderful wife, and they enjoyed a long and very happy marriage. They had twelve children. Adam Clark did missionary and evangelistic work, so he did some traveling. But his home was a happy, Christian home.

In 1798, Rev. Clark began to write a detailed commentary on the entire Bible. He spent 47 years on the project. Thousands of preachers for many years would draw rich insights and understanding of the Word as the result of the scholarship of this humble preacher. When John Wesley died, Adam Clark was asked to lead the Methodists. He was so humble, the preachers had to carry him bodily to his chairman's seat; but he led them very well for years. In 1832, he was out preaching when he contracted the disease of cholera. He died at the age of seventy, having lived one of the most productive and joyful lives a man could live.

The Story of Jim Elliot

In the early 1950's, a young American Bible college student named Jim Elliot felt the call of God to become a missionary. His bride, Elizabeth, shared his vision and his zeal for God, and they prepared for several years to become missionaries.

After much training and fund-raising, the time came for Jim to begin his missionary ministry. He had the use of a small airplane, and four other godly young men to help him reach into the jungles of Ecuador. Their first objective was to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to the fierce Auca Indian tribe, located deep in the jungle.

Wives and friends stayed behind on this dangerous first trip. After years of planning and praying, the men took off for South America. They followed the Curaray River, and came to the place where they had heard the Aucas lived in a village near the river. For several weeks, they dropped gifts and pictures to the people, showing that they were friendly. Finally, on January 3, 1956, the pilot, Ned Saint, made five trips in a small airplane to ferry in Ed McCully, Jim Elliot, and Roger Youderain. He later brought Pete Fleming.

For several days they waited to make contact with the Aucas. A few came out to their clearing, but wandered off again. Within a week, the Aucas killed all five of the kind missionaries.

When word finally got back to Elizabeth, she was heartbroken. It seemed so senseless for these bright young men to die before they had the chance to win even one of these people to the Lord. They had made the supreme sacrifice for a people

who responded only with hatred and violence.

As she was going through his possessions, she came upon his favorite Bible. In it, he had written, "He is no fool who exchanges what he cannot keep for that which he cannot lose." Those words stirred her faith and her hope. She began to pray and ask God for direction. Eventually, she would go with a few others and bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the very people who had killed her young husband. They learned that the strangers from the sky had actually given their lives to bring them the hope of eternal life, and many of them became believers.

It seemed to some that these deaths were senseless. Why did God not guide them away from danger, or protect them in some other way? Why did God allow His obedient servants to die so prematurely? We do not know all of the answers; but we do know that the result of their sacrifice was a strong mission work that continues to this day, winning whole tribes to the Lord. And we also know that there is a special reward promised in Scripture to those who give their lives for the sake of the gospel of Christ, for they are the martyrs. In fact, Biblically, there is no greater way to enter God's eternal heaven than to lay down your life for the One who gave His life for you.

The Story of Dick Iverson

Dick Iverson was the son of a pastor in Portland, Oregon, who was called of God at a young age to preach the gospel. He traveled as an evangelist for several years and was greatly anointed by the Holy Spirit and used of God with supernatural signs following. His father, who had a small church called Deliverance Temple, became ill, and asked his son to move to Portland and help him in the work. The church was not able to support both families, so Dick came to do the work in the church while supporting his young family by selling used cars. He found that he had a talent for spotting good used cars and selling; and while it became a very heavy work load as his father became unable to do any of the work in the church, he managed to handle both full-time jobs.

One night, he realized that someone very powerful was standing at the foot of his bed. The being spoke clearly to him and said, "If you will give yourself to the business, I will make you a millionaire." He knew immediately what was meant, and that it was a valid offer. It would mean quitting the ministry and giving all his efforts to the car sales business. He would greatly prosper, and would be able to support many missionaries on the field, as well as provide a good living for his wife and four young daughters.

He also quickly realized that this was not the voice of the Lord, but the devil himself. God had called him to preach, and although it was difficult for him and his family, he knew he was doing the right thing. He settled it in his mind to reject

the riches and continue to be faithful in the ministry, no matter what the cost.

After his ailing father died, Dick became the senior pastor of the church and began to work full-time as the pastor. He missed the days of travel and excitement that he had known as an evangelist, but he stayed faithful to the task, hoping that someday he might be released from the duties of the church as God would send somebody else to pastor the struggling flock.

One day God gave a message to him through another preacher who had a strong prophetic anointing, and said that the problem in the church was that the pastor did not love the sheep. He responded as David did when the prophet Nathan rebuked him. He repented and responded fully to the call of God, and became committed to his local congregation.

The church began to grow, and he began to raise up young men to preach and teach the Word of God. Today, the church is called Bible Temple, and has a world-renowned leadership team and Bible College, and a great congregation of several thousand. Bible Temple sends out thousands of ministry tapes and textbooks all over the world, and has produced more than 500 pastors and missionaries. Dick Iverson has been mightily used by God to change the lives of multitudes of people. But he had to decide to say no to the world and to a plan that sounded spiritual and right, but was actually a plot from Satan to get him off the track.

The Story of Bob Jones

Robert Reynolds Jones was born in Shipperville, Alabama, in 1883. He was the firstborn of twelve children, and his parents were dedicated Christians. Robert grew up on a farm, where everyone pitched in with the chores and worked long, hard hours. He was never lazy, and had a sharp intellect as well as a strong body.

At the age of eleven, he gave his heart to the Lord Jesus Christ. The preaching of the Word in church moved him to deep conviction, and he genuinely repented of his sins. He began preaching as a young boy, and winning other kids to Jesus. At the ripe old age of twelve, he became the Sunday School superintendent for his home church. He had an unusually good ability to memorize Scripture, and to preach with skill and zeal. People loved to hear this young man preach, because he had an ability to make things understandable.

The "boy preacher" was ordained by the Methodist church when he was 15 years old. Two years later, his parents died. He had a great responsibility to help the family, for he had eleven younger brothers and sisters, and no father and mother to care for them. Bob helped on the farm, but was kept very busy preaching the gospel. He had no time for anything but work. He preached in cotton fields, brush arbors, and small churches.

When Bob was 21, the years of hard work and neglect of his own physical health finally caught up with him. With his body in a weakened condition, he

contracted tuberculosis of the throat. He also had double pneumonia, and was told that he had less than ten years to live. He began to pray, and told the Lord that he was willing to take better care of the temple of the Holy Spirit. Responding to the Lord, and to the advice of his physician, he moved out west, where the air was clean and dry. There, he prayed and rested, and God completely healed his body.

He went back to Alabama, refreshed, strong, and ready to preach. He courted a fine Christian girl named Mary Stollenwerk, and they were married in 1908. She was a great help to his ministry, because she was well-educated and refined. Their son, Bob Jones Junior, was born in 1911. Bob Jones began to be in demand as a speaker, and soon he was preaching in camp meetings and city-wide campaigns.

Bob Jones continued his education, and obtained a doctor's degree. In 1926, motivated by a desire to train preachers for the work of the ministry, he founded Bob Jones College near Panama City, Florida. The college moved to Cleveland, Tennessee in 1933, and then to its present location in Greenville, South Carolina in 1946. Bob Jones University now has an enrollment of 4,000 each year. Until his death in 1968, Dr. Jones promoted the preaching of the Bible as the pure Word of God, and opposed atheism, modernism, and liberal social theology. He is remembered as one of the great fundamentalist preachers in America, and his name is synonymous with conservative Christian education.

The Story of Adoniram Judson

Adoniram Judson was a preacher's kid. He was born in 1788 in Malden, Massachusetts. Adoniram was a very gifted child who learned to read at the age of 3 and was "preaching" to his playmates as a 4-year-old. He learned sea navigation at the age of 10, and could read Greek by the age of 12.

When he was only 16 years old, he entered Providence College and became best friends with a boy named Jacob Eames. Jacob was also intellectually gifted, but he was an atheist and lived a wicked life. The two young men spent many hours talking over their ideas and philosophy, and the more they talked the more the godless Jacob eroded the religious ideas that Adoniram had grown up with all his life.

After graduation, Adoniram returned home and announced to his heartbroken parents that he was an atheist and intended to go out into the world and live a worldly life of pleasure. But had a hard time forgetting his mother's tears. He spent a year living in sin in New York City, and then decided to travel west.

On the first night of his trip he found that the inn was full. In order to get a bed for the night he had to share a room with a dying man. The room was divided in half by a curtain, but all through the night he heard the miserable moans of the sick man who obviously was not ready to face the Lord. As he heard the sounds of the dying man, he thought of death. He remembered the faith of his parents, and their bright hope of eternal life in Heaven with Jesus. He knew that his best friend Jacob Eames would laugh him to scorn for thinking about eternity.

Finally, late into the night, the fitful and distressing sounds from the next bed ceased, and Adoniram was able to sleep until the sun woke him. He asked the innkeeper about the other man. He replied, "I'm sorry, but the man died during the night." Adoniram was not ready to handle the idea of death, and was upset by its proximity. "What was his name?" he asked. The innkeeper said, "His name was Eames. Jacob Eames."

As the word, "lost, lost, lost" echoed through his mind, he realized that his atheist friend was wrong, and that he had died with no hope and gone to hell. Adoniram went home to his parents and announced that he was going to Bible College. There he gave his heart to the Lord and dedicated himself to be a missionary.

Through years of suffering and hardship, Adoniram Judson finally established a missionary work in Burma, becoming the first American foreign missionary. He suffered imprisonment and torture, the deaths of two wives due to the harsh and filthy conditions, and saw the deaths of several of his children. But through it all he stayed faithful to Christ, and had occasion to bless even the men who had tortured him. When Adoniram Judson went to Burma, there were no Christians in the country, and it was seven years before he won his first convert. By the end of his life there were 7,000 Burmese Christians, 63 churches, and 123 ministers in the nation; and Dr. Judson had also translated to Bible into the Burmese language.

The Korean Girl Who Loved Jesus

For most of the 20th century, the followers of Karl Marx, who wrote "The Communist Manifesto," have pursued their goal of world conquest, and have taken control of many nations of the world. In the process, millions of people, many of them Christians, were murdered. What Marx called communism (a shared society) really became socialism, which means that the state owns and controls everything.

Since Christians tend to value freedom and family, and since the Marxist government is by nature atheistic (denies the existence of God, the supreme authority), Christians are always persecuted and often martyred by socialists.

One of the nations which fell to communism was North Korea, although South Korea remained free. In North Korea, many churches were destroyed, and many Christians were martyred.

It was therefore not a complete surprise when a little Korean Christian church was interrupted one Sunday by a group of soldiers. The officer went to the front of the room, where he curtly instructed the little pastor to sit down. He said, "The Christian religion is against the law, and is an expression of rebellion against the state. You people are hereby ordered to disband, and to show your loyalty to the people by renouncing this Jesus you worship. We do not believe in God, and we will not tolerate this religion. We have placed the

portrait of this Jewish Messiah on the door of the church. You will file out of the building one by one. To demonstrate your proper obedience to the state, you are to spit on the picture as you go by it. If you refuse to obey, you will be shot immediately."

The people sat in stunned silence. They began to weep. One by one, from the back of the church they shuffled out into the church yard. The first man, trembling, walked by the painting of Jesus and spit enough to be noticed. The next man did the same. The first six who went out were men, and all of them obeyed the officer's command.

The seventh person to leave was a young girl, who was also weeping. But, instead of spitting on the picture of her Lord, she took part of her long skirt and began to clean off the spittle that was dripping down its surface. She was weeping and sobbing. Not only did she know that it was her death sentence, but it broke her young heart to see the picture of her wonderful Jesus so defiled by the men who claimed to be His followers.

The soldiers watched in amazement, and then in deep admiration. They were so moved by the faith and the tender love of this simple girl, that they turned to the six men who had spit on the portrait, and shot them instead. Then they abruptly left. That girl, and many others, went on to serve the Lord, because they had seen the power and the importance of faith.

The Story of D. L. Moody

This is the story of a man who refused to quit. He was born in Northfield, Massachusetts on February 5, 1837. Dwight was only four years old when his father died, and the family lived in poverty. After struggling in school for a few years, Dwight's uncle offered him a job selling shoes in his store in Boston, with the condition that he agree to faithfully attend church while working at the store. So, at the age of seventeen, he moved to the big city and began his work.

During the Sunday School class, the teacher told the students to turn to the Gospel of John. Dwight had no idea where John was. The other students noticed him leafing through Genesis, and began to laugh at him. The alert teacher quickly traded Bibles with him and went on with the lesson.

As time went on, Dwight did very well as a shoe salesman, but not so well in the church. When he applied for church membership, he was rejected by the committee. They felt that he was not likely to be a productive member of the church, and would not be a good representative of Christianity. Undaunted, he stayed faithful to the church, and also joined the YMCA, which was at the time very active in soul-winning and Christian training.

In 1856, at the age of 19, he moved to Chicago and became active in the YMCA as well as the church. He was a very aggressive soul-winner. He rented 4 pews in the Congregational Church and filled them with anyone he could find. He was known to chase some potential converts through the back alleys of the city, always ready to "compel them to come in."

When he was told that there was no class available for him to teach, he went to the streets and brought in 18 young people and started his own Sunday School class.

He continued to be successful in the shoe business, but always focused his greatest efforts on his work for the Lord. While still a young man, he started a little Sunday School in a deserted saloon in the north part of Chicago. He was known as "Crazy Moody" by people who saw him ride through the streets on a pony, leading a group of children to Sunday School like a "pied piper." By 1863, his group had grown out of several buildings, and Dwight decided to build a building with classrooms and a 1500-seat auditorium.

D. L. Moody conducted several great revival campaigns in England, as well as in the United States. While he was in Ireland, he met Henry Moorhouse, who was known as "the Boy Preacher." Moorhouse asked Moody to take him along to the United States, but Moody was not interested. Later, Henry showed up in Chicago, and invited himself to preach for Moody. He was allowed to speak; and because the Holy Spirit moved through him, he was asked to preach more meetings for Moody.

There were two great lessons that Dwight learned from Henry Moorhouse. First, Henry taught him to rely on the Word of God, and stop preaching men's words. Secondly, he taught him about preaching the love of God, rather than hell and God's hatred for sin. He learned that God hates sin, but loves sinners. From then on, Moody preached the love and grace of God.

Revival at Northampton

During the 1600's, thousands of Puritans and other Christians settled in the new land of America. As long as they sought God, they were blessed and protected. However, when the people became spiritually dull, many of the native tribes united under one chief who was known as King Philip, and many of the Christians were viciously killed by Indians. It was only by the help of the Christian Indians that they eventually defeated Philip.

During the first half of the eighteenth century (1700's), there was a notable decrease in spiritual zeal among the people in America. They had peace and prosperity; and it was only later, during the Revolutionary War, that the nation was spiritually stirred and united. However, in the midst of that period of lethargy and spiritual inactivity, there was a notable revival, called the **Great Awakening**. For a time, God moved mightily, both in England and in the American colonies.

In 1734, God moved in a wonderful way in Northampton, Massachusetts. Jonathan Edwards was a Puritan pastor who was a brilliant Bible scholar, but a boring speaker. He was in the habit of staring at the back wall of the church throughout the sermon, and was, in general, a less than interesting speaker.

However, he began to preach more and more about the grace of God, and became bold in speaking out against the religious complacency of the day. He began to preach with zeal and anointing about genuine salvation through repentance and faith; and that winter, many people were dramatically and miraculously saved. One

young woman, the most notoriously immoral person in town, was born again by the grace of God. She immediately began to serve the Lord and would freely testify of the wonderful work of God in her life.

No one was more surprised at all this than Pastor Edwards, because he was simply not a dynamic person. This great revival was not a product of his personality, but clearly came as a result of God's sovereign move in answer to the prayers of the people. The people would eagerly gather for every church meeting several times a week. They would worship with great joy and zeal, and there would be many tears during the sermon. Some would be weeping in sorrow and conviction over their sins, while others would weep with joy every time they heard God's Word.

During the next spring and summer, the whole town was full of the joy of the Lord. Visitors would come to town and often return home rejoicing, because their lives had been so touched by the presence of the Lord. Surrounding towns began to experience revival. Crowds would flock into the church buildings that for years had seen only a few people. Worship services would burst with excitement where previously only a few feeble voices had barely carried a tune.

Many of the worst sinners around were now sharing their joy with others. Pastor Edwards also developed a message on the judgment of God and moved thousands of people to repentance. It became one of the most famous sermons in history: "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God."

The Story of Polycarp

In the year 162 A. D., Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Verus became the emperor of the Roman Empire, and he led further persecution against the Christians, particularly in Asia and France. The Romans took great pleasure in inflicting great suffering upon believers. They would force Christians to walk over thorns, nails, and sharp shells. They would beat them with metal-studded whips until their sinews and veins were exposed. They sought new and ingenious ways to inflict humiliation and pain before their courageous victims expired. They succeeded in forcing many to deny the faith in a moment of weakness, but many others were sent to heaven by way of the persecutors.

One young Christian named Germanicus was so courageous in the face of torture that the pagan tormentors were enraged, and decided that he should be put to death. They also decided to still the voice of Polycarp, the venerable old bishop of Smyrna.

When the pastor heard of the plans of the Romans to execute him, he escaped and went into hiding. But he was discovered by a child. That night, he dreamed that his bed had suddenly caught on fire. He surmised from that that it was the Lord's will for him to become a martyr for Christ, so he did not seek to flee again. When the Roman soldiers came to arrest him, they were amazed at his peaceful countenance. He offered to feed them, and then asked for an hour to pray. His request was granted, and he prayed with such fervency that the men regretted capturing him.

Pastor Polycarp was taken before the pro-consul, and was commanded to renounce his faith. He replied, "Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He has never done me wrong. How then, can I deny the Savior who gave His life so freely for me? I will not recant. Jesus Christ is Lord and King." He was dragged to the marketplace, where a stake had been prepared for his burning.

The men tied him to a large pole, and surrounded it with a pile of brush. The fire became hot, driving the people back, but the bishop continued to sing praises to God in the midst of the flames. Determined to stop the mouth of the man of God, soldiers stabbed him in the sides with spears. Blood flowed down his sides, and put out the fire. Polycarp continued to sing and pray with all of his strength.

You would think that these pagans would have seen the hand of God on the Bishop, but they were so full of hatred and evil that they only thought of ways to kill the old man. With considerable effort, they finally succeeded in killing the kind preacher, and in burning his body. They also rounded up twelve other Christians who had supported Polycarp's ministry, and killed them as well.

But the more the pagans sought to blot out Christianity through killing, the more people were attracted to this faith worth dying for. The early Church thrived and grew because of the blood of saints like Polycarp, whose memory yet today is honored by millions who have also discovered that Jesus Christ is both Lord and King.

The Story of Charles Price

Charles Sydney Price was born in England in 1887, and trained in law at Wesley College. He emigrated to Canada, and decided to enter the ministry as a Methodist. He became disenchanted with that organization, and became the pastor of a Congregational church in Valdez, Alaska. He became a popular modernist speaker, and after World War I, took the pastorate of the large and formal First Congregational Church in Lodi, California.

Some of Pastor Price's people were showing interest in the Pentecostal movement, and in the work of a local female preacher named Aimee Semple McPherson. In 1920, after hearing about a meeting, he decided to attend incognito. Later, he claimed that the preacher "murdered the English language;" but the Spirit of God moved on Rev. Price, and he ran to the altar under deep conviction.

Soon after that, Pastor Price went to some "tarrying meetings" at a Baptist church in San Jose, and received the baptism in the Holy Ghost, with the evidence of speaking in tongues. He returned to his church, "where the power of God commenced to fall." When the denominational leaders found out that he had received Pentecost, they forced him to resign from his pastorate. He then started an independent church called Lodi Bethel Temple.

In 1922, Charles Price began to travel, preaching in meetings which attracted thousands of people each night, particularly in Canada. The ministry was "confirmed with signs following," as thousands of people were saved, filled with the Holy Ghost, and healed. Often, the power of God was so strong that people

would fall out, and were unable to stand for a time. One woman who was greatly influenced by Dr. Price was Kathryn Kuhlman, who would go on to pursue a similar ministry.

In 1926, Dr. Price began to publish a monthly magazine called "Golden Grain," which included some of his sermon transcriptions. He had a powerful prophetic anointing, and a passion for the Body of Christ. Dr. Price later pastored a great church in Edmonton, Alberta, in Canada. He was opposed bitterly by other preachers who were jealous of his anointing and his popularity.

One night, Dr. Price was praying for the sick, when he spotted the pastor of a large Methodist church who had spoken against him. Dr. Price said, "Just to show you that I am not the healer, I'm going to ask my good friend, Dr. McKay, to come and lay hands on this woman." The pastor could do nothing other than come and mumble a prayer for the woman, whom he could see was seriously crippled. When God touched her, she began to scream, because her body was being straightened, and the braces now hurt her. The braces were taken off, and she began to run and rejoice. Dr. McKay became a supporter and close friend of Charles Price.

In 1947, Charles Price told his friends that there would be many healing evangelists, beginning in 1948, and that some years later they would see a great Charismatic renewal in denominational churches. When asked one night to go to a meeting, Dr. Price said, "No, God told me to stay home tonight. He's going to meet with me, and take me home." That night, he died, a very happy and successful man.

The Story of Revolutionary Preachers

Many people today are unaware of the strong role the Church played in early American history. In fact, the Bible was at the core of the foundation of this nation. Many of the cities of New England were built around the Church, and the most influential voice in town was that of the pastor.

The war for independence from Great Britain was primarily fought for religious freedom, although the oppressive bondage of taxation was a factor. It was the American pulpit that stirred the patriots of America to action, and led thousands of faithful church members to the support of General George Washington and the continental army.

During the battles of Lexington and Concord, Pastor Philips Payson captured two British supply wagons single-handedly. Pastor John Craighead recruited the men in his church, and personally led them to New Jersey to support Washington. When he was not fighting, he was preaching.

One Sunday morning in 1775, a Lutheran pastor in Virginia named Peter Muhlenberg preached a sermon on "For everything there is a season." He said that there was a time for peace, and a time for war. At the end of his inspiring message, he flung off his robe to reveal the uniform of a colonel in the Continental Army. He said, "And now it's time to fight." He marched that same afternoon with 300 men he had recruited from his congregation. Pastor Muhlenberg later rose to the rank of brigadier general, having gained many honors for bravery for himself and for his regiment.

After Great Britain declared war on the patriots who declared independence from the empire, efforts were made to recruit military help from other countries. But most of them refused. France later sent troops to fight with the Americans. But Germany allowed England to hire German mercenary troops (soldiers for hire).

In 1780, the German General Wilhelm von Knyphausen crossed into New Jersey with 5,000 troops. In the little town of Springfield, the patriots fought them off. But, during the fighting, the wife of Pastor James Caldwell, a mother of nine, was shot and killed by German fire in her home. It was never determined whether it was deliberate or not, because Pastor Caldwell was wanted by the British for helping the American army. But the slaying of this kind and loving mother stirred the anger of the townspeople. When the German and British troops came back two weeks later, they were met with furious resistance.

The patriots were fighting valiantly, many of them firing their muskets from behind a fence beside Pastor Caldwell's church. To fire a muzzle-loader, it was necessary to put in gunpowder, a lead ball, and some paper. When they ran out of paper for their guns, Pastor Caldwell ran into the church and gathered up several copies of *Watt's Psalms and Hymns*. He ran out, tearing pages out of the hymnals, shouting, "Given 'em Watts, boys!"

The British Empire was the most powerful military force on earth; but because of the influence and prayer of Christians in Congress, and praying generals and pastors, the Americans won their independence.

The Story of Sandy and Her Dad

Sandy was a fine seventh-grader who lived in Alabama. Her father had been an army sergeant in the Korean War. It was now the sixties, and Sarge had a wife and a fine family. Sandy and one of her brothers were Christians, but mom and dad had never been born again. Sandy prayed every day for her dad. He was a good father, and he loved her very much. He tried to give her everything she wanted, but what she wanted most was for him to get saved.

One day, a pastor in town ran into Sarge. He recognized him immediately. He had served under Sarge in Korea. It had been 21 years, but Sarge had not changed that much. Soon they were talking about old times, and establishing a friendship. The pastor invited him to church, but he was not interested. Sarge had a good life, and did not feel like he needed the Lord right then.

The preacher did not give up on him. He went to his home several times to visit, always looking for a way to win him to the Lord. He soon observed the close bond between Sarge and his daughter Sandy. As soon as he was able, he talked to the young teen girl about her dad, and asked her to invite her dad to take her to church. Sure enough, the next Sunday, there was Sandy, happily coming to the church with her daddy.

The pastor was pleased, but again, he was stumped. He could not seem to get Sarge to the altar to give his life to the Lord. The family was attending church regularly, but no evangelistic sermon seemed to move him to commit himself to Jesus.

The pastor finally reasoned that he had found Sarge's strength, and that was his love for his girl. He called Sandy, and asked her to write a letter to her dad, and mail it from school. On Friday, Sarge got a letter in the mail while his girl was in school. It said,

"Dear Daddy,

You are the best dad in all the world, and I want to thank you for all the things you do for me. Thanks for taking me places. Thanks for all the nice clothes you buy me. Thanks for the radio you gave me for my birthday. Thanks for food, for a home, and thanks for taking me to church. Dad, you are the greatest, and I only know one thing more that you could do to make you even greater, and that is to give your heart to Jesus. Dad, I am fasting and praying for you, because I do not want my wonderful dad to go to hell.

Love,

San."

That Sunday, the preacher preached an evangelistic sermon, and he walked up and down the center aisle. He saw Sarge and his wife, with tears in their eyes. As he gave the altar call, he went back to the pew where they were, and gently took the baby from the arms of Sarge's wife, and handed it to the lady beside her. He led the both the altar, and said, "Sarge, 21 years ago, you were my leader in Korea. Now, I am your leader, and I am bringing you to Jesus." Sarge and his wife were saved, along with several other people in the service.

The Story of Peter Waldo

During the first few centuries after the death and resurrection of Christ, Christianity grew throughout the known world, in spite of periods of intense persecution from civil and religious authorities. But, over the centuries, many church leaders became carnal and corrupt. Humanistic and superstitious traditions began to rise in prominence. Church became a lucrative business, manipulating the common people for personal gain. The Bible was hidden from the people, and religion was ruled by tradition and politics. This lack of spiritual light led to the Dark Ages, which continued for centuries.

During the Dark Ages, however, there were some genuine believers in the world. One such light in the darkness was Peter Waldo, a wealthy businessman from Lyons, France. One day, he was at a party with some friends when another merchant had a seizure and suddenly died. He pondered the thought of death, and sought a Bible to get some answers to quiet his fears. It was a long search, because the few hand-written copies in existence were hard to come by. Finally, he bought one for a large sum of money. In it, he found the greatest treasure in the world: God's plan of salvation.

Peter gave his heart and his life to the Lord Jesus Christ. He gave away his wealth, and sought to tell everyone the good news of the Gospel. People mocked him as a fool, but he used every opportunity to point them to eternal riches. He realized that the Roman Catholic Church, with its emphasis on indulgences and ceremonies and traditions, was not leading people to God, and was in fact keeping the Bible from

people to maintain power over them. He determined to proclaim God's Word to the common people. In 1180 A.D., he had produced a translation of the New Testament in the language of the people of the day, and he and his followers preached the gospel. They became traveling peddlers, carrying merchandise from house to house. Their real purpose was to share the "Pearl of Great Price," and show their customers the most valuable treasure of all. They taught many people that Jesus is the head of the Church, and not the pope. They exposed many of the false teachings of the Roman Church, and led thousands of people to Christ.

In 1208 A.D., Pope Innocent III began a major campaign against the so-called "Waldensians." He decreed that evangelism and Bible study were dangerous, and those who preached the Bible were heretics. The Church put many of the Christians to death, but they could not stamp out the influence of Peter Waldo. He died in 1217 A.D.; but his followers continued the task of personal evangelism, often under the threat of death.

Later, some Waldensians appealed to Pope Alexander III to let them preach the Gospel. They gave him a copy of their Bible. They were officially forbidden to preach, and then they were excommunicated from the church. Remembering Acts 4:19, they continued to preach the gospel, and their numbers grew in spite of the danger. Even as late as 1655 A.D., nearly two thousand Waldensians were killed for their faith in only one year. Peter Waldo's memory and influence live on, because he was a genuine hero in a dark age.

The Story of Horatio Spafford

You have probably heard of the great Chicago fire of 1871, which, according to tradition, was started by Mrs. O'Leary's cow, which kicked over the kerosene lantern. Thousands of buildings burned to the ground, and many lives were lost. One of the wealthy men of Chicago who suffered great financial losses in the fire was a Christian businessman named Horatio Spafford. He lost most of what he owned, but he declared that he was grateful, because he still had his faithful wife and his four delightful daughters.

The Spaffords had known hardship. Their only son had died tragically, but they kept their eyes on the Lord, and purposed to meet him in heaven. After the fire, Mr. Spafford was too busy helping people who were even less fortunate than himself to spend too much time feeling sorry for himself. In fact, he worked too hard. His doctor finally advised him to take some vacation time.

The Spafford family decided to travel to Europe for a long-overdue vacation. Determined to take care of a few more business matters, Mr. Spafford sent his wife and daughters on a sailing ship, and promised to take passage himself to join them as soon as possible in Europe.

On the voyage, another tragedy struck. The ship collided with another, and many lives were lost. Mrs. Spafford and the girls clung to pieces of the wreckage, but one by one the girls slipped under the cold, dark waters, and drowned. Mrs. Spafford

survived. When she arrived in Europe, she wired a simple message back to her husband: "Saved alone."

Horatio Spafford immediately sought the first available transatlantic vessel. One night, as they were sailing, the captain spoke to Mr. Spafford to let him know that they were near the spot where his daughters' ship had gone down. As he retired to his cabin, he turned to the Lord in his grief and loss. He felt the comfort of the Holy Spirit, and the inspiration to write a poem which has ministered to millions of believers through the decades that have passed. He wrote:

"When peace like a river attendeth my way,

When sorrow like sea billows roll;

Whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,

It is well, it is well with my soul.

And Lord, haste the day

When my faith shall be sight,

The clouds be rolled back as a scroll.

The trump shall resound,

And the Lord shall descend,

Even so, it is well with my soul."

Section 6

Promotions

The Importance of Promotions

Promotions are used in the School of the Bible as a tool, which allows us to excite and motivate our young people to grow in the things of the Lord.

All of us are motivated by rewards. Many companies offer bonus and incentive plans, and even prizes, because they have learned the effectiveness of good promotions. Contests are held regularly in order to entice us to buy a product or to try some new service. The cost of the prize never exceeds the benefit received by the sponsor.

Our children are sold things through promotions at school, on television, and by a variety of sources. If we are going to compete for their attention among these promotions, we must be willing to utilize our resources in order to offer our children a healthy alternative.

Promotions have been used in Sunday School programs throughout the country for years. Although many promotions have, admittedly, gotten out of hand, the vast majority of them benefited the kingdom of God. What is the price of a soul? Is a hamburger too much? Is a trip to summer camp too little? There is no price too high. We must be good stewards of God's money and spend it in such a way that we have the greatest impact on the lives of those He wants us to touch. God does want to reach our young people. He cares for them, and so should we.

Because of our love for our children and our desire to offer them the kinds of

incentives necessary to motivate them to do greater things, we are involved in several promotions throughout the year. Certainly, we would hope that our children would be spiritual enough not to need such motivations to spur them into action. However, we cannot expect them to be any more motivated than we are.

As adults, we demand stimuli all the time. To come to church, many need some special, high-priced speaker or singer. To participate or serve, we need to be recognized and seen for our service. Many, but not all, need constant motivation to do greater things for God.

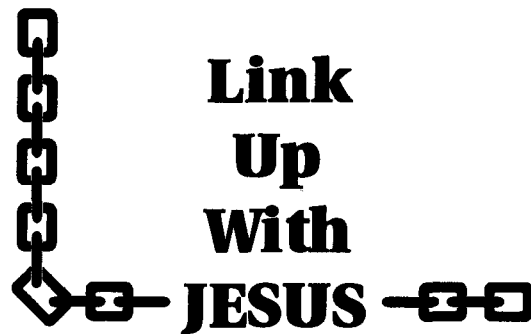
Along the way, motivation becomes less for the sake of the prize on earth and more for the prize that God has promised us in heaven. Please help us motivate our young people so that, when they are adults, they will need less stimulation and will be filled with more anticipation for the great things God has in store for their lives.

Our promotions are designed to motivate our young people to attend both church and the School of the Bible on a regular basis; to bring their Bibles with them; to bring their tithes and offerings faithfully; to bring their friends to Sunday School on a regular basis; to learn the importance of giving to the needy through participating in the church's emergency food pantry program; and to study and to memorize God's Word.

With these goals in mind, we have designed a set of programs which we plan to promote each year. These programs are explained on the following pages. They are subject to change and revision; but, the concept of the programs and the basic time of the year during which they will be promoted will remain somewhat constant.

Each class is encouraged to use internal promotions in order to motivate the students to become greater participants in God's work. Bible memory verse contests,

attendance awards, and special projects all add to the overall effectiveness of our program. Special events, such as Christmas and Easter parties, are also encouraged. The church will also hold a "Hallelujah Party" near Halloween in order to provide an alternative to "Trick or Treating" for the children of the church. Change Sunday, when students are promoted to the next grade, is another time to plan special activities in order to say good-bye to one group of students and to welcome the new.



**Link
Up
With
JESUS**

The "Link Up with Jesus" promotion is designed to encourage students to memorize Bible verses and to increase the attendance in the Sunday School. The spiritual emphasis of this contest is upon hiding God's Word in our hearts. As we memorize His Word, we "link up" with Him and create a bond that cannot be broken.

This promotion is conducted in the first quarter, and is designed to run for six weeks. Students earn points for attendance, bringing their Bibles, memorizing scripture from prepared lists, and bringing friends to Sunday School.

One of the six Sundays of this promotion is designated as "Bonus Sunday." On this day, students who bring five or more items for the church's emergency food pantry will receive five bonus points. Note: If your church does not have an emergency food pantry, substitute another activity for Bonus Sunday.

Each point the students earn is represented by a link in a paper chain. The more points a student earns, the longer his or her chain becomes.

The links in the chains are made from colored strips of paper. A supply of links will be provided for each classroom. There is a different link for every category in which a student earns points (see samples which follow). Chains should be hung around the room to emphasize the students' accomplishments.

At the end of the promotion, students will receive a prize, based upon the number of links they have in their chain. Every student will receive a prize of some kind. Seven levels of prizes are available. In addition, the five students with the longest chains will receive a special grand prize. A prize will also be awarded to the class which accumulates the highest number of links.

Select prizes of increasing value, and list them on the "Prize List" (see sample which follows). A Grand Prize will also need to be selected for the top five finishers, and a special treat arranged for the winning class (perhaps a pizza party or a trip to an amusement park).

Three weeks prior to the beginning of the promotion, prepared lists of Bible verses will be sent home with the students. These lists will also be mailed to the parents, along with a letter explaining

the promotion and asking them to help their child(ren) memorize the verses.

Midway through the promotion, have the students with the largest number of links in their chains parade through the sanctuary in order to show the congregation what they are accomplishing.

Specific Instructions:

At the beginning of the promotion, write each student's name on a 3" x 5" card. Attach the links of each student's chain to their name card. Affix the name cards to the wall (use Sticky Tack!) or bulletin board in order to display the chains.

A Point Chart must be maintained for every student. Keep these charts in the Secretary's folder.

On the Point Chart, mark the "address" (e.g., Psalms 23:1) of every verse the student is able to recite. Then, write that same address on two links and add them to the student's chain. Use your best judgment in listening to the verses. If students know the verses, but stumble over a few words, give them credit. Be

prepared for some students to learn several verses per week!

To record attendance, write the date the student is present in the appropriate box on the Point Chart, and write their name and the date on one link. Add the link to their chain.

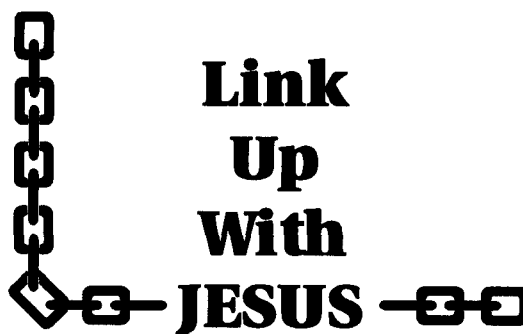
When a student brings his or her Bible, record the date in the appropriate section of the Point Chart, complete the information on the "Brought a Bible" link, and add it to the chain.

When a student brings a friend, record the friend's name on the Point Chart, complete six "Brought a Visitor" links, and add them to the chain.

If a student brings five or more food items for the church's emergency food pantry on the appointed day, place an "X" in the "Qualified for Bonus Points?" box on the Point Chart, and add five links to his or her chain.

If you need additional space to record verses or visitors on a student's Point Chart, attach a second sheet to the original sheet for that student.

**YOU
CAN**



CONTEST BEGINS:	CONTEST ENDS:

**“Link Up With Jesus”
By Earning Links On Your Chain.**

Bring a Friend to Sunday School	Earn 6 Links
<small>Must be someone who has not attended in the last 3 months.</small>	
Memorize a Scripture	Earn 2 Links
Attend Sunday School	Earn 1 Link
Bring Your Bible to Sunday School	Earn 1 Link
BONUS SUNDAY: _____	
Earn 5 Links When You Bring 5 Food Items To Help Us Minister To Those Who Are In Need.	

7 Levels Of Prizes Are Available
At The End Of The Contest,
You May Select One Prize From The Prize List.
The Top Five Students Will Receive Grand Prizes.



**Link
Up
With**

PRIZE LIST

JESUS

LEVEL #1 24 Links	
LEVEL #2 36 Links	
LEVEL #3 52 Links	
LEVEL #4 70 Links	
LEVEL #5 100 Links	
LEVEL #6 150 Links	
LEVEL #7 200 Links	
Grand Prize Top 5 Students	

Christ Commands Us

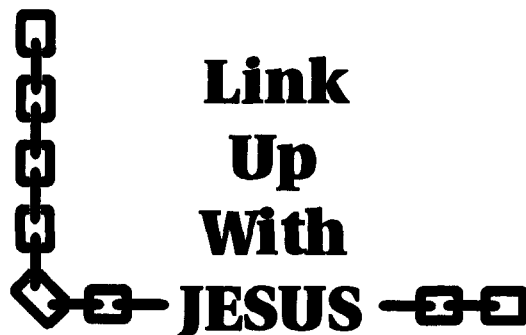
"... Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Matt. 25:40

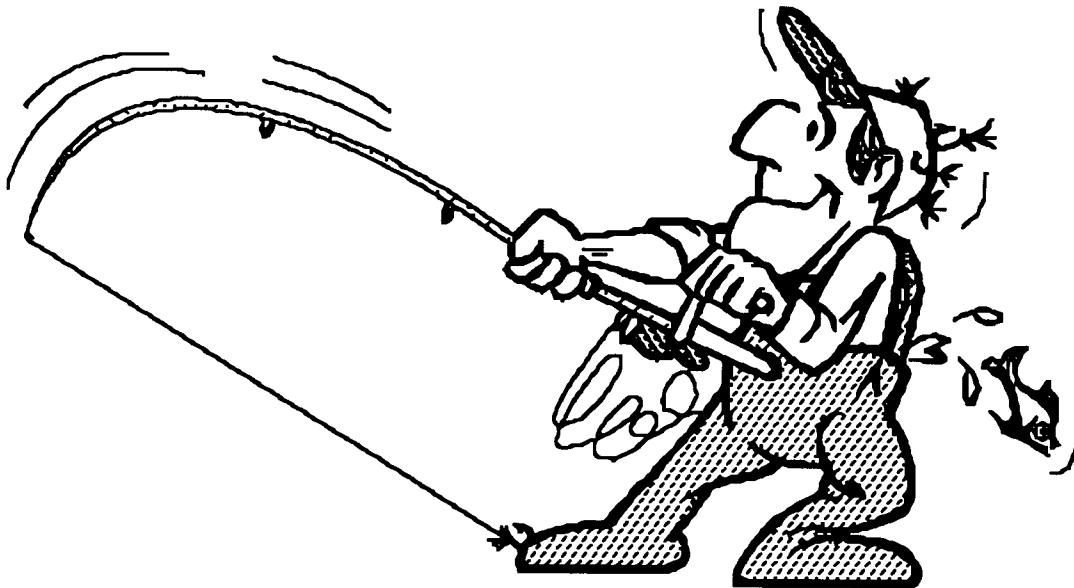
We can fulfill the command of our Lord by ministering to those who are in need.



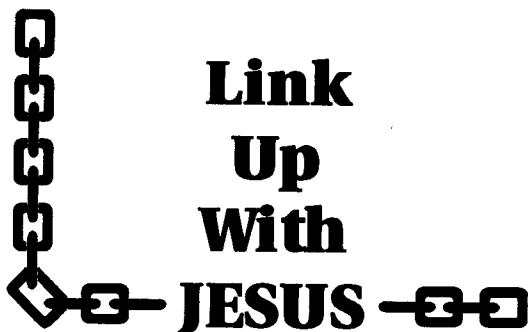
Bring a minimum of 5 grocery items on _____ to your Sunday School classroom, and you will receive 5 links for your chain. You can "Link up with Jesus" and help us reach out to others.



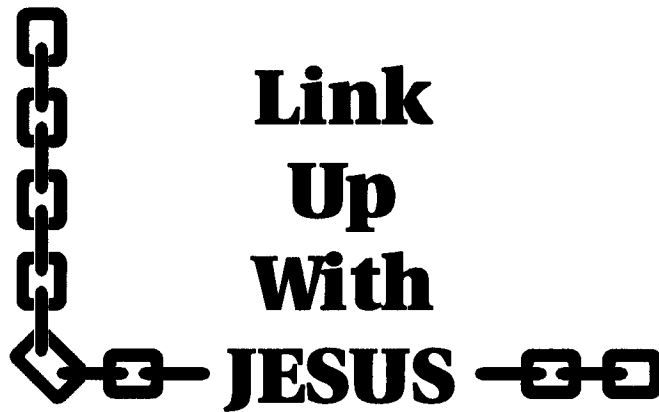
You can't catch fish unless you have the right bait



Spend time this week learning God's Word so you can have the "Right Bait" to catch the biggest fish of all: a person who needs to know Jesus.



You can earn valuable prizes by learning God's Word and by bringing your friends to Sunday School. Start today, and together we can become "fishers of men".



**Link
Up
With**

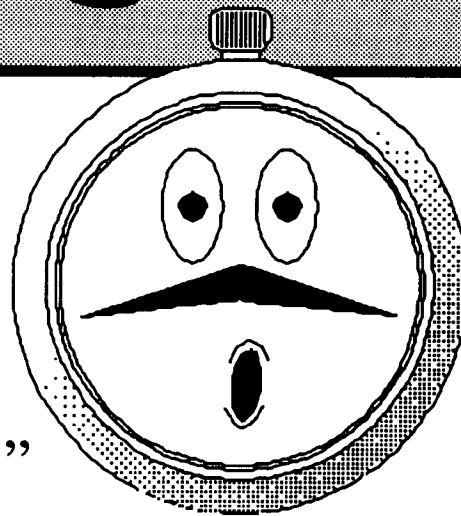
JESUS

**Time is
getting short**

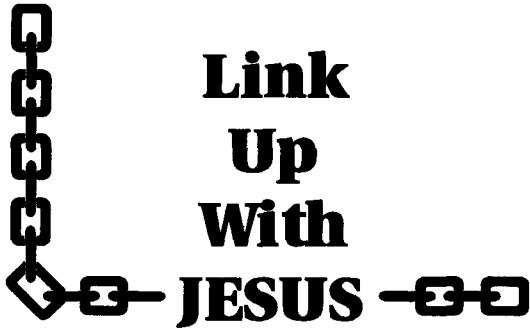
There Are Only



Weeks Left
In The
“Link Up With Jesus”
Promotion!



**Remember To Bring A Friend And
Learn Your Memory Verses.
Together We Can “Link Up With Jesus”**



NAME _____

CLASS _____

Point Chart

Memory Verses Learned

Record the verse "address," below.
Award 2 links per verse.

Attendance

Record the dates in attendance, below. Award 1 link.

--	--	--	--	--	--

Brought the Bible

Record the dates a Bible was brought, below. Award 1 link.

--	--	--	--	--	--

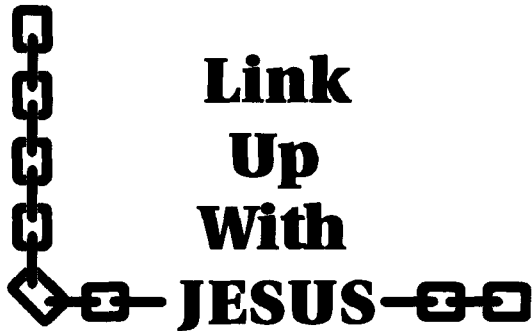
Brought a Friend

Record the name(s) of the friends, below. Award 6 links.

--	--	--	--	--	--

Qualified for Bonus Points?

Award 5 links.



Memory Verses List #1

Gen. 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

Gen. 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the Image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

Gen. 15:6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

Psalms 19:14 Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, Oh LORD, my strength and my redeemer.

Psalms 23:1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

Psalms 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

Psalms 25:1 Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul.

Psalms 25:2 Oh my God, I trust thee: let me not be ashamed, let not mine enemies triumph over me.

Psalms 25:4 Show me thy ways, oh Lord; teach me thy paths.

Psalms 25:8 Good and upright is the Lord: therefore will he teach sinners in the way.

Psalms 25:18 Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.

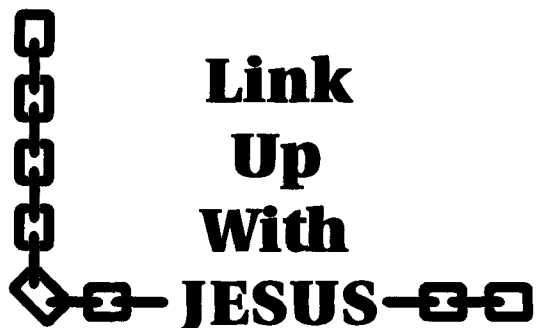
Psalms 25:21 Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee.

Psalms 25:22 Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles.

Psalms 26:2 Examine me, O LORD, and prove me; try my reins and my heart.

Psalms 27:1 The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

- Matt. 5:3 Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Matt. 5:4 Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.
- Matt. 5:5 Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.
- Matt. 5:6 Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
- Matt. 5:7 Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.
- Matt. 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.
- Matt. 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.
- Matt. 5:10 Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Matt. 5:11 Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.
- Matt. 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.
- Matt. 5:16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.
- Matt. 5:41 And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him two.
- Matt. 6:19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth.
- Matt. 6:20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.
- Matt. 6:21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.



Memory Verses List #2

- Psalms 27:7 Hear, O LORD, when I cry with my voice: Have mercy also upon me, and answer me.
- Psalms 27:11 Teach me thy way, O LORD, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.
- Psalms 37:4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.
- Psalms 56:11 In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.
- Psalms 95:6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.
- Psalms 118:6 The LORD is on my side; I will not fear.
- Psalms 119:11 Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee.
- Psalms 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.
- Psalms 120:1 In my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me.
- Psalms 121:2 My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth.
- Psalms 122:6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee.
- Psalms 127:1 Except the LORD build the house, they labor in vain that build it.
- Psalms 134:2 Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the LORD.
- Psalms 143:8 Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust.

- Psalms 147:1 Praise ye the LORD, for it is good to sing praises unto our God.
- Matt. 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.
- Matt. 7:7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.
- Matt. 28:6 He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.
- Matt. 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.
- John 1:4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.
- John 8:32 And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.
- John 14:14 If ye shall ask anything in my name, I will do it.
- John 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.
- Acts 2:1 And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.
- Acts 2:21 And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved.
- Acts 4:29 Grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word.
- Acts 10:44 The Holy Ghost fell on all of them which heard the word.
- Romans 1:17 As it is written, the just shall live by faith.
- Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.
- Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.



Link
Up
With

JESUS

Brought a Visitor

Name _____

Date _____



Link
Up
With

JESUS

Brought a Visitor

Name _____

Date _____



Link
Up
With

JESUS

Brought a Visitor

Name _____

Date _____



Link
Up
With

JESUS

Brought a Visitor

Name _____

Date _____



Link
Up
With

JESUS

Brought a Visitor

Name _____

Date _____



Link
Up
With

JESUS

Brought a Visitor

Name _____

Date _____



**Link
Up
With
JESUS**

Verse: _____

Name _____

Date _____



**Link
Up
With
JESUS**

Verse: _____

Name _____

Date _____



**Link
Up
With
JESUS**

Verse: _____

Name _____

Date _____



**Link
Up
With
JESUS**

Verse: _____

Name _____

Date _____



**Link
Up
With
JESUS**

Verse: _____

Name _____

Date _____



**Link
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With
JESUS**

Verse: _____

Name _____

Date _____



**Link
Up
With**

JESUS

Attendance

Name _____

Date _____



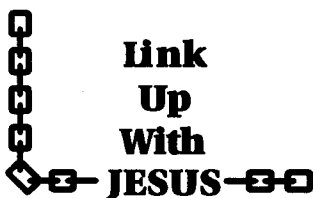
**Link
Up
With**

JESUS

Attendance

Name _____

Date _____



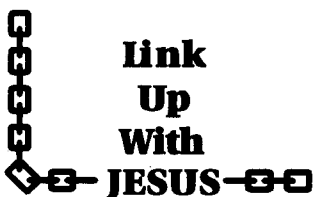
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Attendance

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Date _____



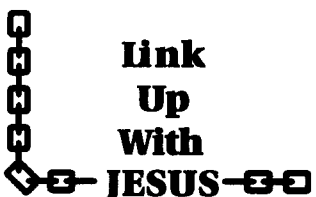
**Link
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JESUS

Attendance

Name _____

Date _____



**Link
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**Link
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JESUS

Attendance

Name _____

Date _____



Brought a Bible

Name _____

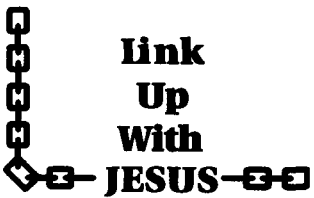
Date _____



Brought a Bible

Name _____

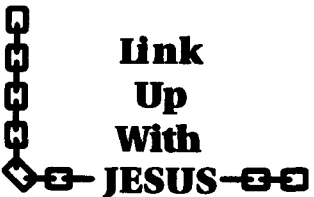
Date _____



Brought a Bible

Name _____

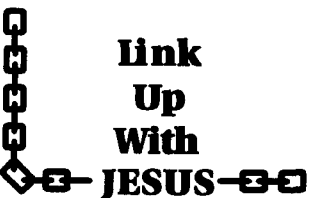
Date _____



Brought a Bible

Name _____

Date _____



Brought a Bible

Name _____

Date _____



Brought a Bible

Name _____

Date _____

Fuel *Flame*

The "Fuel the Flame" promotion is centered around the Day of Pentecost. The students "fuel" the flame by bringing their friends to Sunday School. Reaching out to others is the heart of the work of the Holy Spirit. When we emphasize the importance of sharing Christ with others and invite them to church where God can touch their lives, young people will respond to the spiritual aspects of this program.

This promotion is designed to be conducted for six weeks, during the second quarter. When possible, it will include the special days of Easter, Pentecost Sunday, and Mothers' Day. Because Easter falls on a different Sunday each year, it may not always be possible to include all three special days in this promotion. Including Mothers' Day in this promotion gives a parent, or a close relative, an opportunity to become acquainted with the Sunday School.

As an incentive, points are awarded to the students for attendance, for memorizing Bible verses, and for bringing their Bibles, their offerings, and their mothers to Sunday School.

To reach the first goal, each student is required to bring at least two people to Sunday School. Additional points will be awarded to the students as they bring other friends, and they will be advanced to higher goal levels.

The prize for each goal level is a discount on the fees for one week at summer camp. Students who earn a total of 55 points will qualify for a discount of \$25.00 on their camp fees for one week. Those who earn 80 points will receive a \$50.00 discount, and those who accumulate a total of 120 points will qualify to have their camp fees for one week paid in full.

In addition to these awards, the five students who earn the highest number of points overall will receive an all-expense-paid trip to an amusement park.

During the six weeks of this "Fuel the Flame" promotion, flyers will be distributed to all of the students. Each flyer will contain a different message. Four of the flyers will be mailed to the students' parents, asking for their cooperation. Announcements will also be made from the pulpit and in the church newsletter.

Each week, the children will be encouraged to fill in their "Flame Thermometer." As the promotion progresses, letters will be sent to the top 10 students and, in the last weeks, to the top 20 students in order to encourage them to continue to bring their friends to church.

"Fuel the Flame" has proved to be a successful promotion. It has effectively increased Sunday School attendance, and it has had a positive, spiritual impact on the lives of the students. For children who otherwise may not be able to attend camp,

it provides a way for them to earn their camp fees.

Each week, a Point Tally sheet is completed to record the points earned by each student during that week. Points for attendance will be awarded to each student in the class. Each week, these Point Tally Sheets and your attendance record must be taken to the Department Secretary.

You may also use a Re-Cap Sheet to keep a running total of the points earned

by the students in your class. Keep this Re-Cap Sheet in your Secretary's folder.

After you complete the Weekly Report form, it should be taken to the Department Secretary.

The Flame Thermometers must be filled in each week by the students with red crayons or markers. Please post these forms on a bulletin board or in another conspicuous place.

Fuel the Flame

CONTEST BEGINS:	CONTEST ENDS:

Catch the Spirit of Pentecost

Help Us "Fuel the Flame" by Reaching Out and Sharing the Word of God with the World.

YOU RECEIVE POINTS FOR THE FOLLOWING

Bringing Your Bible:	1	Bringing a Friend, 2nd Time:	15
Attendance:	2	Bringing a Friend, 3rd Time +:	5
Bringing an Offering:	2	Bringing Your Mother,	
Memorizing a Bible Verse:	2	Grandmother, Guardian	
Bringing a Friend, 1st Time:	10	on Mother's Day:	10

(Visitors who have attended during the last 6 months do not qualify.)

P R I Z E S	GOAL #1 PRIZE When You Earn 55 Points	
	GOAL #2 PRIZE When You Earn 80 Points	
	GOAL #3 PRIZE When You Earn 120 Points	
	GRAND PRIZE The 5 Students Who Earn the Most Points	

Fuel the Flame

Who Can I Invite?

Friends from School

Relatives

Neighborhood Friends

The Children of Your Parents' Friends

Friends from Outside Activities:

Scouting

Athletics

Camp Programs

Clubs



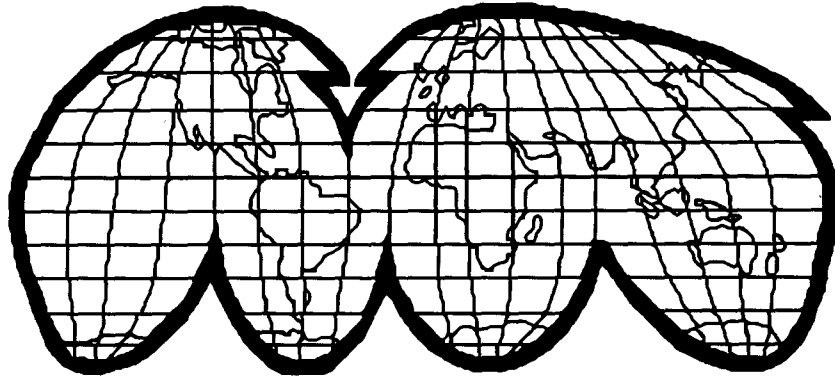
Anyone in the world who needs to know Jesus as their Savior.

List below the names of people you plan to invite. Pray daily over the list. Bring the list to church with you next week, so the entire class may pray for your list.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Fuel *Flame*

Why Save the World?



**Without Christ Our Friends Will Not Be With
Us in Heaven.**

Without Christ There Is NO Forgiveness Of Sins.

Without Christ There Is No True Joy.

Without Christ All Of Us Will Perish.

You can make a difference by reaching out to your friends and inviting them to church. Talk to one person today. Tell them you want them to go with you to a great place on Sunday morning. Christ has called each of us to share Him with our friends. Talk to someone today!

Fuel *the Flame*

Invite A Friend To Sunday School, And You Could Earn:

**GRAND
PRIZE**
For the 5 Students
With The Highest
Point Totals

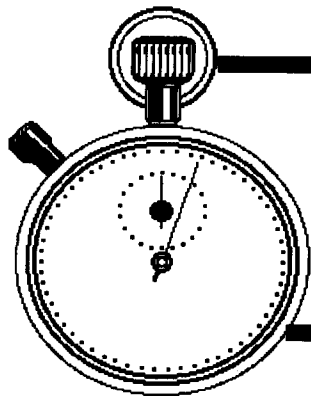
Students Earning
120 Total
Points Receive:

Students Earning
80-119 Total
Points Receive:

Students Earning
55-79 Total
Points Receive:

**Invite a Friend Today and Help Us
Fuel the Flame!**

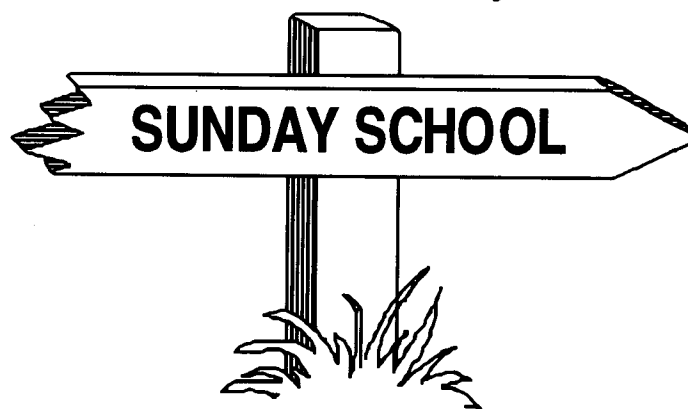
Fuel *the Flame*



**TIME IS
RUNNING OUT!**

**Bring a Friend, or Two,
to Sunday School
Next Week
And Help Us "Fuel the Flame"**

Show Your Friends the Way to Jesus.
Bring Them to Sunday School!



Fuel *the Flame*



Mother's Day

Bring your Mother, Grandmother, or Guardian to Sunday School on Mother's Day and receive 10 bonus points in our "Fuel the Flame" promotion.

Honor Your Mother On This Very
Special Mother's Day.

Mothers are invited to attend the entire hour of Sunday School, or they may choose to attend the Morning Bible Study in the Sanctuary. Only one mother, grandmother, or guardian may be registered per student. A mother with more than one child in the promotion may register in all necessary classes and then attend the class of her choice.



Fuel the Flame

Point Tally

Name _____

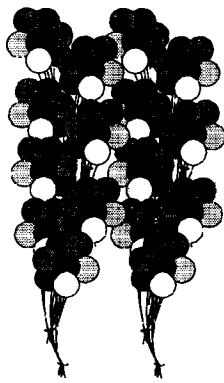
Class _____

Week #	1	2	3	4	5	6
Attendance 2 Points						
Bringing An Offering 2 Points						
Bible Memorization 2 Points						
Bringing A Bible 1 Point						
Bringing A Friend (1st Time) 10 Points						
Bringing A Friend (2nd Time) 15 Points						
Bringing A Friend (Addnl Times) 5 Points						
Bringing Mother on Mother's Day 10 Points						
Total Points For The Week						
Grand Total						

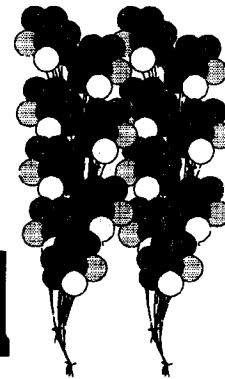
Fuel the Flame

Re-Cap Sheet

Name	Wk #1	Wk #2	Wk #3	Wk #4	Wk #5	Wk #6	Grand Total



Fall Fun Festival



The Fall Fun Festival is a very popular promotion, which is scheduled during the third quarter, usually in September. A variety of games, rides, contests, and concessions make this event a good one for the entire church family.

Prior to the Festival, a six-week promotion will be conducted in which children will be given an opportunity to earn tickets which can be used for the rides, games and various activities. Tickets are awarded for bringing friends: 10; for attendance: 2; bringing a Bible: 1; and memorizing the Bible verse: 1. Tickets will also be given for bringing food items for the church's emergency food pantry.

The Secretary of each class is responsible for keeping a record of the points each student earns each week. To help eliminate lost tickets, they will be distributed to the students at the ticket booth on the day of the Festival.

Each class will be responsible for operating a booth at the Festival. Booths may include games and contests such as:

- Bean bag toss;
- Basketball shoot;
- Cookie walk;

- Ring toss;
- Face painting;
- Fishing: player drops a line over a "wall," and a prize is attached to the line;
- Duck pond: player selects a plastic duck from a tub of water. Each duck is worth a prize.

Use your creativity in selecting the game for your booth. Make it fun and challenging, but not so difficult that students cannot "win." Everyone will receive a prize. Consolation prizes will be given to those who do not complete the game successfully. Prizes of higher value will be awarded to game "winners."

In addition to the booths operated by each class, arrangements can be made for rides, dunk tank, moon walk, etc. Concessions operated by one of the classes (perhaps the high school department) should also be available. A first-aid station, portable restrooms, and a booth for purchasing additional tickets (at a nominal charge) should be included.

The purpose of this promotion is to provide a fun day of fellowship for families. In doing this, we hope to acquaint others with our program, and

encourage other children and parents to join us in the School of the Bible.

Specific Instructions:

Each "point" a student earns is worth one ticket for the Fall Fun Festival. Tickets will be distributed to students at the ticket booth when they arrive for the Festival.

Secretaries will record the points each student earns on the Weekly Point Chart. Totals from this form will then be transferred to the "Re-Cap Sheet."

The Re-Cap Sheets will be used to determine the number of tickets to be awarded to each student. Keep these forms in the Secretary's folder, and double-check them for accuracy.

Fall Fun Festival

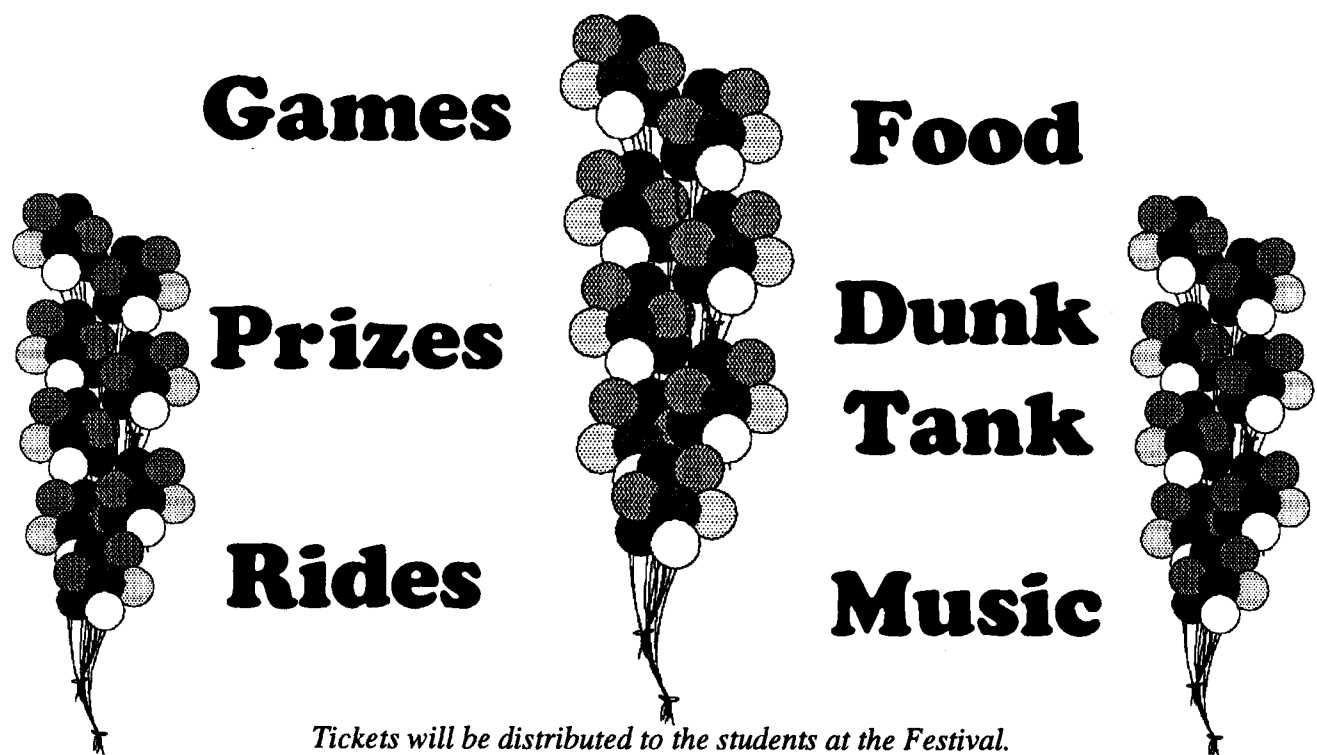
Contest begins: _____

The Fall Fun Festival will be held: _____

Earn Tickets For The Festival By:

- Attending Sunday School: 3 tickets,
- Bringing Your Bible: 2 tickets,
- Bringing an Offering: 2 tickets,
- Memorizing a Bible Verse: 2 tickets,
- Bringing a food item for those in need: 2 tickets,
- Bringing a friend: 10 tickets)

(Friends who have attended Sunday School during the last 4 months, do not qualify.)



Games

Prizes

Rides

Food

Dunk Tank

Music

*Tickets will be distributed to the students at the Festival.
Students will receive certificates each week, showing the number of tickets earned.*



**GET
EXCITED**

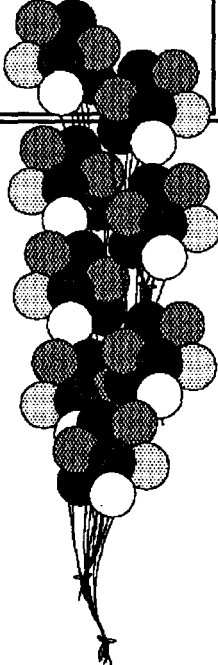
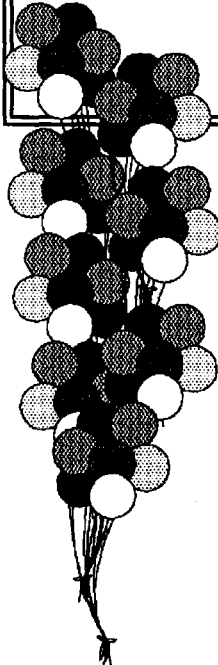
The

"FALL FUN FESTIVAL"

Date:

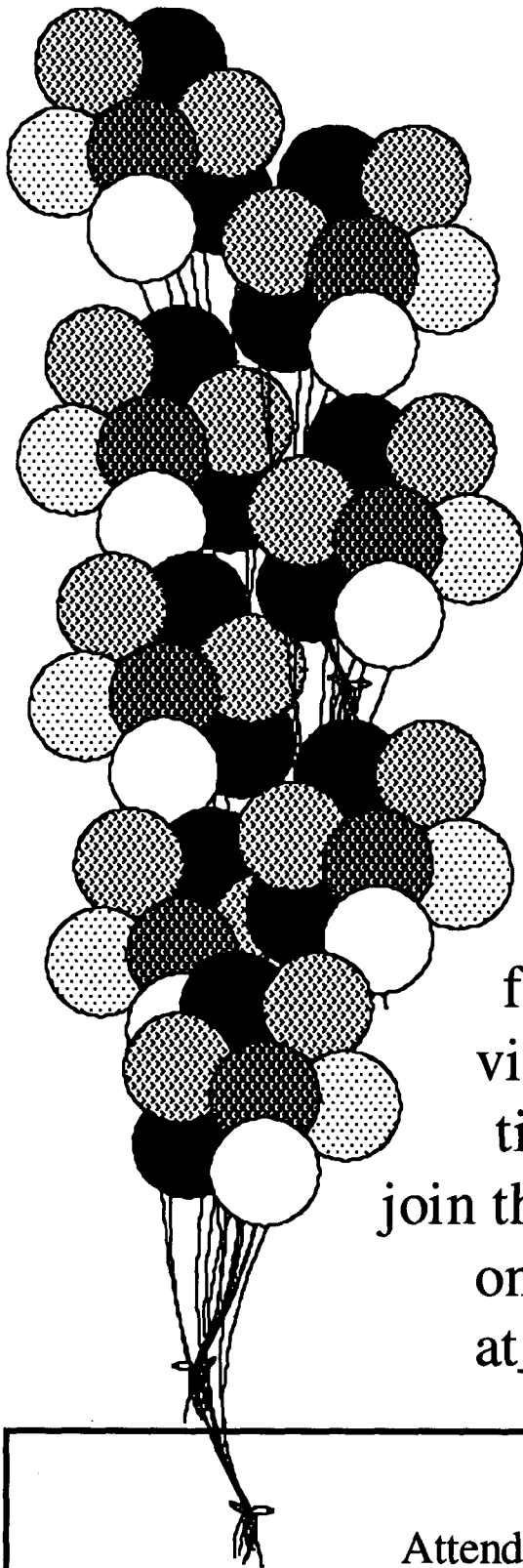
Time:

Place:



*Earn All the Tickets You Can
by Attending Sunday School!
Bring a Friend and Earn Extra Points!*

**GAMES PRIZES
MOONWALK
DUNK TANK
FOOD FUN**

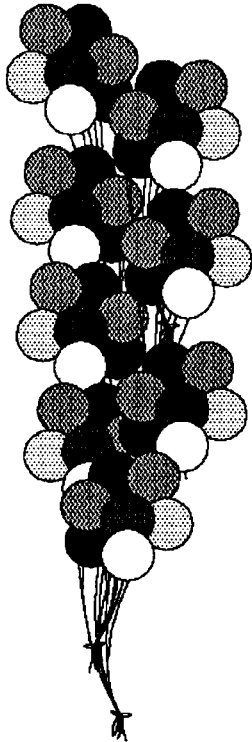


Only Weeks to go in the Fall Fun Festival Contest

Remember to bring your friends -- especially first-time visitors -- and join us for a great time in Sunday School. Then, join the fun at The Fall Fun Festival on _____ at _____

Points are awarded for:

Attendance • Memorizing Bible Verses
Bringing Your Bible • Bringing an Offering • Bringing a Visitor
Bringing a Food Item for Those in Need.



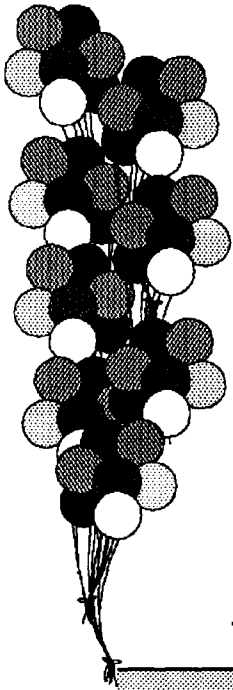
Fall Fun Festival Ticket Certificate

(Name)

*Has Earned a Total of _____ Tickets
for the Fall Fun Festival*

Class Secretary

Have your printer print this form "2-up" (2 forms per page).



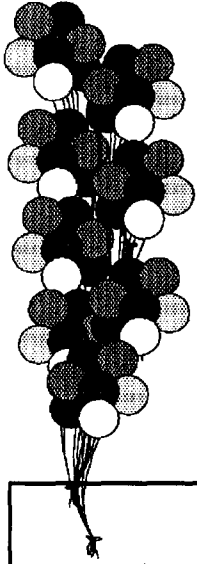
Fall Fun Festival

Weekly Point Chart: Week # _____

Date _____

Class _____

Name	Attendance (3)	Bringing Bible (2)	Bringing an offering (2)	Memory Verse (2)	Bringing food item (2)	Bringing a friend (10)	Total points for the week

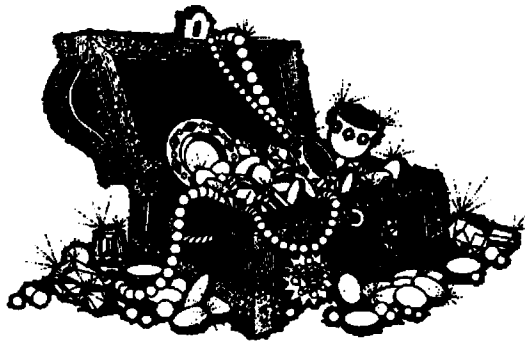


Fall Fun Festival

Re-Cap Sheet

Class:

Name	Wk #1	Wk #2	Wk #3	Wk #4	Wk #5	Wk #6	Misc.	GRAND TOTAL



Unlock The Treasure

Christ is truly the "key" to "Unlocking the Treasure." In this promotion, we want to increase attendance in the School of the Bible and emphasize to the students that Jesus is the key to unlocking vast treasures in our lives -- and not just material ones. We want to encourage students to reach out and witness to their friends, so that they, too, may experience the "treasures" Jesus has to offer.

This promotion is held during the fourth quarter, and runs for six weeks. As in other promotions, points are awarded to the students for their attendance; for bringing their Bible and offerings; for learning their memory verse; for bringing friends; and for contributing food items to the church's emergency food pantry.

Every time a student accumulates 40 points, he or she is awarded a special coin, which is worth 1 gift. A variety of gifts will be available, from which students may choose. Gifts should be displayed in a convenient, central location for the students to see. Some gifts will be worth 1 coin; others worth 2 coins; and some worth 3 coins. Students may elect to use the coin(s) they earn, or save them for a prize of higher value.

At the end of the promotion, the student in each class with the highest

number of points over 200, will receive a special, bonus gift and will be given an opportunity to unlock a treasure chest, filled with gifts valued at over \$200.

Only students who have earned a minimum of 200 points will qualify for this honor. If more than one student in the class earns 200 points or more, the student with the highest point total will be the one who qualifies.

During this promotion, the total number of points earned by each student will not be displayed or announced. It is acceptable to let the students know how many points they have earned from week to week. However, their total points should not be revealed, especially during the last week of the promotion.

At the end of the promotion, the top winner from each class will be given a key. Only one of the keys will open the treasure chest of prizes. **IMPORTANT:** because we do not want to award the grand prize based on "luck" or chance, the student who earned the most points will be given the key which opens the chest. Only the person who distributes the keys will know in advance the name of the grand prize winner. Everyone else will discover who the grand prize winner is when the students try their keys in the lock on the

treasure chest. It will add a bit of excitement and suspense if you have the grand prize winner try his or her key last.

During the course of this promotion, it is good to take the treasure chest of prizes into every classroom and display it briefly, as an incentive for the students. Flyers will also be distributed in the classes, and letters and flyers will be mailed to the parents of students, asking for their help and encouragement.

Specific Instructions:

Each Secretary will have a Weekly Point Chart on which to record the points each student earns. A supply of coins will also be distributed to every class. Additional coins will be available in the Audio-Visual Room. Every time students

accumulate 40 points, they will be given one of the coins. Be sure to sign the coins before you distribute them. Coins without signatures cannot be redeemed.

For example: when a student earns a total of 40 points, he or she will be given one coin. When the point total reaches 80 points, he or she will be given a second coin, etc. It is up to the student to decide whether to redeem the coin for a prize, or save it and try to earn a prize of greater value.

Re-Cap sheets will also be included in the Secretary's folder. Record on this sheet the total number of points each student earns each week. This will help you to determine when students qualify to receive a coin.

YOU CAN Unlock The



Treasure

Beginning: _____ **and Ending:** _____

How Can You Earn Points?

- Attend Sunday School: 5 points • Bring Your Bible: 2 points
- Bring an Offering: 2 points • Learn the Bible Verse: 5 points
- Bring a Food Item for Those in Need: 5 points
- Bring a Friend: 20 points



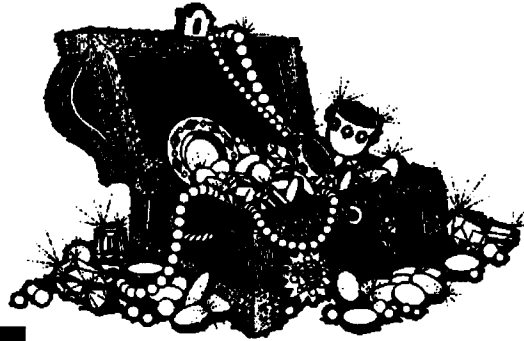
For every 40 points you earn, you will receive a "Gold Coin."
Coins can be redeemed for prizes.

The student in each class, who earns the most points over 200, will win a special prize and will be given a key which may open the Treasure Chest.

The Treasure Chest contains prizes valued at over \$_____.
The student whose key opens the Treasure Chest, will win its contents!

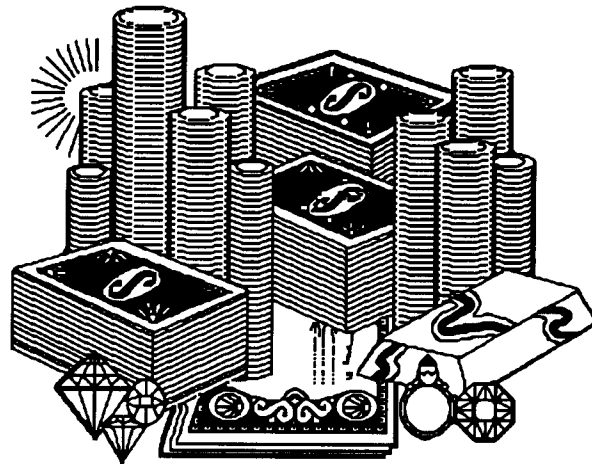
Invite Your Friends to Sunday School!

Unlock The



Treasure

What Treasure is Inside the Chest?

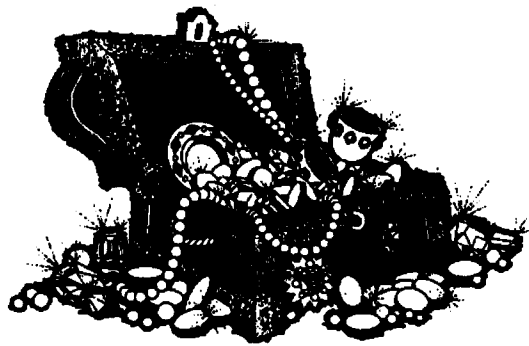


God says that He is worth more than Silver or Gold, and we are to treasure Him above all earthly riches!

You have the opportunity to win an earthly treasure, while helping others to find the treasure of knowing Jesus. Bring a friend to Sunday School between _____ and _____ and earn the opportunity to open the chest and claim the prize.



Unlock The

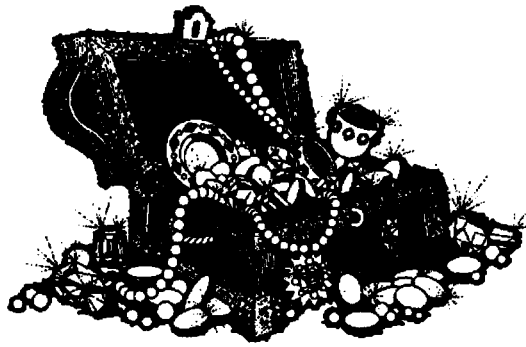


Weekly Point Chart

Treasure

Name	Attendance (5)	Bringing Bible (2)	Bringing an offering (2)	Memory Verse (5)	Bringing food item (5)	Bringing a friend (20)	Total points for the week

Unlock The



Re-Cap Sheet

Treasure

Class:

Name	Wk #1	Wk #2	Wk #3	Wk #4	Wk #5	Wk #6	Misc.	TOTAL

Section 7

Catechism In Doctrine

Introduction to Catechism in Doctrine

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." (I Timothy 4:16)

Jesus said, *"Take heed what ye hear..."* (Mark 4:24) Be careful about what you allow to enter your mind, because it will affect your heart. We are living in a day that is characterized by the deception Jesus warned about in Matthew 24. Our young people are being taught the doctrine of secular humanism, which leads to rebellion, pride, hedonism, and self-destruction.

The purpose of this material is to help stimulate a focus on truth that will change lives. Truth is not just a set of ideas. No one person has all the right answers to every detail of theological thought. Each of us sees *"through a glass darkly,"* (1 Corinthians 13:12) particularly when it comes to our eschatology. It is important that we respect one another in our pursuit of truth. As orthodox Christian teachers, we agree on the essential basics that are expressed in the "Apostle's Creed." Beyond that, we have different perspectives and insights concerning the particular matters of interest relative to Bible history and application. Our purpose is to present basic concepts that will stimulate an interest in young people to seek after wisdom, not to present our views as the final word on doctrine.

Truth is not a set of concepts: truth is the Person of Jesus Christ. When we know the Truth (Jesus), the truth will set us free. Freedom is not the right to do whatever

we want, but is the power to do what we should.

God's Word includes a curriculum guide for all education. It outlines the priorities that should be the basis for every training program. (I Peter 1) The first objective of a wise teacher is **faith**. We are to define and stimulate a focus on God and His purposes in the earth. Before we can train anyone, we must know that he has been supernaturally born again by God's grace through faith. Unless he is born again, he cannot possibly see the Kingdom of God (spiritual reality). (John 3:3)

The second priority is character training. Peter said, *"Add to your faith virtue."* Virtue is the positive influence that flows out of a life that is whole, and transformed by the power and love of God. After he has been led to a personal relationship with God, he needs *"instruction in righteousness."* (II Timothy 3:16) He needs lessons that will teach him to live well, not just to make a living.

Notice that **knowledge** is third on God's list of priorities, not first, as is the agenda of the secular world of educators. In a secularized education, faith and virtue are eliminated by the state, with the erroneous belief that knowledge apart from faith can bring man to wholeness and fulfillment in life. But knowledge without the balancing perspective of faith results in pride and rebellion. *"Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up."* (I Corinthians 8:1)

These lessons emphasize doctrine that stimulates wisdom, which begins with the

fear of the Lord. (Proverbs 9:10) There is a focus on creation, grace, spiritual gifts, accountability, and eschatology. When young people are taught that they are not a cosmic accident, but an eternal soul designed by a loving Heavenly Father, they will tend to be more responsive to other authorities. They will be more likely to have an attitude of gratitude, and a heart for the things of God.

Our goal is not simply to increase our knowledge, but also to hear those things which will have the greatest possible benefit for our lives: things that will still have value ten thousand years from now.

We do not want simply to learn facts about Jesus, but we want God's abiding presence in our lives. We want to know Jesus. As the Apostle Peter said, "*Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*" (II Peter 3:18) In other words, humble yourself and receive more of God's enabling power and strength, and get to know Jesus more personally and intimately.

We pray that these lessons will stir your faith, encourage your heart, and stimulate your desire to search the Word of God with joy as we anticipate the return of our Lord Jesus Christ to the earth.

How Do the Members of the Godhead Relate to Each Other?

The three Persons of the Trinity are one in substance and purpose. They have perfect love and harmony, and They work as one.

"And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." (Luke 3:22)

Christ taught a distinction of Persons in the Godhead, which He expressed in specific terms of relationship as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The mode of this distinction and relationship is not fully comprehensible to us, because it is not clearly explained to us. It is sufficient to understand that there is a distinction of three Persons; yet, there is one God who rules the universe of creation perfectly.

When Jesus was incarnated as a man to live among men and to become the sacrificial offering for the sin of man, He humbled Himself under the hand of the Father; that is, He made Himself subject to the Father and to the Holy Spirit. He became as "a servant," who sought only to do the will of the Father and not His own. (Luke 22:42) Even in His miraculous conception, we see the work of the Godhead. The angel said to the teenage Jewish girl, Mary:

"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore

also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35)

It is significant that the members of the Holy Trinity have a perfect spirit of mutual admiration and honor. Jesus constantly glorified the Father and honored the Holy Spirit. The Father glorified the Son, and the Holy Spirit always glorified the Father and the Son. A sublime evidence of the presence and work of the Holy Spirit is that the name of Jesus Christ is constantly magnified in those through whom He works and speaks. Scripture indicates that all three members of the Trinity are equally God, and co-eternal. Therefore, the parallel of a "father and son" relationship is not exactly like our natural one; but, it gives us an idea that is partially illustrated in the natural.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1)

Jesus is "with God," while at the same time He "is God." This is the mystery of the Trinity, which the natural mind cannot fully grasp. Notice that every time men invent a religion (man-made religions are called "cults"), they reject the idea of the Trinity, because it is not a

concept which the mind of man can grasp or understand. Therefore, men would never invent the idea. Man in his intellectual ego says, "Give me a God I can comprehend with my mind; bring God to my mental level." But, we can no more

fully comprehend God than a coffee cup can contain the Pacific Ocean. God is God; and as finite humans, we must accept what He says about Himself.

Why Don't We Baptize Babies or Sprinkle People for Baptism?

Baptism is the burial in water of an obedient believer, who has confessed that Jesus Christ is his Lord and Savior.

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38)

When Jesus came to John to be baptized in the river Jordan, John was reluctant to baptize Him. So Jesus said,

"Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." (Matthew 3:15)

In other words, "John, this is my act of obedience to the Father." Some groups who promote the practice of "infant baptism" quote the verse in Matthew 19:14, where Jesus said, "*Suffer the little children to come unto me....*" But, small infants are not coming as an act of their obedience or repentance, and they are not yet mature enough to make a confession of faith or a covenant with God.

We believe that infants do not have a sufficient understanding to make a conscious choice to sin or respond to God, and they are not held accountable for sin. Therefore, they are not in danger if they die. The "age of accountability" will vary with individuals; but, it is certainly not in the diaper stage.

The biblical order for baptism is clear. Repentance and a confession of faith come first. Baptism is a choice for the one who is born again. Baptism does not save us. It is a covenant response of those who are saved by the power of God through regeneration.

Baptism cannot be decided for you by someone else, no matter how sincere they may be. There is also no record in the Bible of any infant baptism, although some like to mention that the Philippian jailer was baptized, "*and his house,*" saying that "*surely that included babies.*" No. It does not say that. We suggest that such assumption is presumption, and you cannot make such conclusions, unless there are scriptural grounds to do so. If you were "baptized" as an infant, consider it a nice form of dedication, but you still need to submit to Christian baptism.

The word "baptism" comes directly from a Greek word, "baptidzo," which means "to immerse completely, to submerge, to bury." The Bible says that we are buried with Christ by baptism into death. (Romans 6:4) You do not bury a person by sprinkling dirt on his head, and you cannot baptize anyone from a teacup. Sprinkling was a practice of convenience that was substituted after Bible times by some church leaders; but, is not consistent

with the example or the intent of the
Word of God.

How Can We Exercise Faith in God?

We exercise faith in God by daily dying to self and concentrating our attention on God with praise, prayer, and thanksgiving.

"Verily I say unto you, if ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."
(Matthew 17:20)

There are many who look at this word spoken by Jesus and draw the conclusion that He was referring to an amount of faith. However, notice that Jesus said that we should have faith "as" a seed. A seed is a little bundle of potential life. If it is planted, it "dies," or decays in the ground. However, when it is properly buried and receives water and heat, it can sprout, grow, and ultimately produce a plant, or "tree," producing many more seeds, which can produce many more plants.

The key to the seed principle is death. The key to spiritual life is death to self. When Adam belonged to God, he had joy, peace, life, and dominion over everything, except the one tree which was the reminder that God owned it all. When he disobeyed God to establish his own "lordship," he lost it all and set the death process in motion by sin. When we, as descendants of Adam, repent and give our lives to God as His possession, His grace reverses the process. We begin to live for Jesus instead of for self, and we live for

eternity, instead of for the moment. Jesus said,

"...whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it." (Luke 9:24)

We do not exercise faith in God just by positive confession; but, more importantly, by dying to our selfish purposes and goals, and by stimulating a God-centered vision as servants. As long as a seed maintains its identity, it cannot grow. It must "die." Many see the Christian faith as a way to get God to do what they want. But real faith sees the Lord and His purposes as the center and ourselves as part of His body and army. Real faith does not get God to do what we want, but rather moves us to trust His plan and purposes, and causes us to do what He wants. James 2:18 illustrates this point:

"Show me thy faith without works, and I will show thee my faith by my works."

In other words, "I'm just trusting God to do it for me," as opposed to, "I do not understand it; but, God said to do it this way. So, I will obey."

George Müller was a great hero of faith in nineteenth century England. Through prayer, he raised over five million dollars to finance the support of thousands of orphans. He purposed that he would never ask people for money for his ministry. He had a goal. In his mind, even more important than the needs of the children, was the motive to show people

the power of prayer. Mr. Müller said, "If you want to get anything from God, first, you must put your heart in such a state that you have no will of your own." Jesus did that when He prayed, "*Father ... not my will, but thine, be done.*" (Luke 22:42) Like a seed, faith dies to self and seeks God's best, and God responds with power.

What Are Trials?

Trials are situations in life, designed by God to motivate us to draw closer to Him.

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." (1 Peter 4:12-13)

Our human nature tends toward the path of least resistance. We have a knack for "drifting" in life, unless we are challenged and motivated to pursue a goal. We are motivated either away from perceived threats, or toward perceived rewards.

The "river of life" always flows downstream to a lower level. We need to be encouraged to "press toward the mark" in our spiritual lives. When we face a battle or hardship in life, we are stirred to evaluate our condition and situation, and motivated to seek help or shelter.

"The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." (Proverbs 18:10)

We have an enemy called Satan, who seeks to devour us; but, that fact also stirs us to get closer to God.

One type of trial is an "affliction." The word means "hardship, or trouble." James said, *"Is any among you afflicted? Let him*

pray." (James 5:13) It is time to turn to God seriously and look to Him as our source. The affliction causes us to check our course and respond to God.

"Before I was afflicted, I went astray, but now have I kept Thy word." (Psalms 119:67)

"It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes." (Psalms 119:71)

Do not assume that every negative situation in life is from the devil. God builds our character through adversity.

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;..." (different kinds of hardship). (James 1:2)

As we mature, we will face greater difficulties, and we will need the patience that comes from experience. David faced a lion and a bear. This helped him face the giant, Goliath; and that experience, in turn, prepared him for greater problems later in life.

Trials also keep us from becoming proud. The Apostle Paul had a "thorn in the flesh" which God would not remove, because it kept him humbly dependent upon the Lord. Job suffered through terrible trials. He did not understand why; but, he kept his faith in God and refused to

become bitter. He said, "*The LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away...*" (Job 1:21) He decided to believe that God was good, and he did not develop the mentality that God owed something to him.

Trials will make you better or bitter, depending upon how you respond to them. If you think only of yourself or other people, you will become bitter. If you respond to God, you will grow.

If life was too easy, we would not appreciate it or really enjoy it. You do not

enjoy sunshine or water until you have been without them. In life, the height of your joy can never exceed the depth of your sorrow. "*...But your sorrow shall be turned into joy.*" (John 16:20) If there is no battle, there can be no victory. The greater the struggle, the sweeter the song.

"Make us glad, according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us." (Psalms 90:15)

What Are Temptations?

Temptations are situations in life, which are designed by Satan to draw us away from God.

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man."
(James 1:13)

Satan's goal in the world is to do all he can to keep people from loving and serving God. Satan hates the church, because Jesus said He would use the church to crush the gates of hell. (Matthew 16:18)

Satan hates Christians who dwell and work together in unity, and he hates anyone who is submitted to God's will for his life. Satan will try to lure anyone away from God's presence or from godly thinking, and his basic tool is deception. He has never really deviated from his original approach to seduce people away from God.

Satan first tempted Eve in the Garden of Eden by asking her this subtle question about God's Word: "...hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree"? Then Satan tried to assuage Eve's fear of God by saying, "...Ye shall not surely die...." and turned her attention to carnal things "...it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired...." Satan then presented the idea that there is pleasure in sin "...the woman saw that the tree was good for food." (Genesis 3:1-6)

It is not a sin to be tempted. It becomes sin when we set our hearts on that which God did not provide for us to use. Jesus was human and suffered temptation; but, He never yielded to it and never sinned.

"Every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust has conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (James 1:14)

A man is "drawn away" from God by temptation, like a fish is lured by the bait. The purpose is the same: to hook us with the bondage of sin, which leads to death.

Satan is a liar and is the father of lies. (John 8:44) All temptations are based on illusion, because sin never satisfies the deep desires in a man. The more we get, the more we want. There are three basic temptations described in 1 John 2:16: "*the lust of the flesh*" -- the illusion that physical pleasure can bring satisfaction -- "*the lust of the eyes*" -- the hope that wealth and possessions can satisfy the soul -- "*and the pride of life*" -- the quest for fame or popularity. Jesus was tempted in these three areas by three temptations in the wilderness. (Luke 4:1-13) Nevertheless, He concentrated on God's Word and God's purposes and chose that which was of eternal value over the temporal.

The Bible tells about many people who were deceived by temptations, and they lost their lives because of it.

1. **The lust of the flesh.** King Balak's people began to have illicit relations with the Israelites. This angered God, and he smote the Israelites with a plague. Twenty-four thousand Israelites died before God stayed the plague. This was not fun. (Numbers 25:1-9, Revelation 2:14)
2. **The lust of the eye.** An Israelite named Achan took some Babylonian

garments and gold from Jericho, and his whole family was executed. He lost it all. (Joshua 7:19-26)

3. **The pride of life.** Herod was acclaimed a "god" because of his great speech. When Herod became proud, he was smitten by an angel of the Lord. He was eaten by worms, and died. How humiliating! (Acts 12:23)

What Is Righteousness?

Righteousness is our right standing with God:
the legal result of being justified by faith.

"That I may ... be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." (Philippians 3:8-9)

"Righteousness" means "equitable in character or act;" "rightness;" "free from wrong or sin." Most people do not realize it, but sin is not really "natural," in the sense that it flows against the way we were designed by our Creator. Not only does sin cause guilt, fear, and emotional trauma, but it also damages our bodies.

"... But he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body." (1 Corinthians 6:18)

Many diseases and injuries are caused or carried by sinful actions, such as sexual immorality, perversion, substance abuse, gluttony, etc. Of course, sin damages our spirit, because it separates us from God, who is holy. (Isaiah 59:2)

When we respond to God with repentance and faith, we are made legally righteous. Righteousness is not something we earn by being good. It is a gift from God. We are "in Christ" and stand clothed in His righteousness. It is a product of "justification," wherein we stand legally

pardoned, with our sins "washed away." In God, it is "just as if I" had never sinned.

Our response to temptation is different, not because we are trying to earn God's love, but because we have been changed and made right with God. Instead of reacting to life with fear and submitting to the bondage of evil habits, we are free to obey and to enjoy God. We are free to say, "no," to sin.

Seals and penguins are very awkward on land; but, in the water they are swift and graceful. They are "in their element." A shark will die out of the water; but, in his element, he is awesome. Man walking in sin is living beneath his human potential. His perception is limited to earthly things, and he is spiritually blind and deaf. He is also hindered by guilt and fear.

"The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion." (Proverbs 28:1)

In the Bible, the word for righteousness refers to our character or actions. Righteousness as "right standing with God" is imputed to us when we are born again; but, it is also imparted:

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins" -- imputed righteousness -- "and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" -- imparted righteousness. (1 John 1:9)

"Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not" -- does not continue in a sin-dominated lifestyle. (1 John 3:6)

A man who is right with God and walking in the power of the Spirit is like one who *"shall mount up with wings as*

eagles...." (Isaiah 40:31) A man who is right with God will be free to love people and to live an honest life. The wicked man is perverted and bound by fear, although he will do good sometimes. The righteous man is spiritually alive and free to love others, because he has a new nature, although he may stumble sometimes and do something wrong. When he does, his Heavenly Father corrects him as a son, and he should repent, grow, and continue to *"seek....his righteousness."* (Matthew 6:33)

What Is Holiness?

To be holy is to live a pure and honest lifestyle as a response to God's transforming work of grace in our lives.

"...As he which has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." (1 Peter 1:15-16)

While righteousness relates primarily to the gift of right standing with God and is imputed by His grace, holiness relates to right living in response to God's love and His Lordship. We are made the righteousness of God in Christ. (2 Corinthians 5:21) We are commanded to be holy in all aspects of "conversation." The word translated as "**conversation**" in the King James Bible refers to all aspects of our lifestyle, not just to our speech. It refers to the way we act, think, and respond to people and situations.

The writers of the New Testament wrote many things to believers about the need to pursue holiness in the fear of God.

Paul said,

"...put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Ephesians 4:22-24)

Paul is telling us to put off our old sinful lifestyle -- our sin nature -- and change the way we think and respond in life. The word for "holiness" here means "purity from defilement, right in character."

The Hebrew word for "holy" was "Kodesh," and meant "sanctified; a sacred place or thing." Anything holy belonged exclusively to God and was to be used only for God's purposes. The people were not allowed to use anything holy for their own selfish desires. To be holy in purpose is to be "single-minded;" that is, we should seek to realize that we belong to God and that we exist for His pleasure. When we live for Him, instead of for self, we discover that it is the key to freedom and joy. (Luke 9:24)

King David was such a man.

"One thing have I desired of the LORD; that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the LORD." (Psalms 27:4)

Jesus also had pure motives. He said, "I only came to do the will of my Father." He never did anything for a selfish reason. The Apostle Paul said,

"This one thing I do....I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God...."
(Philippians 3:13-14)

To be pure, water must be either highly filtered or distilled. Pure water has only water in it and is not defiled by dirt, microbes, bacteria, etc. Sin defiles, or pollutes, the heart of man and results in a corrupt lifestyle. Godly Christians try to get as much of God into their lives and thinking as they can, and they are not trying to get away with as much of the world as they can. Romans 6:11 is a great

lesson on purity. We are taught to reckon ourselves *"to be dead ... unto sin, but alive unto God...."* We see our bodies as instruments of righteousness unto holiness, with the end result being eternal life.

Holiness in this life should always be desired, pursued, and encouraged.

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the LORD." (Hebrews 12:14)

What Does it Mean to Be "In Christ"?

To be "in Christ" is to be a partaker with Him as an heir of God through the new birth.

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

There are many rich and exciting truths connected with the Christian walk and the plan of salvation. We realize that "*Christ in (us is) the hope of glory,*" (Colossians 1:27) and that we accept Him into our lives as **Savior** (one who sets us free from sin) and **Lord** (the one who has the right to rule our lives). But, as believers, we also need to see that in a very real sense, we are in Christ. The Bible says that we are "*accepted in the beloved.*" (Ephesians 1:6) Scripturally, we do not let Jesus in to become part of our lifestyle; rather, He lets us in to become part of His family, and we grow as we become more and more like Him.

When discussing the fact that the priestly order of Melchisedec was greater than the Levitical order, the writer to the Hebrews said that Levi was "in Abraham" when Abraham paid tithes to Melchisedec. Therefore, Levi, the tribe which received the tithes, was credited with paying their tithes to the greater priest. (Hebrews 7:9-10) The writer to the Hebrews said that Levi was "*in the loins of Abraham.*" Levi was descended from Abraham, and so he inherited not only family traits from him, but also Abraham's wealth and honor.

The Apostle Paul said that we were "in Adam" racially. He spoke of the fact that every member of the human race inherited traits and qualities from Adam, including a "sin nature." Just as Levi paid tithes "in Abraham," so we sinned "in Adam."

"For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." (1 Corinthians 15:22)

We were in Adam in the Garden of Eden, and his sin was on our account. We also have the tendency to be like him in character, because we are his children.

But, the message of the gospel is that we can be "in Christ" through the new birth. When we repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation, we are forgiven, because the death penalty was paid by Christ. We are born again of the Spirit, and we have a new life. We were "in Christ" when He died on the cross, and that payment for the penalty of our sin was credited to our account. When we are in Christ, we are a new creation. Just as God breathed into Adam the breath of life, so the Spirit of God comes into our spirit, and we are able to see and to live life as a brand new person. We have genuinely been born again and not just converted to a religion.

As Christian believers, we now have a tendency to be like Him in character, because He has imparted His righteousness to us. Those who are in Christ have lives that are changed by the grace of God in them, and they will live with Him forever in Heaven.

We have a new **perspective** on life -- wisdom -- new **power** in life -- grace -- and a new **potential** for life. "*We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*" (1 John 3:2)

What Is an Idol?

An idol is anything that takes the place of God in a person's life and usurps the devotion, trust, or dependence which should rightfully go to Him.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Exodus 20:3)

When we hear the word, "idol," we usually envision a statue with some kind of human or partly human form, with ignorant people bowing and praying vainly to this wooden, stone, or metal image. There are such cultures that worship physical man-made idols, such as Hinduism. The Hindu religion is centered in India, and teaches polytheism, or the concept of many gods. In fact, it is estimated that there are over three hundred million gods in India, and many of them are actual demon spirits who influence the misguided throngs in a depressing and oppressively vain religion.

Men have fashioned idols almost since the race began; but, they are just images and they have no power in themselves. Why do people worship idols? Because, when a man makes an idol, he can develop the ideas and character of the idol in his own mind and, therefore, do what he wants. It is as if, in his rebellion, sinful man, has said, "let us make God in our image." Notice that the Greek and Roman gods of mythology are like foolish and fickle men and women. They are not like the perfect and holy God, who is the one real God.

In our culture we do not practice idolatry as such; but, we do in fact have a serious national problem with idolatry. An idol does not have to be a statue. An idol is anything or anyone which displaces God in our lives. Your God is the one to whom you go when you have a need, because He is your Heavenly Father, Jehovah-Jireh. But, some people turn to other people or to social agencies instead of to the Lord.

We are called to serve God and live for Him; but, many people serve money and live to gain wealth. Their god is money, and they think that money will solve their problems. It is a problem when a nation's leaders forsake the Lord and look to money as their god. They try to solve every problem with money; and, eventually, they spend far more than they have available. Unless they look to the Lord and repent, they can spend the nation into financial ruin. There is no end to spending the country into impossible debt, because there is no end of problems where the money is needed.

Some people live for pleasure: "...whose god is their belly." (Philippians 3:19) In America today, our largest industry is pleasure. We pay entertainers obscene amounts of money, while our nation's leaders and most skilled people receive relatively little. Some people are

even outraged when a minister of the gospel is well-paid; but, they seem to think nothing of paying an entertainer millions of dollars. We bestow great honor on entertainers, which shows where our priorities as a nation are. When a person is referred to as a "screen idol," it is not just an expression. It is a fact. People literally worship the "stars" of music, movies, and sports.

When a person is more devoted to his sports than he is to God, then sports are idols to him. Whatever we love more than God is an idol, and we demonstrate our love by the priorities in our schedules. God is called a "*jealous God*." (Exodus 20:5) He deserves to be first in our lives and affections.

Why Did God Command His People Not to Make Graven Images?

God knows that the carnal tendency of man is to focus his attention and affections on physical things and to neglect the spiritual realities of life.

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image,..." (Exodus 20:4)

When God created man, He placed him in a time space world and made him a physical creature as well as an eternal spirit. But man's sin blinded his spiritual vision, and, since his fall, man has had a problem keeping the eternal things in perspective. He tends to get caught up in the physical and temporal things of life and to neglect the eternal things of the spirit. Jesus taught that, if we are not careful, the cares of this life will choke out the Word in our lives. (Matthew 13:22) He told us to

"seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33)

The Apostle Paul taught this principle of man's tendency to be carnal.

"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." (Romans 8:20)

In simpler terms, man (the creature) was created with human weakness and the potential to be very carnal (made subject to vanity). It was not man's choice. God had a

purpose in subjecting man to the limitations of a physical body and very limited understanding, so that he of necessity would be dependent upon God and would succeed in life only by seeking after God daily. If left to his own resources, man tends toward vanity (a carnal focus on self and things that will not last). We can enter into the liberty of the sons of God only by God's grace, which we receive by faith. We cannot do it with our human ability.

The fact that we are "subject to vanity" is reflected in our response to images. Man tends to *"worship and serve the creature more than the Creator."* (Romans 1:25) When Aaron made a golden calf for Israel, it was intended to represent God. But, the people immediately started to worship the image instead of God.

Today, there are many people who actually worship relics which relate to the Christian religion. People revere, adore, and pray to statues of Jesus, Mary, or to dead saints. They will flock in great numbers to pay homage to trees or tortillas that seem to look like an image of Jesus. Men have spent their lives searching for the cup Jesus used for the last supper -- called the "Holy Grail" -- or the shroud -- linen cloth -- used in His burial. Churches treat with awe the remains of familiar

leaders. In fact, St. Peter's fingers and St. Paul's skull are preserved in European cathedrals. (At last count, apparently Peter had 26 fingers, and Paul had 12 heads!)

God knew that man would have this tendency, so He commanded His people not to make images, so they would not be tempted. But, obviously, they did, and they were tempted. We do not believe that it is wrong to have any statues or artwork and to enjoy their beauty; but, we want to be

careful to avoid any statues or artwork which seek to represent God, or a god, such as a Buddha or a Tiki god. These draw attention to false gods, and they are generally associated with the realm of darkness.

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24)

Why Does the Bible Say that God Is a Jealous God?

God loves us and does not want anything to take His place
of preeminence in our hearts.

"I the LORD thy God am a jealous God." (Exodus 20:5)

Jealousy is a word that only a few people understand today. It is often confused with envy or covetousness. To covet is to desire something belonging to another person. It is a destructive emotion, leading to bitterness or stealing. Envy is a damaging sense of ill will against a person, because of who they are or what they have achieved. It is a desire to have their place or situation. Jealousy is simply the fear of being replaced.

In interpersonal relationships, jealousy is also a negative emotion; it is not an indication of genuine love. Godly love between friends or spouses involves trust; jealousy shows a lack of trust. It is a form of fear - a lack of faith. When people are jealous, they are showing that their focus is on themselves and not on the needs or feelings of the other person. This kind of fear can be conquered only by developing genuine love, which is a focus on the needs of others. *"There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear."* (1 John 4:18)

But the Apostle Paul said, *"I am jealous over you with godly jealousy:...."* (2 Corinthians 11:2) Selfish jealousy is a fear that I might be replaced in the affections of another person, and it reacts to that person

on the basis of violated rights. The response is a self-centered anger. Paul's godly jealousy was motivated by his desire for God's best for the Christians at Corinth, and it had no selfish agenda. The key is the motive. His motive was his concern that the people might get so caught up in the love of things or pleasure that they would develop a form of idolatry and miss out on God's best for their lives. It was godly, because it was motivated by love, not by selfishness.

God is a perfect and loving God, and He is not negative or destructive. He had every reason to be concerned for His people, because they had consistently demonstrated a fickle attitude. God would bless them, often in supernatural ways, and, within days or even hours, they were complaining. Their focus turned away from God and toward their stomachs. After only a few sessions of murmuring, usually they were ready to quit the journey, return to bondage, stone the leader, and take up another gold offering for a new idol. No wonder God was concerned.

It is also important for us to know that God is not interested in playing a "Santa Claus" role in our lives. Many people try to incorporate God and religion into their lives, but they keep things centered on themselves. They see God as a kind

benefactor, who comes around when we have a need, but usually stays up at North Pole Heaven and does not get too involved. No. God is a jealous God. He does not want us only to accept Him into our lives; He commands us to receive Him as Lord and Master of our lives. He is God, and He will not be our servant. We

are His servants and His property; and that is fine, because He loves us very much.

"This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." (Isaiah 43:21)

What Does It Mean to Take the Name of the Lord in Vain?

We take God's name in vain whenever we speak His name irreverently or disrespectfully, or when we use His name to curse others.

"Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain;..."
(Exodus 20:7)

The Hebrew word "vain" means desolating, evil, or useless. God is holy and is worthy of absolute respect, awe, and reverence. All of us associate with one another by our names, and we are affected by the names we are called. We communicate the way we feel about one another by the names we use. Consider the man who calls his wife "sweetheart." Then, think of the man who refers to his wife as "the old lady." What can you tell about these men?

As Christians, we demonstrate what we think of God by the way we use His name. As we refer often to the Lord in our speaking or singing, we are reminded of His wonderful attributes. He is Jehovah-Jireh -- the Lord our provider -- Jehovah-Shalom -- peace -- and other special names. Many ancient Jews held God's name in such reverence that they used the unpronounceable name, JHWH.

Sin, which turns a man's heart from God to an evil focus on self, stirs up strong feelings of animosity and resentment toward God. This is called "enmity." When man sins, it affects his conscience, which is the awareness in his spirit that he

is wrong. He must respond to that conscience by confessing his sin to God and repenting; or, he will seek to justify himself in his heart and build up resentment against the One who is and will be the judge of his life. The more enmity he stirs up against God, the less guilty he feels over the sins in his life.

This is reflected in his talk. Jesus said that *"out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh."* (Matthew 12:34) When a person has evil in his heart, it will tend to come out of his mouth in the form of evil words. Usually this comes out in two basic forms: profanity and cursing. "**Profanity**" is the use of words which draw attention to things that are filthy or profane. There are words in every language that speak of bodily functions or private parts of the body in demeaning or vile ways. Usually they are short, coarse-sounding words that convey to the listener, "this person has a dirty mind and limited intelligence."

"**Cursing**" is the use of words and phrases that communicate condemnation or damnation to someone. "God, damn it" actually is a cursing prayer to consign something to hell. It is an expression of hatred, and affects only the speaker, because *"the curse causeless shall not come."* (Proverbs 26:2) Usually it is in

cursing that people take God's name in vain or use God's name in an evil way, and God will hold us accountable.

It is important for us to avoid bywords, or "minced oaths." "Darn it" is a diluted form of "damn it." Golly and Gosh are derivatives of the name God. Gee, Jeez, Jeepers, and Jiminy Cricket are demeaning

forms of the name of Jesus Christ, and they should not be used by Christians. It is good not to use any oaths at all. Jesus said,

"Let your communication be, Yea, yea; Nay, nay: for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil."
(Matthew 5:37)

Why Did God Command Us to Honor Our Father and Mother?

God knows that sin leads to rebellion against authority, and that the way we respond to our parents will affect our attitudes toward Him.

"Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee." (Exodus 20:12)

The Hebrew word for honor means "weighty, important, of great worth." Honor involves respect and reverence. Many oriental cultures take this to an extreme, because some religions teach ancestor worship. On the other hand, other cultures, which have been influenced by the teaching of evolution and secular humanism, have a very low view of the role of parents. They portray parents as the enemies of self-realization.

The family is the central unit in God's plan for growth and development. The family is also the basis for any strong nation. Satan knows that, if he can destroy the family, he can destroy the church and the nation. God designed the family, and not the state, to be the center of education. God placed each of us in the family of which we are a member. To be resentful of the parents God gave us is really an expression of resentment toward God, because He assigned us to our parents.

The Apostle Paul points out that this is the first commandment with a promise attached directly to it. (Ephesians 6:2-3) The promise is that we may live long upon the

earth. There are several reasons for this. It is not a guarantee of a long physical life; it is the expression of the principle that a right attitude toward one's parents tends toward a longer life. One reason is obvious. When people live in resentment and rebellion, their bodies are affected by those attitudes and are more susceptible to disease and decay. Our parents are a very important part of our lives, and we will be greatly affected by dishonoring them.

Secondly, God gave parents to us as our protectors, particularly our fathers. If we stay under authority, we stay under protection. They are not only for physical protection, but they also provide spiritual and emotional protection. The best protection any girl has against marrying the wrong man is her father, because he can detect wrong motives, which she is not equipped to see. Notice how the movie industry constantly portrays fathers as being wrong about the romantic inclinations of their daughters. That is because there is a strong anti-family and pro-humanist mind-set in Hollywood.

To honor parents does not necessarily mean to do everything they say. The Bible teaches that we should "*be subject unto the higher powers.*" (Romans 13:1) In other words, obey your parents unless their command is in violation of God's

Word. In that case, the Bible is the higher authority, and we must obey God. But, we do honor our parents and acknowledge that they have the right to make the final decisions until we are married. Then

"shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife:..." (Genesis 2:24);

and they will become a new family. Even then, their parents should be honored in their place of counsel.

What Did God Mean When He Gave the Commandment Forbidding Killing?

God commanded that people must never take it upon themselves to take the life of another human being.

"Thou shalt not kill." (Exodus 20:13)

It is ironic that some people have used the sixth commandment as an argument against capital punishment, saying, "Well, the Bible says thou shalt not kill; so do not kill the criminals." However, as we examine the Word of God, we discover that God not only allows civil governments to execute criminals, but also He commands them to do it.

A more literal translation of this commandment is, "thou shalt do no murder." God certainly was not speaking against capital punishment or national defense, because other directives from God clearly outline the necessity of punishing serious crime in order to protect people. God allows for self-defense and police protection as well.

Biblically, capital punishment, or the use of the death penalty to punish serious crime, is necessary if a nation is to deter criminals, who have no regard for the lives or property of others. God specifically commands the death penalty for murder, and that is a direct reflection on the value He places on a human life. Human life is so precious, that murder must warrant the supreme punishment.

"Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man." (Genesis 9:6)

In the book of Genesis, the very beginning of the law, God specifically commanded civil government to carry out the penalty against murder. God did not delegate to the state the responsibility to feed the poor or to educate children. However, He did mandate that the civil government be responsible for capital punishment, so that they would be

"a terror ...to the evil....the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." (Romans 13:3-4)

Civil governments which eliminate capital punishment greatly damage their ability to deter crime in their society, and they become a joke to the criminal element rather than a terror.

God not only allows national defense, but, in many cases, He also commanded Israel to destroy other nations, sometimes even including the livestock. It is thought that some of these nations were full of diseases as a result of widespread immorality. If they had not been killed, the diseases would have been spread to

every part of the world. There were also many evil leaders in the world, and armies which would have conquered and destroyed God's people. Armies have been necessary as long as wicked leaders have been in the world.

This commandment also has nothing to do with killing animals. The Christian view of animals is clear. Animals are not humans, and they exist largely for the benefit of man. Animals do not have a spirit, and they do not have basic human rights. It has always been in order to kill

animals for food and/or clothing, although it is not Christian or ethical to inflict undue suffering on any creature.

This commandment against murder is clear. No individual has the right, out of anger, to take the life of another. We are commanded to forgive. People who hate other people have cut them off in their spirit and will never give them another chance to make things right. That is why the Apostle John said, "*Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer.*" (1 John 3:15)

Why Did God Prohibit Adultery in the Commandments He Gave to Us?

Adultery is a very serious sin against a marriage partner. Marriage is God's living illustration of His covenant relationship with us.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery."
(Exodus 20:14)

Adultery refers to an intimate physical union by a married person with someone who is not his spouse. If two unmarried people share in such an act, it is called "fornication." In God's law, fornication is a sin. Adultery is also a sin, because adultery breaks a serious vow of fidelity which was made before God.

God created the sexual aspect of humanity, not only for procreation, but also as a beautiful way for a covenant man and woman to express their love and enjoy each other. Adam and Eve *"were both naked ... and were not ashamed."* (Genesis 2:25) This kind of openness and intimacy was created to be enjoyed with one partner for life. When we enter into a marriage covenant, we vow to "forsake all others." Each belongs to the other in a relationship that is exclusive, just as we are to belong to God and worship no other god.

It is wonderful to find the one partner for life and to share with that person something special, which you share with no one else. A person who commits adultery is using another person for his own gratification or ego, and damages his integrity before God and man. The result

in his own life is guilt, fear, condemnation, and sometimes illegitimate babies, serious diseases, or death. (In Israel, the penalty for adultery was death.) The person who commits adultery damages his mind, his heart, and his potential for joy and peace. The adulterer causes his marriage partner to suffer insecurity, guilt, depression, jealousy, and anger. No wonder the Bible says,

"But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul."
(Proverbs 6:32)

If a man is a man of understanding, he will not commit adultery.

Proverbs 5, 6, and 7 provide much wisdom on the subject of adultery. We learn that those who commit adultery will be bound by that sin (Proverbs 5:22); their very life will be preyed upon. (Proverbs 6:26) They will get a wound and dishonor, and the reproach on their reputation will stay with them throughout life. (Proverbs 6:33) Proverbs Chapter 7 tells the story of a foolish young man who was blinded by lust and lured to his death by an immoral woman.

Marriage is more than a contract; it is a covenant. In a covenant, we give ourselves to each other. In a real sense, our bodies belong to our spouse. (1 Corinthians 7:4) This also illustrates the fact we belong to God and that our bodies were not made to be used for immorality.

God loves marriage and hates divorce. One of the safeguards He placed upon us to protect the family and the marriage union was His strong warning and command against adultery. The world is constantly portraying adultery and

fornication as if there were no consequences; but, that is a lie.

When people sin against their covenant partner, there are always consequences. Wise young people decide at an early age to resist the peer pressure to compromise themselves, and to keep themselves pure for marriage. They keep their God-given gift of sex within their marriage covenant and find the greatest potential for fulfillment that they can have.

What Kind of Character Weakness Do We Demonstrate When We Steal?

A person who steals is showing a lack of respect for other people, for God and for himself. He is also demonstrating a selfish, lazy spirit.

"Thou shalt not steal." (Exodus 20:15)

All of us know what stealing is. We are stealing any time we take something which does not belong to us, without the permission of the owner. Private ownership has always been a good part of God's economy. God encourages and rewards diligence. Some will work harder than others and will develop greater skills. As a result, they will accumulate more wealth in their lives than others. While all of us should learn to be generous and share with others who are less fortunate, we never have a right to take property away from someone else, even if we think they do not deserve to have so much.

By His nature, God is a God of love, and love is expressed in the way we give: *"God so loved...that he gave..."* (John 3:16) When we have God's love in our hearts, we will naturally want to give to those who have needs. Sin is the opposite. Sin causes us to focus on ourselves and on what we want. When our hearts are full of sin, we can see only what we want or need, and we become insensitive to the needs or feelings of others. Usually, those who have their possessions stolen feel personally violated and hurt; but, the thief is so concerned with what he wants that he does not regard the feelings of others.

God's plan to deal with stealing is called "restitution." In Israel, a person who stole was commanded to return four times as much as he took and, in some cases, seven times as much. This is a good deterrent to stealing. Solomon noted that,

"Men do not despise a thief, if he steal to satisfy his soul when he is hungry; But if he be found, he shall restore sevenfold; he shall give all the substance of his house." (Proverbs 6:30-31)

Historically, there have been nations which have punished thieves with the death penalty, or by cutting off their hands, as they still do in some Middle-East countries. This is contrary to God's perfect system of justice. In the Bible, God's laws mandate that the punishment fit the crime. Instead of cutting off the hands, God's wisdom is to make the person work with his hands and learn to give.

"Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth." (Ephesians 4:28)

Poverty does not cause crime. Crime is the result of sin in the heart. People who steal have an attitude that the world owes

them a living. Very often, those who were given things in life which they did not have to earn have developed this selfish and lazy mentality. The wisest approach is to make them work with their hands, so they will learn the value of money, and

then teach them to give to others in need. They may learn that the joy of giving and the fulfillment of hard work is far better than the sin of stealing.

What Does It Mean to "Bear False Witness" Against a Neighbor?

This is a commandment against lying, particularly when we pass judgment on another person without knowing the facts.

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." (Exodus 20:16)

The initial intent of this law is to deter perjury, or the use of deliberate false statements as a witness against a person being tried in a court of law. Even honest witnesses to a crime often see only a part of the picture and can have a distorted view. So, at least two witnesses are needed to convict a guilty person in most situations. Queen Jezebel instructed people to bear false witness against Naboth so that King Ahab could execute him and take over his property. (1 Kings 21) When Jesus was tried, there were many people who falsely accused Him.

It is a serious thing to damage the reputation of a man, and to be a false witness makes the speaker guilty of causing the suffering and damage which can result from a judgment based on a distortion of the facts. *"A false witness shall not be unpunished,...."* (Proverbs 19:5)

The Bible is particularly strong in admonishing Christians to speak honestly both about and to each other. In fact, we are to *"speak not evil one of another, brethren."* (James 4:11) Here, the word "evil" means negative. We should not

speaking in a way that will damage the reputation of another believer. We need to realize that Christians are on the same team and must be honest with each other. (Ephesians 4:25)

In the broader application, we recognize the evil of any form of deception. Lying is the sin of deliberate deception -- seeking to cause someone to believe something that is not true in order to benefit self in some way. It is a normal part of the sin nature to lie. Satan is a liar, and is called the "father of lies." (John 8:44) His kingdom is a kingdom of darkness and thrives only by deception. The "big lie" of the devil is the idea that, if we do not submit to God's authority, we can be free to do what we want; and, that freedom is the right to do whatever we want. He does not tell us that, when we reject God's authority, we come under the dominion and bondage of slavery. (1 Samuel 15:23)

Sin is based on deception. It is only through deception that Satan can convince people to reject a perfect, loving God and come under Satan's sphere of control in the bondage and hopelessness of sin. (2 Corinthians 4:4)

A lie is not simply making an untrue statement. An honest person may make a statement which is not accurate, but he has

no intention to deceive. He thinks it is correct. On the other hand, you may make a technically accurate statement in a way that will lead the listener to a wrong conclusion. That is lying -- deliberate deception. For instance, if mom says, "Billy, did you wash your hands?" Billy may reply, "Yes ma'am," and under his breath, mutter to himself, "a week ago

Tuesday." He did wash his hands; but, he also knows that the question was made to see whether he had just accomplished that task. He allowed mom to believe something that was not true. He lied. "*He that speaketh lies shall not escape.*" (Proverbs 19:5)

Why Is It a Sin to Covet?

To have an attitude of covetousness demonstrates a temporal values system, an ungrateful spirit, and a lack of love.

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, or anything that is thy neighbor's." (Exodus 20:17)

It is interesting to notice that, while most of the commandments deal with restraints on our actions, this one deals strictly with the attitude of the heart. People perpetrate many wrongs on one another as a result of this particular character weakness. So, it is very important. Solomon wisely said to guard your heart -- the center of your affections -- carefully, for what you do in life will be directed by what is in your heart. (Proverbs 4:23 paraphrased)

Envy is a similar emotion that comes from a focus on other people. It involves resentment against God or people because we are not what they are.

Jealousy is the fear of being replaced in the affections of others.

Covetousness is a selfish concentration on the possessions of other people. It shows that we have a temporal values system -- a short-sighted way of placing undue emphasis and affection on the things that at best can be ours only

temporarily -- while we neglect the more important and eternal things of the spirit. The Bible tells us to choose to focus on the things of higher and eternal value, such as godly character, wisdom, and good works. We can actually control what we will love.

"Set your affections on things above" -- higher things -- "not on things on the earth." (Colossians 3:2)

A covetous person has his affections set on things. That is not wisdom.

Covetousness also shows an ungrateful spirit. "After all, God should have given that to me instead of lavishing everything on my neighbor." Ahab was a millionaire king with vast power and many servants, but he coveted Naboth's vineyard. He was miserable in his palace.

Covetousness also is the result of a lack of love. When we love with God's *agape* love, we focus on the needs of others. We delight to see our brother blessed, even when he seems to have more than we have. Love causes us to give. Sin causes us to covet, because the center of our affection and attention is self.

The Apostle Paul wrote an encouraging letter while shivering in a dark, rat-infested prison, saying cheerfully,

*"I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content."
(Philippians 4:11)*

Contentment is the opposite of covetousness and has nothing to do with the amount of wealth we possess. It is a character quality and is not the result of acquiring things. When you learn contentment, you may not get what you want, but you will want what you get.

Contentment is stimulated by praising the Lord. Contentment says, "I know God has provided all I need."

"Having food and raiment let us be therewith content. But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare and into many foolish and hurtful lusts...." (1 Timothy 6:8-9)

Section 8

Lessons

Drawn from the Waters

Volume 4

Lesson 1



Bible References

Genesis 6:17-18

Genesis 8:1-2

Genesis 15:1, 12-19

Exodus 1:8-10, 17-22

Exodus 2:1-10

2 Chronicles 7:14

2 Corinthians 5:19



Scripture Reading

Exodus 2:5-10

5 *"And the daughter of Pharaoh came down to wash {herself} at the river; and her maidens walked along by the river's side; and when she saw the ark among the flags, she sent her maid to fetch it.*

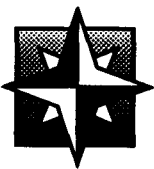
6 *"And when she had opened {it}, she saw the child: and, behold, the babe wept. And she had compassion on him, and said, This {is one} of the Hebrews' children.*

7 *"Then said his sister to Pharaoh's daughter, Shall I go and call to thee a nurse of the Hebrew women, that she may nurse the child for thee?*

8 *"And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother.*

9 *"And Pharaoh's daughter said unto her, Take this child away, and nurse it for me, and I will give {thee} thy wages. And the woman took the child, and nursed it.*

10 *"And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water."*



Theme

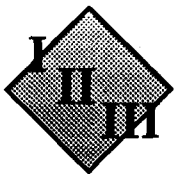
God has a plan and a call for each and every one of us. No matter what the circumstances, He is able to safely draw us from the fast-flowing river of life.



Memory Verse

1 Peter 5:7

"Casting all your care upon him; for He careth for you."



Outline

I. Though Adam Sinned and All of Mankind Fell From Grace, God Had a Plan.

- A. Grace is the presence and power of God.
- B. Adam sinned and was driven from the Garden of Eden.
- C. God had a plan to turn things around through future generations after Adam.
 - 1. God reached out to Noah with a covenant (Genesis 6:17-18) and pulled him from the waters. (Genesis 8:1-2)
 - 2. God reached out to Abraham to shield and protect him (Genesis 15:1), and made a covenant. (Genesis 15:12-18)
 - 3. Abraham, Isaac and Joseph were all held in God's plan, no matter what evil came against them. "...but God meant it for good..." (Genesis 50:20-21)

II. The Favor Joseph's Family Enjoyed in Egypt Was Lost. (Exodus 1:8-10)

- A. After Joseph had been dead for many years, a new Pharaoh came into power who did not remember Joseph.
- B. This Pharaoh feared the Jewish people because, since the time of Joseph, they had grown numerous and powerful.
- C. Pharaoh commanded the midwives, who assisted mothers in the birth of their babies, to kill all Jewish baby boys.
- D. The fear of the Lord -- reverence and holy awe toward the living God -- sustained the midwives who refused to kill these children. (Exodus 1:17-22)
- E. Baby Moses was hidden in a basket and placed in the Nile River among the reeds. (Exodus 2:3)
- F. Moses' sister watched over him from the shore.
- G. Moses' sister was not afraid to speak to Pharaoh's daughter when she discovered Moses in the river.

III. Drawn From the Waters.

- A. Moses' father and mother revered God more than man.
- B. God moved on the heart of Pharaoh's daughter to save Moses and provide for him.

IV. The Cries of the People Are Heard By God. (Exodus 2:23-25)

- A. The Jewish people cried out to the living God.

- B. God heard their groanings and remembered His covenants with them.
- C. God has promised that if His people will humble themselves, seek Him, pray, and turn from their wickedness, He will hear, forgive them, and heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)

V. God's Plan for You.

- A. No matter how fast circumstances and the "waters of life" are trying to carry you away, God can provide a way of escape.
1. God is not overcome by circumstances.
 2. God has the power and desire to reach out to you.
- B. No one who comes against you can stand against the hand and plan of God on your behalf.
1. Pharaoh could not stand against the Lord. Pharaoh had to let the people go.
 2. God is an awesome God -- a consuming fire.
- C. You are not standing alone.
1. Stand in faith, believing God for His plan for your life.
 2. God has promised to watch over us both today and tomorrow.



Spiritual Truths

- Oil spreads on water; The Israelites were called of God and the more the Egyptians oppressed the Jews, the more they spread and grew -- just as the early church in the book of Acts did.
- God has a way to accomplish His plan -- often a most surprising way.
- God heard the cries of His people and called Moses. We are not alone in our walk as a Christian. God will send help, assistance, leadership, deliverance, a friend, and His love.
- Though we only see glimpses of it, God has a blueprint for eternity and a specific plan for your life.
- Amidst all your confusion and care, turn to Jesus and tell Him everything on your heart. Cast all your care upon Him to carry.
- Though there are apostles and prophets, we are all called as ministers of reconciliation or friends for God. (2 Corinthians 5:19)
- Sometimes, just as Moses' mother, Jochebed, we must hope against all odds. "...and having done all, to stand." (Ephesians 6:13)



Lesson Material

In the fast-moving rivers of life, does anything matter? Does God care? Is He able to do anything about our situation? Moses was but one child out of tens of thousands in the land of Goshen, in Egypt, and he was born under the sentence of death. (Exodus 1:16,22) Joseph and his family had come to Egypt four hundred years previously and were warmly welcomed by the Pharaoh. (Genesis 15:13) But after four centuries, the Jews had grown mightily. (Exodus 1:16,22) The new King (Pharaoh) feared the strength of the Jews and set taskmasters over them, before they could become a mighty nation with armies of their own.

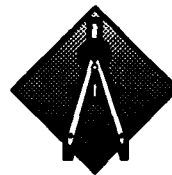
Enslaved, the Hebrews -- as they were known at this time -- toiled under the cruel hand of Egypt, knowing nothing but oppressive bondage. Pharaoh directed the midwives who assisted the Hebrew women at birth to kill all the Jewish male babies. Yet the awesomeness of a living God and His presence was still known to some of the Hebrews and midwives. Shiphrah and Puah did not do as the king commanded, *"but saved the men children alive."* (Exodus 1:17)

Amram and Jochebed's hope was not destroyed, for it was settled in the God of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Jochebed, Moses' mother, hid Moses from the time of his birth, to avoid the death sentence of the Egyptians. Eventually, however, there was nothing more she could do. Moses was growing too large to hide easily. Hoping against hope, she built a grass boat for Moses, and hid him among

the reeds in the Nile River, in the care of God's protection.

Moses was discovered by Pharaoh's daughter, who came to the river to bathe. Moses was "drawn from the waters" and became the deliverer of Israel, by the power of God. The cries and prayers of the Jewish people were heard by God, and He provided a plan: a man, and the power to release the whole nation from bondage.

This principle applies in our lives today. You can come to God, no matter what the circumstance you find yourself in, for He is not surprised or caught off guard. God has a way to deliver and keep all of His children safe. Drawn from the fast moving waters of life, God will keep you and establish you. Maybe you are praying for another person. You can trust the hand of God to reach out and save you, just as Jochebed trusted God to protect Moses. God is an awesome God. He is compassionate, caring, and able to pull you or your family from any of the raging waters of life.



Methods

Water plays a big part in all of our lives. Construct simple paper boats, using several different colors, and write your students' names on them. Have the class tell a simple story about their boat, or act out saving the "arks" from the river. Have the children tell one of their desires or hopes today.

Discuss how brave the midwives were to go against the death decree or how brave Moses' sister, Miriam, was to talk to

Pharaoh's daughter and actually suggest Miriam's own mother to be a nurse for Moses. Discuss how difficult it is to speak out against wrong or to take a stand as a Christian.

Emphasize a caring Father God who wants to direct and protect us as we live in this fast-moving world. In following lessons, you will have opportunity to develop the life and person of Moses.

The Burning Bush

Volume 4

Lesson 2



Bible References

Exodus 3:1-6, 11-14

Exodus 4:10

Exodus 5:1

Proverbs 9:10

2 Corinthians 3:18

Hebrews 12:18-19,29

Revelation 1:14-16



Scripture Reading

Exodus 3:1-6

1 *"Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, (even) to Horeb.*

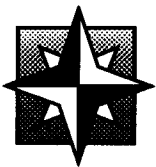
2 *"And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush {was} not consumed.*

3 *"And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.*

4 *"And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here {am} I.*

5 *"And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest {is} holy ground.*

6 *"Moreover he said, I {am} the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God."*



Theme

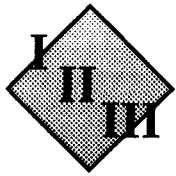
God speaks to us today, as He did in the past.



Memory Verse

Hebrews 12:29

"For our God is a consuming fire."



Outline

I. Moses As a Shepherd.

A. Moses fled Egypt.

1. Moses murdered an Egyptian man who was fighting with a Jewish man.
2. Moses thought he had not been seen, but he had been.
3. Moses fled for his life and moved into the desert.
4. God directed his steps.
5. Moses was married.

B. Moses spent 40 years as a shepherd away from Egypt.

1. Moses was content to dwell in Midian. (Exodus 2:21)
2. At the right time, God called Moses to deliver the Jewish people from Egypt.

II. The Burning Bush.

A. Moses was doing his job of tending sheep. (Exodus 3:1-6)

1. Moses led the flock to Mount Horeb, in order for the sheep to graze.
2. Mount Horeb was actually the mount of God.
3. As Moses approached a bush on Mount Horeb, the bush appeared to be burning.
4. Moses was amazed, because though the bush was in flames, it was not being burned up.
5. God told Moses of His plan to use Moses to deliver the Jewish people from Egypt.

B. The presence of God is a holy presence.

1. God is our friend and very comfortable to be with.
2. However, we are to reverence God, as Moses was commanded to do. (Exodus 3:5)
3. As awesome as it is to imagine, Moses carried on a conversation with God.

III. Moses Said, "...Who Am I?..." (Exodus 3:11)

A. Moses felt insufficient.

1. Moses told God that he had a speech problem. (Exodus 4:10)
2. Moses had been rejected forty years earlier by his own people.
3. Moses was "just a shepherd" now.

B. Our strength and sufficiency is in God.

IV. God Said, "...I AM THAT I AM..." (Exodus 3:14)

A. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

1. God is faithful to back up His promises.

2. He is the covenant-keeping God.

B. God is the eternal, self-existent One.



Spiritual Truths

- God has much glory, and He deserves our reverence. (Revelation 1:14-16)
- Fire burns wood, hay and stubble; but it cleans and hardens metals.
- The fear of the Lord -- a holy reverence -- is the beginning of wisdom. (Proverbs 9:10)
- God's power is great enough to rescue His followers or destroy His foes.
- We may feel inferior, but God can use us to do mighty things.



Lesson Material

Our God is an awesome God -- a Flame of Fire. Yet, He spoke to Moses, and He speaks to us today. Moses fled Egypt, the Pharaoh, and his homeland after murdering an Egyptian. Confused because the Jewish people did not understand that he was trying to help them, Moses went into hiding in the land of Midian. Moses lived on the backside of the desert for 40 years, working as a simple shepherd, while God the Father developed character and patience in him.

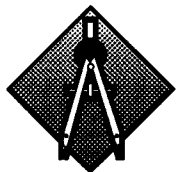
The character of a man or a woman, a boy or a girl, is always developed through a time of training. How can patience, one character trait, be developed overnight? Moses, who would lead thousands of Israelite people -- his people -- first led sheep. Often, Moses' love and care for his flock was developed and tested as he looked for food and water on the edge of a desert. For forty years, God carefully crafted into Moses the many strengths of character Moses would need to tell Pharaoh, "...Let my people go...." (Exodus 5:1)

One day, Moses saw a burning bush -- perhaps a common sight in the heart of the desert -- yet, this one was not consumed. Are we like the burning bush when we receive Jesus in our heart? Simple humans -- yet, the glory of the living God burns within us without consuming us. Many friends, schoolmates, and neighbors will see this fire within us that burns, yet does not go out. That ongoing, lifelong relationship and communion with a living God will allow our hearts and life to burn bright, in order to lead others to Christ and out of a life of darkness.

Moses turned aside to see this bush that was not burned up, and found God. The presence of the Lord is both awesome and comforting. How is it that the Great God of the Universe will take time to talk with me? But it is true. Cast down the fear in your heart and behold Him. Face to face, by the Spirit, we are changed into His image, from glory to glory. (2 Corinthians 3:18) How blessed, to be able to actually hold a conversation with God!

Moses felt insufficient. "Who am I, Lord...oh, but Lord, I speak slowly; how can I speak?" Moses began to make excuses why he could not go. God assured Moses that He would go with Moses. God also

used Moses' brother Aaron as Moses' spokesperson, when Moses confronted Pharaoh. We find our strength in God. Over and over as we patiently allow God to work His will and character in us, we will discover His strength. God's strength within us allows us to burn brightly for Christ and the Gospel.



Methods

Discussion

Discuss how one would approach the President of the United States, a great leader, or a King.

Discuss why Moses was instructed to remove his shoes before the Lord at Mount Horeb.

Discuss how fire can be both beneficial and destructive to man.

Discuss how God has planned our lives with times of training, times of waiting, and times of working.

Drama

Dramatize with your students Moses at the burning bush when God called him.

Teaching Emphasis

Teach three or four of the names of God as revealed by Him throughout the Old Testament. Emphasize how these names reveal God's character and personality. Several of God's names and their meanings:

Jehovah Tsidkenu -- Jehovah our righteousness;

Jehovah M'Kaddesh -- Jehovah who sanctifies;

Jehovah Shalom -- Jehovah is peace;

Jehovah Shammah -- Jehovah is there;

Jehovah Rophe -- Jehovah heals;

Jehovah Jireh -- Jehovah's provision shall be seen;

Jehovah Nissi -- Jehovah my banner;

Jehovah Rohi -- Jehovah my shepherd.

Ten Plagues and a Cow

Volume 4

Lesson 3



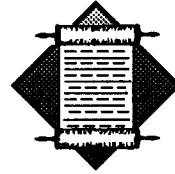
Bible References

Exodus 3:14

Exodus 4:3,6,19-23

Exodus 32:23

Luke 4:8



Scripture Reading

Exodus 4:19-23

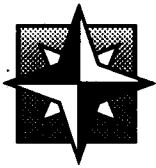
19 *"And the LORD said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life.*

20 *"And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand.*

21 *"And the LORD said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go.*

22 *"And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the LORD, Israel (is) my son, (even) my firstborn:*

23 *"And I say unto thee, Let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, (even) thy firstborn."*



Theme

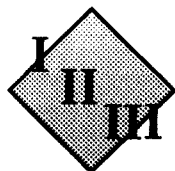
God deals with the idols of Egypt and Israel.



Memory Verse

Luke 4:8

"And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve."



Outline

I. Moses on the Mountain with God.

- A. Moses asked for a sign from God as authority to go before the Egyptians and the Jewish people.
 1. Moses' rod was turned into a snake and back into a rod. (Exodus 4:3-4)
 2. Moses' white hand. (Exodus 4:6-7)
- B. Moses told God that he had a speech impediment and could not go before Pharaoh.
- C. God told Moses that his brother Aaron would speak on Moses' behalf.

II. The Pharaoh Did Not Listen to Moses and Aaron, and Increased the Work Load of the Hebrew Slaves.

- A. Moses told Pharaoh, "...Let my people go..." (Exodus 5:1)
 1. Pharaoh said, "Who is this LORD that I should obey His voice?..." (Exodus 5:2)
 2. Pharaoh refused to let the Jewish people go.
- B. Many difficult times were experienced by the Egyptians before Pharaoh finally freed the Jewish people.
 1. God sent ten plagues on Egypt as a representation against their ten principle gods.
 2. God parted the Red Sea, in order for the Israeli people to escape.

III. The Golden Calf.

- A. The Jewish people doubted that Moses would return. (Exodus 32:23)
 1. Aaron had them make a golden calf to worship.
 2. It is amazing that after all the signs the Jews had seen, they still turned away from God.
- B. God is a forgiving God.

IV. God Said, "I AM THAT I AM." (Exodus 3:14)

- A. The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.
1. God is faithful to back up His promises.
 2. He is the covenant-keeping God.
- B. God is the Almighty Creator of the universe.



Spiritual Truths

- An idol is anything in our lives which consistently takes the place of God, belittles God, or pushes Him to the side.
- God has not hidden Himself from mankind, but has showed Himself through signs and wonders.
- Even though Aaron sinned by building the golden calf, God forgave him and used him to help Moses lead Israel.
- Signs and wonders still occur today, confirming the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- To have a consistent relationship with God, we must walk and live by faith.
- Each person and nation will someday stand before God for judgment. We must be ready for this day.



Lesson Material

Signs and wonders, frogs and rivers of blood were in store for Pharaoh and the Egyptians. Moses had known all this when God sent him to tell Pharaoh, "...Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness..." (Exodus 5:1) While on the mountain with God, Moses asked for the sign of authority that he would be speaking on behalf of the living God. The rod of God, a simple shepherd's staff, reminds us of how God will use as tools the simple things we are familiar with in our lives. Your gifting and calling as a child of God are very specific and unique to the person you are. If you must part "Red Seas" for God and His church, then He will be there with you. But more often, God only asks us to open wide our arms to love and accept someone as Jesus would. Will God call one of us to turn the world's oceans red as blood? More than likely, He will not. But if He does, then God will empower you to do what He tells you to do. More practically, we can be aware that each day, we can put color in a neighbor's smile by pressing beyond their confusion, misunderstanding, or name-calling, and extending a hand of friendship or assistance to them. God reserves awesome signs for terrible times, and uses simple signs for most of the time.

Moses had to go beyond his fear, and return to the homeland from which he had fled. His love of God's people, and the call of God on his life, must have strengthened him before Pharaoh. But, unbelievably, Moses would have to go back ten more times, before Pharaoh would free the Jewish people. If God revealed all of what His plan for our lives

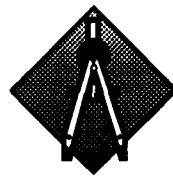
is, we would be overwhelmed, because we would concentrate on the obstacles. To know too much of the task allows unbelief to overwhelm you, as though the responsibility is all your own. Our walk in this world as a child of God will be a walk *with* God. We are strengthened day by day by God the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit by our side. God will reveal enough of His plan to us for us to get started, and give us more of His plan as we need it.

The Jews had not yet developed a relationship with God. They were not firmly grounded in their spiritual lives, so they sinned a terrible sin by doubting the return of Moses and molding a golden calf to worship. God and Moses would judge the people, cutting out the sin; but they would also forgive. Moses must have truly loved the people he led, to ask God to turn His wrath aside and forgive them. What mercy the Father must have had -- to once again forgive, and pour His love and grace upon the "wound" of their sin.

"I AM THAT I AM..." (Exodus 3:14)
Our God is faithful, loving, powerful. Our Heavenly Father sent Jesus, Who had the heart of a shepherd, to go before His people, ultimately laying down His life for them and for us, as well.

We may have "Pharaohs" in our lives -- in school, the work place, or at home.

However, our covenant-keeping God will make provision, so that His people will be free to love and worship Him. We need to know God is in control of the "Pharaohs" that are in our lives. Our trust must remain firmly in the Lord. Then, whatever we face in life, we will know that we are being watched over and cared for.



Methods

Take photographs or models of old idols to class. Discuss what these idols represent and what could be an idol in our lives.

Discuss ways to examine ourselves to prevent goals, possessions, friends, hobbies and so forth from becoming idols.

Dress up as Moses with the rod. Dramatize throwing the rod to the ground, and what Moses' reaction may have been when the rod turned into a serpent. (Exodus 4:2-3)

Passover

Volume 4

Lesson 4



Bible References

Exodus 11:4-7

Exodus 12:5-12

John 1:29

Hebrews 9:12-14

1 Corinthians 11:23-32

4 *"And Moses said, Thus saith the LORD, About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt:*

5 *"And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sitteth upon his throne, even unto the firstborn of the maidservant that (is) behind the mill; and all the firstborn of beasts.*

6 *"And there shall be a great cry throughout all the land of Egypt, such as there was none like it, nor shall be like it any more.*

7 *"But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know how that the LORD doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel."*

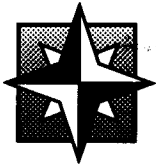
Exodus 12:5-12

5 *"Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take (it) out from the sheep, or from the goats:*

6 *"And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.*

7 *"And they shall take of the blood, and strike (it) on the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses, wherein they shall eat it.*

8 *"And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened*



Theme

Those who had the blood of a lamb on their doorposts were protected.



Scripture Reading

Exodus 11:4-7

bread; {and} with bitter {herbs} they shall eat it.

9 "Eat not of it raw, nor sodden at all with water, but roast {with} fire; his head with his legs, and with the purtenance thereof.

10 "And ye shall let nothing of it remain until the morning; and that which remaineth of it until the morning ye shall burn with fire.

11 "And thus shall ye eat it; {with} your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it {is} the LORD'S passover.

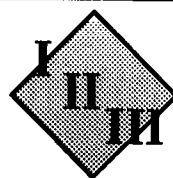
12 "For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I {am} the LORD."



Memory Verse

John 1:29

"...Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."



Outline

I. Pharaoh Finally Allows the Jews to Leave Egypt.

A. God brings one last plague on Egypt.

1. God changes Pharaoh's mind, to allow the Jewish people to be freed. (Exodus 11:1)
2. At midnight, all of the firstborn of man and beast were to die. (Exodus 11:4)

B. God commanded the Hebrews to collect jewelry from the Egyptians.

1. The Jews were collecting their wages kept from them during the 300 years they were in slavery. (Exodus 11:2)
2. God moved on the Egyptian's hearts to give to His people.
3. God asked for the gold they collected, to test and strengthen the Jewish people's faith.

II. The Passover Lamb.

A. The Passover was so important to the Israeli people, that they established Passover during the first month of their calendar. (Exodus 12:2,14)

B. The animals selected for the Passover were to be year-old male lambs, without defect. (Exodus 12:5)

1. The people ate the Passover meal with their coats tied, shoes on their feet, and walking staffs in their hands. (Exodus 12:11)

2. The Jewish people were instructed to eat the Passover meal in haste. (Exodus 12:11)

III. The Passover Blood.

- A. *"And they shall take of the blood, and strike it on the two side posts and on the upper doorpost of the houses...."* (Exodus 12:7)
1. When the angel of death saw the blood on the doorposts, it passed over those houses. (Exodus 12:13)
 2. The houses without blood on the doorposts were visited by the angel of death, who smote all the firstborn males in the household.
- B. God executed judgment to *"...smite all the first born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt...."* (Exodus 12:12)

IV. Communion and the Cross Represent Jesus As the True Lamb of God.

- A. Jesus gave His body and blood for our sin.
- B. Jesus' death on the cross was the ultimate sacrifice.
- C. When God sees the blood of Jesus covering us, we are "passed over" and are saved.



Spiritual Truths

- Jesus is the Lord of lords, and has both the power and right to execute judgment.
- Jesus, as the Lamb of God, shed His blood, that we might be saved. We must allow His blood to cover our lives and our homes.
- Communion represents the body and blood of Jesus, just as the sacrificial lamb and the blood on the doorpost did.
- Unleavened bread represents our lives without corruption or sin.
- Angels are mighty warriors for the children of God -- more powerful than our greatest armies.
- Significant spiritual events in our lives are important to remember.



Lesson Material

"...About midnight will I go out into the midst of Egypt: And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die...." (Exodus 11:4-5)

How terrible will be the final judgment of God upon mankind! Jesus even said, "Fear not." What can take your life away, but fear? God alone has the power to sentence a man to hell forever. By faith we

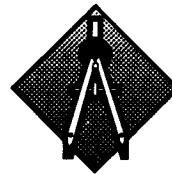
receive the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus as payment for our sins and the Holy Spirit is given as a down payment, anointing the doorpost of our hearts. Satan must pass by our door when he sees the blood of Christ and the Holy Spirit standing alongside and over our lives.

"...And ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S Passover." (Exodus 12:11) With staff in hand and sandals on, in haste, the people ate the Passover lamb. In our lives, we are to be ever ready to step out on behalf of Jesus to share His Gospel, His truth and His love. Will there be much for you to do, or great distances for you to travel? God will provide. The Hebrew people collected gold and jewelry from the Egyptians -- back wages for the 300 years the Jews were held as slaves. The same is true today. Many have labored for the cross of Christ and His Gospel. Many have served their country and helped their neighbors, and without all the pay due them. Are you young, feeling as though the task before you could be too big? God will provide. Often, what we receive as blessing and provision in our lives comes from the seed which was sown by someone many years previously. We are all brothers and sisters in the Lord -- one family, all working for one family business. God will make sure we have the necessary moneys, direction, assistance, and supplies to carry out our mission.

"And the blood shall be to you for a token...." (Exodus 12:13) We now remember the body and blood of Jesus through communion. Now, it is a meal which brings peace and strength. Jesus is the ultimate Passover Lamb. John the Baptist recognized this when he proclaimed, *"...Behold, the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."*

(John 1:29) Jesus poured out His blood at the cross, and now covers our sin with His blood. God the Father looks at us through the blood of Jesus; and, therefore, He does not see our sin. In God's eyes, it is as if we had never sinned! Communion is a time of reflection on our standing with God. Communion is a time to look forward to His return and to receive His strength and assurance.

This lesson naturally leads into a tremendous opportunity to present the plan of salvation to anyone who may not have yet received the Lord. Plan time toward the end of class to give an appeal to receive the Lord -- who is our ultimate Passover Lamb.



Methods

Describe and discuss the Passover meal the Israelites ate and how they were dressed for this meal.

Dramatize eating the Passover meal hurriedly, dressed in such a way as to leave at a moment's notice.

As a class, partake in communion together.

Hold a time of prayer in which the children pray for protection over their homes.

Symbolically anoint the doorpost of the classroom. Explain what this did for the Jews during the Passover, and how it relates to us today.

Living Water

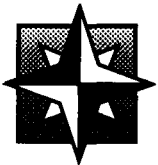
Volume 4

Lesson 5



Bible References

Exodus 17:1-7
Jeremiah 2:13
Zechariah 13:1-2
Malachi 3:8-14
1 Corinthians 10:1-4



Theme

Jesus, the Living Water.



Scripture Reading

Exodus 17:1-7

1 *"And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the*

commandment of the LORD, and pitched in Rephidim: and {there was} no water for the people to drink.

2 *"Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the LORD?*

3 *"And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore {is} this {that} thou hast brought us up out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?*

4 *"And Moses cried unto the LORD, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.*

5 *"And the LORD said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.*

6 *"Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.*

7 *"And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the LORD, saying, Is the LORD among us, or not?"*

1 Corinthians 10:1-4

1 *"Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;*

2 *"And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;*

3 *"And did all eat the same spiritual meat;*

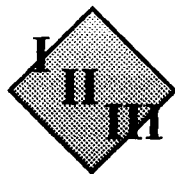
4 *"And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."*



Memory Verse

John 4:14

"...But the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life."



Outline

I. The People Murmur for Water At Rephidim.

A. Moses asked the people in the wilderness why they tempted the Lord. (Exodus 17:2)

1. The Hebrew people should have known God would provide for them.
 - a. God had miraculously enabled them to escape from Egypt.
 - b. God had provided for their every need up to this time.
 - c. God had promised them He would take them to a beautiful land of their own.
2. God had never failed them.

B. Because of their lack of faith, the people looked back toward Egypt, and not forward to the promised land.

1. When times became difficult, the Jewish people forgot about God's promise.
2. The Jews wanted to go back to the oppressive slavery of Egypt.

II. God Instructed Moses and the Elders of Israel to Stand before Him upon the Rock in Horeb. (Exodus 17:5)

A. Moses struck the rock and water came out, that the people might drink.

B. They called the place "Massah and Meribah."

1. "Massah" means "testing."
2. "Meribah" means "quarreling."
3. They were so named, due to the chiding and murmuring of the children of Israel.
4. The Israelites tempted (insulted) the Lord God saying, *"...Is the LORD among us, or not?"* (Exodus 17:7)

III. Jesus Is the Rock, the Source of Living Water. (1 Corinthians 10:4)

A. The world's ways are polluted, and never satisfy.

1. Sin is appealing at first, but makes one feel horrible afterwards.
2. Example: drinking and a hangover; the high of drugs versus the eventual bondage.

B. The ways of Jesus always satisfy, and wash us clean in the process.

1. One never regrets the fun God allows us to have as believers.
2. Proverbs 10:22.

- In the driest desert of your life, God can make living water flow.



Lesson Material

Have you ever found yourself complaining, below your breath -- murmuring to yourself about a situation or an unexpected outcome? Stop that! Cast down those imaginations and negative thoughts. God does not ask us to go about in a dream world of denial to the realities in our lives, but He does ask us to be strong and have some backbone. We must be honest in expressing our real concerns, and understanding in the many little upsets in life.

We have a phrase for "murmuring" -- "bad mouthing." Nothing we seem to do is ever good enough. How encouraging it is to be with someone who helps you to "look on the sunny side" of life. In Malachi, chapter 3, God speaks of two things to which we must pay attention:

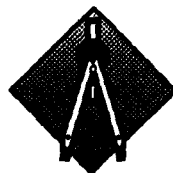
The first, we hear of often: the tithe. (Malachi 3:8-12) It is important to give back to God, so He can return blessings into our lives. But, it is the second point in Malachi 3 that hurts God -- speaking negatively of Him. (Malachi 3:13-14) Some people believe that things go badly for those who trust in the Lord, and things always seem to work well for those who do not walk with the Lord. Do not look back on the old life and "Egypt," because if you look back you will stumble and fall. Rather, look with faith to today, and the presence of the Lord will accompany you.



Spiritual Truths

- Salvation washes the sin out of our lives, and repentance keeps us clean.
- Only Jesus satisfies the emptiness in our hearts. Drugs, alcohol, material possessions, and so forth can never replace the clean flowing river of God.
- We must trust that even though we cannot see God, He is always with us and will always love us.
- Moses had the strength of character to endure all the complaining and unbelief of those whom he led.
- We must exhibit strength of character and patience when people make fun of us for believing in God and His Son, Jesus Christ.

"...And that Rock was Christ." (1 Corinthians 10:4) God always gives the best water -- living water -- poured forth from the hardness of life. Jesus, as a Shepherd, cared for His flock in the wilderness. He will care for you today. Sin, anger, drinking, drugs, and the like will all bring rust and dryness into our lives and into our hearts. What one needs is living water, which has the power to wash away the filth and satisfy the heart. Only Jesus can really satisfy. You will never regret the "high" you receive from drinking deeply at the Rock of our Salvation.



Methods

Bring a clear pitcher to class and fill it with clean water. Add dirt to the water. As the water gets dirty, discuss how devastating pollution of the soul can be.

Ask your students how many of them have friends or those they know of in school, who have experimented with drinking or drugs.

Dress someone as Moses with his rod, and enact Moses striking the rock from which poured water.

Good Advice

Volume 4

Lesson 6



Bible References

Exodus 18:1-27

Ephesians 4:12

Philippians 1:9

14 *"And when Moses' father in law saw all that he did to the people, he said, What {is} this thing that thou doest to the people? why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee from morning unto even?"*

15 *"And Moses said unto his father in law, Because the people come unto me to inquire of God:*

16 *"When they have a matter, they come unto me; and I judge between one and another, and I do make {them} know the statutes of God, and his laws.*

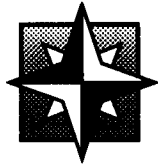
17 *"And Moses' father in law said unto him, The thing that thou doest {is} not good.*

18 *"Thou wilt surely wear away, both thou, and this people that {is} with thee: for this thing {is} too heavy for thee; thou art not able to perform it thyself alone.*

19 *"Hearken now unto my voice, I will give thee counsel, and God shall be with thee: Be thou for the people to God-ward, that thou mayest bring the causes unto God:*

20 *"And thou shalt teach them ordinances and laws, and shalt show them the way wherein they must walk, and the work that they must do.*

21 *"Moreover thou shalt provide out of all the people able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and place {such} over them, {to be} rulers of*



Theme

Consider the advice and experience of your elders.



Scripture Reading

Exodus 18:13-27

13 *"And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses sat to judge the people: and the people stood by Moses from the morning unto the evening.*

thousands, (and) rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens:

22 "And let them judge the people at all seasons: and it shall be, (that) every great matter they shall bring unto thee, but every small matter they shall judge: so shall it be easier for thyself, and they shall bear (the burden) with thee.

23 "If thou shalt do this thing, and God command thee (so), then thou shalt be able to endure, and all this people shall also go to their place in peace.

24 "So Moses hearkened to the voice of his father in law, and did all that he had said.

25 "And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.

26 "And they judged the people at all seasons: the hard causes they brought unto Moses, but every small matter they judged themselves.

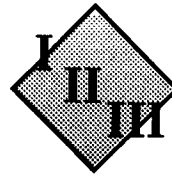
27 "And Moses let his father in law depart; and he went his way into his own land."



Memory Verse

Philippians 1:9

"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment."



Outline

I. Jethro, the Priest of Midian, Moses' Father-In-Law. (Exodus 18:1)

- A. Jethro heard of all that God had done for Moses and Israel.
- B. Jethro returned Moses' wife, Zipporah, and Moses' two sons to him.
- C. Jethro met Moses in the wilderness at Mt. Horeb, the mountain of God. (Exodus 18:5)
- D. Moses honored his father-in-law.
- E. Moses told his father-in-law all the Lord had done to deliver Israel from Pharaoh. (Exodus 18:8)
- F. Jethro, the priest, rejoiced and blessed the Lord for all He had done to deliver Israel from the Egyptians. (Exodus 18:9-12)

II. Jethro Observed Moses.

- A. Moses spent from morning until evening each day judging and counseling the Jewish people.
- B. Jethro told Moses, "...The thing that thou doest is not good. Thou wilt surely wear away...." (Exodus 18:17-18)
- C. Jethro told Moses to listen to the advice Jethro would give him.

III. Jethro's Counsel.

- A. Moses was to instruct all the people:
1. In the laws and ordinances of God. (Exodus 18:20)
 2. To show them the way to walk and the work to do. (Exodus 18:20; Ephesians 4:12)
- B. Place men with the following qualities in positions of leadership under Moses: (Exodus 18:21)
1. Able;
 2. Must fear and reverence God;
 3. Must be truthful and honest;
 4. Must hate covetousness.
- C. God is a God of order.
1. The leaders under Moses were divided to counsel and judge over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens of people.
 2. The military chain of command and rank is a modern example.

IV. Moses Listened to the Counsel of Jethro. (Exodus 18:24)

- A. Moses chose able men out of all of Israel.
- B. These men judged the people at all times.
1. The difficult cases they took to Moses.
 2. The simple cases these men judged for themselves.



Spiritual Truths

- God is a God of order. We cannot do everything by ourselves. We need others to assist us.
- Leadership is a gift from God which can be exercised and developed.
- Our elders have insight and wisdom, which can help us in the situations we face.
- Pride will always hinder you or cause you to stumble.



Lesson Material

Moses was fortunate to have a good family -- his wife, Zipporah, his two sons, and his father-in-law, Jethro. While Moses had been in Egypt telling Pharaoh to let the children of Israel go, he had been separated from his family. He must have been very glad to see them again. Jethro and the family met Moses in the wilderness at Mt. Horeb, the mountain of God. Moses treated his father-in-law with respect and honor, and enjoyed telling him all about the great things the Lord had done to deliver Israel from the Egyptians. Jethro showed that he loved Moses by rejoicing with him -- being glad that so many good things had happened to Moses.

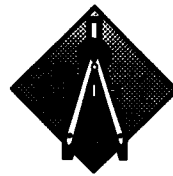
Jethro stayed and visited with Moses for some time. He spent the day watching what Moses did and became very concerned about him. Moses was wearing himself out! Moses was responsible to lead millions of people, and he was trying to personally solve each one of their problems. It was a good thing that Moses cared so much about the people; but it was not good for Moses to exhaust himself trying to take care of the needs of so many people. Jethro saw what Moses needed to do to make the situation better, and Jethro offered Moses advice.

First, Jethro advised Moses to teach all of the people about the Lord and how God wanted them to live and work. Then the people could determine a solution to many of their problems by themselves. Sunday School is a lot like that in our lives. We are fortunate to have a place where we can learn about God and His ways. When problems arise, often we will already know what to do because of what we have learned concerning the Lord and His statutes.

Some problems do require intervention and wisdom from others who are more mature. The Jews would have some situations arise, which they could not sort through themselves. Jethro advised Moses to set up leaders over the people to rule over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. He told Moses to find leaders with special character qualities: intelligence, reverence for God, truthfulness, and contentedness. It was comparable to an army of leaders with privates, lieutenants, colonels, and generals. They were to handle most of the peoples' problems and take only the most difficult cases to Moses. Moses would then not become exhausted, and the people would have their problems solved much more quickly.

Moses was wise, because he took his father-in-law's advice. Moses was not too proud or too stubborn to listen. He was glad to receive the advice, because it improved his life and attitude. We, too, are wise when we ask for and follow advice from our families or an older person in our church.

Jethro is an example of how good it is to have an older person in your life who has much wisdom and experience. Sometimes it is possible to do a good thing, but to do it the wrong way. It is good to have someone around who cares about us and can share a better way to get the job done. These wise and loving people in our lives are very special gifts from God!



Methods

Play a game of "follow the leader" over a number of obstacles.

Have one of the adult leaders sit in a chair. Ask one of the students to try to lift the chair by himself. Then have all the students gather around and lift the chair together.

Discuss the qualities of a good leader.

Dramatize a military combat situation and demonstrate the importance of wisdom, good leadership, proper judgment, obedience to instructions, and willingness to immediately act upon these instructions.

Discuss the importance of immediately acting upon instructions.

The Ten Commandments

Volume 4

Lesson 7



Bible References

Exodus 19:3-9

Exodus 20:3-17

Psalms 19:7

Matthew 5:21-22

Matthew 22:35-40

Luke 6:34-35

John 3:17

John 16:8

Romans 13:10

2 Corinthians 3:6

2 Corinthians 7:9

Galatians 3:24

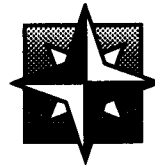
Philippians 2:13

Hebrews 13:5

1 John 3:4

1 John 5:3

Revelation 12:10



Theme

God has revealed to mankind how to live and worship Him.



Scripture Reading

Exodus 19:3-9

3 "And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel;

4 "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and (how) I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

5 "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth (is) mine:

6 "And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These (are) the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.

7 "And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him.

8 "And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the LORD.

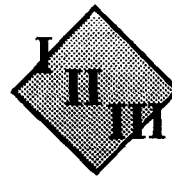
9 "And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever. And Moses told the words of the people unto the LORD."



Memory Verse

Psalms 19:7

"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple."



Outline

I. The Purpose of the Law.

- A. God gave the law because man was sinful and selfish.
 1. Sin makes us selfish and causes us to hurt others.
 2. Sin draws us away from God and keeps us from His presence.
 3. Sin blinds us to spiritual truths and corrupts our lifestyle.
- B. The law is the expression of the minimum standard of human behavior.
 1. The law is the guideline for ethics.
 2. The law is the basis for judging between people in disputes over rights.
- C. The law makes us aware that we are sinners.
 1. The law reveals to us that we need forgiveness and that we need God's grace in our lives.
 2. The law is a teacher which helps lead us to Christ. (Galatians 3:24)

II. The Letter of the Law.

- A. The Pharisees were a sect of Judaism whose based their lives on living by the law.
 1. The Pharisees believed that the purpose of life was obeying laws.

2. The Pharisees tried to make themselves acceptable to God by keeping the law.
3. The Pharisees tried to be spiritual through human effort.
4. This is called "legalism."

B. *"...The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."* (2 Corinthians 3:6)

1. A focus on laws and rules leads to condemnation.
2. The law reminds us of how sinful we are; and in turn, we feel hopeless.
3. Satan is called *"the accuser of our brethren...."* (Revelation 12:10)

III. The Spirit of the Law.

A. God shows us what life can and should be like when we walk in His grace.

B. Obedience to God results in further blessing and freedom.

1. It is only by God's grace that we can be righteous.
2. Jesus said that the heart of the law is to:
 - a. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind; (Matthew 22:37)
 - b. And, *"...love thy neighbor as thyself."* (Matthew 22:39)
3. Love is the basis for all of God's laws and commandments.
4. Sin is the opposite of love.
5. *"...Sin is the transgression of the law."* (1 John 3:4)

C. Grace is God's enabling power working through us.

1. *"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of {his} good pleasure."* (Philippians 2:13)

2. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught characteristics of God's Kingdom.

- a. The law says *"...Thou shalt not kill,..."* but Jesus taught not to even hate anyone. (Matthew 5:21-22)
- b. The law tells us not to steal, but Jesus taught to give to others. (Luke 6:34-35)

D. *"Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law."* (Romans 13:10)

IV. The Ten Commandments.

A. Given by God to Moses at Mt. Sinai:

1. After the children of Israel had crossed the Red Sea. The Red Sea is a type of the blood of Christ -- salvation.
2. When the people were in the wilderness.

B. Two stone tablets, written by God.

1. The first four commandments relate to worship:
 - a. Our relationship with God.
 - b. Vertical relationship.
2. The other six commandments relate to ethics:
 - a. Our relationship with other people.
 - b. They are summed up by the commandment to *"...love thy neighbour...."* (Matthew 22:39)

C. The Ten Commandments were not just religious ordinances of the Mosaic Covenant.

1. They were basic principles for life, and apply to all people.
2. All of the commandments were taught by Jesus Christ in the New

Testament, except the fourth commandment -- *"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy."* (Exodus 20:8)

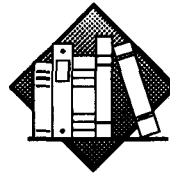
- a. Jesus is our "Sabbath rest."
- b. Jesus fulfilled the fourth commandment -- which is a type of Christ.

- Jesus is our Sabbath rest, because, to be saved, we must cease from our own striving under the law and receive God's grace for salvation.



Spiritual Truths

- Since man has a sin nature, man needs boundaries and guidelines for his behavior; therefore, God gave the Ten Commandments.
- The more we learn God's perfect law, the more we realize that we are sinners and are in need of a Savior.
- God's Word is perfect and is able to transform our thoughts and our attitudes toward life and living.
- God's grace enables us to walk in love. Love enables us to respond to others in a much greater capacity than if we based our lives on the law alone.
- In the New Testament, the Ten Commandments were condensed into two commandments: love the Lord your God, and love other people.
- All of the Commandments can be condensed down to one word: love.
- The Sabbath law was an important part of God's covenant with the children of Israel, but it was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. The observance of the seventh day rest is not a part of the Christian covenant.



Lesson Material

As Christians, we need to gain an understanding that God is the Lord. He is not like images of a Santa Claus, who lives up at the North Pole with a bunch of elves and comes around secretly once a year to give us things, and then whisks away into the night. God is God. He desires an intimate, personal relationship with all those who will seek His face. When we accept God, we do not make Him our servant or magic genie waiting to grant us three wishes. God is not looking for people who want to live life on their own terms and then include Him on occasion. God is seeking worshippers. God has a kingdom. In any kingdom, everyone and everything belongs to the king.

The most important thing in life is to realize that God is our Creator and our Lord. As believers, we are to seek and follow God's will for us. God is the Lord, and He gives commands. God did not give Moses the Ten Suggestions. They are commands. They are not voided by the fact that some people choose to ignore or violate them.

The Pharisees missed the mark, because they followed the letter of the law, but missed the spirit of the law. They were consumed with keeping, and even making, rules. The Pharisees actually became spiritually bound in their fleshly

efforts to appease God by being good. They simply did not understand the spirit of the law. The law is not God's way to make people miserable or to restrict them just for the sake of having restrictions. God is not trying to make life rough, but is showing man how to live a good life. The law, specifically the Ten Commandments, was an expression of good and right principles which should never be violated. Every time we violate a command of God, we do something which diminishes our potential in life and hurts people and relationships.

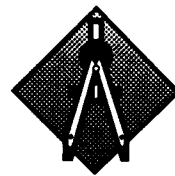
Satan's lie to Eve is the same one he uses today on anyone he can influence -- "God is holding out on you. He is withholding something good and delightful. Life will be better and richer if you do what you want." But this is still a lie. God is love, and nothing He tells us to do will diminish us as people. In fact, God's commands make life better and sweeter. *"...His commandments are not grievous."* (1 John 5:3) It never hurts to obey God. Disobedience to God always results in hurt and loss.

The "letter of the law" says, "you can not do this or that." The "spirit of the law" says, "Love the Lord your God, and treat other people well." When we see the spirit of the law, we see God's goodness and love. We respond to love with love, and learn that life is better when we place God and others before ourselves. The letter of the law brings condemnation, but the spirit of the law brings conviction, and leads to repentance.

Jesus did not come to earth to condemn people. (John 3:17) Condemnation is the sense that you are bad and hopeless. Condemnation focuses on what you did wrong, and leads to the conclusion that you are no good. But the Holy Spirit came

to *"...reprove the world of sin...."* (John 16:8) Conviction is the quickening of our conscience, whereby we realize our sinful condition. Our sin separates us from God. But conviction brings hope and not despair because real conviction brings us to repentance, and forgiveness. Paul said, *"Now I rejoice...that ye sorrowed to repentance."* (2 Corinthians 7:9)

Our society tends to focus on man and seeks to ask the question, "What do the people want?" But when we see that Jesus is Lord, we realize that the most important question is, "What does *God* want me to do?" The Ten Commandments are a good place to start. Let us look at ways we can please God and find some helpful ideas to live the most joyful and productive life we can while on earth.



Methods

Before beginning any study on the Ten Commandments, it is important to understand that God gives instructions in righteousness, not to make us feel oppressed, but to bless us and make us a blessing. He gives rules and ethical guidelines, because He knows how He designed us, and how we best operate. God gives the law to protect us, because He loves us.

We need to distinguish the difference between the laws of human conduct and the ordinances and religious statutes connected with the Mosaic covenant. Many of the ceremonial laws for Israel were types or symbols of the New Covenant, which was fulfilled in Jesus

Christ. He is our High Priest and our Sacrificial Lamb; and His blood covers and washes away our sins. We are the tabernacle, or dwelling place, of God. The offerings we offer are the sacrifices of praise and worship. (Hebrews 13:15)

Those ceremonies and ordinances which prefigured Christ have spiritual lessons for us today, but are not part of the New Covenant.

The Ten Commandments, however, still relate to us today. Other than the

Sabbath laws, which were fulfilled in Christ and yet also have a spiritual application, the Ten Commandments are basic laws which have both a practical and spiritual application. By God's grace, we can do much better than the minimum prescribed in the law; but the Ten Commandments are still valid guidelines in the study of ethics, and our inability to keep them perfectly shows us our need for a Savior.

No Other Gods

Volume 4

Lesson 8



Bible References

Exodus 20:1-6

Deuteronomy 6:5

Deuteronomy 11:1

2 Chronicles 16:1-7,12

Proverbs 16:6

Isaiah 42:8

Matthew 22:37

John 4:24

1 Corinthians 1:31

2 Timothy 3:4

Hebrews 11:6



Scripture Reading

Exodus 20:1-6

1 *"And God spake all these words, saying,*

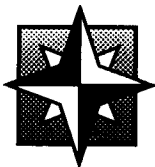
2 *"I {am} the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage.*

3 *"Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

4 *"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness {of any thing} that {is} in heaven above, or that {is} in the earth beneath, or that {is} in the water under the earth:*

5 *"Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God {am} a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth {generation} of them that hate me;*

6 *"And showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."*



Theme

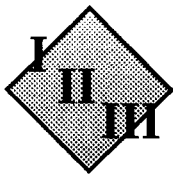
Nothing should come before our relationship with God.



Memory Verse

Exodus 20:3

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me."



Outline

I. The First Commandment.

- A. No other gods.
- B. God is Lord, and must be first in our lives:
 1. First in our affections;
 - a. New Testament interpretation: *"...Thou shalt love the Lord thy God..."* (Matthew 22:37)
 - b. Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy 6:5 and 11:1.
 - c. Deuteronomy is a recapitulation of the law.
 - d. The word "Deuteronomy" means "second law."
 2. First in our loyalty;
 - a. Isaiah 42:8.
 - b. We belong to God above all else.
 3. First in our faith;
 - a. *"Without faith, it is impossible to please him..."* (Hebrews 11:6)
 - b. King Asa trusted in foreign armies for his defense, instead of prayer. (2 Chronicles 16:1-7)

- c. He also went to the physicians with his sickness, and did not turn to God first. (2 Chronicles 16:12)
- 4. First in our delight.
 - a. *"...He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."* (1 Corinthians 1:31)
 - b. Nothing should give us more pleasure than does our relationship with the Lord.

II. What Is an Idol?

- A. Something that is worshipped in the place of God.
- B. Worship.
 1. To express love, devotion, and primary loyalty.
 2. To give yourself in adoration and honor.
- C. What can be an idol?
 1. Anything or anyone which comes before God in our affection, trust, or aspiration.
 2. Sports can be an idol, if we emphasize and delight in them more than God.
 3. Money can be an idol, if that is the primary motivation of our lives, or if we view money as our source of security.
 4. Pleasure can be an idol. (2 Timothy 3:4)
 5. An entertainer can be an idol.
 - a. Many music, television, or movie stars are even called "idols."
 - b. These are not just idle words.
 6. A possession can be an idol, if it is our greatest source of delight and pride.
 7. Any object or creature can be an idol.

8. Many heathen idols are representations of actual demonic spirits.

III. The Second Commandment.

A. No graven images.

1. Any statue or object which is designed to represent God, or a god.
2. In times before Christ, most heathen cultures worshipped graven images.
3. Many cultures still worship graven images.

B. The golden calf.

1. The golden calf was made by Aaron when the people lost faith in God.
2. People naturally find it easier to relate to an object which they can see and touch, rather than to a spiritual God, Who is unseen.
3. Worship of images is wrong, because people soon forget the spiritual and venerate the physical.

C. Transference of allegiance.

1. Today, many churches are filled with ornate statues, crucifixes, and physical symbols of Christianity.
2. People love to build shrines to relics.
3. Eventually, the image receives the attention of worship, and the spiritual aspects are neglected.
4. Physical symbols representing God can hinder our ability to worship God "*...in spirit and in truth.*" (John 4:24)

D. Relics and statues.

1. It is not necessarily wrong to have any sculpture or statue around, as

long as it is a decoration and does not have any spiritual significance placed upon it.

2. On the other hand, some images which come from heathen cultures may have been dedicated to the "gods" or demon spirits, and may have a harmful influence.
3. It may be best to remove such questionable objects.



Spiritual Truths

- God is the Supreme Ruler of the universe, and deserves to have first place in our lives.
- God is not at all like Santa Claus. God desires intimate and daily fellowship with His people, and does not exist just to give us possessions.
- The most important aspect of putting God first in our lives is the aspect of loving Him above everything else.
- God does not seek to be included in our lives, but to be the Lord of every aspect of our lives.
- People have a natural tendency to focus on the physical rather than the spiritual; and so, the second commandment is simply for our protection.
- We are not to seek to relate to symbols and images of God. That is vain religion. We are to seek God and know Him personally.

- Many “gods” in this world are actually demonic spirits pretending to be gods.
- Western cultures do not worship images and statues as much as other cultures. Western cultures worship other idols -- such as sports, entertainers, money, and pleasure.



Lesson Material

What is a god? The word “god” means “judge,” or the one who makes the final decision. What person or thing determines the basic direction of your life? Who or what receives the bulk of your time? Who or what influences your lifestyle the most? What do you delight in and trust in more than anything else? What is the basis of your life goals and your hope?

When we relate to the God of the Bible, we come to Him on His terms, and seek to do His will. The attraction to images and idols is that when you have another “god,” you tend to control the god. Basically, idols come from the heart of men who reject the true God. When you relate to God, you do so on His terms. God is good, and He is love; but God is the Lord, and has determined the guidelines by which we are to live. If the Lord God is your God, then He is your only God. God will not cohabit with other gods. He will not take second place.

Idols are attractive, because one can worship them the way he wants to. The purpose of the false god’s existence is based on the desires of the person who created it. In heathen cultures, it is common to see

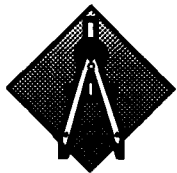
gods who are bloodthirsty, or sexually perverse, or greedy for money, because idols basically reflect the hearts of the people. It is believed that the Aztec and Mayan Indians of Central and South America eventually died out because of their religion. Their “gods” were apparently cruel gods who demanded thousands of human sacrifices. Finally, there was no one left to sacrifice.

Many of the gods mentioned in the Bible were gods of sexual perversion. The people worshipped them by indulging in their fleshly lusts. It should be noted that Israel had to exterminate some of the nations in Canaan, not just because the Israelites needed room, but because these peoples, such as the Amalekites, were full of deadly diseases. If the Amalekites would have been allowed to survive, they would have infected other nations.

The important aspect of this commandment is that which Jesus mentioned when people asked Him, “*Master, which is the great commandment in the law?*” (Matthew 22:36) Jesus did not answer, “Well, they are all important.” He knew immediately what to say. The most important law is that we are commanded to love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. Love is the great law, because relationship is the goal of God. God’s purpose is to have a people for Himself, who will worship Him in spirit and in truth.

The basic problem with human nature is that, when given a choice between something spiritual which we can not readily relate to and something physical which we can see and touch, we tend to concentrate on the physical. Immaturity follows after the tangible aspects of life, and avoids the abstract. God knew of this tendency within the nation of Israel, so He

gave them a specific command not to make any graven images at all. They made one, anyway -- a golden calf. But God was angry with them, because when they turned their attention toward the image instead of the true God, they began to indulge in sinful behavior. They started playing the music they had heard in Egypt, and indulging in evil behavior. Concentration on natural carnal things leads to selfish behavior. The fear of the Lord is what allows us to depart from evil. (Proverbs 16:6)



Methods

Discussion:

What person or thing determines the basic focus and direction of your life?

What or who influences your lifestyle the most?

What do you delight in and trust in more than anything else?

What is the basis of your life's goals and your hope?

Is it spiritually dangerous to have religious relics around?

Why is it so important for us to build up our spiritual sensitivity, and to suppress our fleshly tendencies?

Do you know of anyone who is an idol?

Do you have any idols in your life that you need to confess before the Lord?

How much do you think about eternal and spiritual things?

Is Santa Claus possibly a false god?

What wrong concepts concerning God might one gain from believing in Santa as a youngster?

God's Name and the Sabbath

Volume 4

Lesson 9



Bible References

Exodus 20:7-11

Isaiah 9:6

Matthew 5:34-37

Matthew 6:9

Matthew 12:34

Matthew 15:17-20

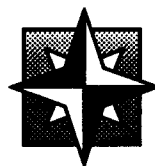
John 19:30

Colossians 2:16-17

Hebrews 4:10

James 3:4

James 5:12



Theme

We are not to take the name of the Lord in vain. God had a purpose for establishing the Sabbath.



Scripture Reading

Exodus 20:7-11

7 *"Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.*

8 *"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.*

9 *"Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work:*

10 *"But the seventh day {is} the sabbath of the LORD thy God: {in it} thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that {is} within thy gates:*

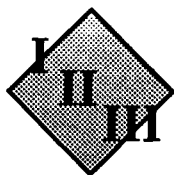
11 *"For (in) six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them (is), and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."*



Memory Verse

Colossians 2:16-17

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath (days): Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body (is) of Christ."



Outline

I. The Name of the Lord.

A. God's name is holy.

1. A name is a word to identify an individual.
2. God has many names (or titles) which identify Him as God. All of God's names describe Him in some manner.

B. Bless the name of the Lord.

1. Some religions concentrate on ways to express homage to the names of God.

2. Some would religiously refuse to utter certain names of God, because the name was considered too holy.

C. Do not take God's name in vain.

1. "Vain" means "desolating, destruction, with guile."
2. Never use God's name in a negative or hateful way.
3. Never utter a name of God as an expression of anger, frustration, or disgust.
4. Always express reverence for any name associated with God, as an expression of honor to Him.

D. Swearing.

1. Men usually swear by something greater than themselves.
2. Men might swear an oath, because their word may not be considered good.
3. The Bible teaches to avoid swearing, and to let our "yes" and "no" be good enough, because we keep our word. (James 5:12)

E. Cursing.

1. To pronounce a curse on someone or something.
2. Usually associated with hell.
 - a. "Damnation" means "assigned to the fires of hell; eternal condemnation."
 - b. Only God has the power to damn a soul.
3. "Damn it" is a curse.
4. To attach God's name to it is to use God's name in vain.

F. Profanity.

1. Words and expressions relating to private bodily functions, or extremely evil things.

2. Speech relating to things which are profane.
3. "Gutter language."
4. God's name is often used by people with a filthy mouth as part of their profanity.
5. Jesus taught that the things which come out of the mouth are the things which defile the man. (Matthew 15:17-20)

II. Bywords.

- A. Many Christians use bywords, or "minced oaths," without realizing it.
 1. It is very common in some cultures to flavor the speech with extra expressions.
 2. Many of these expressions are "watered down" or minced from cursing or profanity.
- B. Minced oaths that we should avoid using in our speech:
 1. Golly!
 2. Gosh!
 3. Gol dern!
 4. Jeez!
 5. Gee!
 6. Jiminy Cricket!
 7. Holy Smoke!
 8. Darn it!
- C. Minced profanity:
 1. Foey!
 2. Shoot!
 3. Shucks!

III. The Sabbath Laws.

- A. Rest on the seventh day.
 1. In honor of the seventh day of creation.
 2. In order to prevent people from overworking.
 3. And to teach them to set aside a time to come before God.
- B. Spiritual fulfillment.
 1. Jesus did the work of redemption on the cross.
 2. We cannot get to heaven by our works.
 3. We must trust in the work of the Cross.
 4. Jesus said, "...It is finished..." (John 19:30)
 5. To try to work our way into heaven would be to deny the sacrifice on the cross, and to blaspheme Jesus.
 6. In salvation, we enter into His rest. (Hebrews 4:10)

IV. The Lord's Day.

- A. The Lord's day has been observed ever since the resurrection of Christ.
 1. Christians have celebrated the Lord's day for centuries.
 2. Christians usually worship God on Sunday.
 - a. Jesus rose from the dead on a Sunday.
 - b. The church had the first "church service" with Jesus that night.
 - c. The believers were commanded by the apostles to gather and give their offerings on the first day of the week.

B. The Jewish controversy.

1. Jews continued to worship on Saturday, because they rejected the Savior.
2. The Pharisees had added about 400 detailed laws concerning what they were not allowed to do on the Sabbath.
3. The Pharisees focused on the physical aspects of the law.
4. Jesus worked on the Sabbath, and made the Pharisees very angry.
5. Jesus said, "...The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." (Mark 2:27)

- Some denominations today try to mix law and grace, and are often characterized by a strict and legalistic observance of the old Sabbath laws, by which they feel obligated to worship on Saturday.
- Sunday is a day to worship God and celebrate the resurrection of Jesus, but we should praise and worship God every day in some way.



Spiritual Truths

- God is holy, and He commands all men to respect and honor His name.
- A good name is more important than great riches.
- The names of God not only point to Him, but also reflect the many aspects of His character and power.
- It is a wise practice to avoid using even "minced" oaths, which are derived from the names of the Persons of the Holy Trinity.
- Our words tend to flow out of whatever is in our hearts, but they also affect and influence our whole life.
- The Pharisees focused on the letter of the Sabbath law; but, they missed the main point, because they were caught up in legalism, rather than grace.



Lesson Material

Jesus model prayer given to the disciples begins, "...Our Father, which art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name." (Matthew 6:9) Now, we realize that Jesus was not giving them a prayer to recite, because He had just told them not to repeat prayers with vain repetition, but to speak personally to the Father. Jesus told the disciples to pray in the manner of the Lord's prayer, not to recite it. After praising God and acknowledging that He is our Heavenly Father, we should praise and hallow the name of the Lord.

There are many names and titles that express the attributes of God. Some people would argue that there is only one name of God, but any title which brings a specific reference is a name. You probably have several names. Some names can be used in speech as another word, such as "Joy," or "Grace," or "Frank;" but when the words are used to identify a person, they become names. Isaiah said that the Messiah's name would be called:

"...Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isaiah 9:6)

Each of these is a description, and when used to refer to the Lord, they are names. When used in reference to God, or any member of the Trinity, they should be used with reverence and respect.

It is common for many people to blurt out swear words or bywords in their conversations. Jesus said, *"...out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh."* (Matthew 12:34) In other words, your speech will tend to reflect what is in your heart, and it is impossible to "tame the tongue" and keep it from revealing the heart. People who have a sweet, contented heart will tend to have a sweet tongue, and people with a foul heart will have a foul tongue. Our words both reveal and influence our heart. James said that the tongue is like a rudder, which turns the direction of a ship. (James 3:4) People who speak positive things tend to be more positive, and vice versa.

Most people understand the difference between cursing, swearing, and profanity. But when a person has a sinful heart, he tends to use them all, without realizing the distinction. Some people utter many curses and profane words, because they think evil thoughts and because they lack the intelligence to think of other things to say. The language one uses describes the kind of person he is. People who take God's name in vain show that they do not have a fear of God. Therefore, they are giving a direct indication of their spiritual condition.

Somewhere along the line, something came into the language that carried the intent and flavor of cursing and profanity, while backing off from actually speaking it. Bywords imply a curse, and are used to

"pepper the speech," but seek to avoid the stigma of actually taking God's name in vain. Someone, perhaps a new convert, hit his thumb with a hammer and blurted out "Jeez..." and then stopped himself from saying "Jesus Christ" in a vain way. Someone else was surprised, and started to say "God!" But she stopped herself with a "shhh," and wound up saying "Gosh." There are many such words that are used in the place of curse words or profanity. Is it a sin to use them? Probably not, especially when you do not realize the origin or the meaning of the word you are using. But it is a very good idea to do what Jesus did. Let your yes be yes, and your no be no. Just say what you mean, and mean what you say, and do not bring any name of God into it -- not even halfway.

The fourth commandment has less a practical and more of a spiritual application for us today. The Sabbath was God's command to the Israelites, to remind them not to do physical work all the time, but to rest from that kind of labor at the end of the week and seek Him. This specific law prefigured the work of Christ on the cross, and we fulfill the principle by entering into His rest. We do that by trusting in the completed work of the cross to atone for all of our sins, and by realizing that we cannot earn our way into heaven. Jesus is our Sabbath rest.

The Pharisees were continually distraught with Jesus, because He kept violating their Sabbath rules, although He had said,

"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil." (Matthew 5:17)

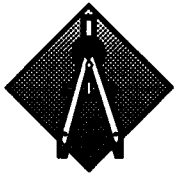
They were so focused on the legalistic aspects of the Sabbath that they did not understand the spirit of the law, which

Jesus came to demonstrate. The fourth commandment is the only one that Jesus did not reinforce and emphasize in His teaching ministry, and the only one that the early church seemed to ignore. Instead, they worshipped on the first day of the week, the Lord's day. The Sabbath was not changed from Saturday to Sunday. It was fulfilled in Christ, and the church worships primarily on the Lord's day. It is not a sin to worship God on Saturday rather than Sunday, but religious people who condemn others for not keeping the Jewish Sabbath are violating scripture by judging with respect to Sabbath days, (Colossians 2:16) and are bound with legalism.

anyone, but to give "instruction in righteousness." It is a good thing to learn to speak plainly, without any appearance of evil, and without even the flavor of profanity.

We do need to understand that Sunday is not the Sabbath, but yet recognize the spiritual significance of the fourth commandment.

Encourage your students not only to express respect in the way they use the names of God, but to also communicate respect in the way they address their teachers and elders.



Methods

Our purpose in teaching about minced oaths is not to bring condemnation to

Honor Parents and Respect Life

Volume 4

Lesson 10



Bible References

Genesis 9:6
Exodus 20:12
Proverbs 3:1-7
Proverbs 4:1-2
Matthew 5:21-22
Romans 13:1,3
Ephesians 6:2
Hebrews 9:27
1 John 3:15
1 John 4:20



Scripture Reading

Proverbs 3:1-7

1 *"My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:*

2 *"For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.*

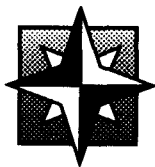
3 *"Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:*

4 *"So shalt thou find favour and good understanding in the sight of God and man.*

5 *"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.*

6 *"In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.*

7 *"Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil."*



Theme

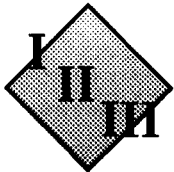
Obedience to God's principles results in great personal benefits in life.



Memory Verse

Proverbs 4:1-2

"Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law."



Outline

I. The Fifth Commandment.

A. *"Honor thy father and thy mother...."*
(Exodus 20:12)

B. Honor.

1. Hebrew "kabad."
 - a. To "make weighty."
 - b. To "attach great worth."
 - c. To "esteem as valuable."
 - d. To "promote."

2. The same word is used in Proverbs 3:9.

- a. *"Honour the LORD with thy substance."*
- b. Also translated "glory."

C. We should recognize that God placed us under the care and guidance of our parents, and uses them to develop our character.

1. David honored King Saul, even though David was abused by him.
2. David had faith in God, and honored the office of the king.
3. David refused to smite the king, even though Saul had wronged him.

D. You can honor a parent and still not submit to them if they make a wrong demand.

1. Some parents have sexually abused their children.
2. We are to obey the higher authority. (Romans 13:1)
3. If any parent makes a demand that goes against God's Word, obey God, because He is the higher authority.
4. You may have to tell one parent about the action of another.
 - a. You can still love and value them.
 - b. But you must also honor God, and do the right thing.
5. This is a rare situation, but it does occur.
6. Most of your parents love you, and are very worthy of all the honor you can give them.

E. Never address your mother or father by their first name.

F. Never rebuke your parents, but appeal if you feel they are wrong.

G. Go to the your parents for counsel. They know far more than your peers do, and they love you more than anyone, except God.

II. The Promise.

A. This is "the first commandment with promise." (Ephesians 6:2)

B. "...That thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee." (Exodus 20:12)

1. Parents help to impart wisdom and knowledge.
 - a. Wisdom tends to lengthen life, because wisdom grants us greater perspective and helps us avoid pitfalls and dangers in life.
 - b. Wisdom involves the fear of the Lord, which lengthens life.
2. This is not an absolute guarantee that everyone who honors their parents will live a long life.
 - a. It is the principle that nations which have strong family relationships will be stronger and safer.
 - b. Good family relationships promote health, safety, and God's blessing.
 - c. Parents can impart wisdom, and help their children avoid pitfalls in life.

III. Thou Shalt Not Kill.

A. Literally translated: "Thou shalt do no murder."

B. This does not apply to killing of animals.

1. God created animals to serve man, and/or to be used as food.
2. God's ethical laws encourage kindness to animals, but not reverence.
 - a. Animals do not have a soul.
 - b. Animals are not reincarnated relatives.

C. Thou shalt not murder another human being.

1. Because man is created in the image of God.
2. Man's life belongs to God.
3. Murder is an extreme form of selfishness and rebellion against God.
4. Human life is sacred.

D. Capital punishment.

1. God has given governments the right to execute murderers. "*Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.*" (Genesis 9:6)
2. God never gave any society the right to execute for stealing, but He does hold a governing body responsible to protect its citizens.
3. A just government should be a "terror" to the wicked. (Romans 13:3)

E. War.

1. God has given governments the right to declare war and defend from war.
2. War sometimes involves taking of life.



Spiritual Truths

- It is both wise and prudent to honor your parents as much as possible and demonstrate esteem and respect at every opportunity.
- King David's father-in-law treated him poorly, but he honored him by not talking about him negatively to others.

- You should give honor according to the superiority of the authority over you. If a parent commands you to dishonor God by doing something immoral, you always obey God, who is the higher authority.
- It is never right to rebuke or dishonor a parent, but it is both right and beneficial to appeal to their authority when you do not feel they are right.
- Honoring parents tends to promote peace and extend life, because you will have more harmony, learn more wisdom, and earn more freedoms as you do.
- Children gain far more privileges and freedoms by submitting to and honoring their parents, than by demanding their rights or trying to receive sympathy.
- The sixth commandment, to be accurate, should read, "Thou shalt do no murder."
- A good national government should base its laws on the supreme authority of God's Word, which makes it responsible to protect its citizens.

loving children, and the best training ground is to develop the heart of an adoring servant.

The other six of the ten commandments given to man, relate to interpersonal relationships. Love is not just a warm feeling, but a selfless sense of giving; it is paying attention to the needs and desires of the other. The closer we draw to God, the more we will devote ourselves to pleasing Him and exalting His name. We will become less self-centered, and more Christ-centered. This is what Christian lifestyle is all about. Jesus demonstrated to us how it is accomplished. He gave Himself totally to the will of the Father. Jesus did nothing simply for his own pleasure. He was the perfect servant.

Love for God automatically translates into love for people. The Apostle John asks his readers how they can say they love God when they do not love their brother. (1 John 4:20) When our life's aim is to do what is pleasing to God and beneficial to His kingdom, we will naturally be more sensitive to the needs of others, because God loves people so much. We express our love for God largely by the way we treat people.

Sin is the opposite of love. Sin in the heart not only alienates us from God, but also tends to keep us away from people, at least emotionally. The deeper we are involved in a sinful activity, the more we will tend to view people as sources for our own pleasure or promotion. Some people are so given to wickedness that they will destroy the lives of others, if they believe it will gain them some personal advantage. To gain a perspective on how God views this kind of attitude, research the Great Flood, or God's response to Sodom and Gomorrah's wickedness.



Lesson Material

The first four commandments are called, "The commandments of worship," because they deal with our relationship to God. The most important aspect of life is the development of that relationship, built on trust, loyalty, and loving devotion. We were designed to be God's

Sin also breaks down the family, by promoting a self-centered perspective of life. The more we feel the world revolves around us, the more trouble we have relating to authorities, such as parents. Satan is attacking the family from both sides. He is enticing parents to strive for money or pleasure, and breaking down communications with children. Satan is also seeking to indoctrinate children wherever he can, by convincing them that what they want is the most important thing in life.

This is not the attitude the child of God should hold. The Christian ethic is the attitude, "I belong to God. What does He want me to do?" God is the Lord. He created us, and He has the right to rule our lives. He also loves us, and knows what is best for us. The sin problem is not that there is something good that God is withholding from us, but that we are deceived into thinking that we will gain some personal advantage in doing wrong.

The non-Christian perspective, which removes God from the equation, promotes isolationism and distrust. After all, if each person is concerned with his own self interest, how can we expect that another person will be concerned with what is best for me? He is only interested in doing what is best for himself. The world system works against the unity of the family and other social structures, because it tends to set us against each other, at least from the perspective of trust. When the Roman Empire became rich and strong, the families began to hire Greek tutors for their children. These tutors brought an ungodly perspective to their students. The family broke down, and the Roman Empire eventually crumbled.

God had designed the family to be the basic building block of any society. The relationship of trust and communication between parents and their children is essential for emotional health and a balanced world view. In Deuteronomy 6, God gave commandments to parents. Parents were required to indoctrinate their children with wisdom, and spend much of their time training them. Children, on the other hand, needed to be encouraged to trust, honor, and rely on their parents. Only in very rare cases do we have parents who do not love their children, even if they are not Christians.

The other commandment discussed in this lesson is the sixth, "Thou shalt not kill." It is unfortunate for us that the translation in the King James is not specific here, because today, many people use this verse ignorantly to condemn the harvesting of animals for food and clothing, or to condemn the execution of criminals. The exact commandment is, "Thou shalt do no murder."

The Bible is clear, both in the Old and New Testaments, that God created animals to be used by man for food, clothing, or implements of labor. Animals are not equal with people. They do not have rights. The Bible does teach that we treat animals with kindness. It could be argued that killing for the sake of killing is not right. Also, Christians generally have no problem with protecting endangered species. But the idea that we must be vegetarians is completely without scriptural grounds. It comes basically from the Hindu religion, which teaches that animals are recycled souls, and therefore equal with people.

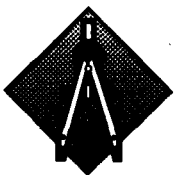
Genesis 9:6 gives governments the right to use capital punishment. Human life is sacred; therefore, murder is a very

serious crime. Note that in God's legal system, justice is very consistent, and punishment is always appropriate.

It is a very serious crime to kill people. Notice also that Jesus took it a step further. He said that not only should we refrain from killing anyone, but that,

"whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment...but whoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire." (Matthew 5:21-22)

John said, *"Whoever hateth his brother is a murderer...."* (1 John 3:15) Why? Because a murderer ends a person's opportunity. Once a person's life has ended, he has no chance to restore, repent, or do anything else in this life. His life is ended, and he must give an account based on what he did in the time he had. The murderer has usurped the role of God, who "appoints" the time to die. (Hebrews 9:27) A person who hates another person will cut that person off in spirit. That person will not have the opportunity to have the relationship restored. He has been judged, and will not be trusted again. This is what John meant by saying, *"Whoever hateth his brother is a murderer...."* (1 John 3:15)



Methods

It is increasing likely that one or more students in a youth Bible class will have an abusive parent, stepparent, or former parent. That young person will have a difficult time relating to the fifth commandment, and the teacher needs to

use wisdom in relating the message. You can still honor that parent by honoring their God-given authority, and give all the respect and esteem that you can. Make sure that the students realize that honoring any person is secondary to honoring God -- so, an authority figure who does evil or whose commands are contrary to God's, may need to be reported, or at least appealed to.

However, this situation is rare. You may see one student averting his or her eyes when you mention honoring parents. This may be a sign that they need to hear this kind of exhortation in private, and that they should be encouraged to open up to their other parent. Be prayerful and careful. Your goal is not to step in and take over if you have suspicions of abuse. Your goal is to strengthen the family and encourage children to trust their parents more. Let the other parent or authorities handle abuse.

Note that much humor in cartoons and comedy programs directly attack and undermine the fifth commandment. Parents, especially fathers, are portrayed as fools, who are lazy, stupid people, who are constantly outsmarted by their brilliant children. Fathers are portrayed either as stupid or absent. Life is based on support from peer groups, rather than family groups. Children today are more frequently gathered in peer groups, and subtly taught to distrust parents. Do all you can to build up the family, even to the point of encouraging the parents to be more involved in Bible training. In fact, a good way to answer a question might be to say, "Ask your father." If the father has the answer, encourage a report the following week.

Love Thy Neighbor

Volume 4

Lesson 11



Bible References

Exodus 20:14-17

Leviticus 18:22

Deuteronomy 5:21

Psalms 15:2

Proverbs 6:32

Proverbs 30:15

Matthew 4:1-11

Romans 6:14

1 Corinthians 6:9,18

2 Corinthians 4:2

Ephesians 4:25,28

Ephesians 5:3

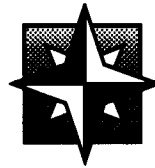
Philippians 4:11

2 Thessalonians 3:10

1 Timothy 1:9-10

1 John 3:14-24

1 John 5:3



Theme

Our love for others will prevent us from breaking the commandments.



Scripture Reading

1 John 3:14-24

14 *"We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not {his} brother abideth in death.*

15 *"Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.*

16 *"Hereby perceive we the love {of God}, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down {our} lives for the brethren.*

17 *"But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels {of compassion} from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"*

18 "My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth.

19 "And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him.

20 "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things.

21 "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, (then) have we confidence toward God.

22 "And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are pleasing in his sight.

23 "And this is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.

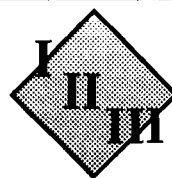
24 "And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us."



Memory Verse

1 John 5:3

"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."



Outline

I. Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery.

A. Adultery.

1. Violating the marriage vows by being joined in a physical union with someone other than one's spouse.
2. Marriage is a holy union symbolizing Christ and the church.
3. For a more detailed explanation of adultery, consult your parents.

B. Consequences of adultery.

1. Adultery is a broken vow, and greatly damages trust.
2. Adultery causes great emotional and spiritual damage.
3. Any man who commits adultery lacks understanding. (Proverbs 6:32)
 - a. If he understood the consequences, he would not do it.
 - b. It will affect his whole life, and the lives of those around him.
4. Adultery is a serious offense against God, and damages a person's spirit.

C. A wise young person will commit himself or herself to remain a virgin until his/her wedding, and have only one sexual partner for life.

1. It is the happiest, most joyful, and most rewarding kind of life.

2. Statistically, couples who fornicate before marriage have a far higher rate of divorce.
3. Girls, especially, should make a covenant with their fathers.
 - a. The best protection against moral impurity is a father's love.
 - b. Keep a good, honest relationship with your father.
 - c. Allow him to help you choose your friends and companions.

D. New Testament truth:

1. Be so devoted to your spouse that you do not even want to commit adultery.
2. Jesus said, "...whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed [adultery] with her already in his heart." (Matthew 5:28)
3. This is not "under the law."
 - a. This is a much higher standard than the law.
 - b. God's grace enables us to love with a pure heart.

II. Thou Shalt Not Steal.

A. Do not take anything that does not belong to you.

1. Respect the property rights of others.
2. God can provide all your needs.

B. Poverty does not cause stealing.

1. People steal because they have a low regard for others.
2. Thieves are usually those who failed to learn to work hard.
3. Thieves do not appreciate the value of things.
4. They focus on their rights, but ignore their responsibilities.

5. Stealing is a clear evidence of sin in the heart.

C. God's solution.

1. Thieves should always pay back what they stole, with a large amount of his own goods.
 - a. Men do not despise a thief if he is really needy, but he should pay back seven times as much as he stole, if he is caught. (Proverbs 6:30)
 - b. This is called "restitution."
2. Thieves should be made to work hard with their hands, so they can learn to be givers instead of takers.

D. New Testament truth.

1. Jesus taught that we should we not steal from others.
2. Jesus also taught that we should be in the habit of giving to others.
3. This goes far beyond the minimum command of "do not steal."
4. People who are givers do not think of stealing, or of cheating others.

E. Law says, "Do not steal." Grace says, "Give to others."

III. Thou Shalt Not Bear False Witness Against Thy Neighbor.

A. Do not lie.

1. Specifically, do not lie in a court or judgment situation.
2. "Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another." (Ephesians 4:25)

B. Speak the truth in your heart. (Psalms 15:2)

1. Be honest with yourself and with God.
2. Be open, and not crafty and deceptive.
3. Renounce hidden things of dishonesty. (2 Corinthians 4:2)
4. Liars will be assigned to the lake of fire for eternity. (Revelation 21:8)

C. What is a lie?

1. A deception -- seeking to make someone believe something which is not true.
2. An untruth is not necessarily a lie.
 - a. If you make a statement which you believe to be true, but in actuality is not, it is not a lie.
 - b. It is an untrue statement, with no intention to deceive.
3. On the other hand, a true statement can be a lie.
 - a. If you deliberately mislead by giving a half-truth, you are deceiving.
 - b. "Did you take your bath?" Mom says. "Yes (a week ago)."
 - c. Technically, your statement was true, but you know that your mother wanted to know if you had just taken a bath, and you deceived her.

IV. Thou Shalt Not Covet.

- A. *"... Neither shalt thou covet ... any (thing) that (is) thy neighbour's."* (Deuteronomy 5:21)
- B. To "covet" means:
1. To desire wrongfully that which belongs to another;
 2. To strongly wish for a possession without due regard for the property rights of the owner.

C. Covetousness is a clear example of the opposite of love.

1. When you love someone, you are glad to see them blessed.
2. Sin makes us selfish, and makes us put our own desires above those of others.
3. Covetousness is the opposite of contentment.

D. Contentment.

1. The attitude of being satisfied and grateful for that which God has provided.
2. Contentment is a character quality which demonstrates an unselfish spirit.
3. Contentment never comes from getting what we want, because we will tend to want more, no matter how much we get. (Proverbs 30:15)
4. Contentment is learned, and comes when we mature spiritually. (Philippians 4:11)



Spiritual Truths

- When we violate God's design for marriage, we damage ourselves emotionally, spiritually, and often, physically.
- If a man understands the importance God places on the individual, he would never commit adultery.
- You can give a thief all he wants, but you will not change his urge to steal, until you teach him to work with his hands and become a giver.

- The law was given because of sin in the hearts of people who live in the flesh and do not live in the power of God's grace.
- A lie is not merely speaking an untruth, but is a deliberate deception.
- Contentment is a learned character quality.
- Contentment is not related at all to what we have or lack in life.
- Covetousness is a clear indication of a selfish, immature heart.



Lesson Material

The church today is in a battle against spiritual deception. The world system seeks to remove God from our thinking. When we do not regard God's standards as we make decisions, the major incentive for morality and ethics is removed. If life is just physical, and if the purpose of life is one's own personal happiness, then it does not matter how other people are treated, as long as we get ahead. Many feel that other people are merely to be used, and one's own rights are most important.

The biblical world view changes our whole perspective on life, and radically affects our relationships with other people. If the Bible is true, then this life is a preparation for eternity -- Jesus is the center of life, and other people are very important. God puts us in families; God orders our steps; and God will hold us accountable for the way we treat other people. It is not a decision to love either

God or people, because the more love we have for God, the more we will tend to love other people. The conflict is between serving God or mammon -- the material world of money and pleasure and ego. If we follow the world's philosophy, then it is all right to do for ourselves and use people, as long as we not caught or suffer consequences in this life. "Whoever dies with the most toys wins." This is one slogan of a non-Christian mind. The question a thinking Christian might ask is, "Wins what?" If one believes that life is only in the here and now, then they do not really win anything. Certainly, if we have a Christian world view, we know that it does not matter at all how many possessions we have when we die. The only thing that matters is our relationship with God, and the way we have served Him.

The Ten Commandments were not designed as goals for ethical conduct, but as basic moral absolutes for those who were not spiritually sensitive to love. The Bible is clear that,

"...the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers... whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars...." (1 Timothy 1:9-10)

In other words, people who are walking by the power of God's grace do not need to be reminded of moral absolutes: they are already walking in love. When you love, you do not even think about stealing from someone else, or coveting his possessions. "...For ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Romans 6:14) "Grace" means "gift," and speaks not only

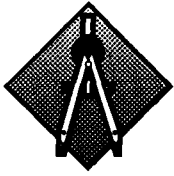
of the favor and blessing we receive by faith, but also of the impartation of God's good qualities and abilities into our lives. Grace teaches us to live by "...denying ungodliness and worldly lusts..." (Titus 2:13) People who are motivated and empowered by God's grace do not need to be reminded of the minimum requirements of law. Givers do not need to be told not to take, and people who are filled with the Spirit of God do not need to be told not to commit adultery, because the Holy Spirit will direct their actions. It is when we become selfish and deceived by sin that we fall into temptation, and come under the standard of law.

When you teach the seventh commandment to young people, you do not have to go into details about human sexual activity to convey the message. Even young people understand that some parts of their bodies are private, and that some kinds of touching are wrong. Today, they are usually exposed to far more sexual information than they should be in their stage of development, and even very young people are often thrust into situations where they have to deal not only with their own feelings, but with the sins of others around them. It should be sufficient to clarify that God created us to be married to one person for life. The best way to teach the seventh commandment is to exalt the bond of marriage and encourage a firm commitment to keep physical intimacy reserved for marriage.

Stealing is not caused by poverty in most cases, but by a lack of respect for another's property. Many today believe that everyone has a right to wealth and possessions, whether they deserve them or not. The "rich" are maligned as greedy and selfish. The Christian ethic is not socialistic. Those who work harder deserve a greater reward. Those who are

more skilled and accomplished at their task receive the greater honor. "...if any would not work, neither should he eat." (2 Thessalonians 3:10) God's Word teaches us to be kind and generous to the poor (those who cannot earn a living), but we do not feel any such compulsion to give handouts to those who refuse to work. Indeed, the worst thing you can do for a lazy man is to provide for him without making him work. The New Testament method of rehabilitating a thief is hard, physical work (Ephesians 4:28), and the encouragement to be a giver. Giving is the opposite of stealing. We do not have to tell someone who has learned the joy of achieving and giving to others not to steal from others. It is not part of his mentality. Stealing is caused by sin, not by society.

The important lesson about lying is that it refers to deception, rather than misinformation. So many people think they can communicate a clever deception by a half-truth or a misleading "truism," and not be lying. But you can lie without saying a word, if your gesture or response is designed to make someone else believe something which is not true. Any deception is a lie. Lying comes from a dishonest heart, and not from misinformation. Satan is the father of lies. He was a liar from the beginning. (John 8:44) Note that he even lied to Jesus, by quoting parts of scripture verses out of context, to make them say something that was not true. (Matthew 4:1-11)



Methods

There is a strong anti-Christian movement today, which has resulted in the removal of the Bible, prayer, and even the Ten Commandments from public education. Many educators are promoting the idea that morality is determined by popular consensus or majority opinion. The more we focus on creation and the end-times, the more we are aware that there are absolutes in God's universe, whether or not we recognize them.

The foundational truth of morality is that there are moral absolutes, because we are created by a holy God. Morality is determined by God, Who designed us and knows how we function best. If you purchase a car, and then decide, "This is my car. I will do what I want with it. If I want to put maple syrup in the gas tank, I

will." What happens? The car will be damaged, and ultimately destroyed. Sin operates in the same manner. God is our manufacturer, and knows what is best for us. We can say, "I can do what I want with my body. If I want to put alcohol or uppers in the bloodstream, I can." But eventually, we will be damaged and ultimately destroyed by sin.

Sin is never good in its effect. It only feels good for the moment.

Discussion:

What makes sin sinful? Is it because God does not like it, or because it destroys us?

Why does God hate sin?

What does the verse mean, "...his commandments are not grievous"? (1 John 5:3) Answer: It never diminishes or harms us to do right.

How do we know right from wrong?

The Golden Lampstand

Volume 4

Lesson 12



Bible References

Exodus 37:17-24

2 Chronicles 1:5

Psalms 91:4

Psalms 119:105

1 Corinthians 2:14

Galatians 4:24

2 Timothy 3:16

2 Peter 1:21



Scripture Reading

Exodus 37:17-24

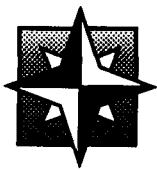
17 *"And he made the candlestick {of} pure gold: {of} beaten work made he the candlestick; his shaft, and his branch, his bowls, his knops, and his flowers, were of the same:*

18 *"And six branches going out of the sides thereof; three branches of the candlestick out of the one side thereof, and three branches of the candlestick out of the other side thereof:*

19 *"Three bowls made after the fashion of almonds in one branch, a knop and a flower; and three bowls made like almonds in another branch, a knop and a flower: so throughout the six branches going out of the candlestick.*

20 *"And in the candlestick {were} four bowls made like almonds, his knops, and his flowers:*

21 *"And a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, and a knop under two branches of the same, according to the six branches going out of it.*



Theme

The golden lampstand in the tabernacle is a beautiful picture of the Bible.

22 "Their knops and their branches were of the same: all of it {was} one beaten work {of} pure gold.

23 "And he made his seven lamps, and his snuffers, and his snuffdishes, {of} pure gold.

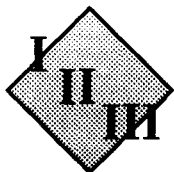
24 "{Of} a talent of pure gold made he it, and all the vessels thereof."



Memory Verse

Psalms 119:105

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."



Outline

I. Bible Types.

A. God uses physical things and people to show us truths about spiritual things.

1. Type: a prophetic representation -- one thing is used to give a glimpse of a greater reality to come.
2. Some examples of types:
 - a. The sacrificial Passover lamb was a type of Christ;
 - b. Noah's ark was a type of salvation in Christ;
 - c. The Tabernacle was a type of the New Testament church;

d. The brazen serpent was a type of Christ, Who became a curse for us and was lifted up above the earth.

B. Bible symbols.

1. Symbol: a physical object which gives us a mental picture, in order to illustrate a spiritual reality.
2. Some biblical symbols:
 - a. Leprosy, a symbol of sin -- a deadly disease which destroys sensitivity and beauty, and ends in death;
 - b. Colors;
 - c. Names -- "Boaz" means "strength"; "Isaac" means "laughter"; "Abraham" means "father of nations."
 - d. Numbers.

C. Allegories.

1. From the Greek word for "other" and "to speak."
2. A story which illustrates a principle.
3. Galatians 4:24 -- the story of Ishmael and Isaac is a spiritual allegory of the spiritual church and dead religion.
4. The prodigal son is an allegory about God's love and man's sin.

II. The Golden Lampstand.

A. A piece of furniture in the inner court of the tabernacle.

B. How the lampstand is a type -- a prophetic picture -- of the Bible.

1. Made by Bezaleel. (Exodus 37:17-24)
 - a. A picture of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. The Master Craftsman who formed it.
2. Made of pure gold.

- a. Gold is the symbol of God's glory.
- b. No wood in its construction -- wood is a symbol of humanity, and man did not write the Bible. (2 Peter 1:21)
3. Located in the inner court of the temple.
 - a. No one from the outside could see in.
 - b. The inner court was only for the priests.
 - c. The Bible was not written to the mind of man, but to the spirit of man.
 - d. Only Christians can really understand and enjoy the Bible. (1 Corinthians 2:14)
4. The lampstand was molded out of one piece of gold.
 - a. The Bible was written over 1,600 years, yet retains its integrity as having one supreme Author -- the Holy Spirit.
 - b. The Bible is consistent, and holds together without contradiction.
5. The lampstand had 66 parts.
 - a. The base had 27 parts.
 - b. The upper half had 39 parts.
6. The lampstand was full of oil.
 - a. Oil is a symbol of spiritual anointing by the Holy Spirit.
 - b. The Bible is anointed by God.
7. The lampstand gave light to those in the tent.
 - a. God's Word gives light to our lives.
 - b. Light reveals dangers, dirt, and delights.

III. The Only Light.

A. The inner court.

1. The inner court is a picture of ministry and fellowship in the church.
2. Only the priests could enter.
 - a. We are a "royal priesthood."
 - b. All born-again believers can enter in.
3. The inner court had a table of shewbread -- communion of saints, fellowship in Christ.
4. The inner court also held a golden altar of incense, which represents prayer.

B. No other light.

1. The lampstand was the only light in the inner court.
2. No sunlight could enter in. Sunlight represents earthly wisdom.
3. No other lamps.
 - a. The Bible is the complete revelation of God.
 - b. We do not need new scriptures or new revelations.
 - c. We need to study and know the Bible, which has stood the test of time and has been proven accurate as God's Word.



Spiritual Truths

- The Bible is full of physical things which illustrate spiritual principles, including symbols, types, and allegories.

- The golden lampstand is a fascinating and amazingly accurate type of the Bible itself.
- The Bible was not written to the mind of carnal men, but to the spirit of believers. That is why spiritually dead people believe it is a dead book.
- Any new revelation which claims to be from God, but which disagrees with the Bible, is false.
- The Bible gives us a road map for life and points out many dangers and obstacles along the way.
- The most important thing about the Bible is that it directs us to Jesus. We do not just need to know about Him -- we need to know Him.
- We should know the names of the books of the Bible in order, and should develop good reading skills, so we can study it effectively.



Lesson Material

Our goal as teachers is not just to inform, but to inspire. In teaching Bible lessons, it is far better to stimulate curiosity and interest in personal study, than to impress students with your knowledge. Our tendency is to hold back information, for fear that it is "over their heads." We must be realistic. Much of the Bible is over our heads, too. We need to be lifelong learners, and allow the students to know that we do not know it all. If we are not careful, we can lead young people to

the conclusion that we know it all, and that the Bible is simple kid's stuff.

It is a tendency for people to look at the surface of the Bible accounts and miss the deeper meaning. This section of Exodus, for example, can seem very dry and boring until you find the "hidden treasures" of symbols and types in it. Every color, number, kind of material, and other fact mentioned has a spiritual meaning. Why did the Holy Spirit go into such great detail to have Moses write all this information if it would not benefit us? *"All scripture is...profitable..."* (2 Timothy 3:16)

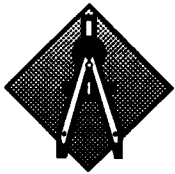
The Bible is full of types and symbols. They are very similar, in that they both are physical things which represent higher, usually spiritual, truths. But Bible types specifically relate to being pictures which foretell future events. They are basically prophetic in nature. The fact is, much of the truth in the Bible is far beyond our human ability to comprehend, without some reference to natural things to which we can relate.

God gives us these word pictures, knowing our tendency to focus so completely on the natural, that we cannot see the spiritual. For example, there are "anthropomorphisms" -- spiritual things put in human terms, so that humans can relate to them. Animal cartoon characters are common anthropomorphisms today. They become anthropomorphisms the moment such animals as mice, rabbits, or dogs begin talking, wearing clothes, driving cars, etc.

The same is true biblically. God is a Spirit, and has no body. In order to help us relate to a God that is far beyond our perception, the writers speak of "the hand of God," "the face of God," etc. If we take these references too literally, we might believe that God is a chicken -- "...under

his wings shalt thou trust...." (Psalms 91:4)
He is not a chicken or a man. God is a Spirit.

We gain a powerful and accurate picture of the Bible in the study of the golden lampstand. Some translations call it a candlestick, but it really was not. There was no wax involved. Wax is a symbol of insincerity, because it was used to cover flaws in cracked pottery or marble pillars in ancient times. But it was a lampstand, with seven lamps on top. Seven is the biblical number for completeness and perfection; and we receive the Bible as God's complete revelation to the world concerning redemption.



Methods

Try to find a model of the lampstand, or at least a picture of it. Of course, it is

always good to have a model of the tabernacle, if available. A diagram of the tent and court is essential.

Your goal should be to inspire your class to become students of the Word. Stress the value and benefits of daily devotions, with both Bible reading and prayer.

Do not be afraid to lead the class into some deep, rich insights of the Word. It is better to leave the class with awe and wonder, than to be too simplistic, and leave the students with the feeling that the Bible is not relevant for today.

Try to explain the difference between symbols and types, and see if you or the class can recognize some others from scripture.

Moses, the Intercessor

Volume 4

Lesson 13



Bible References

Exodus 32:1-35

Exodus 33:11

Numbers 14:20

Numbers 16:46-48

Job 22:26-30

Psalms 103:7

Proverbs 1:7

Isaiah 43:26

Matthew 6:7

Matthew 7:7

Matthew 21:22

Romans 8:28

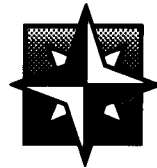
Ephesians 3:20

Philippians 4:6

Hebrews 11:6

James 1:14

1 John 5:14-15



Theme

Moses persevered in prayer for the nation of Israel.



Scripture Reading

Exodus 32:8-11

8 *"They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These (be) thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.*

9 *"And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it (is) a stiffnecked people:*

10 *"Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation.*

11 *"And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou*

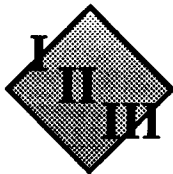
hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand?"



Memory Verse

Matthew 7:7

"Ask, and it shall be given unto you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you."



Outline

- I. **Moses on Mt. Sinai.**
 - A. Moses received the Ten Commandments from God.
 1. Exodus 31:18.
 2. Ten basic rules of ethical conduct.
 - B. Moses also received the design for the ark of the covenant.
 1. The tables of stone were written with the finger of God.
 2. What an awesome time of prayer Moses had!
 - a. God was there with him face to face.
 - b. Exodus 33:11.
- II. **Moses, the Intercessor.**
 - A. The sin of the Israelites greatly angered God.
 1. Exodus 32:10.
 2. God wanted to consume Israel and create a new nation for Moses to lead.
 3. God was offering to raise up a new nation from Moses' offspring.
 4. Moses was too humble to accept it.
 5. Moses loved his people.
 - B. Moses interceded on behalf of the people.
 1. As Abraham had interceded for Lot, Moses now stood face to face with the living God on behalf of the people, and interceded for them.
- C. The people sinned.
 1. When their "pastor" was gone for almost six weeks, they were like sheep without a shepherd.
 2. Without strong leadership, the Israelites were led into error.
 - a. The Israelites were led away by the lust of their own hearts. (James 1:14)
 - b. The Israelites were led by carnal leaders.
 - c. Moses had a pure heart, and stayed true to God.
 - d. The people played loud, sensual music.
 3. The people constructed a god out of the gold God had provided.
 - a. Some wanted to "represent" the true God with an image.
 - b. However, the image they created was modeled after the image of the world's (Egypt's) gods.
 4. The Lord told Moses that the people had corrupted themselves. (Exodus 32:7)

2. It takes real courage to be honest before God and to talk openly with Him. (Matthew 21:22; Philippians 4:6)
 - a. Moses was faithful to God and had a good relationship with Him.
 - b. A pure conscience is the basis for boldness.
3. Perseverance in prayer comes from a spirit of faith.
4. Wisdom begins with the fear of the Lord. (Proverbs 1:7)
 - a. The fear of the Lord is not cowering and hiding from God.
 - b. The fear of the Lord is reverence, awe, and respect.
 - c. When you fear God, you will not fear man or death.
5. Moses feared the Lord, even when the people did not.

III. Your Prayer.

A. "...He that cometh to God must believe...": (Hebrew 11:6)

1. That God exists and is the ruler of the universe;
2. That God is the rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

B. God hears and answers the prayers of Christians.

1. Mumbling religious words over and over has no power or influence with God. (Matthew 6:7)
 - a. "Vain repetition" has no value.
 - b. Real prayer is talking personally to God, the Father.
 - c. Jesus taught us to pray to the Father in Jesus' name.
2. Prayer born out of a relationship with God brings forth tremendous power.
3. Numbers 14:20; 16:46-48.

4. Prayer for your family.
 - a. A good relationship with God is the key to answered prayer.
 - b. One who is close to God brings blessings on his family and friends, too.
 - c. Job 22:26-30.



Spiritual Truths

- A life of prayer comes from a life in relationship with God.
- It is impossible to be an overcoming Christian without being a praying Christian.
- All truly great people in the world are born-again Christians, because the anointing of God is the key to greatness.
- Moses was great because he was faithful to God and was not selfish.
- Reciting prayers is not praying, because true prayer is talking to God from the heart.
- If it does not seem like God answers right away, do not give up -- keep praying!
- The more you know the Bible, the stronger your prayers can be.
- The more you pray for the will of God, the more faith you can have for results.
- No matter how bad the situation or unexpected the outcome, you must

stand, believing that all things do work together for good. (Romans 8:28)

- God is the Father Who loves His children, the Son who died for them, and the Spirit who will stand by them.



Lesson Material

Prayer is amazing, because God hears every word we say, even though millions of people are all praying at the same time! God never gets confused or mixes up our prayer with someone else's. He is never too busy to listen to each one of us, and nothing is too small to talk about with Him. Prayer is a powerful privilege that Jesus our Savior encouraged us to use, saying,

"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." (Matthew 7:7)

When something terrible happens, we do not have to just accept it. We can go to our mighty God and ask Him to do something about it. Moses found himself in a terrible situation, when he came down from Mt. Sinai with the two stone tablets on which God had written the Ten Commandments. The people had made a golden calf to worship -- exactly what God had forbidden them to do! Moses was so angry that he threw down the stone tablets and broke them in pieces. But God was even more angry. He wanted to destroy all the people and begin again with just Moses.

Moses realized that he did not want God to destroy the people, so he prayed

and asked God not to do it. He reminded God that He had promised to bring the people out of Egypt and take them safely to the Promised Land. Moses reminded God that God's own reputation was at stake. It took all of Moses' courage; but he was open and honest before God, and he kept on praying until he got the answer. God decided to forgive the people, because Moses asked Him to.

The most powerful prayer is the unselfish prayer. God loves it when we show concern for His reputation and the needs of others. Many of us tend to pray somewhat selfishly. "God, bless me, and meet my needs. God, bless me and mine, amen." But God is not selfish. He is generous, and He loves to give. That is why He is so pleased when we are unselfish. He wants us to be like Him. Moses was very pleasing to God, because he was concerned with God's reputation; and Moses showed a love for the people. That kind of prayer is very powerful.

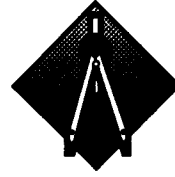
Jesus taught us to pray -- frequently and fervently. Prayer is not simply a way of getting what we want from God. Prayer is communicating and communing with God. God never shouts, so we must get close to Him in order to hear what He is saying. This is the whole idea behind prayer. God wants us to be close to Him. He can do anything, but has chosen not to intervene in world affairs unless believers pray.

God wants us to pray, because He wants us to learn that He is our first and best source of supply. He is our Father. When we are sick, we can go to the doctor; but God wants us to go to Him first in prayer. He wants us to learn that He can meet every need, and that we do not have to go through life limited to our human resources. Christianity is not just a

philosophy and moral creed. We not only believe the lessons and sermons that Jesus taught: we also believe that He is a risen Savior and a living Lord. Jesus is alive and can do more than we can ask or imagine. (Ephesians 3:20)

Jesus told us to be careful not to just "say" prayers, memorizing one we think "works" and then mumble it over and over again. God would much rather have us talk to Him in our own words, even if we feel shy. He wants to hear what is really deep down in our hearts.

Even though you are young, please do not underestimate the power of your prayers! In fact, it can be an advantage to be a young Christian, because it is sometimes easier to pray in faith. Remember that the power is in God, not in our natural strength or knowledge. When you know Jesus, and the Holy Spirit lives in your heart -- your prayers have tremendous power! You can pray every day and see God bring wonderful blessings to your family and friends. When you pray unselfishly, you will also find that you are more blessed personally than you would have been if you had lived only for yourself.



Methods

Lead the class in prayer. Include praise and thanksgiving, intercession, petition. Focus on God's purposes in the earth. Note that the "Lord's prayer" is not given as something to recite, but as a model example for talking to God.

Have each student think of a prayer request for his family, himself, and a friend.

Have a time of shared prayer where you bring your prayer requests to God.

Explain the importance of establishing prayers on the promises in the Bible.

Discuss 1 John 5:14-15.

Discuss Psalms 103:7. God made known His ways unto Moses but the children of Israel only knew His acts. The people understood the things that God had done; but Moses understood the reasons that God had done those things.

Would you like to be close to God, in the same way Moses was?

The Tabernacle of Moses

Volume 4

Lesson 14



Bible References

Exodus 35-39

Psalms 100:4

Romans 12:1

Ephesians 5:26

1 Peter 2:5

saying, *This (is) the thing which the LORD commanded, saying,*

5 *"Take ye from among you an offering unto the LORD: whosoever (is) of a willing heart, let him bring it, an offering of the LORD; gold, and silver, and brass,*

6 *"And blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine linen, and goats' (hair),*

7 *"And rams' skins dyed red, and badgers' skins, and shittim wood,*

8 *"And oil for the light, and spices for anointing oil, and for the sweet incense,*

9 *"And onyx stones, and stones to be set for the ephod, and for the breastplate.*

10 *"And every wise hearted among you shall come, and make all that the LORD hath commanded;*

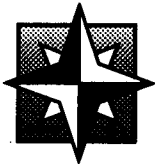
11 *"The tabernacle, his tent, and his covering, his taches, and his boards, his bars, his pillars, and his sockets,*

12 *"The ark, and the staves thereof, (with) the mercy seat, and the veil of the covering,*

13 *"The table, and his staves, and all his vessels, and the showbread,*

14 *"The candlestick also for the light, and his furniture, and his lamps, with the oil for the light,*

15 *"And the incense altar, and his staves, and the anointing oil, and the sweet*



Theme

The tabernacle in the wilderness was a type of the Church.



Scripture Reading

Exodus 35:4-19

4 *"And Moses spake unto all the congregation of the children of Israel,*

incense, and the hanging for the door at the entering in of the tabernacle,

16 *"The altar of burnt offering, with his brazen grate, his staves, and all his vessels, the laver and his foot,*

17 *"The hangings of the court, his pillars, and their sockets, and the hanging for the door of the court,*

18 *"The pins of the tabernacle, and the pins of the court, and their cords,*

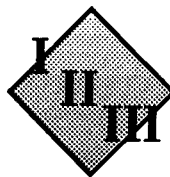
19 *"The cloths of service, to do service in the holy {place}, the holy garments for Aaron the priest, and the garments of his sons, to minister in the priest's office."*



Memory Verse

1 Peter 2:5

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."



Outline

I. The Purpose of the Tabernacle.

A. A place to meet with God.

1. "Tabernacle" means "tent."
2. Located in the center of the camp.
 - a. The focus was on God.
 - b. The camp of Israel was apparently in the shape of a cross.
3. A place of sacrifice, and judgment of sin.
 - a. Worship and praise.
 - b. Atonement for sins.
 - c. Prefigures the cross of Christ.

B. Materials used in the tabernacle.

1. Provided through free-will offerings.
 - a. The tithe supported the Levites and priests.
 - b. The tabernacle was built with offerings given above the amount of the tithe.
 - c. God provided the materials to the people, and then asked them to give back an offering.
2. Every material, color, and number has spiritual significance.
 - a. Gold -- God's glory.
 - b. Silver -- redemption, grace.
 - c. Brass (or bronze) -- judgment.
 - d. Red -- blood.
 - e. White -- holiness.
 - f. Blue -- heaven.

II. Tabernacle Types.

A. Outer court.

1. Curtain: 50 by 100 cubits.
 - a. Five cubits high.
 - b. One door, always placed to the east.
 - c. Jesus is the door.
2. Bronze altar.
 - a. 5 by 5 cubits: five represents sacrifice and atonement.
 - b. Place of sacrifice.
 - c. First step in salvation -- repentance. We must deal with sin.
 - d. Romans 12:1.
3. Bronze laver.
 - a. The wash basin.
 - b. A type of the Word of God. (Ephesians 5:26)
 - c. Used to wash the priest's hands -- hands represent our works.
 - d. Also washed the priest's feet -- feet represent our walk, lifestyle.
 - e. We see ourselves in the Word.

B. Inner court.

1. Within the tent.
 - a. Only for the priests.
 - b. Completely closed in.
 - c. Curtain and covering -- a type of the Holy Spirit.
 - d. 10 by 10 by 20 cubits long.
 - (1) Represents 2,000 year church age.
 - (2) The inner court is a type of the church, the priesthood of believers.
2. Furniture.
 - a. Golden lampstand -- represents the Bible, our source of light.
 - b. Golden altar -- represents the ministry of prayer.

- c. Golden table of shewbread -- represents communion, fellowship of saints.

C. Holy of Holies.

1. In the back part of the tent.
2. 10 by 10 by 10 cubits.
 - a. 1,000.
 - b. Speaks of the Millennium.
 - c. 1,000 year reign of Christ on the earth.
3. Ark of the Covenant.
 - a. Made of acacia wood. Wood is a Bible type of humanity.
 - b. Covered with gold -- a type of the glory of God.
 - c. Mercy Seat -- the place where blood was offered for the atonement.
4. The room had no light, except for the glory of God.

III. Three Parts.

A. Tabernacle.

1. Outer Court.
2. Inner Court.
3. Holy of Holies.

B. Man.

1. Body.
2. Soul.
3. Spirit.

C. Trinity.

1. Father -- Holy of Holies.
2. Son -- Outer court.
3. Holy Spirit -- Inner Court.

D. Three functions of the church:

1. Evangelism;
2. Body ministry -- fellowship, teaching;
3. Worship.



Spiritual Truths

- God provides many rich pictures of spiritual truths in the physical things that He designs.
- If we want to build God's church, it is essential that we build it His way.
- Pattern of God's revelation: first the physical, then the spiritual.
- God gives types and shadows, and then brings forth the fulfillment.
- There are three basic ministries of the church reflected in the design of the Tabernacle: evangelism -- outer court, altar and laver; body ministry -- inner court, ministry of the Word, prayer, and the communion of saints; and worship -- Holy of Holies, ministering to God in His presence.
- Jesus is the only door to a covenant relationship with God.
- The secular world cannot understand our relationship with God or the mysteries of the kingdom of God.



Lesson Material

The tabernacle in the wilderness, or "*the tabernacle of the congregation...*" (Exodus 27:21), which God commanded Moses to build, is an important study for those who wish to understand the plan of God more fully. There are many important lessons we could learn from a study of the tabernacle. In fact, it would be entirely possible to do a whole year of weekly studies on this subject. There are many spiritual truths hidden within this simple tent. We learn some tremendous insight through the manner in which the tabernacle came to be, the manner in which God had the tabernacle constructed, and by the details which were involved. A careful study of the tabernacle also reveals much spiritual symbolism and many prophetic types. It is a rich resource of wisdom.

First of all, the very fact of the tabernacle's existence indicates God's priority toward man. God created man for Himself, and a relationship with Him is the most important aspect of life. God designed the camp of the Hebrews to surround the tabernacle, where the important work of atonement and sacrifice was carried out. The tabernacle itself is an illustration that we are to be a habitation for God through the Spirit. We are living stones, built up together to be a place in which God can dwell. Of course, the temple signified the permanence of believers as the "city of God;" but the tabernacle expresses the truth that we are in transition as a church. We are going through the "wilderness" in the world, and have not yet arrived.

God provided everything for the people of Israel, and then commanded them to give back some of the precious materials to build the tabernacle. That is God's way. He wants to teach us to be givers. God could have provided a rich vein of gold or an abundance of materials supernaturally, but He did not. God made provision to individual people, and then taught them to give. God could have provided a superior edifice, but He called the people to build it for Him. How inferior it must have been to what God could have done; and yet, it was important that the people build the tabernacle with Moses, according to God's direction. The Bible instructs us that Jesus is preparing a habitation for us to dwell in with God, but notice the emphasis in the Bible: one verse or so mentioning a "mansion," and a few references in Revelation describing heaven, but dozens of whole chapters relating to the details of the tabernacle we are to build for God. When we build the house of God by edifying the saints and building up our spirits, we are fulfilling the vision of Moses, Bezaleel, and Israel. They worked on the physical house; but we are building up a spiritual house, made up of redeemed people.

God moved on the hearts of the people of Egypt to give to the Israelites gold, silver, and other costly materials. The Egyptians did not give this wealth to God, but to the people. God loves to provide for us, and then teaches us to be givers. It seems that the tithe was just enough to support the priests and the Levites, and that the tabernacles and temples of Israel were financed through free-will offerings. When we offer ourselves to God, He is able to make us into vessels unto honor. God is the potter, and we are the clay. The thing which makes us useful and valuable is not the raw material we give, but the

skilled hand of the Master Potter Who molds us.

Not only was the tabernacle a place used to relate the people to God, but it was also prophetic in nature. Every time God spoke a detail concerning the tabernacle, it was significant. Every number, color, and material is important. For example, the brazen altar was to be made of bronze, and it had to be the right dimensions, because bronze is a type of judgment of sin; and this altar was the first structure inside the tent wall.

The ark of the covenant was to be constructed from wood and overlaid with gold, to symbolize humanity clothed with the glory of God. The curtain outside the outer court was specifically designed to be one hundred by fifty cubits, and five cubits high. A cubit is about eighteen inches, the approximate distance between a man's elbow and the end of his finger. The curtain, then, contained 1,500 square cubits of material. Fifteen hundred years after the first tabernacle was built, Jesus came to earth.

The second section was the inner court. It was inside the tent, and was exactly ten by ten cubits, and twenty cubits long. As it happens, there were 2,000 cubic cubits in this section, which relates to the church age. The church age, from the time of the first coming of Christ to His second coming, is roughly 2,000 years. The Holy of Holies, the place where the high priest met with God, is a prophetic type of the Millennium. It was ten by ten by ten cubits, or 1,000 cubic cubits.

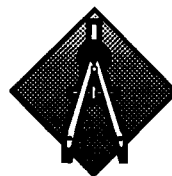
The tabernacle is a good example of praise and worship. There are many kinds of songs we sing to the Lord. David said to "*enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise....*" (Psalms 100:4) Whenever we worship, we are

spiritually coming into God's presence. Some songs relate to the outer court: the sacrifice of praise, dedication, and consecration. Other songs relate to the inner court, involving prayer, the Word, or body ministry. Songs about the Holy Spirit also fit into this category. Of course, worship is the goal, and relates to the Holy of Holies. We can only worship with our spirit when we are in God's presence. Praise leads us into worship, and prepares us to minister to God.

The three parts of the tabernacle are significant, because that number reflects both God and man. Three is the number of perfect witness. The tabernacle, a picture of the church, is an expression of the threefold vision and ministry of the church. The outer court signifies evangelism. The business of the church is to bring the lost to the Lord through salvation -- to bring people to the altar, so they can enter into a relationship with God. We are called to be soul-winners.

The inner court was inside the tent. There was a heavy curtain across the front. Only the priests were allowed to enter. We are a "royal priesthood." We gather as believers for fellowship -- represented by the table of shewbread; for prayer -- represented by the altar of incense; and for the Word of God -- represented by the golden lampstand, which had sixty-six parts. No one from the outside could see in, just as the world cannot see what God is doing among His people. The truths of God are mysteries, revealed to those who are born again and led by the Spirit.

The Holy of Holies relates to the third basic ministry of the church, and that is worship. Worship is ministering to God in the spirit. While praise is bragging about God, worship ministers to God. Worship is spiritual intimacy. We enter in with praise and thanksgiving, but we respond to God in both individual and corporate worship. Worship blesses the heart of God. God seeks worshippers, who will worship Him in spirit and in truth.



Methods

This is just a glimpse of the rich wealth of insights and prophetic types which are contained in the Tabernacle of Moses. It is not important to memorize all the details or the types related to it. The important idea to communicate is that everything in the Bible is alive with meaning and truth. Rather than being a boring set of instructions for something that was completed 3,500 years ago, we need to view the Bible as a rich prophecy for us today, as well as an example of God's ways. Again, the purpose of a good teacher is not merely to inform, but to inspire.

What other symbols and types do you find in study of the tabernacle? Remember that the Bible interprets its own types -- we do not simply make up the meanings ourselves.

World Evangelism

Volume 4

Lesson 15



Bible References

Psalms 37:5-6

Proverbs 16:3

Matthew 9:37-38

Matthew 18:14

Matthew 28:16-20

Mark 16:17-18

John 15:5

Acts 1:8

Acts 8:4

Acts 13:1-4

Romans 10:15

Romans 13:1-7

Romans 14:23

1 Corinthians 1:18

1 Corinthians 3:6-17

2 Corinthians 4:4

2 Corinthians 6:2

Ephesians 4:11

Ephesians 5:15-17

Philippians 2:9-11

Colossians 3:18-24

1 Thessalonians 2:19-20

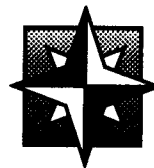
Hebrews 9:27

1 Peter 4:11

1 John 5:14

Revelation 20:15

Revelation 22:12



Theme

We all have a part in reaching the world for Christ.



Scripture Reading

Matthew 28:16-20

16 *"Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them.*

17 *"And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted.*

18 *"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*

19 *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*

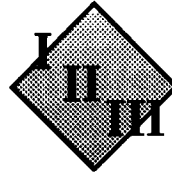
20 *"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, (even) unto the end of the world. Amen."*



Memory Verse

Matthew 28:19

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."



Outline

- I. **Jesus' Last Words Show the Importance of World Evangelism.**
 - A. The last words a person speaks are those things he considers most important.
 1. God understands how the human mind functions.
 2. This is the truth that the Lord wanted to most emphasize before He ascended into Heaven.
 3. By this fact, the Lord attached great importance to world evangelism.
 - B. These verses are the Lord's last mandate and mission outline to His people. Jesus believed that evangelism and discipleship are important, and God wants us to see that importance.
- II. **World Evangelism Was Designed By the Lord.**
 - A. The Lord gave a single command and focus -- to make disciples of all nations.
 1. "Nations" in the Greek means "ethnic groups."
 2. The Greek word for "teach" is in the command mode. It can also be translated, "make disciples."
 3. The words "go," "baptizing," and "teaching" describe the process of fulfilling this command.

4. This command is fulfilled in local churches, where people are won to Jesus, baptized unto the Lord, and taught or disciplined in the faith.
- B. God has appointed Christians to preach the Gospel.
1. God will not preach in our place, but He will preach the Word through us.
 2. We are partners with Jesus in the Gospel.
 3. Jesus is our ultimate authority and lifegiver; and without Him, we can bear no fruit. (John 15:5)
 4. God wants His servants to preach the Word as the "mouthpiece" of God. (1 Peter 4:11)
 5. Neither God nor angels preach the Gospel. God has designed that Christians preach where and when He calls them.
- C. The Gospel is God's power to save lost people. (1 Corinthians 1:18)
1. There is no other element that can save a soul. Education, morality, religion, social programs, and political efforts cannot save a person; but, hearing about the Lord's life and His death on the cross as our substitute for sin can -- if they will believe.
 2. Many language groups have not heard for the first time. Many people around us have never heard of the love of God and the power of the cross. God has given us the responsibility to tell them.

III. If We Love God, We Will Help Evangelize the Lost.

- A. You are to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and might. The highest expression of worship is obedience to God. (Colossians 3:18-24)
1. Obey your parents, and God will bless you.
 2. Obey civil authorities.
 3. Obey your church leaders.
 4. Obedience toward man should be "as unto the Lord."
- B. God is one God in three Persons.
1. We are to baptize believers in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
 2. All three Persons are distinct individuals, each with His own personality.
 3. All three Persons are God.
 4. All three Persons work in harmony with each other. God always works in an orderly way. The Father is first. The Son is second and does only what the Father does. The Holy Spirit is third and accomplishes the work.
 5. We know that Jesus is God, because He received worship. You are to worship God only.
- C. God has commanded us to make disciples of all nations.
1. If we love God, we will obey this command.
 2. Not everyone is called to go to other countries and cultures, but God wants all Christians to be willing and available.
 3. Jesus is the Lord and we are His servants. A servant needs to be

available, sensitive, and obedient to the voice of the master.

4. Even if we do not go to other nations, we can share Jesus' love with our family, friends, and schoolmates.

D. The disciples loved Jesus, so they obeyed the command. They *"went every where preaching the word."* (Acts 8:4)

IV. The Length Of Time Is Short.

A. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is for this age. Now is the time -- *"...now is the day of salvation."* (2 Corinthians 6:2)

B. People die every day.

1. Souls will not have a second chance in eternity to be saved. (Hebrews 9:27)
2. God loves people and does not want any of them to perish in eternity. (Matthew 18:14)
3. Only those who receive Christ as Savior and Lord have eternal life with Him. (Revelation 20:15)

C. The Lord will return to earth and end this age.

1. The time is short. The Lord could come at any time.
2. God wants us to use our time for His work. (Ephesians 5:15-17)
3. Jesus will return to reward us, if we are faithful to obey His command to make disciples of all nations. (Revelation 22:12; 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20)



Spiritual Truths

- God has emphasized His desire for every person to have eternal life in Jesus Christ; but, it is the responsibility of Christians to proclaim the message of salvation.
- Many people feel called to give their lives to the Lord's work. Those who give their lives to full-time work must be supported through our faithful tithes and offerings.
- God's heart and focus is on the salvation of the world; so, everything that a church does should be done with that goal in mind.
- It is possible to put the Gospel into every language group, but every church needs to do something for this to be accomplished -- send out workers and finance the cause of world evangelism.
- God uses the process of going to the unreached, wherever they are; baptizing new converts; and teaching in the local church under apostolic ministry, to make disciples of all men.
- Though we are not all called to go to other countries or cultures, every child of God is to be a witness.
- World evangelism is not an option -- it is a command.
- If we love the Lord, we must obey the command to be involved in world evangelism.

- God will reward us according to our faithfulness -- not according to ability or results.
- God can do anything, so He does not need talent; but, He needs available people who will obey Him and bring in the harvest.



Lesson Material

The passage that we are studying this week is commonly called "The Great Commission." It contains the will of God for His people in this, the Church Age.

This mandate is based on authority. Jesus said, "...All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore..." (Matthew 28:18-19) Every one with a mission must have authority for that mission, to be good and legitimate.

If a student were to leave a class without a pass, even for a good cause, the student would be corrected for leaving without authority. However, if the teacher asked him to leave the room for his purpose, and wrote him a pass, as long as he was fulfilling the assignment from the teacher, he would have good standing with both teachers and administrators.

In the same way, God works through channels of authority. He never violates those channels because He is the one who establishes them. (Romans 13:1-7)

This is the reason that in Jesus' commission to believers, He made sure that He defined the authority with which they were sent. It is the authority over all

of heaven and earth. Jesus is the ultimate authority. The Bible says that some day every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9-11)

God defines this authority, so we can be confident in the work that we do for Him. Insecure people always feel they are not doing the task the way their superiors want it done. Students do better work when a teacher gives good and clear instructions, because then the students know what is expected of them.

As we venture in our faith and share what the Lord has done for us, we must do so with faith. God has called us to make disciples. He will go with us. God wants His children to walk in faith, because "*whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*" (Romans 14:23)

When saints are involved in efforts to spread the Gospel, they can be sure that they are in the will of God and that they please God. Why? Because God's will has already been revealed -- that the church is to make disciples of every ethnic group in the world.

This is why we are to pray that God will thrust out laborers into the harvest. (Matthew 9:37-38) God only answers those prayers that are according to His will, plans, and purposes. (1 John 5:14)

When we, as God's people, really analyze our prayers and good works, we often find that we are praying and working with the wrong motive. Jesus is the Lord of the harvest, and He calls us to labor in His fields.

If a Christian will commit all of his ways to God, God will give him the wisdom to accomplish His work. It is

within the will of the Lord that a man or woman can have peace and a healthy conscience, knowing that they are working under the Lord's authority, and that He is pleased. (Proverbs 16:3; Psalms 37:5-6)

Along with the authority of heaven and earth comes the credentials to go and say whatever God commands us to say. This is why Jesus said that we would have power over demons, sickness, snakes, and that even poison would not hurt us in this mission. (Mark 16:17-18) What a great confidence and promise!

But the point is not for us to have power, but rather to win souls. Miracles are given to break through the barriers that Satan puts up to resist the Gospel. (2 Corinthians 4:4) This means that in the midst of battles with forces of spiritual darkness, if we are focused on the harvest, a believer can rest assured that the victory is the Lord's. Why? Because God is the all-powerful Creator of heaven and earth. It is by His authority that we preach, teach, and build the church.

The flow of God's authority is observed in the Trinity. All of the Persons in the Trinity are equal in nature and essence. However, they are distinct in roles. God is a God of order, not confusion. In His work, the Father does all things through the Son and by the Holy Spirit. We baptize people in the Name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, because a soul is saved because of the heart of the Father, Who sent His Son to die for our sin. A person is saved by the Holy Spirit, when that person calls on the Lord for salvation and is born again.

This reflects God's attitude for authority and order in the church. Jesus gave gifts to men for the building of the church. (Ephesians 4:11) He gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and

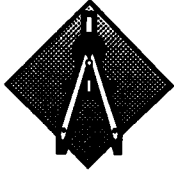
teachers. These are gifts of leadership that Jesus uses to direct the body of Christ. These are not the gifts of the Spirit, but of Christ.

The body of believers is given the gifts of the Spirit, so that by the Spirit, the work of building the church can be fulfilled under apostolic authority. The Father initiates the work; through the Son, direction is given in leadership; and by the Spirit, the work is accomplished in the body.

When God calls a person to go someplace to make disciples, baptize, and teach, the Lord will confirm it through leadership. (Acts 13:1-4) It was apostolic leadership that sensed the timing and direction of the Holy Spirit. Because Paul and Barnabas submitted to this leadership, they were sent out by the Holy Spirit with authority to make disciples and start new churches in Asia.

God wants every Christian to make his life available to the work of the Great Commission. When the Lord places a call on a life, He will make that known to leadership. When leadership sends a person out, that person goes with the authority of heaven and earth, in the power of the Spirit.

Until that time, the Lord calls us to be committed to the effort of reaching the world through the local church in which He has placed us. Some send and some are sent, but all are partakers of the fruit because we are laborers together for Him. (Romans 10:15; 1 Corinthians 3:6-17)



Methods

Take a world map with you to class. Obtain the latest statistics on the percentage of people who do not have a witness of the Gospel in their country and/or language. Shade in the map of the world with colored markers, using one color to represent those who are reached for Christ, and another color to represent those who are yet to be reached.

Ask your pastor for reports from various missionaries which describe the project and needs. Use these reports and pictures as an example of the work that the Lord is using for the fulfillment of "world evangelism."

Order the book, *The Smoke of the Thousand Villages* by David and Naomi Shibley, published by Thomas Nelson Publishers. Select a story from this book to demonstrate the faith and dedication of God's people who have made missions possible.

The work of world evangelism is a big job. No one person or church can fulfill this commission by themselves. However, when we work together as believers and churches in harmony, God will give us the authority and power that we need to do the job.

This is the reason each person is important and each person's role is crucial. To demonstrate this, ask one student to pick up an object which is obviously too heavy for him to lift by himself. When he cannot, ask two, then three, and so forth until the object is able to be lifted. This will illustrate that if we all remain obedient to God's call on our lives, that together we can accomplish the task.

Challenge each student to make their life available to God for world evangelism. You may want the students to close their eyes to eliminate a peer response and distraction, and then ask them to raise their hand to the Lord, if they are willing to be available in whatever way the Lord may direct. After their response, lead the group in a responsive prayer of dedication.

The Role of a Pastor

Volume 4

Lesson 16



Bible References

Psalms 75:6-7

Psalms 78:72

Psalms 145:15

Ecclesiastes 12:8-14

Matthew 16:16-19

Luke 12:48

John 18:36

John 21:15-17

Acts 20:28-30

1 Corinthians 1:26-27

Ephesians 2:22

Ephesians 4:11

Ephesians 5:22-33

Colossians 1:18

1 Timothy 2:1-2

1 Timothy 5:17-18

2 Timothy 2:2-4

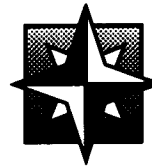
Hebrews 13:17

James 3:1

1 Peter 2:9

1 Peter 4:11

1 Peter 5:3



Theme

Jesus gives pastors to the body of Christ, to bring the church into maturity.



Scripture Reading

Ecclesiastes 12:8-14

8 *"Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all (is) vanity.*

9 *"And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and*

sought out, {and} set in order many proverbs.

10 "The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and {that which was} written {was} upright, {even} words of truth.

11 "The words of the wise {are} as goads, and as nails fastened {by} the masters of assemblies, {which} are given from one shepherd.

12 "And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books {there is} no end; and much study {is} a weariness of the flesh.

13 "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this {is} the whole {duty} of man.

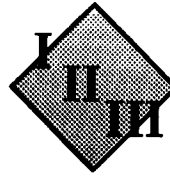
14 "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether {it be} good, or whether {it be} evil."



Memory Verse

Psalms 78:72

"So he fed them according to the integrity of his heart; and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands."



Outline

I. The Church.

A. Greek word "ecclesia."

1. Means "called out ones."
2. The church is people who are called out of the world to serve God.
3. Local church: a body of Christians brought together and ruled by Christ, for the purpose of:
 - a. Spiritual training;
 - b. Encouragement;
 - c. Worship;
 - d. Evangelism.

B. Biblical pictures of the church.

1. A temple in which God dwells. (Ephesians 2:22)
2. The bride of Christ. (Ephesians 5:22-33)
3. The army of the Lord. (2 Timothy 2:2-4)
4. A royal priesthood. (1 Peter 2:9)
5. The body of Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:27)
6. A flock of sheep. (John 21:15-17)

II. Church Government.

A. Not a democracy.

1. God did not call the church to be ruled by politics.
2. Not congregational rule.

B. Not a monarchy.

1. The pastor is not the king.

2. The pastor is God's servant, our overseer.

C. Not an oligarchy.

1. God did not design the church to be ruled by a committee.
2. The church is a spiritual organism, not just an organization.

D. The true church is a theocracy.

1. Ruled by God.
2. Built on the foundation: the revelation that Jesus is the Christ. (Matthew 16:16-19)
3. Jesus is the only true Head of the church. (Colossians 1:18)
 - a. God appoints leaders.
 - b. Psalms 75:6-7.
 - c. Whom God appoints, God anoints.
4. The church should be led by those who are called to hear from God.

III. The Role of the Pastor.

A. Greek "*poimen*."

1. Means "shepherd."
2. The leader, under Christ.
3. Overseer of the local church.

B. Guide.

1. God's messenger -- Greek word "*angelos*."
2. He must give an account to God. (Hebrews 13:17)

C. Teacher.

1. Responsible to get a word from God.
2. Rightly divide the word of truth.
3. Feed the people "*...meat in due season*." (Psalms 145:15)

4. Be God's voice -- mouthpiece, oracle. (1 Peter 4:11)

D. Protector.

1. Guard against false teaching.
2. Be mighty in spirit.
3. Protect the sheep from poisonous weeds -- doctrinal error.
4. Protect from wolves -- those who would come in and divide the flock for their own gain. (Acts 20:28-30)

E. Example to the people. (1 Peter 5:3)

1. The pastor must be morally pure and honest.
2. The pastor will be judged by a higher standard than the congregation. (James 3:1)

IV. Honor the Pastor.

A. Believe God to speak through him to you.

1. Honor the authority of the pastor as God's representative.
2. Respect God's servant.

B. Pray for him. (1 Timothy 2:1-2)

C. Bless him.

1. Communicate with him.
2. Bless him financially. (1 Timothy 5:17-18)



Spiritual Truths

- God is able to accomplish the most when churches are led and governed by spiritual, anointed pastors.
- Jesus, the Great Shepherd of the sheep, is the One Who sends a pastor to govern, guide, and guard the church.
- The pastor of a church is much like the father in a home; and they are all under Christ.
- A good pastor will labor diligently to feed the sheep a fresh, interesting, and anointed Word from God.
- There is a big difference between a Bible book report and a real Word from the Lord.
- A good way to honor God is to honor and bless His servant, the pastor.
- Having a good pastor to lead the church is a wonderful gift from God, and it should be appreciated.



Lesson Material

There is only one true universal church in the world, and that is the church of Jesus Christ. It is not a man-made organization, and it has no earthly headquarters. Jesus said, *"My kingdom is not of this world..."* (John 18:36) The true church is made up of all people who are

genuinely born again through faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ. They are adopted into the family of God, and will live with God in heaven when they die. There are many false churches, started and ruled by men or groups of people, who do great harm, because they give people the false hope that they are going to heaven. There are many false prophets and false teachers in the world. It is only by the Spirit and through the Word of God that we can discern the true from the false.

In the church, which is built by and on the Lord Jesus Christ, there are five kinds of spiritual leaders. All of them are gifts of Christ to the church. Paul said that Christ,

"...gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers."
(Ephesians 4:11)

These are not angelic beings, nor are they unique, brilliant individuals. They may not be the ones we would choose or elect, but God chooses whom He will to be the leaders of His Church.

This lesson concentrates on one specific type of apostolic ministry -- the pastor. Within the church universal are many local churches. The New Testament has much more to say about the local church than it does about the universal church. It is within the setting of the local church that we learn the most about Jesus, and we learn to get along with each other. The local church is the training ground for eternity, and the real expression of the universal church. Some people like to emphasize that they are "part of the whole body of Christ." This is often a poor excuse for people who cannot submit to authority or get along with the local church, so they travel from church to church, hoping to find one which will give them their way.

People who are grounded in the Spirit find that God has a way of "planting" His people in the local church. The local church is the greatest threat to the kingdom of darkness, and the pastor is the one who is God's special messenger and gift to the local church. The pastor must answer to God for the way he manages the people; and we will answer to God for the way we have responded to and treated God's servant. The pastor is not our "minister" (servant) -- he is God's servant, and our overseer. We need to pray diligently for him, so that he can hear a clear word from God when we gather together to worship. We need to honor the pastor's authority, because it is established by God.

God places many demands on the pastor of a church. The pastor must be of good moral character and have a good reputation, because people associate his lifestyle with the Lord and with the Gospel. As a teacher, he must be an example of what he teaches, or the Gospel will be rejected by more people.

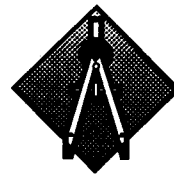
Why are some people pastors? It is important to realize that the call to preach is not a reward, nor a punishment, nor a compliment from God. God does not choose necessarily the smartest, or the most popular, or even the most spiritual person to be a pastor. Many very sincere Christians have struggled for years, trying to gather a flock to pastor, when God may not have called them to that. But they felt that they were so dedicated to God that surely they should be in full-time ministry. It is not necessarily so. If God did not call you to be a pastor or a preacher, do not do it. Find out what God wants you to do, and do it.

God simply sets us each in the place He sovereignly chooses, and equips us to do what He has called us to do. Paul said,

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, (are called): But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise..."
(1 Corinthians 1:26-27)

God seems to take particular delight in calling people who are not the "most likely to succeed," and use them to do exploits. The call to preach the Gospel is certainly an honor, but it carries with it a greater responsibility. "...For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required..." (Luke 12:48)

When a church honestly seeks God, God will provide the right pastor for that congregation, according to His own purposes. The way we respond to and treat this man of God is a reflection of both our faith and our faithfulness. Believe God to speak through your pastor. Pray for him every day.



Methods

Discussion:

What are the characteristics of a true New Testament church?

How is the role of a pastor of a church like that of a father in a good family?

How is a pastor of a church like a shepherd of a flock of sheep?

Spiritual Warfare

Volume 4

Lesson 17



Bible References

1 Samuel 15:23

Psalms 119:105

Matthew 5:14

Luke 21:8

John 8:12,44

Romans 1:21-22

2 Corinthians 4:1-10

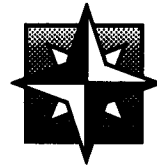
2 Corinthians 10:3-5

2 Corinthians 11:14

Ephesians 6:12-18

1 Timothy 4:1-4

2 Peter 1:16



Theme

There are spiritual, demonic enemies of Christianity, with whom we war.



Scripture Reading

2 Corinthians 4:1-10

1 *"Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;*

2 *"But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.*

3 *"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:*

4 *"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.*

5 *"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.*

6 *"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to (give) the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

7 *"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.*

8 *"(We are) troubled on every side, yet not distressed; (we are) perplexed, but not in despair;*

9 *"Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;*

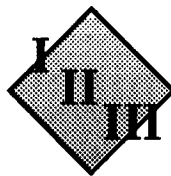
10 *"Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body."*



Memory Verse

Ephesians 6:12

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high (places)."



Outline

I. Light.

A. Children of the day.

1. *"Ye are the light of the world...."* (Matthew 5:14)
2. As is Jesus: *"...I am the light of the world...."* (John 8:12)

B. Honest.

1. Exposing hidden things.
2. Not crafty, tricky, subtle.
3. *"For we have not followed cunningly devised fables...."* (2 Peter 1:16)

C. *"Thy Word is ... a light unto my path."* (Psalms 119:105)

D. Light.

1. Reveals dirt and flaws (conscience, godly sorrow).
2. Reveals dangers and obstacles.
3. Overcomes the darkness.
4. Light is more distinct and effective in a dark place.
5. Illuminates truth -- is an image of God.

II. The God of this World.

A. Satan.

1. Satan is not God.
 - a. He is a created being.
 - b. He can only be in one place at a time.

- c. He cannot read your mind or know your heart.
 - 2. Masquerades as "...an angel of light." (2 Corinthians 11:14)
 - a. Satan is not ugly.
 - b. The devil does not have a tail or red tights.
 - c. Satan never says, "This is the devil speaking."
 - d. Satan might say, though, "This is God."
 - e. He will always lie, and twist the scriptures around. (John 8:44)
 - 3. Satan never tells the truth, and God never lies.
- B. Satan is the god of this world.
- 1. "Kosmos" - the order of the unregenerate world system.
 - 2. He rules in the hearts of men who are not submitted to God's rule.
 - a. "Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft...." (1 Samuel 15:23)
 - b. Witchcraft is the practice or act of coming under Satanic authority or influence.
 - 3. We are all servants in this life.
 - a. We are either servants of God;
 - b. Or, we are servants of the devil, and the flesh.
 - (1) Bound by sin.
 - (2) We cannot be righteous through our own effort.
- C. Satan is the prince of the power of the air.
- 1. He is not the ruler of the heavens.
 - 2. He was thrown down to the earth.
 - 3. Satan uses his evil helpers to bring temptation to, and condemnation against, the human race.

III. Blinds the Mind.

A. Christians.

- 1. The Holy Spirit leads believers into all truth.
- 2. The Holy Spirit illuminates our minds to reveal Jesus.

B. Unbelievers.

- 1. Those who do not believe in their hearts will have blinded minds.
- 2. The mysteries of the Gospel are not understood by non-believers.

C. Whatever is in our hearts will affect our minds.

- 1. Rebellion within the heart produces mental deception.
- 2. "...Their foolish heart was darkened." (Romans 1:21).
- 3. "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." (Romans 1:22) -- Refers to people who reject truth.

IV. Our Weapons Are not Carnal.

A. 2 Corinthians 10:3-5.

- B. As we as Christians are in spiritual warfare, we must rely on spiritual weapons.

C. Pulling down strongholds.

- 1. Imaginations.
 - a. Fantasies.
 - b. Pride.
 - c. Vanity.
- 2. Every high thing that exalts self against the knowledge of God.
 - a. Only through humility and repentance can we know God.
 - b. Pride prevents us from walking with God.

- c. Spiritual weakness causes the heart of man to puff up with pride.

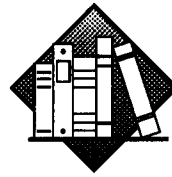
D. Our weapons. (Ephesians 6:12-18)

1. Sword of the Spirit -- the Bible.
2. Prayer.

E. Our defense.

1. Shield of faith.
2. Righteousness.
3. Hope of salvation.
4. Preparation of the Gospel.
5. God's mighty hand.

- God has twice as many good angels to dispatch on our behalf than the devil has demons; but we must pray in faith, so that God can receive the glory.
- The devil is a deceiver, and he loves to build his strongholds within the minds of people.



Lesson Material

We live in a society which is dominated by the secular. That is, in most communications and personal interactions, people tend to focus on the physical and the temporal, rather than on the eternal. Even many church members are more excited about sports and television than they are about the things of God. Only those who make a deliberate choice and a consistent effort become mighty in spirit.

The greatest danger in times of ease and prosperity is that we drift away from God. God's design is that we become very intimate and dependent on Him in life. Otherwise, we become aimless and essentially useless. When we drift away from God, we become vulnerable to spiritual deception. Paul told Timothy that in the latter times, some would depart from the faith. (1 Timothy 4:3-4) That is, they would take the Bible out of their thinking, out of their schools, and out of their plays and movies. They would become more worldly. What follows a decline in biblical thought is obvious: "...giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." (1 Timothy 4:1) In other words, the more society removes



Spiritual Truths

- One of Satan's most effective weapons against Christians is the deception that we are not in a serious spiritual warfare.
- The devil is a clever, deceptive angelic spirit, but he is not, and will never be, a god.
- The devil has a host of unholy helpers called demons, who are also spiritual creatures.
- The only place where we can be assuredly safe from demonic attack is under the blood of Christ and the authority of God.
- One cannot fight spiritual battles with a strong body or clever mind. One can only fight with humility and prayer.

godly standards and principles from their lives, the more people get caught up in moral impurity. When you take God out of your thinking, you remove the fear of the Lord, and immorality becomes very seductive. What follows the decline in moral standards? *"...and doctrines of devils."* (1 Timothy 4:1) The third step is an increase in the demonic activity. The New Age movement is based on a combination of self-centeredness, which removes a need for God and faith in Him; and eastern mysticism -- doctrines of devils.

Halloween is a time which should remind every Christian that there is a serious spiritual war of deception going on, and that we should be diligent. When speaking about the end times, Jesus often warned His followers that they should be alert for false christs who would teach false doctrine. (Luke 21:8) This is an age characterized by spiritual darkness. There are many false religions which appear to be Christian, but whose end is hell.

Satan is called *"...the god of this world..."* (2 Corinthians 4:4) We need to be careful not to think of him as a god, because this is his goal. He wants to be seen as a god. Actually, Satan is just one spirit. He is very smart. He is a criminal genius, but he is not God. He can only be in one place at a time, and he cannot read your thoughts. He is a god in the sense that anything can be a god, depending on the way people respond to them. He is a "god" to those who reject the Lordship of Jesus Christ. He manipulates the minds of those who are not walking in the light of Jesus Christ.

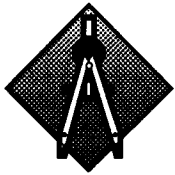
There is a warfare going on between light and darkness. Satan has his angels and demons, and God has His angels. The devil's primary weapon is deception. He

always lies. He has the ability to present his garbage in such a way that it looks as if it is light: *"...Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light."* (2 Corinthians 11:14) He looks as if he is bringing light and truth; but, actually, Satan brings darkness and deception.

Why do so many people choose darkness rather than light? The answer is found within the heart. There are two reasons a man cannot see: either he has no light, or he has no sight. If a person just needs light, he will respond when the light is turned on. There are billions of people in the world who have never heard the Name of Jesus one time. Generally, these people respond in great numbers when the light is turned on in their lives. But a blind person will not respond to light. No matter how much he is exposed to the Gospel, he cannot see it. This spiritual blindness is called "reprobation." This is a condition that is caused by a willful rejection of truth and a deliberate embracing of darkness. People who are reprobate have blasphemed against the light of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. If you are afraid that you might have committed the "unpardonable sin," then you have not. Those who are reprobate cannot be saved, because their conscience is dead. They have willfully turned away the Holy Spirit.

Faith is a function of the spirit and of the heart, but those who have willfully rejected the Holy Spirit will have their minds blinded by the devil. By contrast, we see in 2 Corinthians 4:6 that *"...God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts..."* What a wonderful thought. The same God who said *"...Let there be light..."* (Genesis 1:5), and billions of massive stars were ignited to illuminate the vast universe, is the same God who said, "Let there be light

in Billy's heart." Awesome! We need to realize that winning people to Jesus is not just a matter of convincing people to convert to our religion and believe our creed. There must be a spiritual birth by the Holy Spirit. God has to shine in their hearts. As you witness and talk about the things of God to the unsaved, pray for the work of the Holy Spirit. God will not do it without working through people and responding to their prayers; but we cannot do it without Him.



Methods

The primary emphasis here is to make young people aware of the spiritual world, and the fact that they must build up their spiritual strength through prayer, Bible reading, worship, and Christian fellowship. We need to encourage each other to be spiritually minded, and not neglect the supernatural.

It is obvious that there is a supernatural emphasis in the world on Halloween, but it is based on all kinds of deceptions. Many people are led to follow myths about death and dying. Satan always distorts and lies about everything. The focus on ghosts and the dead is a deception. Regardless of all the tales about the dead coming back in some form, the fact remains that the dead are either in heaven with Jesus, or in hell. They cannot come back. People who think they are communicating with the dead are either imagining things, or they are dealing with demonic spirits who imitate the dead.

It is important for young people to realize these dangers and be motivated to stay under spiritual covering. Nothing protects like the prayers of Christian parents, teachers, and pastors; and there is no safer place to be than under their authority. What are the primary devices of Satan to lead young people out from under authority, so he can attack their minds and hearts? Some of the most common weapons against our spirit are: rebellion, alcohol, drugs, lasciviousness, and worldly music.

Believe God for an Answer

Volume 4

Lesson 18



Bible References

Deuteronomy 28:7

Psalms 27:14

Psalms 37:4

Psalms 66:18

Psalms 139:23-24

Proverbs 28:9

Isaiah 59:1-2

Mark 9:23

Luke 8:41-55

James 4:2



Scripture Reading

Luke 8:41-55

41 *"And, behold, there came a man named Jairus, and he was a ruler of the synagogue: and he fell down at Jesus' feet, and besought him that he would come into his house:*

42 *"For he had one only daughter, about twelve years of age, and she lay a dying. But as he went the people thronged him.*

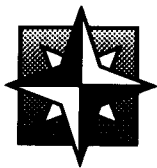
43 *" And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any,*

44 *"Came behind {him}, and touched the border of his garment: and immediately her issue of blood stanchd.*

45 *"And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press {thee}, and sayest thou, Who touched me?*

46 *"And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me.*

47 *"And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared*



Theme

Believe God, in spite of your circumstances.

unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately.

48 "And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.

49 "While he yet spake, there cometh one from the ruler of the synagogue's (house), saying to him, Thy daughter is dead; trouble not the Master.

50 "But when Jesus heard {it}, he answered him, saying, Fear not: believe only, and she shall be made whole.

51 "And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden.

52 "And all wept, and bewailed her: but he said, Weep not; she is not dead, but sleepeth.

53 "And they laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead.

54 "And he put them all out, and took her by the hand, and called, saying, Maid, arise.

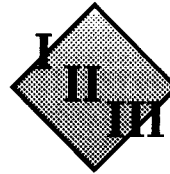
55 "And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and he commanded to give her meat."



Memory Verse

Mark 9:23

"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things {are} possible to him that believeth."



Outline

I. Jairus Sought Help from Jesus.

- A. Jairus came to Jesus with a humble spirit.
- B. Jairus came to Jesus without pride or embarrassment.
- C. Jairus explained his need to Jesus.

II. Obstacles to Receiving an Answer.

- A. The woman's healing caused delay for Jairus.
- B. In the meantime, Jairus received discouraging news about his daughter's death.
- C. Jairus believed in the sovereignty of God.

III. Jesus Rewards Faith.

- A. Jesus encouraged Jairus to believe for an answer.
- B. Jesus had unbelievers removed from the house.
- C. Jesus healed the daughter.

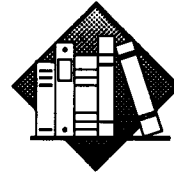
IV. Spiritual Laws to Follow to Receive Answered Prayer.

- A. One's relationship with God must be right.
- B. Resist Satan's discouragement.
- C. Believe God for an answer.



Spiritual Truths

- Our relationship with God must be right, if we expect God to answer our prayers.
- To have prayer answered, we must come to God with a humble and honest heart.
- Satan will try to prevent us from focusing our spiritual eyes on the Lord.
- Praise God for the answer to your prayers, even before you receive the answer.
- Do not be afraid to ask for something big from God, if you need a big miracle.



Lesson Material

How many of you are believing God for an answer to a special need in your life or family?

Today, we are going to read about a man who came to Jesus with a serious need; and Jesus helped him. There are truths in this story which can help us get a prayer answered.

There was a crowd of people around Jesus when Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue burst through and fell at Jesus' feet.

Notice in Jairus a lack of pride, as he fell at Jesus' feet in front of everyone present. When we want to receive something from God, we should come to Him with a humble spirit -- totally honest and without pride. God hates pride. Why was Jairus so humble? Luke 8:42 explains that Jairus had only one daughter, and that she was dying. The story relates that Jesus agreed to go to Jairus' house.

Could Jesus have healed the daughter from where He stood in the crowd? Perhaps Jairus did not have faith for that big of a miracle. We do see that he had to wait to receive the miracle.

If we do not trust God totally, that does not mean that God will not answer our request -- however, it may cause unnecessary delay in receiving that which we urgently desire, and this can give Satan an opportunity to hinder us.

God sometimes delays giving us an answer if it will serve His purpose in our lives -- or in the lives of others.

Jairus experienced a delay in the healing of his daughter. Jesus took time to heal a woman. It appears that she was not an important woman in the eyes of men, but she was precious to Jesus. You are precious to Jesus, too!

Can you imagine Jairus trying to hurry Jesus along and desperately hoping for no further delays? Perhaps the devil was using the opportunity to place anxiety within Jairus' heart. Satan tries to discourage us whenever we are about to receive something from God.

As Jairus and Jesus were on their way to Jairus' house, word came to them that Jairus' daughter had died. Jesus knew that faith can be shaken at times such as this, and was quick to strengthen Jairus. The only requirement for Jairus was to believe! Can we learn something from this example? God wants us to learn that all things are possible when we believe. Let us not let doubt what God desires to do for us.

However, God is sovereign. He is in charge. He knows what is best, and it may not be what we are asking for.

Finally, Jesus arrived at Jairus's home, and indeed the girl was dead. People had already gathered and were weeping over the loss of Jairus' daughter. No faith or encouragement could be gained from that crowd. Jesus had everyone but Peter, James, John, and Jairus and his wife leave the house. Jesus only wanted those few in the room who would exercise faith.

Share your prayer requests with those who will encourage you and believe God with you. There may only be a few!

Jesus took the girl by the hand and said, "...Maid, arise." (Luke 8:54) Immediately, she did.

What would have happened if Jairus had listened to the words of the unbelieving crowd, rather than the words of Jesus?

What will happen if you stop trusting God for the answer to your greatest prayer request? If you will trust in the Lord, God will honor you.

There are spiritual laws or principles which are involved in having our prayers answered. God is perfectly just and right in all He does. He does not arbitrarily answer some prayers and not others, just because of the mood He is in. God knows all the factors involved in each situation, but we seldom do. We need to pray and seek His will, and then trust Him to do what is best.

Our relationship with God must be right:

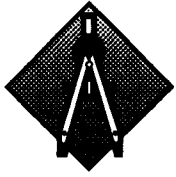
"Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid (his) face from you, that he will not hear." (Isaiah 59:1-2)

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." (Psalms 66:18)
Iniquity can be an attitude of rebellion against our parents, teachers, or God's will.

Proverbs 28:9 tells us that if we carry sin in our heart, our prayers are an abomination to God.

Come before God with a humble spirit. (Psalms 139:23-24) David trusted in God's mercy.

Jesus said, "...If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." (Mark 9:23)



Methods

Ask for something big if you need something big -- *"...ye have not, because ye ask not."* (James 4:2)

"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." (Psalms 37:4)

Guard against Satan's discouragement. Psalms 27:14 says, *"Wait on the Lord: be of good courage...."*

Deuteronomy 28:7 says, *"...Thine enemies...shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways."* Satan is our enemy, but he has been defeated.

Praise the Lord for the answer even before you receive it. The Bible tells us several incidents where, as the people of Israel praised the Lord, their enemies were defeated.

If you have a need in which you want God to intervene, raise your hand and let us agree in prayer.

God's Mercy for All

Volume 4

Lesson 19



Bible References

Psalms 103:17

Jeremiah 33:3

Jonah 1-4

Romans 8:28

whence comest thou? what is thy country? and of what people art thou?

9 *"And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry land."*

Jonah 2:5-7

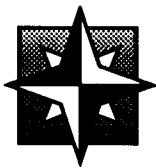
5 *"The waters compassed me about, (even) to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head.*

6 *"I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars (was) about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God.*

7 *"When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple."*

Jonah 4:8

"And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, (It is) better for me to die than to live."



Theme

God's mercy is abundant, and it is for all people.



Scripture Reading

Jonah 1:8-9

8 *"Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil is upon us; What is thine occupation? and*



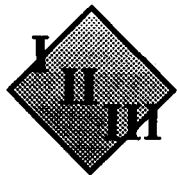
Memory Verse

Psalms 103:17

"But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children."

Jeremiah 33:3

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."



Outline

I. Jonah Fled from God's Command.

A. God's call to Jonah.

1. Jonah was to go to Nineveh, the great capital city of Assyria.
2. Nineveh was a large and important city.
3. As in Sodom, the wickedness of Nineveh was very great.
4. As always, God wanted to provide warnings before destruction and judgment.
5. God called His prophet, Jonah, to warn the people of Nineveh to repent.

B. Jonah's disobedience.

1. Jonah was reluctant to go to Nineveh to preach to the people.
2. Jonah was a prophet, and could see spiritual things.
3. Jonah probably knew God's will, but chose to go his own way.

C. God revealed His power over elements and man to accomplish His purpose.

D. The sailors turned to the true God through Jonah's apparent failure.

E. Jonah's prayer and release.

II. Jonah's Obedience.

A. The forgiving God gives Jonah a second chance.

B. Jonah's warning to the Ninevites and convicting story.

C. The Ninevites repent and turn to the Lord.

D. God's response to the repentant Ninevites.

E. Jonah's depression and physical exhaustion.

F. God's response to Jonah.



Spiritual Truths

- God's love and mercy is for all people.
- God warns people.

- God controls the elements.
- God is slow to anger.
- God expects obedience.
- God knows and will implement whatever it takes to get us to accomplish His purpose.
- God is forgiving beyond what man can imagine.



Lesson Material

Jonah was a prophet of God. One responsibility of a prophet is to warn people of the judgment of God on those who will not repent. The Lord told Jonah to go to Nineveh, a great city which was estimated to be sixty miles across. Jonah's mission was to warn the Ninevites that the Lord was aware of their wickedness, and that if they did not repent, they would face judgment. Jonah rose up. But instead of going to Nineveh, in enemy territory, he went in the opposite direction. He paid his fare and boarded a ship going to Tarshish, a distant commercial city. Jonah knew God's will for his life. But, instead of doing what God wanted, Jonah did what he wanted to do.

God, who is omniscient (all-knowing), had a particular mission for Jonah to do, and knew where he was hiding. So our God, being omnipotent (all-powerful) sent a great wind upon the sea, and the water became so violent that the ship was in great danger. Just because you are going through a "storm" (difficult time) in your life does not prove you are out of the will

of God. Even when we are doing right, we can face opposition. But in this case, the problem arose because Jonah was not in the will of God. Notice, too, that this storm affected the people in the ship with Jonah. When we do wrong, it can affect others who are with us. We want to seek to be a positive influence in the lives of others.

God could have used any means to get Jonah's attention. He often uses natural laws and means to make us submit to His will. Jonah was asleep in the bottom of the boat while the men on deck fought the waves. These men were seasoned sailors and knew that this was no ordinary storm. They believed in false gods, and started crying out to these false gods for help.

The storm became even more violent and the men had to start throwing precious cargo overboard to keep from capsizing. The captain came to Jonah and begged him to pray to his God, too, because the crew feared for their lives.

It is hard to imagine the storm getting worse, but it did. The men finally realized that someone must be the cause of this evil. They cast lots -- similar to drawing straws -- and the lot fell on Jonah!

Read Jonah 1:8-9.

The men knew Jonah was fleeing from his God, so they begged him to tell what they could do to stop the storm. Jonah told the men to cast him into the sea, and it would become calm. The men did not want to do this, and they tried once more to row to shore; but finally, in desperation, they beseeched Jonah's God, who is our God, to not hold them accountable for what they were about to do. They picked Jonah up and threw him into the sea, and immediately the sea became calm. At that moment, the sailors knew that Jonah's God, the God who could stop the storm,

was the real God. The Bible tells us that they began to worship, sacrifice, and make vows (promises) to God.

Jonah probably never imagined that the sailors would come to our Lord as a result of his ordeal. He must have felt as if he had failed God and himself, and was now about to die. You may never know in this lifetime the effect your life and actions have had on other people.

You may feel as if you have failed God, your friends and family; but in truth, the little things you have done are of great value to God. Praying for a friend or situation, bringing someone to Sunday school or church, leaving a Gospel tract where someone would pick it up, contributing items to send to mission outreaches -- all of these things have a "ripple effect," and you may never see in this lifetime the beautiful things the Lord has done with your efforts.

Note to teacher: This would be an excellent place to insert a story of a modern example of one who gave to the Lord, and how the Lord used that effort beyond any expectation.

The Lord prepared a big fish to swallow Jonah. Note again, as in so many Bible stories, God can control even the minds of creatures. It is a miracle in itself that the jaws and teeth of the big fish did not crush Jonah as it sucked him in.

Jonah was squeezed in that fish for three long days and three long nights, in utter darkness and frantic peril, gasping for a pocket of air. There was no sure footing -- just slippery sides along with swirling water, juices, pieces of fish and slimy seaweed wrapped around his face and head.

Try to imagine how terrifying this experience was. It was not like the scene in "Pinnochio," where Pinnochio was on a raft with lots of room. The fish swam up and down, causing Jonah to feel himself taken to the depths of the sea. Listen to Jonah's words:

"The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God. When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple."
(Jonah 2:5-7)

God hears us when we call to Him with a repentant heart; and Jonah was offering praise, in spite of his horrible situation. God also knows exactly what it will take for each person to come to the place of obedience. God did not enjoy seeing Jonah suffer, but He knew just how long to make the trial. When Jonah was ready to obey, God quickly delivered him, by causing the fish to vomit him up on dry ground. No fish likes dry ground -- God made the fish put Jonah in a safe place.

Can you imagine the joy when Jonah could feel warm sunshine, dry wind and smell beautiful fresh air? Oh the splendor of being free at last! God's abundant mercy was giving him a second chance, and God's mercy is the same for us today.

Again God spoke to Jonah,

"Arise, and go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." (Jonah 3:2)

Do you think Jonah was quick to respond? You had better believe he was!

Romans 8:28 tells us that God causes

"...all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

Jonah's experience gave him a whole new purpose and determination to obey. He also had acquired an amazing testimony, to convince the people that God would indeed destroy them in forty days if they did not repent.

Jonah went to Nineveh and boldly told his whole story with a great anointing. People listen when a person is excited and convincing about what they are saying; and the people of Nineveh believed. Even the king heard and believed. He proclaimed a great fast for all of the people, and even the animals. They humbled themselves and prayed; and God saw that they were sincere, and revoked His judgment because of His great love and mercy. Remember that we all were made for His pleasure, and He wants no one to perish.

Now our story takes an interesting turn: Jonah was angry and displeased when God changed His plans. God had just forgiven Jonah for his disobedience and now Jonah was angry that He was forgiving the Ninevites.

Have you ever felt that someone -- such as a younger brother or sister -- deserved to be punished, and you were secretly happy when they received their punishment? This is possibly is the way Jonah felt. He said something like this to God, "I knew you would be merciful and gracious and slow to anger. Please just let me die." Then Jonah prepared a little place

outside the city and waited to see what would happen.

It was hot and the Lord made a gourd plant to grow near Jonah. The big leaves gave him shade from the hot sun and Jonah was glad for it. Then the Lord made a cutworm come and gnaw at the plant, so that it withered.

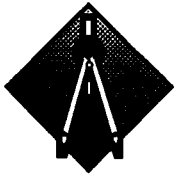
"And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, (It is) better for me to die than to live." (Jonah 4:8)

God then spoke to Jonah and said,

"...Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night: And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and (also) much cattle?" (Jonah 4:10-11)

God's nature has not changed -- He wants all people to love him. He warns people of coming judgment, to give them a chance to repent. God expects obedience, but His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting.

Pray. Thank God for mercy. Pray for direction, and pray that God will give you the grace to obey His direction.



Methods

Display a map showing Nineveh, the sea and Tarshish.

With chalk, divide the blackboard into three sections. Ask those who arrive to class early to use their imagination to draw scenes from the story on the board. For example: Jonah being cast from the ship, Jonah in the fish, the storm, etc. Give the students some good details from the story. Refer to the board during your lesson.

As always, encourage students to bring their Bibles to class with them. On the board, list the scripture references to be read during class which tell the story. As this story is longer to read than many, it may be wise to use teachers with strong voices to read the parts of God, Jonah, the ship captain and crew, and the Ninevites.

Ask the students to think of a person they have a hard time showing mercy to. Ask them to pray that the Lord will teach them to be merciful and show mercy, even as He is so often merciful to each of us.

When Jesus Rules the World

Volume 4

Lesson 20



Bible References

Isaiah 11:6-9

Jeremiah 29:11

Ezekiel 43:7

Joel 3:18

Matthew 24:30-31

Acts 1:9-11

Acts 2:21

Romans 11:29

1 Corinthians 15:20-25

2 Corinthians 4:4

Ephesians 2:2

Ephesians 4:8-10

Ephesians 6:11-12

Galatians 6:9

1 Thessalonians 4:16-18

James 4:7

1 Peter 5:8

Jude 9

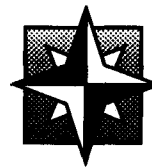
Revelation 1:7

Revelation 7:9-17

Revelation 11:11-12

Revelation 14:1-5

Revelation 20:1-7



Theme

God's ultimate plan for this earth is that Jesus will rule in the hearts of people.



Scripture Reading

Revelation 1:7

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the

earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."

Revelation 20:1-6

1 *"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.*

2 *"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,*

3 *"And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.*

4 *"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and {I saw} the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received {his} mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

5 *"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This {is} the first resurrection.*

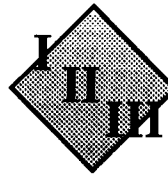
6 *"Blessed and holy {is} he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."*



Memory Verse

Revelation 20:6

"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years."



Outline

- I. **The Second Coming of the Lord.**
 - A. God promised the nation of Israel that He would give them a king who would rule them in righteousness.
 1. Israel was scattered as a nation, because they rebelled against the Lord.
 2. God chose Israel to be His earthly people.
 3. The gifts and callings of God never change. (Romans 11:29)
 4. Jesus was born to be the promised King.
 5. The nation of Israel rejected Jesus as their King, and had Him crucified by the Roman Empire.
 6. God used the rejection of the Jews to provide a sacrifice for our sin, so we could be saved.
 7. God has not forgotten His promise to His earthly people, Israel. The

church is His heavenly people, temporarily on earth.

B. There are two comings of the Lord.

1. In the air, to receive the members of the church. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)
2. On the Mount of Olives, when every eye shall see Him return as the lightening flashes from the east to the west. (Matthew 24:30-31; Acts 1:9-11)

II. The Sentence of Satan.

A. Satan is called by four names in these verses.

1. Dragon -- cruelty.
2. Serpent -- artful, malicious person; sly cunning.
3. Devil -- false accuser, slanderer, the tempter of man.
4. Satan -- the accuser, the adversary of Christ and His people.

B. From these names and the fact that Satan can be bound, we see that he is a person, not just an evil influence. He is revealed in the Bible as:

1. "Prince of the power of the air." (Ephesians 2:2)
2. "God of this age." (2 Corinthians 4:4)
3. "Ruler of the powers of darkness." (Ephesians 6:11-12).
4. Michael, the powerful archangel dared not rail in accusation against Satan. (Jude 9) Yet, Satan is not all powerful; he is not God, because just one angel of no particular power or position can bind him and place him in a bottomless pit.

C. Satan is bound for a thousand years.

1. Bound to the side of the pit, since there is no bottom.
2. He will be bound because of his rebellion against the plans and purposes of God.
3. The term "1,000 years" is used six times in Revelation 20:1-7 and gave rise to the term "millennium" (from the Latin word "mille" meaning "thousand," and "annus" meaning "year").

D. In Christ, we have victory over Satan and all the powers of darkness.

1. We are in a spiritual battle.
2. We already know the outcome of that battle. Satan will lose, and Jesus Christ is the Victor. When Jesus returns, Satan will receive his sentence and be placed in a prison house for one thousand years.
3. When Satan reminds you of your past, you need to remind him of his future.

III. The Saints Resurrected.

A. The "first resurrection" is a term which includes all those that will be raised to eternal life in Jesus Christ and be given a glorified body. (1 Corinthians 15:20-25) There are seven companies of the redeemed that will be resurrected:

1. Christ, the firstfruits. (1 Corinthians 15:20)
2. Old Testament saints. (Ephesians 4:8-10)
3. Church-age believers. (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)
4. Tribulation saints. (Revelation 7:9-17)
5. 144,000 Israelites. (Revelation 14:1-5)

6. The two witnesses. (Revelation 11:11-12)
 7. The Great Tribulation martyrs. (Revelation 11:11-12)
- B. The first resurrection encompasses all who will receive eternal life in Jesus Christ.
1. These do not experience the second death.
 2. Born twice, and you die once. Born once, and you die twice.
 3. The second resurrection is unto eternal death.
 4. This passage reveals to us that there will be 1,000 years between the first and second resurrections.
- C. All saints will give an account of their works.
1. We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. This refers to the review stand in the ancient Olympics, where athletes would receive their medals for competing.
 2. God will call our lives into account. Those decisions that we have made for Christ will be rewarded with eternal responsibility.
 3. Our eternal position is determined by our faithfulness to God's plan now.
- As children of God, we have victory in every situation, because Jesus died, rose again, and will come again.
 - God wants us to live for Him, and will reward us for labor for Him.
 - We must continue to do good until the Lord returns or takes us home with Him. We are promised a spiritual harvest if we do not give up. (Galatians 6:9)
 - The Lord will return for those who love Him.
 - God wants us to live each day as if it was the one in which Jesus would come for us.
 - Character is the sum total of our decisions. Only godly character will stand in eternity.
 - All of the problems of the world will be resolved by the second coming of Christ.
 - Jesus will rule the world through the nation of Israel for 1,000 years.
 - During the millennium, there will be peace, because all nations will serve and worship the Lord.
 - God wants the reign of King Jesus to begin in your thoughts, heart, and will today. When you yield to Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, you allow His will to be done here on earth as it is in heaven.



Spiritual Truths

- God is in control of all things.
- Every creature, even Satan, must yield to the will of God.



Lesson Material

This chapter is the Continental Divide of scripture. There are two interpretations. The two views consist of the premillennialists, who use a single interpretive principle; and the amillennialists, who use an inconsistent or dual principle in interpretation.

Premillennialists find in the vital chapter of Revelation 20 that, after the visible coming of Christ explained in Revelation 19, Jesus will set up His earthly kingdom and reign with His saints for a thousand years. Satan, joining the anti-christ and the false prophet who have already been cast into the lake of fire, will be confined to the abyss. Later, the evil trio are permanently sentenced to the lake of fire, to remain there forever in punishment.

Amillennialists find an earthly reign of Christ neither predicted in the Old or New Testaments, nor realized in a thousand year kingdom. According to the beliefs of amillennialists, Satan was bound by Christ (contra. 1 Peter 5:8) and remains in such imprisonment throughout the present church age. As to the two resurrections of Revelation 20, one is said to be spiritual and the other literal and final.

Since we need to be consistent in our interpretation, and because the early church believed in a premillennialist view until Augustine rebelled against it, it is suggested that the premillennialist view be adopted and emphasized. It is the only view which makes sense of the scriptures being interpreted.

Between Revelation 20:2-7 there are six mentions of "1,000 years." If this number is symbolic, of what is it a symbol? It cannot mean that which is endless, because the Greek language, as well as the Hebrew, has ample means to convey the thought without ambiguity.

The Lord Jesus Christ has already proclaimed victory over Satan and the powers of darkness. Satan's only weapons against God's children are temptation through deception, the fear of death, and the accusations which he makes against believers in God's presence.

Satan cannot touch a believer without God's permission. This is proven in the story of Job, in Job 1:10. Satan cannot arbitrarily destroy properties, cause sickness, or kill believers without God's authorization. What God does permit, is for the good of His children, not for destruction. (Jeremiah 29:11) When we are in the will of God, we can say that "*...all things work together for good....*" (Romans 8:28)

Jesus settled all these issues in His earthly ministry. He won the victory over every subtle temptation of Satan, and completely obeyed the Father in everything. He defeated Satan's attack against believers by dying for our sin and, with His own power, rising again. The blood of Jesus covers our unrighteousness, so the devil cannot successfully accuse believers before the Father. The Lord rose from the dead, and He has taken away the fear of death that Satan uses against those who are unsaved.

To prove that Jesus has legally satisfied all the requirements, we see that when He returns to earth, one angel will bind Satan from his deceptive activities for 1,000 years. Satan has already been dealt with and has been legally defeated. God will

work all things according to His plan and timing, and Satan cannot prevent it.

Satan cannot be bound by believers. He can be recognized and resisted. He has no power over Christians. If we could bind him now, then why will he need to be bound in the future?

After the 1,000 year sentence has been completed, Satan will be loosed for a short while. Why? Simply, God will reveal to us that Satan has not changed his nature, and that man still is susceptible to the devil's wiles and schemes.

The millennial reign of Christ will change the order of the earth. That age will be characterized by several differences in religious, social, political, medical, biological and spiritual orders.

The government of the world will be a theocracy, for the Lord will rule all nations. (Luke 1:33) The capitol of the world will be Jerusalem. The center of worship will be the rebuilt temple in Jerusalem. (Ezekiel 43:7) Satan will be bound from tempting and accusing people. Palestine will become a beautiful garden. (Joel 3:18) The animal kingdom will lose its violence and fear. (Isaiah 11:6-9) Human life will be prolonged. The Old and New Testament saints who had been martyred will sit on thrones and reign with Jesus Christ. (Revelation 20:4)

When the saints are resurrected, they will be like Jesus. That is, they will have a spiritual, glorified body like the one Jesus had when He rose from the dead. Jesus could travel instantly, materialize and dematerialize, go to heaven and earth, eat food, and communicate with God, angels, and people. In the resurrection, believers will receive a changed body which is immortal. That is, death can never touch it again. That body will possess all the

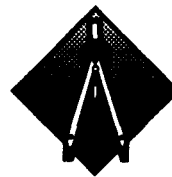
properties of the Lord's body, for we shall be like Him.

In the resurrection, there will be no more questions. God plans to make us aware of all things in the same way that we are known to God. God will answer the unanswered questions. All things will become clear in that day.

This is the hope of the believer. The resurrection of the dead is the ultimate hope of the believer. Hope is confident expectation. The world falsely interprets hope simply as wishful thinking. Our future in God is a sure thing, which we can look forward to and live for.

As children of God, our eternal position is being determined today. God has called us to bear fruit. Yielding to God's will and abiding in Jesus Christ produces that fruit in our lives. God will review our lives according to our works and motives. God will reward His children for their faithfulness, not talents or abilities. Saints are "on probation" and in training for eternal activities.

God wants all of His children to live each day in the light of eternity.



Methods

This lesson could be taught over a three week period.

Week One.

The Second Coming of the Lord. (Teach "I." in this outline.)

Chalk Talk:

Create a time line to demonstrate the two comings of the Lord (below in bold) in relationship to God's plan of the ages.

Cross -- Church Age -- **Coming in the clouds** -- Tribulation of 7 years -- **Jesus returns to be King** -- Millennium -- Eternity.

Discuss the grace of God to keep a nation as His people, even though they rebelled against God. Emphasize that it is not God's desire to make us suffer, but to bring us back to Himself.

When Jesus returns, He will bring Israel back to Himself. God never removes His gifts and callings on our lives.

Week Two.

The Sentence of Satan. (Teach "II." in this outline.)

Discussion: How powerful is Satan?

Satan will use his power of lying to tempt Christians to disobey God. We are to love God. Love is expressed in obedience.

When you were tempted to do something wrong, what will you do? How will you know that it is wrong?

The Bible teaches that if we resist the devil, he will flee (run away scared) from you. (James 4:7) Your greatest weapon against the devil is the truth. The truth is in the Word of God.

Christians are in a spiritual battle. This battle will continue until the Lord returns. God has never lost a battle. He causes His children always to triumph. The battle belongs to the Lord.

The only thing a Christian must do to gain victory is to yield to God's will for his life, trusting God to work out the details.

In this attitude you will have peace, and God will fight your battle. Remember that the war has already been won.

Week Three.

The Saints Resurrected. (Teach "III." in this outline.)

Discussion:

What will you be like when the Lord returns?

In the resurrection, we will be changed in our bodies. The law of sin and death now works within us. In the resurrection, sin will be removed and death will leave.

Where will you be when the Lord returns? Only those who are born again will be raised with Him. "...Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." (Acts 2:21)

Our bodies will not be under the limitations they are now. Space travel will become a normal part of life. Yet, eating and friendship will also still be enjoyed. Most importantly, God will give us a supernatural ability to relate to Him.

What will you say about your life when you see Jesus? As young people, you have your whole life before you. What will your life mean when the Lord reviews it?

You can make some important decisions now which will affect your character forever. Choose good friends, because you will become like them. Submit to God's plan for your life, because it is the best plan. Determine not to give in to the temptations of Satan to take drugs or to lie and cheat. If you commit yourself to God's call on your life, you will be rewarded in eternity.

Anger

Volume 4

Lesson 21



Bible References

Genesis 4:3-10

1 Kings 21:1-16

Matthew 21:12-16

Mark 3:1-6

Acts 7:54-60

Ephesians 4:26

12 *"And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves,*

13 *"And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.*

14 *"And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.*

15 *"And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the son of David; they were sore displeased,*

16 *"And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?"*

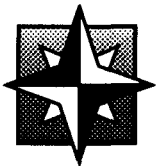
Mark 3:1-6

1 *"And he entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand.*

2 *"And they watched him, whether he would heal him on the sabbath day; that they might accuse him.*

3 *"And he saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth.*

4 *"And he saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil?"*



Theme

God has given us an emotion called anger, which can be used for good or evil.



Scripture Reading

Matthew 21:12-16

to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.

5 "And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched (it) out: and his hand was restored whole as the other.

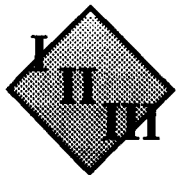
6 "And the Pharisees went forth, and straightway took counsel with the Herodians against him, how they might destroy him."



Memory Verse

Ephesians 4:26

"Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath."



Outline

I. What Is Anger?

A. Definition of anger.

1. Anger is a strong emotion of hostility, which causes us to react.
2. God gave us anger so that our bodies can come from a state of rest to full readiness -- instantly.

3. Selfish anger is an intense response to a perceived violation of rights.

B. Uses of anger.

1. Anger generates energy which causes us to hurt or destroy that which makes us angry, and thus allows us to survive.
2. Righteous anger causes us to right wrongs.

II. Example of "Evil" Use of Anger. (1 Kings 21:1-16)

A. Anger -- 1 Kings 21:4.

- B. Ahab's selfishness brought about a wrong use of anger, to get his own way.

III. Examples of "Good" Anger.

A. Jesus gets angry with sin. (Mark 3:5)

- B. Jesus rights wrong. (Matthew 21:12-16)



Spiritual Truths

- Anger can cause us to sin.
- Anger can protect us.
- Anger can motivate us to change things.
- We should not make close friendships with people who are given to anger, because we will tend to become like them.



Lesson Material

Many times we are taught that all anger is wrong. That teaching puts us under condemnation. We all experience anger -- even Jesus.

Anger is a strong emotion; and God gave us our emotions. Therefore, if God gave it to us, it is not bad, but good. As we know, everything that is good remains good only if used correctly. The scripture warns us not to sin in our anger. (Ephesians 4:26) Anger is defined as a strong emotion of hostility, which causes us to act. It allows our bodies to quickly go from a state of rest to full readiness for action. Anger generates energy which will enable us to hurt or destroy that which angers us. Anger and its effect on our bodies is God-given for protection and survival. Anger in its positive form can cause us to right wrongs.

People have displayed extraordinary feats of strength due to the emotion of anger. An article in a local newspaper stated that a young girl was trapped in a burning car. In the accident, the car had rolled on its side, the doors to the car could not be opened, even by the wrecker at the scene. A truck driver saw the activity, stopped and ran over to the car. He jumped up on the car, pulled the door open, reached down and rescued the young girl. In a later interview, it was discovered that his daughter had died in a fire. When he saw what was happening to this other child, a surge of adrenaline enabled him to do a superhuman feat.

When you have gotten angry and the situation is passed, have you noticed how

your body shakes from the increased flow of adrenaline? The heart beat increases, the breathing rate increases, and so forth -- all as the body's way to prepare you for a crisis.

In this lesson, the reactions of two men who responded in anger will be examined. One man used anger for evil and the other for good. First is King Ahab, whose account is found in 1 Kings 21:1-16. He was angry because he did not get his way. He wanted Naboth's land. Because Ahab was angry, he allowed his wife to kill Naboth so he could get Naboth's land. Anger, when used in the wrong way, can kill people. Other examples of wrong reaction to anger are Cain (Genesis 4:3-10) and the crowd around Stephen. (Acts 7:54-60) These situations resulted in death.

There are many examples in our own families of other members of the family becoming angry. We can read where family battles often result in tragic injury or murder. Anger can cause words to be spoken that do great damage to the one who is receiving the verbal attack. We need to make the students aware that the initial anger is not wrong, but it is necessary to express it correctly.

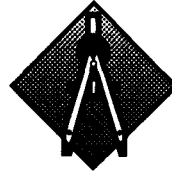
Jesus became angry. Let us look toward Him for an example of how anger can be handled without sin. In Mark 3:5, Jesus became angry at the hardness of men's hearts. They had rules against even doing good on the sabbath. Jesus did not get angry and stomp off, lose control, or sulk. Jesus became angry, remained in control and healed the man. He did not sin in His anger.

Another time Jesus was angry and took drastic action. Matthew 21:12-16 recounts one of the times Jesus cleansed the temple. He became angry with what He saw -- people turning His Father's house into a

den of thieves. He turned over chairs and tables and cast out all who bought and sold. Notice that He did not go off in a huff, but rather continued ministering to the people. He healed the blind and the lame. Jesus' anger caused Him to right a wrong; but, He did not kill the people or their animals. In Jesus' anger, He did not sin.

Anger is an emotion we all feel. It is normal and good, if used correctly. It helps us to survive, it helps us to right wrongs, and it helps us to make changes.

When anger is inappropriately vented, we fall into sin; and not only will we suffer, but others could possibly be made to suffer.



Methods

If time allows, discuss real situations where anger entered. How was it handled -- in an appropriate or inappropriate manner? If the anger resulted in sin, what could have been done, instead? Encourage the students to look critically at the situations they actually face.

Role play scenarios in which anger will have to be dealt with. Have cards to assign the child a role as a parent, teacher, or child. In each scenario, portray a wrong reaction in anger, and then portray how a right reaction to the situation might be dealt with.

Discuss ways to alleviate anger that are inappropriate.

Thanksgiving

Volume 4

Lesson 22



Bible References

Leviticus 23:1-44

Numbers 10:2-10

Deuteronomy 16:9-17

Psalms 37:4

Psalms 100:4

Isaiah 58:3-7

Jeremiah 31:33

Matthew 6:16

Luke 5:33-35

Acts 2:1-6

Acts 7:38

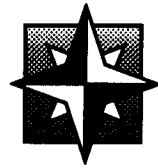
1 Corinthians 14:8

Ephesians 5:20

Philippians 4:6

Colossians 2:6-7

2 Peter 1:13-14



Theme

God has created us for His glory, and He commands us to cultivate a grateful spirit.



Scripture Reading

Deuteronomy 16:9-17

9 *"Seven weeks shalt thou number unto thee: begin to number the seven weeks from {such time as} thou beginnest {to put} the sickle to the corn.*

10 *"And thou shalt keep the feast of weeks unto the LORD thy God with a tribute of a freewill offering of thine hand, which thou shalt give {unto the LORD thy God}, according as the LORD thy God hath blessed thee:*

11 *"And thou shalt rejoice before the LORD thy God, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite that {is} within thy gates, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that {are} among you, in the place which the LORD*

thy God hath chosen to place his name there.

12 "And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in Egypt: and thou shalt observe and do these statutes.

13 "Thou shalt observe the feast of tabernacles seven days, after that thou hast gathered in thy corn and thy wine:

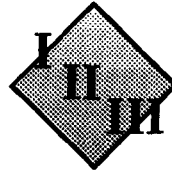
14 "And thou shalt rejoice in thy feast, thou, and thy son, and thy daughter, and thy manservant, and thy maidservant, and the Levite, the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow, that {are} within thy gates.

15 "Seven days shalt thou keep a solemn feast unto the LORD thy God in the place which the LORD shall choose: because the LORD thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands, therefore thou shalt surely rejoice.

16 "Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty:

17 "Every man {shall give} as he is able, according to the blessing of the LORD thy God which he hath given thee."

and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving."



Outline

I. The Three Major Feasts of Israel.

A. Passover -- first Jewish month.

1. Commemorated the deliverance from the tenth plague in Egypt.
 - a. The death angel passed over the homes where the blood of the Lamb had been applied to the doorposts of the house.
 - b. All others experienced the death of the firstborn.
2. Prefigured Jesus Christ.
 - a. The "Lamb of God."
 - b. His blood is applied to the hearts of all who repent and believe God for salvation from sin.

B. Pentecost -- third Jewish month.

1. Commemorated the giving of the law at Sinai.
2. "Pentecost" means "fifty."
3. Occurs 50 days after the Passover.
4. Fulfilled in Jerusalem after the ascension of Christ. (Acts 2:1-6)
 - a. On the literal day of the feast of Pentecost.
 - b. The Holy Ghost fell on 120 disciples in Jerusalem.
 - c. They all spoke with other tongues.



Memory Verse

Colossians 2:6-7

"As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him: Rooted

C. Tabernacles -- seventh Jewish month.

1. Commemorated the wilderness experience.
2. Prefigures God dwelling with His people.

II. The Seven Feasts.

A. Passover.

1. The Feast of Passover.
2. The Feast of Unleavened Bread -- lasted seven days.
 - a. Leaven -- usually a type of sin.
 - b. Leaven of the Pharisees -- hypocrisy.
 - c. Leaven of the Saducees -- humanism.
 - d. Leaven of Galatia -- legalism.
 - e. Leaven (natural) is fermentation, which causes the bread to rise.
 - f. This is a type of pride and carnality.
 - g. Leaven is also used in scripture as a type of the kingdom of God, which spreads throughout society.
3. The Feast of the Sheaf of Firstfruits.
 - a. Sheaves of grain represent people. An example is Joseph's dream of bringing in sheaves.
 - b. Firstfruits sheaf represents Jesus.
 - c. Firstfruits of the Resurrection.

B. Pentecost.

1. Also called the "Feast of Weeks."
2. Commemorates the giving of the law.
3. Israel was established as the "...church in the wilderness...." (Acts 7:38)
4. Fulfilled in Jerusalem.
5. New Testament church established at Pentecost.

6. At Sinai, God wrote the law on tables of stone.
 - a. In the church, God writes His law on the hearts of the people.
 - b. Jeremiah 31:33.

C. Tabernacles.

1. The Feast of Trumpets.
 - a. Trumpets -- a picture of those who declare the Word of the Lord.
 - b. 1 Corinthians 14:8.
 - c. Numbers 10:2-10.
 - d. Revelation 8:2-7.
 - e. "...Prepare ye the way of the Lord." (Matthew 3:3)
2. The Day of Atonement.
 - a. The priest entered the Holy of Holies once each year.
 - b. On the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant, he offered the blood of a lamb, as the sin offering.
 - c. This covered the sins of the people of God, until Jesus Christ came to offer up His own blood as our Eternal High Priest.
3. The Feast of Tabernacles.
 - a. Is not yet fulfilled.
 - b. Will celebrate God dwelling with His people.
 - c. Remember the wilderness.
 - d. Our bodies are called "tabernacles." (2 Peter 1:13-14)
 - e. We are reminded that "here we have no permanent dwelling place."

III. Times of Fasting, Times of Feasting.

A. There is a time to fast.

1. Isaiah 58:3-7.

2. To afflict the soul, to undo the heavy burden.
3. Jesus said, "When ye fast..." -- not "if ye fast." (Matthew 6:16)

B. There is a time to feast.

1. Luke 5:33-35.
2. People criticized Jesus, because His disciples were not fasting as were the disciples of John and the Pharisees.
3. Jesus told those who criticized Him that one does not fast when he is with the bridegroom;
4. However, the day will come when the bridegroom will be taken away, and then they will fast.

IV. Celebrate the Lord.

A. "Halal."

1. A name for "feast."
2. Means "praise."
3. "To celebrate, to make a show, to boast, to be clamourously foolish."
4. Root for the word, "hallelujah!" which means "Celebrate the Lord!"

B. Thanksgiving.

1. A time to gather and thank the Lord.
2. A time to remember that God is our source of all good things, and that we should be continually thankful.
3. We should always pray with thanksgiving. (Philippians 4:6)
4. Thanksgiving should be a daily part of our lives.
5. Not only for food, but for everything. (Ephesians 5:20)
6. We should always approach God's presence with praise and thanksgiving. (Psalms 100:4)



Spiritual Truths

- The blood of Jesus will be effectual in eternity only for those hearts to which it has been applied by repentance and faith.
- Death has been decreed for all men because of sin; but pardon and life are made available through Jesus Christ.
- The first Pentecost established the church in the wilderness, but the fulfillment of Pentecost established the eternal, spiritual church of Jesus Christ.
- Our physical bodies are dwelling places, through which we express our souls.
- There is a time to fast and there is a time to feast before the Lord.
- The world has many times of celebration and feasting, but it is a serious offense to leave God out of our times of rejoicing.
- It is good and proper for families to gather to feast before the Lord in joy and thanksgiving.
- It is important that we reserve our most enthusiastic celebrations for our God, and not put greater delight into the celebration of vain things, such as sports or entertainment.



Lesson Material

God is a wonderful, loving God. But because God is Spirit and we are flesh, we have a tendency to concentrate on natural things and neglect worship and the Word. It is so easy to get busy with life and living, forgetting the God Who not only made it all possible, but to Whom we will give an account.

God deserves our highest praise, and He deserves to be the object of our greatest delight. This is not just a trite saying. Many Christians take God for granted, and will be more enthusiastic at a sports event than they will in church. The Psalmist said, *"Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart."* (Psalms 37:4) Of course, if we really delight ourselves in the Lord, then the desire of our hearts will be for more of God.

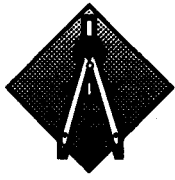
Thanksgiving is not a national holiday in some countries. Thanksgiving is a part of the Christian experience. It is a time set aside once a year to remember God, and to bless Him with the giving of thanks. These times should help us grow spiritually, as we encourage one another to associate our happiest experiences in life with our God. Since we all have a natural tendency to drift from a spiritual focus in life, we need to remind each other to bless and thank the Lord.

Prayer should always begin with thanksgiving. If we desire anything from God, it is naturally proper to be thankful for what He has already done. God is our Father. All parents desire gratitude from their children. Parents usually are willing

to sacrifice anything for their children; but, even so, they desire to be appreciated. If they do not feel gratitude in return for what they do, they have a difficult time continuing to give. It means a great deal to anyone to be thanked or to feel appreciated.

God had commanded Israel to gather all the males of Israel three times a year for a feast. The details were prescribed to provide a rich resource of spiritual types and symbols, as well as to bring significant spiritual times to mind. The people were required to set aside their vocational pursuits and gather in God's presence to concentrate on spiritual things. It is good for churches to have special feast times. Unfortunately, in times of natural prosperity, many churches find it more and more difficult to gather the people together. The lake is so inviting. We can afford nice trips. Many do not have time any more to spend in the worship of the One who has blessed us so bountifully.

Just as it is beneficial and healthy to periodically fast, it is beneficial and healthy to feast before the Lord. Our happiest times of celebration should be in the house of God. Our best meals should be those we share with other believers, as we share fellowship and food, acknowledging our common faith in Jesus Christ. We should also find times to share food with those in need, always acknowledging that it is given in the name of the Lord.



Methods

Do we associate Thanksgiving with God and spiritual blessings, or do we primarily associate the day with turkey and sports?

Do we really understand the meaning of Thanksgiving?

The Pilgrims in America established a day of Thanksgiving at the time of harvest, because they realized that God had brought them through that first, horrible winter when many in the group had died. They knew that God was their source, and that they should be extremely grateful to be alive. They celebrated with great fun and joy, but also with a deep sense of gratitude to God. Should not we be a bit more grateful, since God has been so good to us?

The Trinity

Volume 4

Lesson 23



Bible References

Genesis 1:1-2,26

Deuteronomy 6:4

Isaiah 61:1

Malachi 2:10

Matthew 3:16-17

Matthew 6:26,30

Luke 3:22

John 1:1,14

John 10:18

John 20:28

Acts 2:24

Acts 5:3-4

Romans 3:30

Romans 8:11

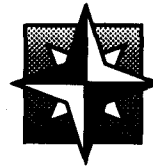
1 Corinthians 8:6

1 Corinthians 12:1-7

Ephesians 4:3-6

Hebrews 1:8

2 Peter 1:17



Theme

There is one God, in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



Scripture Reading

Luke 3:22

"And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

Ephesians 4:3-6

3 *"Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

4 *"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;*

5 *"One Lord, one faith, one baptism,*

6 *"One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."*

- **Father is God**

Matthew 6:26,30

26 *"Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?"*

30 *"Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, (shall he) not much more (clothe) you, O ye of little faith?"*

1 Corinthians 8:6

"But to us (there is but) one God, the Father, of whom (are) all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom (are) all things, and we by him."

2 Peter 1:17

"For he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

- **Son is God**

Hebrews 1:8

"But unto the Son (he saith), Thy throne, O God, (is) for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness (is) the sceptre of thy kingdom."

John 1:1,14

1 *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*

14 *"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."*

John 20:28

"And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God."

- **Holy Spirit is God**

Isaiah 61:1

"The spirit of the Lord GOD (is) upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to (them that are) bound."

Matthew 28:19

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

Acts 5:3

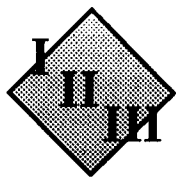
"But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back (part) of the price of the land?"



Memory Verse

1 John 5:7

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."



Outline

I. The Scriptures Teach there Is One God, Although the Word for "God" May Be Singular or Plural.

A. Old Testament.

1. There is one God. (Deuteronomy 6:4)
2. One God created us. (Malachi 2:10)

B. New Testament.

1. One God and Father of all. (Ephesians 4:6)
2. One God. (Romans 3:30)

II. One God in Three Persons.

A. Unity.

1. The Father is God.
2. The Son is God.
3. The Holy Spirit is God.

B. Diversity of ministries.

1. 1 Corinthians 12:1-7.
2. Father -- Creator.
3. Son -- Redeemer.
4. Holy Spirit -- Sanctifier.

III. Unity (One Substance).

A. Creation.

B. Resurrection.



Spiritual Truths

- God is one God, not many gods.
- The doctrine of the Trinity was not an invention of men, because our minds cannot comprehend God being Three and One at the same time.
- There is one God in three distinct Persons -- Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- God is not one God with three personalities, but One God in Three Persons.
- "Unity" means "one substance."
- The three Members of the Godhead are all without beginning or ending, and are all omnipotent.



Lesson Material

"Trinity" is the word used to describe one God existing in three Persons and being of one substance. The word "Trinity" is not used in the Bible. It is the word we use to describe what the Bible teaches. The Trinity is one of the great mysteries of the Bible. The truth of this mystery is revealed through the Holy Spirit.

God has given us many examples which help explain the Trinity. One example is man. Each one of us is an individual, yet each of us has a body, soul

and spirit. Each part of the human body works together with the other parts.

We also see an illustration of the Trinity in fruit. A banana is actually comprised of three separate sections. If you slice a banana and carefully pull it apart, you will notice it is made up of three pie-shaped pieces. The three separate pieces go together to make one banana. Similarly, there is only one God, but within that one God are three distinct Personalities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each has His own function; and each is very God.

As we read the scriptures, we find that the Old and New Testaments agree that there is one God. Deuteronomy 6:4 explains very clearly that Israel believed there was one God; and the apostles of the New Testament also taught there was one God. (Ephesians 4:6)

The Old and the New Testaments also teach that there is one God in three Persons. Matthew 3:16-17 tells of the Father being in Heaven, the Son being on earth, and the Holy Spirit descending as a dove.

We also are shown in the scripture that each of these three Persons -- Father, Son and Holy Spirit -- are God.

1 Corinthians 8:6 says the Father is God.

Hebrews 1:8 says the Son is God.

Acts 5:3-4 says the Holy Spirit is God.

The Bible consistently teaches there is one God in three Persons.

Though God is three Persons, the Three act as One and are One. (1 John 5:7)

We see that in the beginning, at the time of creation, the word "God" is plural. (Genesis 1:1-2,26) In the New Testament, we read in John 1:1-4 that Jesus is "the Word." This reference says that Jesus was Creator of all that exists. We have the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit -- one God -- at creation.

Each person of the Trinity cooperated in the death and resurrection of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We find in the following scriptures:

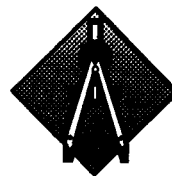
Romans 8:11 -- the Spirit was involved in the resurrection of Christ.

Acts 2:24 -- God was active in the resurrection of Christ.

John 10:18 -- Jesus was involved in the resurrection.

The Father, Son and Holy Spirit are in complete unity in the resurrection. Unity can either be absolute -- there being only one person or one thing; or it can be compound -- such as marriage, in which two become one. (Ephesians 5:31-32) Throughout scripture, it is taught that there is one God in three Persons Who are in complete unity -- they are one (compound unity).

There is one God in three Persons - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They act as One, being of one substance.



Methods

This would be an excellent lesson in which to incorporate an object lesson.

Take a banana to class; and, while discussing the "three in one" concept, demonstrate it with the cutting of the fruit. The fruit could then be used as a snack for the class, and might help the

children remember the impact of the lesson. Let the students practice telling one another how the fruit is a picture of the Trinity.

They Said He Would Come

Volume 4

Lesson 24



Bible References

Psalms 16:8-21

Psalms 22:18

Psalms 34:20

Psalms 41:9

Psalms 55:12-14

Psalms 118:22-23

Isaiah 7:14

Isaiah 11:1

Isaiah 40:3

Isaiah 53:7-12

Micah 5:2

Hosea 11:1

Zechariah 11:12-13

Matthew 1:21-23

Matthew 2:6,15,23

Matthew 3:1-3

Matthew 21:42

Matthew 26:14-16,21-25

Matthew 27:9-14,34

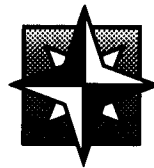
John 3:14-16

John 19:24,36

Acts 2:25-27

Acts 8:32

Romans 6:23



Theme

The Old Testament contains many prophecies foretelling the birth, life, and death of Christ.



Scripture Reading

Isaiah 40:3

3 "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the

LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God."

Matthew 3:1-3

1 "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,

2 "And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

3 "For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

Isaiah 7:14

"Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel."

Matthew 1:23

23 "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."

Micah 5:2

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, (though) thou be little among the thousands of Judah, (yet) out of thee shall he come forth unto me (that is) to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth (have been) from of old, from everlasting."

Matthew 2:6

"And thou Bethlehem, (in) the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel."

Hosea 11:1

"When Israel (was) a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."

Matthew 2:15

"And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son."



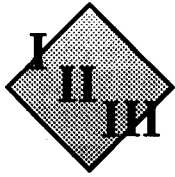
Memory Verse

John 3:14-16

14 "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:

15 "That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.

16 "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."



Outline

I. Bible Prophecy.

A. What is prophecy?

1. Forthtelling -- Giving a message from God.
2. Foretelling -- Relating future events as they are given by God.

B. The Bible contains prophecies in the Old Testament concerning the birth, life, and death of Christ.

C. Jesus also prophesied concerning His own ministry, death, and resurrection.

II. God's Plan of Redemption.

- A. Because of the sin nature, mankind needed a Savior.
- B. God sent his Son into the world to be the sacrifice for our sins.
- C. The role prophecy has in the plan of redemption.

III. Old Testament Prophecies Foretelling the Birth of Jesus.

- A. Prophecy concerning a forerunner.
- B. Prophecy concerning the virgin birth.
- C. Prophecy concerning the place of Messiah's birth.
- D. Prophecy concerning being called out of Egypt.

E. Ten major prophecies concerning the Messiah:

1. His birth. (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23)
2. He would be called a Nazarene. (Isaiah 11:1; Matthew 2:23)
3. His rejection by Israel. (Psalms 118:22-23; Matthew 21:42)
4. His betrayal by a friend. (Psalms 41:9; 55:12-14; Matthew 26:14-16,21-25)
5. His trial. (Isaiah 53:7; Matthew 27:12-14; Acts 8:32)
6. His crucifixion. (Isaiah 53:9-12; Matthew 27:34)
7. Casting lots at the cross. (Psalms 22:18; John 19:24)
8. Not a bone in His body would be broken. (Psalms 34:20; John 19:36)
9. Sold for thirty pieces of silver. (Zechariah 11:12-13; Matthew 26:15)
10. His resurrection. (Psalms 16:8-11; Acts 2:25-27)

IV. Salvation.

- A. Salvation explained.
- B. Salvation offered to students in class.
- C. Repeat sinner's prayer.
- D. Teacher's prayer for new converts.

V. Instruction for the New Christian.

- A. The need for daily prayer.
- B. The purpose of Bible study.
- C. The importance of church attendance.



Spiritual Truths

- What is written in the Bible is true.
- Many prophecies recorded in the Old Testament are fulfilled in the New Testament. The remaining prophecies will be fulfilled in the end times.
- God foretold through prophecy that Jesus would be sent into the world, to redeem the world from sin.
- It was God's plan to reveal that man needed a Savior and would receive forgiveness of sins by believing on Jesus.



Lesson Material

Prophecy -- Prophets who lived in Old Testament times predicted Jesus would come.

Prophecy is speaking for God. It is God giving a word through one of His children, and can involve a divine revelation concerning future events.

This lesson will examine a few of the many prophecies in the Bible which foretold the birth of Christ, and some of the events that took place during Jesus' life.

God knew from the beginning that man would sin and would need a savior in order to regain fellowship with God. It

was God's plan to send his Son, Jesus into the world, to live among us and to show us, through His own example, the nature of God. It was also a part of the plan for Jesus to pay the price for our sins by dying on the cross. This is known as the plan of redemption.

The Old Testament has many prophecies which foretold the birth of Christ, events which would take place during His life, and also specific details concerning His death.

God revealed many prophecies to Isaiah and other prophets concerning the coming of Jesus, the Messiah. These prophecies were recorded so that many years later when they should come to pass, the people would recognize that God's promises were coming true, and would accept Jesus as their Savior.

God revealed to Isaiah that there would be a forerunner, preparing the people to receive Jesus as their Messiah. (Isaiah 40:3) This prophecy came to pass about 700 years later, and is recorded in Matthew 3:1-3.

The angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph, who was engaged to be married to Mary. The angel said that Mary would give birth to a Son, even though she was a virgin. The angel further said that the baby would be conceived by the Holy Spirit, and that Joseph and Mary should "...call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21) God gave this revelation to Isaiah; and it was recorded in the Old Testament hundreds of years before it was to occur. (Isaiah 7:14)

God told the prophet Micah where Jesus would be born, and it is recorded in Micah 5:2. The fulfillment of this prophecy is recorded in Matthew 2:6.

God foretold through the prophet Hosea that Jesus would be called out of Egypt in Hosea 11:1. It was fulfilled in Matthew 2:15.

There are hundreds of prophecies concerning Jesus and His life and death given to us through several Old Testament prophets. Each one is fulfilled in the New Testament.

1. His birth. (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23)
2. He would be called a Nazarene. (Isaiah 11:1; Matthew 2:23)
3. His rejection by Israel. (Psalms 118:22-23; Matthew 21:42)
4. His betrayal by a friend. (Psalms 41:9; 55:12-14; Matthew 26:14-16,21-25)
5. His trial. (Isaiah 53:7; Matthew 27:12-14; Acts 8:32)
6. His crucifixion. (Isaiah 53:9-12; Matthew 27:34)
7. Casting lots at the cross. (Psalms 22:18; John 19:24)
8. Not a bone in His body would be broken. (Psalms 34:20; John 19:36)
9. Sold for thirty pieces of silver. (Zechariah 11:12-13; Matthew 26:15)
10. His resurrection. (Psalms 16:8-11; Acts 2:25-27)

These are only a few of the many prophecies given by Old Testament prophets that came to pass in the New Testament.

God wanted us to see His fantastic love for us -- a love that would cause God to offer his Son to live among us and die for us, so that we who are sinners could

receive forgiveness for our sins and be able to stand before a Holy God without fear of judgment.

"For the wages of sin {is} death; but the gift of God {is} eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."
(Romans 6:23)

God made salvation so simple to receive. To be saved, we must recognize that we are sinners and need a Savior; and that Jesus is that Savior, sent from God, to pay the price for our sin.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16)

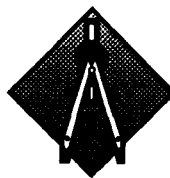
Jesus offered His life almost 2,000 years ago; and yet, it was offered for our sins today. If you have never asked Jesus to forgive your sins and to be your Savior, do it today. Now is your special opportunity!

How many of you have asked Jesus to be your Savior? If you could not raise your hand, would you like to ask Jesus to be Lord of your life right now?

Lead the students in the following prayer for salvation. Possibly, all the students can repeat the prayer, in order to encourage those who are receiving Christ as their Savior:

"Dear Jesus -- I know I am a sinner -- And that I need a Savior -- I know Jesus, that you are the Savior -- I ask you to forgive me of my sins -- I accept you as my Savior right now -- I believe that you receive me as your child -- Help me to live for you the rest of my life -- Thank you for coming into my heart. Amen."

Encourage those who asked Jesus to become their Savior to begin to pray every day to God, their Heavenly Father. Assist them in their understanding that they can talk to God as one would a friend. Also, tell your students of the importance of reading something out of the Bible each day, and the necessity of regular church attendance.



Methods

Communicate not only facts and information about Jesus, but be full of the Holy Spirit, so that you can radiate the joy of Jesus. Remember that we communicate what we *are* more than what we *know*. A message from the mind reaches a mind, but the message from the heart reaches the heart. Remember that our purpose in life is not to know *about* Jesus, but to *know* Jesus.

The Christmas Story

Volume 4

Lesson 25



Bible References

Psalms 37:23

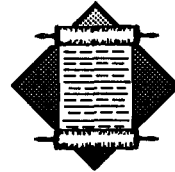
Micah 5:2

Luke 2:1-7

Romans 8:28

2 Corinthians 5:7

Philippians 4:4



Scripture Reading

Luke 2:1-7

1 *"And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed.*

2 *"(And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.)*

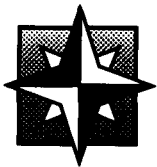
3 *"And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.*

4 *"And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)*

5 *"To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.*

6 *"And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.*

7 *"And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn."*



Theme

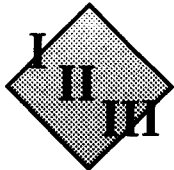
Christmas is a time to celebrate God's love gift to the world with praise, worship, sharing, and by giving our hearts and lives to Jesus.



Memory Verse

Romans 8:28

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to (his) purpose."



Outline

I. The Right Place: Bethlehem.

A. The prophecy.

1. The Savior would be born in Bethlehem. (Micah 5:2)
2. This prophecy was written approximately 700 years before Jesus' birth.

B. The problem.

1. Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth, not Bethlehem.
2. Bethlehem was about 60 miles away. It was a long, difficult trip, especially when traveling by donkey.
3. Joseph and Mary probably wanted to stay home, because Mary's baby would soon be born.

II. Circumstances Which Led Them to Bethlehem.

A. The Roman Emperor Caesar Augustus decreed that a census would be taken of the whole Roman world, which included Israel.

B. A census is a survey conducted by a nation's government to gather information about its people.

1. Information gathered in a census may include population, housing, and agriculture, as well as age, employment, income, gender, and race.
2. A population census (counting the number of people in an area) may be used to determine taxes, government representation, and school districts.

C. In order to register for the census, each family had to go to the hometown of the father's family.

1. Bethlehem was the hometown of Joseph's family.
 - a. He was of the house and lineage of King David.
 - b. That means that he was a direct descendent of David.
 - c. If Judah had not been conquered by other world empires, Joseph would have possibly been a member of the royal family.
 - d. Jesus was born to inherit the throne of David, and fulfill God's promise to David concerning his dynasty.
2. The law required Joseph and Mary to register. If they did not go, they would be breaking the law.

III. The Scene in Bethlehem.

- A. The city was crowded -- people had come from all over to register for the census.
- B. All the inns were full because of all the people who had come for the census.
- C. Jesus was born in a stable, but not necessarily because his parents were poor. Joseph was a carpenter. He had the money to rent a room in an inn, but the inns were all full.

IV. Divine Arrangements.

- A. Mary and Joseph were submissive to God during difficult circumstances.
 1. A long trip to Bethlehem.
 2. A stable as the birthplace of her first-born.
- B. God ways are higher than ours.
 1. God's plan was to redeem mankind through the birth, death, and resurrection of His Son, Jesus.
 2. God used circumstances -- the census and the crowded inns -- to accomplish His will.

V. Our Response to Circumstances We Do Not Understand.

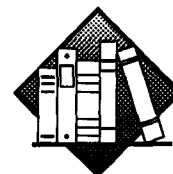
- A. Submit your life to God; desire to obey Him and live for Him.
- B. Keep a right attitude and trust God.
 1. "...all things work together for good to them that love God...." (Romans 8:28)
 2. The steps of the righteous are ordered of God. (Psalms 37:23)

3. "Rejoice in the Lord always...." (Philippians 4:4) Paul wrote the book of Philippians from a prison cell.



Spiritual Truths

- When our lives are submitted to God, He will make sure that we are in the right place at the right time.
- The certainty that God's Word will be fulfilled is the foundation of our faith.
- God will arrange people and events, in order to work out His will for our lives and His plans for His kingdom.
- Jesus Christ is both Savior and Lord.

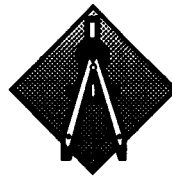


Lesson Material

When difficult circumstances come into our lives, our tendency as humans is to grumble and look for a way out. As a Christian whose desire is to live a life committed to doing God's will, we should understand that God may be using the circumstances to accomplish His purpose in and through our lives. We must learn to "...walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Corinthians 5:7), because we do not see the whole picture, as God does.

Mary and Joseph were confronted with some undesirable circumstances. Because

of the census ordered by the Roman Emperor Caesar Augustus, they had to travel from Nazareth to Bethlehem -- a 60-mile trip on a donkey. This would have been a fairly miserable experience for anyone, but it was made all the worse for Mary, because she was pregnant. Upon arriving in Bethlehem, this first-time mother discovered that she must deliver her child in a stable among the animals, because there were no rooms available in the inn. Scripture does not record that Mary or Joseph ever complained about their circumstances. They were trusting God to direct their lives. Because they were faithful despite the hardships they faced, God was able to use them to accomplish His purpose. Jesus, the Savior of mankind, was born in a manger in Bethlehem, thereby fulfilling prophecy.



Methods

Locate Nazareth and Bethlehem on a map. Use the map scale to estimate the distance. Challenge the students to calculate the number of days the trip would take, if they were able to travel five miles a day by donkey.

Take a census of the students in the class and make a bar graph with the total students, boys and girls. You could also take a census of brothers and sisters, or pets.

Discussion:

What does Christmas mean to you?

Are you excited about anything you are going to give to someone this year?

Have you honored the Lord Jesus Christ by giving Him your heart and life?

In the Beginning

Volume 4

Lesson 26



Bible References

Genesis 1:1-8,26

Psalms 37:23

Jeremiah 10:10

John 1:3

John 4:24

Romans 1:10-23

Romans 8:28

2 Corinthians 5:7

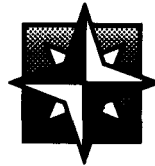
Philippians 4:4

Colossians 1:16-17

1 Thessalonians 5:23

Titus 1:2

Hebrews 11:3



Theme

God, Who is a Spirit, created everything in the universe, both spiritual and material.



Scripture Reading

Genesis 1:1-8

1 *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*

2 *"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness (was) upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*

3 *"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*

4 *"And God saw the light, that (it was) good: and God divided the light from the darkness.*

5 *"And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.*

6 "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

7 "And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which {were} under the firmament from the waters which {were} above the firmament: and it was so.

8 "And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. "



Memory Verse

Hebrews 11:3

"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."



Outline

I. God.

A. "Elohim."

1. Hebrew word in plural form -- literal translation, "Gods."
2. In the beginning "Gods."
3. Used with a singular verb.

4. Used 2,500 times in the Old Testament.
5. God is three Persons, yet one God.

B. "...Let us make man in our own image...." (Genesis 1:26)

1. The Godhead.
 - a. God the Father.
 - b. God the Son.
 - c. God the Holy Spirit.
2. Man. (1 Thessalonians 5:23)
 - a. Spirit.
 - b. Soul.
 - c. Body.

C. The Bible does not try to prove God's existence.

1. It presupposes God.
2. When the universe was created, God already existed.

D. God always was.

1. God had no beginning.
2. We have a beginning, but will have no end.
3. God created man a "living soul".

E. God is Spirit. (John 4:24)

1. God is not limited to a physical body.
2. God is infinite.

II. Created.

A. All matter came into being, because God spoke His creative word.

1. Colossians 1:16.
2. God made the stars and planets.
3. Hebrews 11:3.
 - a. The physical world was created by God, Who is Spirit.

- b. All physical things are made of atoms and molecules, which we cannot see.
- 4. What holds atoms and molecules together?
 - a. Jesus Christ.
 - b. "...by him all thing consist."
(Colossians 1:17) -- which means, "hold together."

B. There is nothing created which was not created by God. (John 1:3)

III. The Heaven and the Earth.

A. Terrestrial heaven.

1. The atmosphere.
2. Several miles thick.
 - a. Filters the sun's rays.
 - b. Supports life.
 - c. Composed mostly of nitrogen and oxygen.
3. There are several "heavens."
 - a. Earth's atmosphere.
 - b. The universe.
 - c. God's home (possibly an unseen planet), where spirits dwell.

B. Earth.

1. A tiny speck in comparison to the sun.
2. One of nine major planets which revolve around the sun.
 - a. Similar to the way electrons spin around the nucleus of an atom.
 - b. The earth rotates around the sun once a year.
 - c. We have seasons, because the earth rotates on a slant.
3. God made the earth.
 - a. Precisely the proper distance from the sun, so that is neither too hot nor too cold.
 - b. Just the correct amount of water.

- c. Perfect combination of elements to support life.



Spiritual Truths

- All matter in the universe had a beginning, but God has always been.
- Evolution is a theory which says that everything came into existence through a series of accidents. Christians, however, have an account of what happened from the only eye witness.
- God is three distinct Persons and yet one God.
- The doctrine of the Trinity was not invented by man, because the mind of man cannot comprehend it.
- The earth is a very tiny speck in the vast universe, among billions and billions of stars and planets.
- Human beings are not gods, but were created in God's image and likeness -- with a spirit, soul, and body.
- Everything that exists was created by God, Who is good and loving.
- God created every one of us for a purpose.



Lesson Material

For centuries, men have debated the origin of the universe. Most cultures have adapted forms of folklore or tradition which involve some kind of gods involved in the formation of the earth. A popular doctrine today is called the theory of evolution. In fact, it is now being referred to as an indisputable scientific fact, largely because it has been promoted for so long, by so many people. For those who choose to reject the idea that we were created and are therefore accountable to God, it seems to be the only plausible explanation. The Bible is God's revelation of His plan of redemption for lost humanity. The Bible makes no attempt to logically prove the existence of God, nor does it give a detailed explanation of how God created the material universe.

The important thing that God wanted us to know is that He is our Creator. We believe this by faith. Through faith we understand that the material world was created by a spiritual God. God is the only One who was there in the beginning, and we can rely on His Word. In fact, God has never lied about anything. He is absolutely true. (Jeremiah 10:10; Titus 1:2)

While Christians acknowledge that their doctrine is based on faith, the evolutionists are not so honest. Ultimately, evolution must be received by faith as well, because this theory is impossible to prove. In fact, most of the ideas which formed the basis of Darwin's theory have been disproved by science. There are many qualified scientists and brilliant thinkers today who reject the theory of evolution, on the basis of

scientific evidence. For example, the second law of thermodynamics includes the proven fact that matter tends to move from order to disorder, unless there is a controlling outside force. In other words, left to themselves, things tend to decay, rust, and deteriorate. The creationist says, given enough time, a typewriter will become a pile of dust. The evolutionist theory says, given enough time, a pile of dust will become a typewriter.

Romans 1:18-23 speaks of the fact that God put into the heart of man an innate awareness of God; and the realization that the fact that there is a creation logically demands that there is a Creator. Design and order never come about through blind chance. Science has also verified the biblical concept that life can never be created out of inorganic matter. There has never been a single living cell formed by spontaneous generation, although scientists have been trying to accomplish spontaneous generation for years. It takes life to beget life. If one wants a chicken, one must put a rooster and a hen together.

Evolutionists believe in a "god" called "time." The idea is, if you hypothesize in terms of large numbers of years, then the mind can accept the idea that anything is possible. Generally, the figures relating to million or billions of years in placing dates on various formations or organisms are a matter of speculation. Where do they get the idea that the earth is 4.7 billion years old? It is a guess, based on the presupposition that it must have taken a long period of time. These fantastic figures came from the idea that the world and its evolution must have begun a long time ago, for so many "accidents" to create the order and beauty that is in the earth today.

People who promote evolution are generally those who begin with the notion

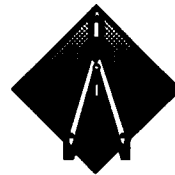
that there is no God, and therefore the biblical account of creation is not an option in their minds. They have formed their conclusion even before they have done any research. This is not scientific. The debate goes on; but the fact remains that the flood is a far more plausible explanation of the fossil record than the concept of gradual evolution. If everything happened so gradually, then the plants which became vast fields of oil and coal, and the animals which were suddenly buried in mud or ice, should have decayed or been devoured by scavengers, insects, and microorganisms. It is also significant that in cultures all over the world, there are ancient, traditional stories about a man who built a huge boat and saved the animals and his family from a worldwide flood. At least thirty other versions have been found, besides that of Christianity and Judaism. These are from heathen cultures, most of whom have never even heard of the Bible or Noah.

The fact that we were made in such a marvelous way is an indication that we have a marvelous Creator. David said,

*"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully
{and} wonderfully made:
marvellous {are} thy works; and
{that} my soul knoweth right well."
(Psalms 139:14)*

God created angels as spiritual beings with no physical body. He created the animals with a physical body, but no eternal spirit. With all that God created, He desired to make a special creature with whom He could relate in a very special way. God formed man out of dust and breathed life into him. Man became a living soul. Since we are created, we know that when this life is over, we will give an account to our Creator. It is important for us to know that we are created, and to

know the reason that some people reject the reality of the Creator. They believe the theory of evolution because they want to, and because they do not want to consider themselves accountable to anyone other than themselves.



Methods

Try to illustrate the relative size of the earth and the sun by using a basketball to represent the sun and a pea to represent the earth. Place them a great distance apart and remind your students of the vast size of the sun and universe.

Assure the class that not all scientists believe the theory of evolution, and that it is not a proven fact, as many claim. Use the term "doctrine of evolution" on occasion, to reinforce the fact that it also must be believed by faith. Every theory about the origin of the universe is speculation, unless it is based on an eye witness account. The only legitimate source of information is the Bible, because God was there.

We must realize that the indoctrination being done in our day concerning the theory of evolution is a direct attack against Christian values. The conflict is not between science and the Bible, but between legitimate science and science "falsely so called," because the evolution model was birthed out of an atheistic mind set.

Talk about the wonders of God; but, assure the students that it is all right if they cannot comprehend a God Who has no beginning or end and is without

limitations -- a God Who can be three Persons, and yet is one God. Remind them that you can not comprehend it, either. You are taking God's word for it. Ultimately, every system of belief has to have its roots in some kind of faith.

Anyone who rejects God's account of creation has to have enormous faith in chance, because the mathematical odds against this ordered world evolving out of nothing are inexpressibly vast.

The Re-Creation

Volume 4

Lesson 27



Bible References

Genesis 1:2,27-28

Ecclesiastes 7:29

Isaiah 14:10-19

Jeremiah 4:23-28

Ezekiel 28:13-19

Mark 8:34

John 3:16

John 10:10

2 Corinthians 5:17

2 Peter 3:8



Scripture Reading

Jeremiah 4:23-28

23 "I beheld the earth, and, lo, {it was} without form, and void; and the heavens, and they {had} no light.

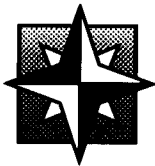
24 "I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly.

25 "I beheld, and, lo, {there was} no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled.

26 "I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place {was} a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the LORD, {and} by his fierce anger.

27 "For thus hath the LORD said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end.

28 "For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black: because I have spoken {it}, I have purposed {it}, and will not repent, neither will I turn back from it."



Theme

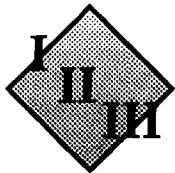
God created the world. He created it perfect, but it became marred by the influence of sin.



Memory Verse

2 Corinthians 5:17

"Therefore if any man (be) in Christ, (he is) a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."



Outline

I. Without Form. (Genesis 1:2)

A. "Was."

1. Word translated from the Hebrew word which means "state of being, or becoming."
2. Could be translated "the earth became void...."

B. Perfect creation.

1. Many Bible scholars believe God created the earth perfect, but it was marred and made dark because of Lucifer's fall.
2. Then God "re-created" the earth.
3. This is consistent with other creations.
 - a. Angels were made perfect, but some of them fell into rebellion.
 - b. Man was made perfect, but was marred by sin.

c. *"...God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions."* (Ecclesiastes 7:29)

C. Replenish.

1. Genesis 1:28.
2. God told man to replenish the earth.
3. This implies a restoration.

II. The Fall of Lucifer.

A. Lucifer was a beautiful archangel.

1. The name "Lucifer" means "light-bearer."
2. He was the worship leader of heaven.

B. Lucifer became proud of his beauty.

1. Isaiah 14:10-19.
2. Ezekiel 28:13-19.

C. Fallen angels.

1. One third of the host of Heaven.
2. Rebelled with Lucifer against God.
3. Cast down to the earth.

III. The Prehistoric World.

A. Pre-Adamic race.

1. It is possible that there was a race of beings on earth which was destroyed when the earth became void.
2. This would have occurred before Adam was created.
3. Some theologians believe that the demon spirits in the world today are the disembodied spirits of that race of beings.

B. This could explain the origin of demons.

1. God created every being in the universe -- both physical and spiritual.
2. God created every spiritual being a free moral agent.
3. Whatever their origin, demons are evil creatures who help Satan in his work to steal, kill, and destroy.

IV. Human History.

A. The first man, Adam.

1. God breathed life into Adam.
2. God created Eve from Adam's rib to be a helpmate for him.
3. They were both created as intelligent adults.

B. Human history began with Adam and Eve about 6,000 years ago.

1. The number of a man in scripture is the number six.
2. The span of history in the age of man is 6,000 years.
 - a. One day with the Lord is as a thousand years, and a thousand years is as one day. (2 Peter 3:8)
 - b. The seventh millennium in human history will be a time of rest, because Jesus Christ will rule the earth.



Spiritual Truths

- God is consistent in His ways. We can learn about the way He deals with people by the way He deals with nations, and even with planets.
- Pride is a serious sin, because it takes glory which belongs to God and keeps it for one's self.
- The re-creation theory is biblically very plausible; but, it is not an essential doctrine of the church, because the Bible does not give us a very clear picture of creation.
- It is far more important that we know the Creator than it is for us to be able to explain the details of the creation.
- The human race has a spiritual enemy named Satan, who was created as a beautiful, worshipping angel. Satan transforms himself into an angel of light, not as a mean-looking guy with red leotards and horns.
- The age of human history had a definite beginning and will have a definite and exciting conclusion.
- God has designed and fulfilled a perfect plan of redemption for humans, and it is available to "...whosoever will..." (Mark 8:34)



Lesson Material

The concept of the re-creation is one which is gaining respect among Bible teachers. It is based on some sound biblical principles and viable logic. It is also consistent with the Genesis account, although it is certainly not emphasized in scripture; so, we do not want to make it a major issue. It is certainly not essential to your salvation, whether you agree or disagree with the idea.

One of the primary supports for the idea comes from the Hebrew word, "hayah," which means "a state of being." It could be translated as "was," or "became." If read that way, the translators could have accurately rendered Genesis 1:2, "and the earth *became* without form and void." This makes sense when you consider God's ways. God is consistent in the way He deals with His creation. We note that God did not originally create angels or men evil. God initially created all of His creatures perfect and whole, and not as a wretched seed of potential that eventually developed into something good. The order of God's creation is from order to disorder. God created His creation good, beautiful, and complete, but with the potential to degenerate and become corrupt. This is precisely consistent with the second law of thermodynamics.

God made both angels and man perfect and whole. One-third of the angels rebelled against God, and followed the archangel Lucifer in his pride. These spiritual beings became mean and ugly, and continue their work of deception and opposition to all that is good. Two-thirds of the heavenly host remained faithful to

God, and have never sinned. By maintaining a good relationship with the Father, these angels continue to be good and whole. On the other hand, the entire human race sinned against God in a similar way as those who fell with Satan, and was marred severely by it. Life became dark with deception, and death came upon the family of man. Sin destroyed the beautiful relationship God had with man, and brought hardship, suffering, and all kinds of inhumanity upon the earth. Man was created perfect, but sin and rebellion made him "without form and void." Sin separated man from God, and life is void without Him. Jesus came, and said,

"... I am come that they might have life, and that they might have {it} more abundantly." (John 10:10)

If we accept the idea of a re-creation, then we gain another parallel in creation to the principle of God's redemption plan. God did not create the earth and then realize that it was still dark and void. He created a world that was perfect, but when the proud and rebellious Lucifer was cast down to the earth, he deceived and corrupted the people on the planet, who were completely given over to wickedness.

When God saw that the whole human race in Noah's day was wicked except for Noah, God wiped out every person except Noah and his immediate family. If Noah had been wicked too, then God would have had to judge the whole race with death, because God does not grade on the curve. God is perfectly just. That means that He will judge sin. It also means that when we respond to His covenant plan of salvation, He will always forgive and restore, because God is no respecter of persons.

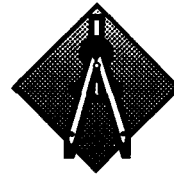
We do not know exactly the condition of the earth when it was without form and

void, but we do believe that there were major changes in the order of things. We do know that there were life forms many years ago which could not be supported by the climate and atmosphere we have today. The great skeletons of the dinosaurs we have today indicate that these beasts required vast amounts of vegetation to survive, and the enormous reserves of coal and oil indicate that there was a prodigious amount of plant life to eat. Oil and coal were formed when huge, dense forests were suddenly covered over with mud and water, and compressed under something -- creationists believe it to be flood waters -- until they were changed and formed into layers of the hydrocarbon compounds we use as "fossil fuels." Some evolutionists claim that it took "millions of years to form." This is a myth. In fact, a gradual process could not have formed any fossil fuels, because of the natural decay process. Coal and oil can be explained through either the re-creation, involving a cataclysmic event which destroyed all plant and animal life, and/or through Noah's flood.

For whatever reason, we now recognize that about 6,000 years ago, there was a need for a creation. God moved upon the earth to form the firmament, plants, and animals, and He set the whole solar system in order. God formed a beautiful garden, and the Bible indicates that it was somewhere in what is now the Middle East. The world is not quite what it was back then, is it? Things have changed.

The spiritual truth we can gain from this study should help us understand God's plan of redemption. God created man for Himself. He designed mankind to be a special creation, to have a special place of relationship with Him. God was not satisfied with only the creation of the angels, although most of them served

Him faithfully. God formed man in "*His own image*," (Genesis 1:27) to walk with Him and relate to Him. God loved the human race. In fact, He loved us so much, that when we were marred by sin and turned away from Him in rebellion, God provided a plan to restore lost people to Himself, so that we could live with Him forever. (John 3:16) That plan involved the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus, because God is too holy and just to overlook sin. God's holiness required the cross, and God's love brought it to pass. By dying in our place, Jesus satisfied the demands of God's justice; but it is applied only to the lives of those who will ask for the available forgiveness -- those who will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ with all their hearts.



Methods

With all of the cultural approval and promotion of various forms of sin, our young people need more and more understanding of the seriousness and awfulness of sin. They need to understand the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom (viewing life from the perspective of eternity and with a view of the spiritual aspects). The fall of Lucifer and the rebellious angels is an example of the serious consequences of pride. God deserves all the honor and glory, and He deserves our gratitude.

The plan of salvation is better understood when we realize that it is a special plan available only for human beings who are the descendents of Adam and Eve. The angels that sinned had no such plan. Jesus did not die for them. If

there was a pre-adamic race, then Jesus did not die for their sins, either. Jesus died for our sins; and He made it possible for us, even though we also are rebellious sinners, to be restored to God by repenting of our sins, believing on Jesus Christ, and turning our lives over to Him as our Lord and Savior.

Again, recognize that your students today are probably being strongly

indoctrinated with the teaching of evolution -- that life just happens, and the purpose of life is one's own happiness. Proponents of evolution believe that death is the end. Remind your students that evolution is not a proven fact. Also remind them that we rightly belong to God, because He not only created us for Himself, but He redeemed us from sin for Himself.

The Firmament

Volume 4

Lesson 28



Bible References

Genesis 1:1-13

Isaiah 55:9

Luke 15:11-32

Galatians 6:8

2 Peter 3:4-7

1 *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*

2 *"And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness {was} upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.*

3 *"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*

4 *"And God saw the light, that {it was} good: and God divided the light from the darkness.*

5 *"And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.*

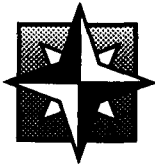
6 *"And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.*

7 *"And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which {were} under the firmament from the waters which {were} above the firmament: and it was so.*

8 *"And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day.*

9 *"And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry {land} appear: and it was so.*

10 *"And God called the dry {land} Earth; and the gathering together of the waters*



Theme

The fall of man brought consequences not only to mankind, but to the entirety of creation.



Scripture Reading

Genesis 1:1-13

called he Seas: and God saw that {it was} good.

11 "And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, {and} the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed {is} in itself, upon the earth: and it was so.

12 "And the earth brought forth grass, {and} herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed {was} in itself, after his kind: and God saw that {it was} good.

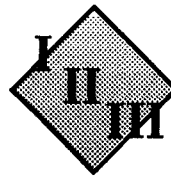
13 "And the evening and the morning were the third day."



Memory Verse

Galatians 6:8

"For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting."



Outline

I. God Created.

A. Fact.

1. Some non-Christians have changed the definition of the word "fact" to mean, "that which can be verified."
 - a. This would make truth dependent on man's knowledge.
 - b. God has said, "*For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my [ways higher] than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.*" (Isaiah 55:9)
2. The word "fact" means "a thing known to be true; a statement about something which has occurred."
 - a. All reality is a fact, whether or not we understand it.
 - b. Truth is dependent on God.
 - c. In 1,500 AD., scientists declared that there were 5,000 stars in the universe.
 - d. That was all the stars that could be "verified."
 - e. Now, we have powerful telescopes, and know that there are actually many billions of stars.
 - f. They were there all the time.

B. The fact of creation.

1. Whatever the opinions of man, and whatever the outcome of all the debates, the fact of creation remains unchanged.

2. Man's ideas change, but what was done in the beginning was done and is unchangeable.
3. We should take the word of the only Eye-witness, because the details of the origins of the universe cannot be verified by observation or experimentation.

C. God's Word.

1. God is the Omnipotent Spirit.
2. God spoke matter into existence.
3. The Spirit is more important than the material aspect of creation.

II. God Made the Firmament.

A. The firmament.

1. The sky.
2. The protective atmosphere over the earth, enabling physical life to exist.

B. Water above the firmament.

1. A great vapor canopy existed before the flood.
2. High moisture in upper atmosphere.
 - a. Filtered the sun's harmful rays much more effectively than today.
 - b. Diffused the sun's heat and light.
 - c. There was no winter, no polar caps, no cold weather.
 - d. No storms.
 - e. No pollution.
 - f. No harmful viruses or bacteria.

C. This explains the longevity of men before the flood.

1. Many people lived for hundreds of years.

2. Methuselah, the oldest man, lived 969 years.

- D. This also explains why there were such dense, massive forests, and huge life forms, such as the dinosaurs.

III. After the Flood.

A. The flood.

1. Fountains of the deep were broken up.
 - a. Subterranean water came forth.
 - b. The vapor canopy over the earth collapsed, and formed heavy rain.
 - c. All the water on earth covered everything.
 - d. All the hills and "mountains" were covered.
2. Note: Mountains can be formed today by volcanic activity and by shifts in the land masses.
 - a. These mountains can be formed, and within 100 years can form a permanent surface and look "old."
 - b. It is highly possible that there were no high mountains before the flood. Then it would have been easy for the volume of water now on earth to cover everything.

B. Massive changes in the atmosphere.

1. The "waters above the firmament" were never restored.
2. The earth became a much more harsh environment.
3. Many kinds of species were no longer able to survive, because there was less vegetation, and more extremes of weather.
4. After a flood, bacteria and viruses tend to flourish more.

5. The sun's rays were less diffused by the thin atmosphere, so the north and south poles froze over, piling up trillions of tons of ice.
6. No one lived such a long life after the flood.

IV. The Lesson in Wisdom.

A. God is perfect and consistent.

1. God deals with His creation with the same patterns on every level.
2. We learn spiritual lessons from physical examples.

B. Sin.

1. Sin never meets real human needs.
2. Sin always ends in destruction and loss.
3. We can be forgiven, but still lose eternally.
 - a. If you disobey your mother and accidentally cut your arm off, you can be forgiven.
 - b. But you will still have to live with only one arm.
4. The "prodigal son," whose story is found in Luke 15:11-32, was forgiven and restored to sonship, but he never regained his inheritance.
 - a. He had already wasted it and could not recover it.
 - b. The father said to the older brother, "*...all that I have is thine.*" (Luke 15:31)
 - c. This did not leave much for the younger brother.
 - d. "*For he that soweth to his flesh shall...reap corruption.*" (Galatians 6:8)
 - e. Corruption speaks of decay or loss.

C. God saved a remnant from the flood, and restored mankind and the earth.

1. However, there were permanent damages to the earth.
2. Man still had opportunity to be restored to God; but, his life was shortened, and he had a harsher world in which to labor.

D. Restoration.

1. We look for a new (renewed) heaven and earth.
2. In the end of the age, God will judge the world by fire. (2 Peter 3:7)
3. God will restore the earth and the firmament.
4. The earth will again be a much more pleasant place.



Spiritual Truths

- God created a perfect world, because He is a perfect God.
- Those who believe the doctrine of evolution will find evidence to support their theories, while those who believe creation will find the evidence to support that.
- It is impossible to prove evolution or creation without asking the only One who was there; and then, you need to either believe His Word or reject it.
- Ultimately, faith is a matter of the heart.
- People believe what they want to believe.

- The vapor canopy theory makes very good sense, and is a great aid in understanding the phenomenon of antediluvian (before the flood) longevity.
- Sin always promises to make life better and make us happy, but it always diminishes life and damages our ultimate joy.
- We can be forgiven and restored; but, it is always best to remain faithful and never allow ourselves to fall into sin and rebellion, because we will lose good things which we can never regain.



Lesson Material

God created the heavens and the earth. God, by the power of His spoken word, spoke all matter in the universe into existence. That is a statement of fact in the Bible. You either believe it, or you do not. If you do not, then you must come up with some kind of explanation for our existence. Those who reject the fact of creation can adopt only one other concept: that all creation came about by chance. According to evolutionist views, given enough time, anything can happen. We know the scientific law of entropy (the second law of thermodynamics -- that things tend to move from order to disorder, that things naturally decay, rot, and break down); but, given enough time, maybe there were billions of exceptions to the law. Maybe there could be a creation without a creator. Maybe there could be a

design without a designer. Maybe there is no design: that life just happens.

Some non-Christians cling to faith in a "god" called "time" and to the doctrine of evolution, because otherwise, they would have to deal with the fact that they have a Creator, and that God will hold them accountable for their lives and actions. Ultimately, a person will believe what he wants to.

Our young people need to be warned against the evolutionary theory, which is being taught as a fact and a law today. They need to understand the mentality behind it, lest they become blinded in their minds against the truth. This is basic to the plan of Satan. If he can convince people that life simply happens, he can lead them to abort their babies, live wickedly, and even commit genocide, as Adolf Hitler tried to do against the Jews. If man is just a mammal, then what is the significance?

The secular world would like for us to believe that the debate over origins is between highly educated, objective scholars, and Bible-waving, ignorant fundamentalists who operate on blind faith. The fact is, there are many educated, brilliant scientists and scholars who reject the theory of evolution because of its very unscientific basis. The evidence of decades of research has disproved every major postulate of the evolution theory. On the other hand, there are evolutionists who will cling to their faith in chance, with the tenacity of religious zealots, and will ignore verified data if it can not be reconciled with their foregone conclusion. They promote their doctrine with fervor, because the only alternative to evolution is creation, which they do not want to believe. Increasingly, the record of paleontology is pointing to evidence of a

great flood, rather than a gradual evolution of life.

In the early 1900's, a skull was "discovered" in Piltdown, England. It had the cranium of a small human, but the large jaw of an ape. It was hailed as the "missing link" between man and the apes. Ah, we were indeed born of the monkey! The "Piltdown Man" was reproduced in museums all over the world, and the evolutionists gloated. It was not until the 1950's that it was finally concluded by scientists that this was all a hoax. Someone, in their desire to be famous, took an old skull of a woman, and matched it with an old jawbone from an orangutan, treated it with acid, and then buried it in a gravel pit, to later "discover" it. The models still remain in museums, although the hoax was exposed.

In 1917, a tooth was found in Nebraska. Scientists got together, and declared that it was indeed "humanoid." They took the tooth, and constructed a man-like jaw that "must have been" like the original. They then drew an ape-like skull, body, wife, and family around this tooth. Later, many teeth were found nearby which were identical to the first. The "Nebraska Man" was really the result of some vivid imaginations, because the tooth was the tooth of an extinct species of pig.

God is our Creator, and we can learn some valuable lessons about life by understanding how He created us. We do not have a clear picture concerning the details of creation, but we do not need details. We do need to know that God was there, and that He is still in charge. We also need to understand that the sin of mankind has resulted in permanent damage to the earth. The next time you hear about a tornado or hurricane, remember that those things were not in

the original plan. God created a much better climate on earth for man to live in, but sin caused not only massive loss of life, but a diminishing of the earth's atmosphere, resulting in a much harsher climate. Today, we have much shorter life spans, largely due to the long-term consequences of the flood, which was God's judgment for sin.

Before the great flood, the atmosphere was covered by the "waters above the firmament," or a great "vapor canopy." We now know that this could have a fabulous effect on the earth's weather. If the sun's heat was diffused by such a canopy, we would not have storms, which are the result of the different temperatures of air masses, and high and low pressure systems. There were no storms, and there were no polar ice caps. This fact is verified by the huge oil deposits to the north, which is absolute proof that there were great masses of vegetation where we now have ice and snow.

Peter spoke about those who would scoff at religious faith. Why? Because they are "walking after their own lusts." They would be saying,

"Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation." (2 Peter 3:4)

Evolutionists base much of their data on the presupposed idea that everything has remained the same from the beginning. This is the basis for "carbon dating," which is utterly unreliable, because we do not know the molecular structure from the beginning point. Of course, when they want to believe in change, they accept it. Peter went on:

"For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished." (2 Peter 3:5-6)

The world that was before the flood perished. That is, it no longer has the excellent atmosphere it had. It was permanently changed because of God's judgment on sin.

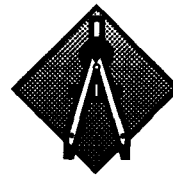
"But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." (2 Peter 3:7)

Peter went on to say that there will be another great judgment of the world -- this time, by fire. The indication is that the world will then be dramatically changed, and ultimately restored and "renewed," and will be more like it was before the great flood.

The lesson here is that sin has consequences. We hear of people who lived in deep wickedness, and then became Christians. They have "great testimonies," and are asked to speak and give their life stories in magazines. But the best life is the one which stays faithful to God. The best marriages are the ones which are for life. People who fall into deep sin lose things they can never regain.

The prime example of this is the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32. Teachers often miss the most important part of the lesson, and lead people to conclude that the younger brother regained everything that was lost -- and that there were no consequences to his sin. We can get the idea that "I can go into the world, have a

great time, and then repent. I can have the best of both worlds." This is a deception. Notice that, while the prodigal was restored to sonship and everyone celebrated, he did not regain his inheritance. The remainder of the inheritance went to the older brother. While God is faithful and quick to forgive, there are still consequences to sin.



Methods

Discussion:

Imagine what it would be like to have perfect weather all the time.

Imagine what it was like to have a life expectancy of 800 years.

Does this give us a little indication of the future of those who are faithful to God?

What would the world be like today, if there had not been a great flood?

Do our sins affect others around us, and those who will be born later?

Do I have an influence on anyone else who may be watching my life as a Christian?

Why is it still better to remain in the church and be faithful to God, than to backslide and "sow wild oats," hoping to come back to God when I have run out of fun?

Adam and Eve

Volume 4

Lesson 29

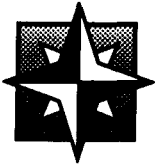


Bible References

Genesis 1:27

Genesis 2:7-26

Genesis 3:1-24



Theme

The first temptation and disobedience give us an understanding of the need for a plan of salvation, and of the principle of restoration to God.



Scripture Reading

Genesis 3:1-12

"Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman,

Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?

2 "And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden:

3 "But of the fruit of the tree which (is) in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die.

4 "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:

5 "For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.

6 "And when the woman saw that the tree (was) good for food, and that it (was) pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make (one) wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.

7 "And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they (were) naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons.

8 "And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden.

9 "And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where {art} thou?"

10 "And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I {was} naked; and I hid myself.

11 "And he said, Who told thee that thou {wast} naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?"

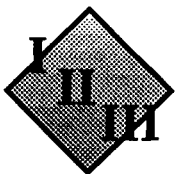
12 "And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest {to be} with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."



Memory Verse

Genesis 1:27

"So God created man in his {own} image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."



Outline

I. God's Created Earth with Man in Mind.

A. Man alone was created in God's image.

1. Man had dominion over the animals.
2. Man was caretaker in the garden.

3. Woman was created especially to be helper/complement for man.

B. Man was created to have a special, personal relationship with God.

1. Being close to God is the most fulfilling and rewarding way to live life.
2. Sin never fully satisfies.
3. All cultures of the world have something or someone to worship.

II. Satan Entered the Garden.

A. Satan used the serpent, a crafty creature.

1. The serpent had legs, and was very beautiful.
2. Apparently, it was not unusual for animals to talk.
3. Many animals have the physical structure for speaking.

B. The serpent tested Eve concerning what God had instructed.

C. The serpent lied to Eve about what God said.

1. The serpent used some half-truths.
2. Satan always seeks to lead us away from an intimate relationship with God.

III. The Result of Sin.

A. Adam tried to hide from God.

1. For the first time, Adam knew fear.
2. Adam also experienced guilt.

B. Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden.

1. They were prevented from eating of the tree of life.
2. God did not allow them to live forever in their sinful condition.

- The devil wants us to think that rebellion makes us free, but he is a liar. Rebellion brings loss and destruction.



Spiritual Truths

- The story of Adam and Eve is not a fable or an allegory, but a true, historical account of the first man and woman on earth.
- Man allowed his mind to receive lies and was tempted by pride; and sin entered.
- God provides for us both physically and spiritually.
- Sin always separates from God, because God is perfectly holy.
- All disobedience to God is sin.
- The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was a constant reminder that all belonged to God, and that Adam and Eve were stewards of what God had created.
- When man disobeyed God, he was really taking possession of his life. When he took possession, he lost dominion.
- God loves us so much, He gives us chances to be close to Him forever. He provided Jesus as the ultimate gift of love.



Lesson Material

God created everything, up to and including the sixth day of creation, with man in mind. All he would need for his physical needs -- air, land, water, creatures, plant life (both for nutrition and enjoyment) -- were created for man by God's spoken word. In the scheme of things, God created a sense of usefulness for man, a purpose. God walked with man in the cool of the evening, providing fellowship. God gave Adam charge of the garden and dominion over the animals, for a sense of purpose. God created a suitable helper for man when He saw it was not good for man to be alone. All of Adam's needs were met.

Adam was given the task of naming all creatures. One by one, God brought each species to Adam; birds and beasts alike were paraded in front of man. The names Adam chose were as they were called from then on.

Because there was no suitable helper found for Adam, God caused man to fall into a deep sleep, and from his sleeping body took a rib. From that rib, God created woman. He brought her to the man. How complete man must have felt. A perfect creation of God to complete Adam, to be a helper. The mystery of the oneness in a marriage is demonstrated in this passage.

Adam was the caretaker of the Garden of Eden. We are not sure of the exact

location; but, we have a general idea of its location, because two of its four rivers are still in existence today.

Satan entered this perfect setting by coming in the craftiest of the creatures, the serpent. Apparently the serpent was not ugly or frightening; man had known no fear or repulsion of any of the creatures. Satan, using the serpent, approached Eve. Adam was placed in charge; yet the serpent, being crafty, went to the woman to put the seeds of doubt in place. First, he tested her knowledge of what God had said. (Genesis 3:1) Eve had heard God perfectly, as proven by her quoting back His very words. (Genesis 3:2-3)

Satan then called God a liar, "...*Ye shall not surely die.*" (Genesis 3:4) Eve started listening. (Genesis 3:5) Bring to the attention of the students that sin begins in our minds. Our thoughts are attacked by Satan still today. He still tests us to see if we know what God really says. Then he tries to lie to us and tell us that it is different than what God said. If we continue to listen to him, his lies encourage us to sin -- to go against what we know God wants and go with what Satan tries to get us to believe. Thoughts, if left to grow, turn to doubts and questions, and finally lead to the actual action of sinning.

Standing right by Eve was Adam -- the one who was supposed to be in charge of the Garden. He did not prevent Eve from listening, nor did he stop her from eating the fruit. She turned after biting the fruit and gave some to her husband. He also ate. From that moment on, both Old and New Testament scripture tells us that sin was in man and it entered through Adam.

Immediately after eating (sinning), Adam and Eve became different. They knew shame for the first time and they

knew fear, when God called for Adam in the cool of the day. They hid from God -- from the presence of the Lord. We know that there is nowhere we can go to hide from God. He is everywhere and knows everything. No matter how hard Adam and Eve tried to cover up the sin, God still knew about it.

Imagine you have a friend. His dad has purchased the most elaborate sound equipment and has some wonderful tapes to demonstrate the equalizers, woofers, tweeters and other gadgetry. He has strictly forbidden your friend to ever go into the study and play with this equipment. Your friend has really been eager to let you hear the fantastic quality of this stereo system. One day while you were visiting, his parents had to run an errand. All of a sudden, your friend decided this was the chance to show off. He went to the forbidden piece of equipment and put in a tape. It was wonderful -- so great that your friend turned up the volume, hit "rewind," and prepared to move the roof. He pressed "play" again. All of a sudden, he broke out in a sweat, for as he removed the tape, it came out in parts, with several inches of the tape wrapped tightly around the internal parts of the player, and the broken end of the tape dangling from the cassette in his hand.

His eyes bugged out while turning to tell you about the trouble. He glanced over your shoulder to the doorway. There stood his dad, red about the collar with clenched fists on his hips,....

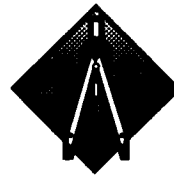
Can you imagine what your friend may have felt at that moment? Have you ever been caught "red-handed," doing what you had been forbidden to do? Or perhaps you were able to conceal your deed for a while, but were later discovered? No escape -- you were guilty.

The sin of Adam and Eve was not hidden from God, though they tried. This is so typical of man. Even today, when God asks about behavior, we try to blame our behavior and sin on someone else. Read Genesis 3:11-13. They blamed each other, the serpent, and even God. God spoke to the serpent first. Then He spoke to Adam and then Eve. Their sin could not go unpunished. They were expelled from the garden. They were destined to work hard, to have pain, and to know difficulty for the rest of their lives. The good part was that they were still able to walk in God's mercy.

You see, God loved man. He desired reconciliation with him. As we read on through the next chapters of Genesis, as well as throughout the entire Bible, we see God, Who cares for fallen man, providing him with a temporary means of forgiveness through sacrifices. He continues to show mankind the shadow and image of the ultimate, perfect Sacrifice that would be given in the right time for all of man's sin. One day God sent His perfect, blameless Son, Jesus, to die and pay the penalty for our sin.

Jesus conquered death, rose again, and gives us the opportunity to receive eternal life. By asking forgiveness for our sins, knowing that Jesus died for those sins, and asking Him to come into our lives and be

in charge, we no longer have to fear. God sees us as justified, as if we had never had sin in our lives, when we genuinely repent and believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Do you know Jesus? Do you want to have your sin forgiven? We can pray together and tell Jesus how much we need His forgiveness, and you can ask Him to come into your heart.



Methods

If time permits, role play situations of temptation. Make the situations something the group can relate to. Allow them to demonstrate and talk about feelings of guilt, temptation, remorse, and consequences of actions.

Encourage your students to view God as ever willing to forgive, to give us a way out of tempting situations, and to be there when Satan tries to trick us. Emphasis needs to be on God making a way for us to get rid of our sin, thus getting rid of guilt, shame, etc.

Take a map to class which has the two existing rivers mentioned in the Garden of Eden. Point out this region to the class.

The Man Who Pleased God

Volume 4

Lesson 30



Bible References

Genesis 6

Genesis 7

Genesis 8

Psalms 111:10

Proverbs 9:10

Hebrews 11:7

1 *"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them,*

2 *"That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they (were) fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose.*

3 *"And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also (is) flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years.*

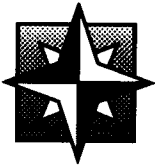
4 *"There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare (children) to them, the same (became) mighty men which (were) of old, men of renown.*

5 *"And God saw that the wickedness of man (was) great in the earth, and (that) every imagination of the thoughts of his heart (was) only evil continually.*

6 *"And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.*

7 *"And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them.*

8 *"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."*



Theme

Noah sought to obey God, whether or not man agreed with him.



Scripture Reading

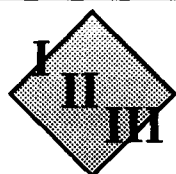
Genesis 6:1-8



Memory Verse

Genesis 6:8

"...Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD."



Outline

I. Man's Wickedness.

- A. Man's thoughts turned to evil all the time. (Genesis 6:5)
- B. Man became corrupt in his ways. (Genesis 6:12)

II. God's Heart Was Broken. He Regretted Making Man.

- A. The Lord was grieved that He had created man. (Genesis 6:6)
- B. God decided to destroy man and the earth, because of man's wickedness. (Genesis 6:13)

III. Noah's Family Was the Only Righteous Family.

- A. Noah was blameless and walked with God. (Genesis 6:9)
- B. Noah was the only righteous man in his generation. (Genesis 7:1)

IV. Noah Was Obedient to God's Plan to Save His Family.

- A. Noah did everything just as the Lord commanded him. (Genesis 6:22)
- B. Genesis 7:5.

V. Noah's Obedience Brought Him and His Family Safety.

- A. The Lord shut Noah and his family in the ark. (Genesis 7:15-16)
- B. Only Noah and his family were spared God's wrath. (Genesis 7:23)

VI. By Faith, Noah Condemned the World.

- A. Hebrews 11:7.
 - 1. Warned of God about things not seen as yet.
 - a. There had never before been a flood.
 - b. It is very possible that there had never been any rain before the flood. (Genesis 2:5-6)
 - 2. Moved with fear.
 - a. *"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom."* (Psalms 111:10; Proverbs 9:10)
 - b. Noah feared God, so he did not fear the people.
 - c. Noah knew God would keep His word.
- B. Condemned the world.
 - 1. Noah did not preach condemnation.
 - 2. Noah simply obeyed God.
 - 3. If Noah had not obeyed, then the people might have said to God, "It is

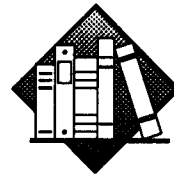
impossible to be righteous."

- a. They might have said, "No one can be human and not be wicked."
 - b. "The world is too evil."
4. But Noah was righteous, so he proved it could be done.
 5. That is how Noah "condemned the world."



Spiritual Truths

- God is just. He will punish sin, and cannot just overlook it.
- God is merciful. He loves us and wants us to be saved from spiritual death.
- If we confess our sin, God is faithful to forgive us.
- The fear of the Lord causes us to refrain from sin and obey God.
- Faith in God results in obedience to God's command.
- When you know God has told you to do something, you will not give up simply because people oppose or ridicule you.
- Obedience is required, even when we do not understand why or how.
- If you know the Who, you do not have to know the why, how, or when.



Lesson Material

Noah was born hundreds of years after the earth was created. At that time, there was much wickedness on earth. Man had turned from God and from following His ways, and lived in a great deal of sin -- with the exception of Noah and his family.

The world was so full of wickedness and sin that God looked at the earth and was sorry he had made man. God's heart was grieved (broken). Man -- the only creation made in the image of God -- had changed from being a perfect creation. Not only had man multiplied, but so had his sin. In fact, the world had become so corrupt, so violent, that God said He would destroy man along with the earth.

Noah and his wife had three married sons. Genesis 6 tells us that these 8 people were able to bring joy to God because of their obedience. It was Noah to whom God offered a plan to be kept safe during the destruction that would come upon the rest of the earth.

This plan must have seemed rather bizarre to Noah. Imagine this man of God trying to fathom what an ark was, or what rain was, or how he and his three sons would manage the awesome task of building this strange structure.

God was very specific. This structure would be equivalent in tonnage to 600 freight cars. The dimensions of this ship easily held all of the creatures God had commanded. God instructed Noah in the method of waterproofing the ark. It had adequate ventilation and lighting. The ventilation would be extremely important,

for these eight people would share this structure for over a year with so many animals. God was designing a healthy, as well as safe, habitat for this precious cargo. It included space for enough food for the entire time of confinement for not only the humans, but for all the animals as well. There would need to be cages, stalls, and pens constructed. The means for disposal of waste as well as protection from the rushing waters were all designed by God, Who forgets no details.

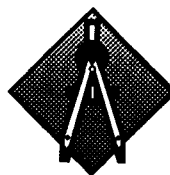
Year after year, for 120 years, Noah listened to instructions and carried them out, as the Lord gave them to him. Repeatedly, Noah obeyed. As this structure took shape, as this family toiled year after year, we can only imagine the reaction of those caught up in sin who lived around them. How many times Noah must have been taunted, ridiculed and mocked. How do you imagine the people around Noah felt about what they saw happening? Do you think Noah grew discouraged, as he tried to tell people what God would do if they did not turn from sin? What reaction would Noah have hoped for? What reaction did he most likely get?

After many years, the vessel was completed. God had given mankind 120 years to repent. Only Noah's family was obedient. We can imagine that Noah obeyed when it seemed foolish to him. He obeyed in the midst of loneliness, watching his neighbors continue with their lives and business while only he and his family struggled to do exactly what God wanted. When the time came, God said, "...Come thou and all thy house into the ark...." (Genesis 7:1) God instructed that there be ceremonially clean animals on board for sacrifice, as well as a male and female of every species. God then shut the door to the ark with Noah, his family, and all species of animals inside.

For forty days and nights, the rains came. The waters burst forth from the earth. Noah and his family and the cargo of precious animals remained safe. The waters raged, raising and eventually covering the highest ground, until all life which was not in the ark was destroyed, just as God had promised.

When the judgment was completed, God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters receded. The ark touched ground and rested upon the Mount Ararat. After many weeks, Noah followed the signs of the released birds (Genesis 8:6-12); and at the proper time, he opened the door of the ark for the first time in many months. When the earth was dry, God told Noah to leave the ark, and take his family and all the creatures from the ark.

Noah, when first walking on the earth after all those months, built an altar unto the Lord, and offered Him a sacrifice. Genesis 8:21 states that the Lord smelled a sweet savor and made a covenant with Noah to never again send a world-wide flood. He sealed that promised safety with the still present sign of the rainbow.



Methods

Ask the students if they can remember times they had to stand for their faith in God, while around them was sin.

Try to encourage the students to imagine the ark as being a physically safe place. In the same way, express to the class that being in the presence of God, in a state of obedience, is a spiritually safe place.

Ask the students to recall times when they remained obedient -- when they remained safe from sin and the devil's schemes by doing exactly what God commanded. Cite situations, or allow students to share when this happened to them. Discuss how the ark is a shadow of how God wants us to be "in Him" for protection.

Write a skit, portraying what life might have been like in the ark. Remember that it is full of animals: every kind of animal, including hundreds of species which are extinct today.

Discussion:

What was it like on the ark?

How did the wicked people feel when the rains started, and the door of the ark was closed?

Do you believe Noah had all full-grown animals on the ark, or did God send young ones, which would take less space and food?

The Tower of Babel

Volume 4

Lesson 31



Bible References

Genesis 11:1-9

Psalms 53:1-6

Psalms 127:1

Malachi 3:16

Acts 2:1-4

Romans 1:21

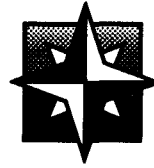
Romans 12:2

1 Corinthians 1:10

Galatians 5:19-23

Hebrews 11:10

James 3:4-5



Theme

Man, in rebellion to God, seeks to raise himself to the place of self-worship and self-sufficiency.



Scripture Reading

Genesis 11:1-9

1 *"And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech.*

2 *"And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar; and they dwelt there.*

3 *"And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar.*

4 *"And they said, Go to, let us build us a city and a tower, whose top {may reach} unto heaven; and let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of the whole earth.*

5 "And the LORD came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded.

6 "And the LORD said, Behold, the people (is) one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.

7 "Go to, let us go down, and there confound their language, that they may not understand one another's speech.

8 "So the LORD scattered them abroad from thence upon the face of all the earth: and they left off to build the city.

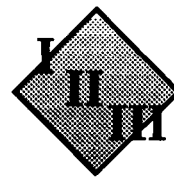
9 "Therefore is the name of it called Babel; because the LORD did there confound the language of all the earth: and from thence did the LORD scatter them abroad upon the face of all the earth."



Memory Verse

Romans 1:21

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified (him) not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."



Outline

I. The Tower.

A. After the flood.

1. The family of man grew.
2. Later generations forgot God.
3. They became like those who were drowned in the flood -- very wicked.

B. "...Let us build a city and a tower...." (Genesis 11:4)

1. A city -- for identity and protection.
 - a. Abraham "...looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Hebrews 11:10)
 - b. Carnal man desired a city whose builder and maker was mankind.
 - c. God will not bless and honor a church built by the schemes and initiatives of man.
 - d. "Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it...." (Psalms 127:1)

2. A tower.

- a. A symbol of man's glory.
- b. A monument to man's achievement.
- c. A central focus to unite humanity.

C. The builders used bricks instead of stone. (Genesis 11:3)

1. Bricks were made of baked mud.
2. This was a carnal substitute for stones, which were formed by God.
3. You are living stones. (1 Peter 2:5)

- a. A spiritual house.
- b. Built by God.
4. Bricks: a type of man-made religion; a substitute for biblical Christianity.

D. We will use slime instead of mortar.

1. Mortar.
 - a. A type of covenant love.
 - b. We are knit together by love.
2. Slime -- a carnal, selfish "love."
 - a. People using people.
 - b. Unnatural affections.

II. The Power of Language.

A. To have unity:

1. "...All speak the same thing..." (1 Corinthians 1:10)
2. The tongue is like a rudder. (James 3:4-5)

B. Tongues. (Acts 2:1-4)

1. They were all in one accord.
2. They all spoke with tongues.

C. God confounded the language of man at Babylon.

1. This was a miracle.
2. They instantly forgot their native tongue.
3. Each family had a different language.
4. You cannot trust when you cannot communicate.
 - a. "... they that feared the LORD spake often one to another..." (Malachi 3:16)
 - b. Not "spake one *about* the other."

III. Why God Confounded Their Language.

A. Unbelievers mock Christianity concerning this story.

1. "If your God is spiritual, then man could not have built a tower that could reach heaven."
2. "Why would God have to stop them, if their goal was impossible?"

B. The goal of the builders was to make a name for themselves.

1. They wanted to unite mankind around themselves.
2. They could have achieved world unity against God, if God had not confounded them.
3. Language barriers are still today the greatest deterrent to world unity.

C. Satan is still trying to build a one-world government, the "new world order," with fleshly efforts and manmade systems.



Spiritual Truths

- After a spiritual revival, later generations tend to drift away from God in times of physical ease and prosperity.
- When man forgets God, he tends to focus his attentions and aspirations around man.

- Humanism, which is really the worship of man, is the natural expression of hearts which refuse to retain God in their thinking.
- A city is a place of identity and protection.
- Abraham looked for a city which had foundations, made by God.
- The purpose of the Tower of Babel was to build a monument to man's glory and to unite the world under the glory of man.
- Our adversary, the devil, is still working in the earth to unite mankind under the banner of a secular society which excludes God.
- The greatest hindrance to this one-world secular government today is the church -- the body of born-again Christians in the earth.



Lesson Material

We know that the Bible says that God never changes. What we often fail to realize is that mankind has remained essentially the same for the last 6,000 years of human history. The same problems, emotions, and conflicts that men dealt with centuries ago, relate to us today. The Old Testament emphasizes the natural, physical events in human history. If we look carefully, we will see a wealth of wisdom in these stories, which still apply today. The natural is an illustration of the spiritual. The same devil which lured man away from God and promoted

wickedness and a secular mind set is still operating in the world today. He uses basically the same tactics that he has throughout history.

The family of Noah witnessed the awesome power of the judgment of God. They had seen the entire earth destroyed by a flood. They had endured many long months of confinement, as the earth dried up, leaving millions of carcasses buried in the mud. You would think that they would have a healthy amount of the fear of the Lord, but it was a matter of a very short time before Noah himself got drunk and disgraced himself. His son, Ham dishonored his father and brought a curse on all of his descendants. It does not take long for people to get their eyes off of God and become focused on the flesh. It does not seem to take long for revival to dissipate into a memory.

It was only a few generations after the flood that the family of man began to focus on methods to maintain world unity. The people were rapidly growing in number, and there was concern among the most elite that the people might scatter and diminish their power base. When the people came to the plain of Shinar, they decided to solidify their own power and build a great monument. They already had enough technology to build a high tower; and, apparently, they had the manpower. It is an error to think that they were seeking to invade God's spiritual heaven. They were trying to build a tower which would reach high into the sky, as a great monument to man's achievement and man's glory. God looked down from His spiritual heaven and saw that their motive was evil. Anything which causes man to exclude God from his thinking is ultimately destructive to the human race. God created man for Himself, and it is impossible for man to be whole and

complete, without a relationship with his God.

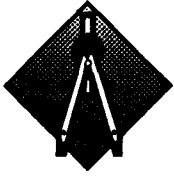
When man excludes God from his thinking, he becomes immediately more selfish and more destructive. Galatians 5:19-21 describe various "works of the flesh," and contrasts them with the fruit of the Spirit. (Galatians 5:22-23) The works of the flesh naturally operate when there is a spiritual vacuum. Man has to seek after God, in order to maintain a spiritual relationship with God. Man never drifts toward God; he always drifts away from God. This is a spiritual parallel to the second law of thermodynamics: that matter tends to move from order to disorder, unless there is a specific force applied. Many spiritual revivals have degenerated over the years, because the people became satisfied and stopped seeking after God.

The word "Babel" originally meant "gate of God." The name indicates that the people saw their organization as a religion. They were not really seeking God -- they were seeking world religious unity around themselves. Man cannot seek God or please God by building monuments to religion, although he still tries. Man can only please God by having faith in God and by seeking God in humility. Pride always alienates man from God, because pride focuses the glory which belongs to God onto man, and is therefore a form of idolatry. After God confounded the language of man at Babel, the word "Babel" became associated with "confusion of language." "He was just babbling on and on." Many words originate by being associated with events in history, or with people who were characterized by a certain action.

The key word to the religious movement at Babel was the word

"substitute." The whole story is the effort of man to substitute God's glory with his own glory; and to unite mankind around religion, instead of God. They substituted a religious monument for worship and sacrifice and built a physical city, instead of building a spiritual relationship with God and seeking an eternal city. The spiritual truth is illustrated in the fact that they used bricks instead of stones, and slime instead of mortar. Stones are made by God, and are a type of the believer. In the New Testament, we are called living stones (1 Peter 2:5), and are created to be a house and a city for God to dwell in. Brick or baked mud is a type of man-made religion. It is formed as "earthen vessels," and is a substitute for the stones God created. You can conform the bricks you bake to any mold you make, and you can conform a life to any man-made religion or cult. But you can not conform and become a Christian. You have to be transformed by the power of God. The world wants you to conform to its image, but God wants to transform you by His grace. (Romans 12:2)

The builders used slime for mortar. Again, this has spiritual application for us. The world substitutes physical attraction for love. We are taught that love is a romantic feeling and has to do with some biological reaction. Today, in fact, love is being used to describe unnatural affections -- lustful relationships between people of the same gender or between people who are not married. Mortar is a type of godly, covenant love. It is this mortar which holds together marriages, families, churches, and nations. The ability to genuinely love can only come from God, because love is an expression of His character. You may substitute gang loyalty or carnal affection, but slime will not last very long. However, love always endures.



Methods

Discussion:

What does the word "secular" mean?
(It leaves God out.)

What was the purpose of man in
building the Tower of Babel?

How important is it that we continue
to seek after God?

Captivity

Volume 4

Lesson 32



Bible References

Ezra 7:25-28

Nehemiah 2:1-9

Daniel 1-4

Luke 2:40-52

Romans 13:1



Scripture Reading

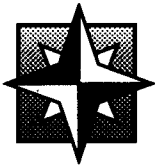
Ezra 7:25-28

25 *"And thou, Ezra, after the wisdom of thy God, that {is} in thine hand, set magistrates and judges, which may judge all the people that {are} beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God; and teach ye them that know {them} not.*

26 *"And whosoever will not do the law of thy God, and the law of the king, let judgment be executed speedily upon him, whether {it be} unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment.*

27 *"Blessed {be} the LORD God of our fathers, which hath put {such a thing} as this in the king's heart, to beautify the house of the LORD which {is} in Jerusalem:*

28 *"And hath extended mercy unto me before the king, and his counsellors, and before all the king's mighty princes. And I was strengthened as the hand of the LORD my God {was} upon me, and I gathered together out of Israel chief men to go up with me."*



Theme

God wants us to be under authority, even in captivity.

Nehemiah 2:1-9

1 "And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, {that} wine {was} before him: and I took up the wine, and gave {it} unto the king. Now I had not been {beforetime} sad in his presence.

2 "Wherefore the king said unto me, Why {is} thy countenance sad, seeing thou {art} not sick? this {is} nothing {else} but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid,

3 "And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, {lieth} waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?

4 "Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven.

5 "And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.

6 "And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

7 "Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

8 "And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the palace which {appertained} to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the

house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

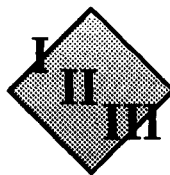
9 "Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me."



Memory Verse

Romans 13:1

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."



Outline

I. Men and Their Circumstances.

A. Israel had been in captivity for 70 years.

1. The most intelligent and most handsome young men had been taken from the land.
2. The people were forced to work for their captors.

B. Three Jewish men in particular were used of God in spite of their captivity.

1. Zerubbabel.
 - a. A layman.

- b. Chosen by God to restore the temple.
- 2. Ezra.
 - a. A prophet.
 - b. Sent to Israel to deliver a message of holiness.
- 3. Nehemiah.
 - a. A government official.
 - b. Rebuilt the wall around Jerusalem.

II. Men's Reaction.

- A. These men knew they were not to worship any other gods.
- B. They were trained to honor God and their parents.
- C. They were in a society which did not honor God.
 - 1. There were many opportunities to compromise.
 - 2. The government authorities instituted laws preventing worship of the Lord God.
 - 3. Idols of false deities were expected to be worshipped.
- D. Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah did not betray their own people.
- E. Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah did not disobey the governmental authorities God had placed them under.
- F. Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah obeyed the Word of God and kept the Lord first in their lives.

III. God's Reward.

- A. Because of their obedience to the Lord, God used Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah in a special way.

- B. God influenced the captors of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah to allow them to complete the special tasks God called them to.
- C. God blessed these men because of their obedience to Him and their captors.
- D. God will bless us when we follow Him.
- E. God will bless us when we obey the authorities which He has placed over us.



Spiritual Truths

- God can use enemies to train us and develop our character.
- Rebellion is the willful rejection of God's way.
- God rewards obedience which is based on faith.
- God and man love obedience.
- God is the author and judge of all true authority.
- God did not provide parents and other authority figures in our lives to make life more difficult, but to give us protection and wisdom.
- Our goal in life should not be to do our own thing, but to find the will of God and do it.



Lesson Material

Israel had been in captivity for 70 years. Nebuchadnezzar conquered Israel in 605 BC. The best looking and brightest Jewish men had been taken from the rank and file and were trained for government service. The others were pressed into forced labor, and some were tortured and killed. We can read about Nebuchadnezzar in the book of Daniel.

The Babylonians were conquered by the Persians, led by King Cyrus in 539 BC. King Cyrus did not rule by oppression, but he allowed some of the nationals to rule with limited power. They always had to be in submission to the King of Persia and those he placed to watch over the conquered people. The Israelites were known for rebellion against foreign governments. King Cyrus appointed only those Israelites who were in submission and under authority to his government. Three such men were Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah. They were three men who were not traitors to their own people, but men who understood submission and authority.

As children, the Hebrews were taught by the law to be obedient to God and their parents. They were also taught to love the Lord and have no other gods before Him, and to honor their fathers and mothers.

Zerubbabel was a layman who was chosen to restore the temple in Jerusalem.

Ezra was a prophet of the living God, Jehovah; and he was sent to Israel to bring the people into a walk of holiness.

Nehemiah was a trusted government official. He was not an ordinary servant of the king, but one who was trusted with the life of the king -- tasting of food and wine for the king. Even though he was in a high official position, he loved God and had a strong desire to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall around that city.

These men knew God very well and knew God desires order for men. These men served the enemy king, but they would not violate any of God's laws. They would worship neither men nor idols, which were common practices in those days. Idol worship and worship of the king was the stipulation of some governments. Romans 13:1 says,

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God."

We read that God teaches the same principle to the New Testament church. He is the One who puts governments into power, and it is He who gives them authority. We are to be subject -- in other words, we are to obey the laws of the government, unless they specifically violate God's law. God not only places governments into authority, but He also places parents, teachers, pastors, prophets, policemen, and so forth into authority as well. When authority is used properly, it gives us order and safety. God intends us to be in submission to and obedient to the government.

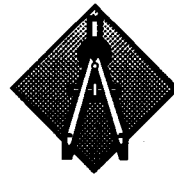
Jesus was under submission to His earthly parents, even though He was the Son of God. When Jesus' parents could not find Jesus and they discovered Him teaching in the synagogue, they did not understand His ministry. They made Him come home with them. (Luke 2:40-52) *"And Jesus increased in wisdom and*

stature, and in favour with God and man." (Luke 2:52) Obedience to God-given authorities produces maturity and blessing in our lives.

By being under authority to their captors, Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah were able to be used by God and be blessed by Him. These men were able to do God's will with the blessing of their captors -- and the captors even paid their expenses.

We are told often to just "do our own thing." Many children disobey their parents and rebel. Yet, the Lord wants us to work within the authority He has placed over us. Remember, God created us and knows what is best for us. The kingdom of God operates by authority. To disobey or take authority which is not ours is rebellion, which is the sin Satan has committed. When we disobey or are rebellious, we are saying we know better than God, how to run our lives. He has given us authority in government, churches, and in the family to bring order, safety, and peace into our lives.

These three men -- Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah -- were men under authority. They were obedient, and God was able to bless them because of their obedience.



Methods

Have the children discuss authority figures. Give them freedom to talk about why submission to authority is difficult. Guide them in their understanding of how God gives us wisdom and strength to walk in obedience -- even when it is difficult.

Role play correct and incorrect reactions to situations involving authority. Discuss how we need to decide ahead of time to be obedient, and be prepared ahead of time to be obedient when tempted to be rebellious.

Babylonian Exodus

Volume 4

Lesson 33



Bible References

Ezra 1:1-11

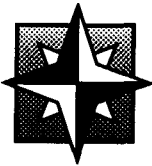
Ezra 2:68-70

Ezra 3:1-13

Matthew 6:21

John 14:6

1 John 1:9



Theme

When God restores His people, He has a definite plan to bring it about.



Scripture Reading

Ezra 3:1-13

1 "And when the seventh month was come, and the children of Israel {were} in the cities, the people gathered themselves together as one man to Jerusalem.

2 "Then stood up Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and his brethren the priests, and Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and his brethren, and builded the altar of the God of Israel, to offer burnt offerings thereon, as {it is} written in the law of Moses the man of God.

3 "And they set the altar upon his bases; for fear {was} upon them because of the people of those countries: and they offered burnt offerings thereon unto the LORD, {even} burnt offerings morning and evening.

4 "They kept also the feast of tabernacles, as {it is} written, and {offered} the daily burnt offerings by number, according to the custom, as the duty of every day required;

5 "And afterward {offered} the continual burnt offering, both of the new moons, and of all the set feasts of the LORD that were consecrated, and of every one that willingly offered a freewill offering unto the LORD.

6 "From the first day of the seventh month began they to offer burnt offerings unto the LORD. But the foundation of the temple of the LORD was not {yet} laid.

7 "They gave money also unto the masons, and to the carpenters; and meat,

and drink, and oil, unto them of Zidon, and to them of Tyre, to bring cedar trees from Lebanon to the sea of Joppa, according to the grant that they had of Cyrus king of Persia.

8 "Now in the second year of their coming unto the house of God at Jerusalem, in the second month, began Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, and Jeshua the son of Jozadak, and the remnant of their brethren the priests and the Levites, and all they that were come out of the captivity unto Jerusalem; and appointed the Levites, from twenty years old and upward, to set forward the work of the house of the LORD.

9 "Then stood Jeshua {with} his sons and his brethren, Kadmiel and his sons, the sons of Judah, together, to set forward the workmen in the house of God: the sons of Henadad, {with} their sons and their brethren the Levites.

10 "And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise the LORD, after the ordinance of David king of Israel.

11 "And they sang together by course in praising and giving thanks unto the LORD; because {he is} good, for his mercy {endureth} for ever toward Israel. And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid.

12 "But many of the priests and Levites and chief of the fathers, {who were} ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy:

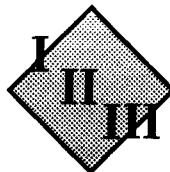
13 "So that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people: for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off."



Memory Verse

1 John 1:9

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us {our} sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."



Outline

I. Zerubbabel.

- A. A layman.
- B. Called to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem.

II. The Ministry.

- A. The people gave an offering to help finance the rebuilding process.
- B. Zerubbabel rebuilt the altar first, so that sacrifices to the Lord could resume.
 - 1. The altar was a place for sacrifices.
 - 2. The altar was a place for worship.
 - 3. The altar was a place for memorial.

III. The Opposition.

- A. Many opposed the rebuilding of the temple.
- B. The opposition brought the rebuilding project to a halt.
- C. It was several years later that the temple was finally able to be completed.
- D. God used those who opposed the rebuilding process to ultimately finance the project.

IV. The Application.

- A. When we do what God tells us to do, there will be opposition.
- B. Opposition produces strength of character.
- C. Opposition allows God's strength to be manifested.
- D. Jesus is the ultimate sacrifice and is able to forgive all sin.

- When we do anything for God according to God's directions, there will always be opposition.
- We must abide in God through Jesus Christ.



Lesson Material

After being in captivity for 70 years, Cyrus, the King of Persia conquered the Babylonians and prepared to set the Hebrew captives free. Nothing in scripture leads us to believe that Cyrus served the living God; but, in Ezra 1, Cyrus announced that God had given him all the kingdoms of the earth and God wanted him to send the children of Israel back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple. Cyrus not only set the people free, but also gave back all the articles of silver and gold which were taken from the temple.

Ezra 2 tells of the exiled Jews returning to their land. When they got there, the families gave freewill offerings to rebuild the house of God. The hearts of the returning families were turned toward God.

As Bishop Paino has pointed out, all revival in the Bible started with the people giving. Scripture says that "...where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matthew 6:21)

Ezra 3 relates that the first thing that Zerubbabel rebuilt was the altar. Altars were places of sacrifice, places of worship, and places of memorial. This was the place where they could bring their sacrifices for forgiveness of sin. It was here the people



Spiritual Truths

- God wants fellowship with all men.
- God has provided the way to fellowship, and that way is the Person of Jesus Christ.
- Jesus provided the way for forgiveness, by paying the death penalty for us.

brought their tithes and offerings to acknowledge God.

In God's wisdom, He made the temple the center of the Israelites' lives. They would travel miles to come and celebrate the feasts and holy days.

After 70 years of captivity, the Jews were sent home to build the house of God, the place for worship and communion with God. God always calls His people to Himself. The captivity from which they had just been released was, in fact, due to the Israelites pulling away from God, doing their own thing and worshipping other gods. Before the people went into exile, the last thing God had torn down was the temple -- and the first thing God wanted rebuilt when they returned was the temple.

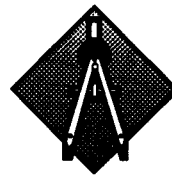
How much different is God's plan today? When we have wandered away from God, or do not know Him, we are captives of the enemy, Satan. To have fellowship with God, or to restore fellowship with Him, we must first come to the place of needing God and then asking and receiving forgiveness from Him. We also must repent -- change our ways to God's ways. Then we must keep God in the center of our lives. God has provided a way: instead of the altar, He gave us His son, Jesus, Who died on the cross for us for the forgiveness of our sins. Jesus became our sacrifice once and for all. We do not need to keep offering sacrifices as the Israelites did. Jesus did it once and for all. To have fellowship with God, we must ask Jesus to become our Savior, recognize that we are sinners and cannot save ourselves. Jesus said, *"...I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."* (John 14:6)

As Zerubbabel was rebuilding God's temple, there were many who opposed

him and were successful in bringing the project to a stop. The project of rebuilding the temple was postponed for several years, but ultimately, God used the very people who opposed the project to finance the rebuilding.

In the previous lesson, it was learned that Zerubbabel was a man under authority. This lesson gives an even greater example of the fruit of that submission. Be being under authority, even to the point of stopping reconstruction on the building, God was able to bless the Israelites in a greater way. Ultimately, those in opposition were ordered to stop interfering; and they also had to pay for the expense of the building.

God's manner of the restoration of mankind to Himself was first the altar, and is now Jesus. The altar was a place of forgiveness, repentance, and restoration. Now we can come to God's Son and confess our sin. Jesus is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. By this act, we are restored to God. God desired this restoration so much that he directed that His temple be rebuilt in the time of the Old Testament. Ultimately, God sent Jesus, so that fellowship between God and man could be restored.



Methods

This lesson affords a good opportunity to talk about the condition of the students' hearts. If they need to be restored or accept Jesus for the first time, make opportunity to do that in the course of sharing the

material. God wants us to come to Him -- to be one with Him through Jesus. Encourage the students to make that commitment today, during class. Make it a time of celebration, then go on with the lesson. Privately, during the week or after class, offer your phone number as a point of contact to those who have received Christ or recommitted their lives to Him.

This point of contact may be much needed for this newborn Christian, at some time in the near future.

Do not leave the student without some means to be in touch with someone who can encourage him, pray with him, and remind him that he is part of the family of God.

Exodus from Babylon II

Volume 4

Lesson 34



Bible References

Ezra 3:3-7

Ezra 6-10

John 15:19

2 Corinthians 6:14

James 1:22

1 Peter 1:16

1 *"Now after these things, in the reign of Artaxerxes king of Persia, Ezra the son of Seraiah, the son of Azariah, the son of Hilkiah,*

2 *"The son of Shallum, the son of Zadok, the son of Ahitub,*

3 *"The son of Amariah, the son of Azariah, the son of Meraioth,*

4 *"The son of Zerahiah, the son of Uzzi, the son of Bukki,*

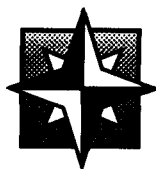
5 *"The son of Abishua, the son of Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron the chief priest:*

6 *"This Ezra went up from Babylon; and he {was} a ready scribe in the law of Moses, which the LORD God of Israel had given: and the king granted him all his request, according to the hand of the LORD his God upon him.*

7 *"And there went up {some} of the children of Israel, and of the priests, and the Levites, and the singers, and the porters, and the Nethinims, unto Jerusalem, in the seventh year of Artaxerxes the king.*

8 *"And he came to Jerusalem in the fifth month, which {was} in the seventh year of the king.*

9 *"For upon the first {day} of the first month began he to go up from Babylon, and on the first {day} of the fifth month*



Theme

After repentance, God brings holiness to His people.



Scripture Reading

Ezra 7:1-10

came he to Jerusalem, according to the good hand of his God upon him.

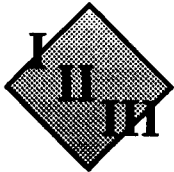
10 "For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the LORD, and to do (it), and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments."



Memory Verse

1 Peter 1:16

"Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."



Outline

I. Ezra.

- A. A priest.
- B. A scribe of God's Word.
- C. A teacher of the law.
- D. Led exiled Jews back to Jerusalem.

II. The Ministry.

- A. Rebuilt the altar in Jerusalem, so that worship could resume. (Ezra 3:3-7)
- B. Called the Jewish people to repentance, after discovering they were intermarrying.

- C. Prayed to God on behalf of the people.

III. The Results.

- A. The temple was rebuilt.
- B. The Jewish people repented of their sin.
- C. The Jewish people removed foreign and sinful influences from their lives.



Spiritual Truths

- God calls us into a life of holiness.
- We must not only hear the Word, but obey it.
- We are to be different from the world in our values, thoughts, and actions.
- We are to be like Jesus.
- We do not have to strive to be like Jesus by ourselves, because the Holy Spirit will help us.



Lesson Material

When we read the Bible, we do not always get the feeling of time moving on. However, the first six chapters of Ezra take place over a 22-year period. There is a 58-year gap between the 6th and 7th chapters

of Ezra. During this time gap, Esther lived and was queen in Persia.

Almost 80 years had passed between the decree of Cyrus, King of Persia, releasing the Israelites from captivity, and the sending of Ezra to Jerusalem. The temple was completed in 516 BC. It is during the reign of Artaxerxes, King of Persia (458 BC), that Ezra led another group of exiles to Jerusalem -- approximately 1,700 Israelites.

Little is known about Ezra, except what is written in scripture. There is little to be read about him from other historical sources. Ezra was a scribe. He was not only a secretary, but also a teacher of the law.

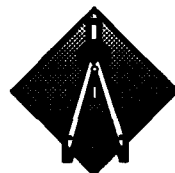
When Ezra arrived in Jerusalem, he found many of the Jewish people mixed with other non-Jewish people. He found the Israelites spiritually backslidden. They had not kept themselves separated from the world; but instead, they had taken many pagan wives and were practicing things which were detestable to God. Not only were the common people behaving in this way, but the leaders and officials were found to be equally guilty of disobedience. During an evening sacrifice, Ezra tore his clothes, fell on his hands and knees, and began to pray to God and confess the sins of Israel. The people heard, and their hearts were touched. They confessed their sins. Ezra continued to fast and pray for Israel. Many men who had taken foreign wives against God's law repented of their sins, separated from the people around them, and divorced their foreign wives.

In many places throughout the world, there are interracial marriages; but, the purpose of God asking Israel not to intermarry was to keep their service to God pure. He knew they would take up the ways of the foreigners. Jesus taught

concerning our attitude towards the world. We are in the world, but not of the world. (John 15:19) God encourages us to marry believers and not be unequally yoked. (2 Corinthians 6:14) Marriage was not the root of the problem. The Jewish people had departed from God's Word, and their marriages were the result of their being separated from God.

Many people today come to Jesus, but fall away. This is why God gives us the Holy Spirit. As we listen to God's Word, the Holy Spirit will convict us of wrong thoughts and wrong actions. Possibly some in the class have taken on attitudes and actions of the world -- bad or inappropriate thoughts or actions, or language which is not godly. Today would be a good time to take inventory of our thoughts, actions and language. When the men of Jerusalem heard Ezra speak the Word of God, they not only felt bad, but they did something about it. James 1:22 tells us not only to hear the Word, but to be a doer of the Word.

God has called us from a life of sin into a walk of holiness. We are called to be different than the world.



Methods

Make an opportunity for any unsaved person in class to accept Jesus as their Savior. You may then want to move to a discussion with the students who already have asked Jesus into their hearts, but need to do some spiritual "housecleaning." Time and weather permitting, have ready small pieces of

paper to give the students. Have them privately write those things they need to be separated from -- things which they have allowed to creep into their lives. In an area outside, have a coffee can or container in which you can have the students place the wadded up pieces of "sin" and burn them as they watch, believing the Lord to give them freedom and victory.

An indoor alternative may be to use sugar cubes to symbolize areas of sin they have been dealing with and have the cubes dissolved in a container of warm/hot water. Perhaps the water could be colored red to symbolize the blood of Jesus taking care of the sin as we give it to Him.

Exodus Part III

Volume 4

Lesson 35



Bible References

Judges 6:5

Nehemiah 2:1-20

Matthew 6:33

Romans 8:35-39

king. Now I had not been {beforetime} sad in his presence.

2 "Wherefore the king said unto me, Why {is} thy countenance sad, seeing thou {art} not sick? this {is} nothing {else} but sorrow of heart. Then I was very sore afraid,

3 "And said unto the king, Let the king live for ever: why should not my countenance be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' sepulchres, {lieth} waste, and the gates thereof are consumed with fire?

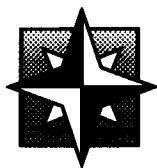
4 "Then the king said unto me, For what dost thou make request? So I prayed to the God of heaven.

5 "And I said unto the king, If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it.

6 "And the king said unto me, (the queen also sitting by him,) For how long shall thy journey be? and when wilt thou return? So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time.

7 "Moreover I said unto the king, If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river, that they may convey me over till I come into Judah;

8 "And a letter unto Asaph the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the



Theme

God protects us from our enemies.



Scripture Reading

Nehemiah 2:1-20

1 "And it came to pass in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artaxerxes the king, {that} wine {was} before him: and I took up the wine, and gave {it} unto the

palace which {appertained} to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into. And the king granted me, according to the good hand of my God upon me.

9 "Then I came to the governors beyond the river, and gave them the king's letters. Now the king had sent captains of the army and horsemen with me.

10 "When Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, heard {of it}, it grieved them exceedingly that there was come a man to seek the welfare of the children of Israel.

11 "So I came to Jerusalem, and was there three days.

12 "And I arose in the night, I and some few men with me; neither told I {any} man what my God had put in my heart to do at Jerusalem: neither {was there any} beast with me, save the beast that I rode upon.

13 "And I went out by night by the gate of the valley, even before the dragon well, and to the dung port, and viewed the walls of Jerusalem, which were broken down, and the gates thereof were consumed with fire.

14 "Then I went on to the gate of the fountain, and to the king's pool: but {there was} no place for the beast {that was} under me to pass.

15 "Then went I up in the night by the brook, and viewed the wall, and turned back, and entered by the gate of the valley, and {so} returned.

16 "And the rulers knew not whither I went, or what I did; neither had I as yet told {it} to the Jews, nor to the priests, nor to the nobles, nor to the rulers, nor to the rest that did the work.

17 "Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we {are} in, how Jerusalem {lieth} waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach.

18 "Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king's words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for {this} good {work}.

19 "But when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the servant, the Ammonite, and Geshem the Arabian, heard {it}, they laughed us to scorn, and despised us, and said, What {is} this thing that ye do? will ye rebel against the king?

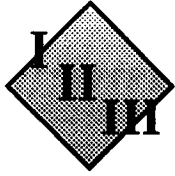
20 "Then answered I them, and said unto them, The God of heaven, he will prosper us; therefore we his servants will arise and build: but ye have no portion, nor right, nor memorial, in Jerusalem."



Memory Verse

Matthew 6:33

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."



Outline

I. Nehemiah.

- A. A Jewish man in exile.
- B. The king's cup-bearer.
- C. A man God used as a special leader in Jerusalem's history.

II. The Ministry.

- A. Nehemiah led a group of exiles back to Jerusalem.
- B. Under God's direction, they rebuilt the wall around Jerusalem.
 1. Rebuilt in only 52 days.
 2. Rebuilt amidst enemy opposition.
- C. Nehemiah encouraged the builders in the midst of discouragement and ridicule from their enemies.

III. The Results and Practical Application.

- A. The wall was completed, which helped keep Jerusalem safe from its enemies.
- B. The Jewish people overcame their enemies by keeping their eyes on the Lord and remaining faithful to the task God had given them.



Spiritual Truths

- God is our protection.
- Through prayer, we can communicate with God.
- Our personal comfort should not be our primary concern.
- God is greater than any enemy.



Lesson Material

Nehemiah rebuilt the wall around Jerusalem thirteen years after Ezra returned to Israel to restore worship and bring purity and revival to the people of Israel. Zerubbabel had led the first captives back to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple 94 years earlier.

God now called the third man, Nehemiah, to lead the last group of captives back to Israel. Nehemiah was a man in a high government position, not as a ruler, but as a direct aide to the king. He was the cup-bearer for the king -- a position similar to that of the Secret Service in the U.S.A., who protect the president. Several kings in history had been assassinated by their cup-bearers. Their deaths happened either through poisoning their food or drink, or by violent acts. A cup-bearer needed to be a man with whom you could trust your life. He tasted the wine (hence the name "cup-

bearer") and food that the king was to eat. The cup-bearer was in close proximity to the king during his meetings, and would overhear much information that definitely needed to be kept confidential. The cup-bearer would know the king better than any other man, because he would spend more time in the king's presence than would any other person. The cup-bearer would be a man privileged in many ways. He would eat and drink what the king ate and drank. He would have a wardrobe befitting someone who dwelt with a king. This was the position of the man, Nehemiah. He had the confidence of the king, himself.

In all of this grandeur, surrounded by such lovely appointments and privy to important information, Nehemiah had compassion for the people of Israel -- they were his people. He had received reports that Jerusalem still lay in ruins. The Jewish people were a laughingstock, because they lacked physical protection. The great wall which protected them was still in ruins, leaving the people vulnerable to attack. Nehemiah sought the Lord through prayer. God granted him favor with the king, and Nehemiah was sent to restore the city walls.

Nehemiah, along with another group of captives, returned to Jerusalem to restore the wall. Even with opposition, the wall was rebuilt in only 52 days -- a truly remarkable feat. The wall extended for 2.5 miles and was an average of 38 feet high. This wall is described in great detail in the book of Nehemiah.

The way God deals with man is always orderly, and as one looks at the tasks of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah, there is a definite order as well. First, God restored the temple through Zerubbabel, turning the hearts of the people toward God.

Secondly, God restored the lives of His people through His Word, using Ezra the prophet. Now God was providing the people with physical protection, by having the wall restored. The scripture says,

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33)

God's plan of protection does not start with us being strong physically, economically, intellectually, or militarily; but it begins with a right relationship with Him.

Throughout scripture, men without personal strength were able to overcome armies greater than their own. Gideon is a good example. With the help of God and 300 men, Gideon defeated the Midianites and the Amalekites, who were reported to be so many that they could not be numbered. (Judges 6:5)

Nehemiah left the comfort and riches of the king to restore the wall of Jerusalem. Because he sought God through prayer and obedience, God gave him a plan. He organized the people into small groups. Sometimes, families worked together on a small section of the wall. When opposition came to them while they were rebuilding the wall, God again gave Nehemiah a plan. Nehemiah posted men to work on the wall, who also served as guards. Certain groups rebuilt the wooden gates which had been burned down. Nehemiah always kept before him the goal God had given him. Nehemiah kept in the center of God's will through prayer and making his relationship to God his first priority. God, in return, provided protection for Nehemiah and for the people.

There is always opposition to doing the right thing. This opposition can distract us from what God wants us to do. In Romans 8:35-39, we read:

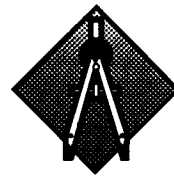
"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? (shall) tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Many things will come against us. Protection comes not from the wall, but from God. The walls which Nehemiah rebuilt had once stood tall and strong, and the Babylonians had torn them down. The Israelites did not lose their protection when the enemy tore down the walls -- the Israelites lost their protection when they worshipped other gods and disobeyed the one true God. The wall should be a reminder of the protection God gives us.

Nehemiah did not consider his personal wealth, comfort, or safety -- only what God asked him to do.

"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." (Matthew 6:33)

What has God asked you to do?



Methods

Ask the students to write down what three things they would absolutely have to have if they were going to be stranded on a desert island. Point out that those things which are so important to us can become "gods." They can become so significant that we do not want to give them over to God. Point out the need to constantly and consciously practice putting God first. We will then be equipped to be like Nehemiah -- not thinking first of our personal wealth, comfort, or safety -- only of doing what God asks us to do each day.

Restoration

Volume 4

Lesson 36



Bible References

Ezra 1

Nehemiah 7:1-4

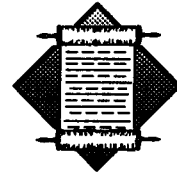
Nehemiah 8:7-18

Nehemiah 9:13

Nehemiah 11:1

Nehemiah 12:43-47

Philippians 1:6



Scripture Reading

Nehemiah 8:7-18

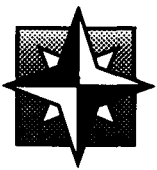
7 *"Also Jeshua, and Bani, and Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodijah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, Pelaiiah, and the Levites, caused the people to understand the law: and the people (stood) in their place.*

8 *"So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused (them) to understand the reading.*

9 *"And Nehemiah, which (is) the Tirshatha, and Ezra the priest the scribe, and the Levites that taught the people, said unto all the people, This day (is) holy unto the LORD your God; mourn not, nor weep. For all the people wept, when they heard the words of the law.*

10 *"Then he said unto them, Go your way, eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and send portions unto them for whom nothing is prepared: for (this) day (is) holy unto our Lord: neither be ye sorry; for the joy of the LORD is your strength.*

11 *"So the Levites stilled all the people, saying, Hold your peace, for the day (is) holy; neither be ye grieved.*



Theme

God goes to great lengths to teach His people; and He never gives up.

12 *"And all the people went their way to eat, and to drink, and to send portions, and to make great mirth, because they had understood the words that were declared unto them.*

13 *"And on the second day were gathered together the chief of the fathers of all the people, the priests, and the Levites, unto Ezra the scribe, even to understand the words of the law.*

14 *"And they found written in the law which the LORD had commanded by Moses, that the children of Israel should dwell in booths in the feast of the seventh month:*

15 *"And that they should publish and proclaim in all their cities, and in Jerusalem, saying, Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as {it is} written.*

16 *"So the people went forth, and brought {them}, and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the street of the water gate, and in the street of the gate of Ephraim.*

17 *"And all the congregation of them that were come again out of the captivity made booths, and sat under the booths: for since the days of Jeshua the son of Nun unto that day had not the children of Israel done so. And there was very great gladness.*

18 *"Also day by day, from the first day unto the last day, he read in the book of the law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day {was} a solemn assembly, according unto the manner."*

Nehemiah 9:1-3

1 *"Now in the twenty and fourth day of this month the children of Israel were assembled with fasting, and with sackclothes, and earth upon them.*

2 *"And the seed of Israel separated themselves from all strangers, and stood and confessed their sins, and the iniquities of their fathers.*

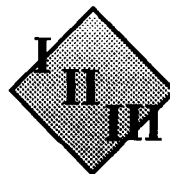
3 *"And they stood up in their place, and read in the book of the law of the LORD their God {one} fourth part of the day; and {another} fourth part they confessed, and worshipped the LORD their God."*



Memory Verse

Philippians 1:6

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform {it} until the day of Jesus Christ."



Outline

I. Restoration of the Physical.

- A. The temple.
- B. The wall.

II. Restoration of the People.

- A. In Jerusalem.
- B. In the country.

III. Restoration of the Relationship.

- A. The law.
- B. The heart.
- C. The ongoing restoration.



Spiritual Truths

- God loves His people.
- God will go to great lengths to teach His people.
- God is not finished with us yet.
- God continually draws His people to Himself.
- Everything God does is for our good.
- God will supply all of our needs.



Lesson Material

The account of how God began the process of the restoration of Israel begins in Ezra chapter one. Restoration is the act of restoring or bringing back to the original

state. Israel had been conquered in 605 B.C., and the captives were led off to Babylon in three different exiles. They were in captivity until Cyrus, King of Persia, conquered the Babylonian empire in 539 B.C. The Israelites were in captivity for 70 years. Many were reluctant to return to Jerusalem, because they had done so well in captivity.

God sent Zerubbabel and 49,000 Israelites back to their land in 538 B.C. to restore the temple. Ezra and 1,700 captives followed them about 80 years later. Ezra's mission was to reform the people. Finally, in 444 B.C., Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem to restore the wall around the city.

We find the restoration of the wall and temple complete in Nehemiah 7:1-4. The wall was dedicated to the Lord, and praise and worship was restored. (Nehemiah 12) A store room was designated for the tithes and offerings for the staffing of the temple. The city and surrounding areas were inhabited with Israelites, and they lived on their ancestral property. Jerusalem was inhabited by the casting of lots. (Nehemiah 11:1) One out of every ten Israelites lived in the holy city.

Even after all of this had occurred, the situation was still incomplete in God's eyes. There was a place of worship -- the temple. The city and the countryside were once again inhabited by Jewish people. The city became secure with the completed wall about the perimeter. Yet, God still had not done all that He intended to do. Why? Because the most important part of the restoration was that of the hearts of the people. This part of the restoration was begun with Ezra. He began with the reading of the law -- the Word of God -- and prayer and fasting. The people confessed their sins. Those guilty of

intermarriage repented and put away their foreign wives. But this was not the end. Ezra began reading the law aloud to the people and translating it into their language. They again confessed their sin and separated themselves from foreigners, in obedience to the law.

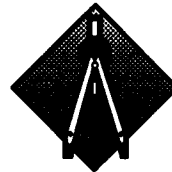
We sometimes wonder why their relationship with God seemed to come and go. We know from God's point of view that He is ever bringing the people to Himself. It is the people who walk away. Today, we face the same problems. In our schools, as well as elsewhere throughout our society, there is always that same pulling away from the things of the Lord. Our friends and family members tempt us to do things which will draw us away from God. God does not give up on us. Philippians 1:6 says,

"Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform (it) until the day of Jesus Christ."

God has given us Jesus, so that, as our Savior, He can forgive our sins; and as our Lord, He can show us how to talk and act. He draws us closer to Him as we obey. But restoration takes time and patience. God's promise is that He will never give up on us. He is a God of mercy. We can learn several things from God's restoration of Israel. No matter who or what holds us captive, God can set us free. He is the sovereign God. He has given us a place of forgiveness. Instead of an altar where we must offer sacrifices, we have lasting forgiveness through Jesus Christ. God has given us the Holy Spirit to live within us

and to lead us into the right ways. As we read in Philippians 1:6, God does not stop with salvation, but will continue that work in us until Jesus comes again. God's plan includes a complete restoration, even to a new earth and a new Jerusalem. Then Satan and all his followers will be thrown into the lake of fire.

We also can see the value of God's Word, the Bible. As Ezra read the law, God's Word, the people were convicted of their sins. It is important for us to hear the Word of God, so that we will know the ways of the Lord. He can show us where we need to repent (change), so our relationship with Him can be restored.



Methods

Discuss with the students things that they know about that are in need of restoration -- buildings wrecked by storms or fire, antique things such as furniture or cars, clothing which is damaged, upholstery that is spoiled. Discuss how restoration is done in stages. Some restoration is very complicated. If the item is severely damaged or has been neglected for a long period of time, the restoration is a big job. As we take care of damage in items as it occurs, the restoration is minimal. So it is with our spiritual health. Maintenance is important -- on a daily basis!

Water and Fire

Volume 4

Lesson 37



Bible References

Isaiah 40:3

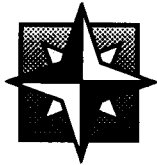
Matthew 3:2,11-17

Matthew 4:1-11

Romans 6:4

Hebrews 2:18

1 John 2:16



Theme

John the Baptist preached repentance symbolized through water baptism. Jesus baptized with fire, which symbolized purification.



Scripture Reading

Matthew 3:13-17

13 *"Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.*

14 *"But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?"*

15 *"And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer (it to be so) now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.*

16 *"And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:*

17 *"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

Matthew 4:1-11

1 *"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.*

2 *"And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered.*

3 *"And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.*

4 *"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

5 *"Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple,*

6 *"And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in {their} hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

7 *"Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.*

8 *"Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and showeth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them;*

9 *"And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me.*

10 *"Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.*

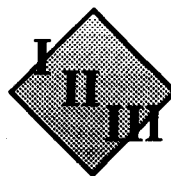
11 *"Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him."*



Memory Verse

Matthew 3:11

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and {with} fire."



Outline

- I. **John the Baptist Prepares for Jesus.**
 - A. John preached repentance in the desert of Judea.
 1. As people confessed, John baptized them in the Jordan River.
 2. Pharisees and Sadducees warned of God's wrath.
 - B. John told of One Who would baptize with the Holy Ghost and fire.
 1. Gathering the wheat.
 2. Burning the chaff.
- II. **The Baptism of Jesus.**
 - A. Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan, to be baptized by John.
 - B. The Spirit of God descended from heaven and rested upon Jesus.

III. The Temptation of Jesus.

A. Jesus was led into the wilderness.

1. Jesus fasted for 40 days and nights.
2. The Holy Spirit strengthened Jesus and helped Him.
3. Jesus was very hungry.

B. The tempter came to Jesus.

1. Jesus was tempted to turn stones into bread.
2. Jesus was tempted to throw Himself off the high point of the temple.
3. Jesus was tempted to have all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.



Spiritual Truths

- "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near."
- "Repentance" means to "turn around and go the other direction; to begin doing the opposite."
- Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit.
- Jesus was tempted; and He is able to help us when we are tempted. (Hebrews 2:18)
- "Baptism" means "a burial; to be completely submerged."



Lesson Material

John the Baptist said, "...Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 3:2) John the Baptist seemed to be a very unusual man. Some said this was the man that Isaiah spoke of in Isaiah 40:3. John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. For food, John the Baptist ate locusts and wild honey.

John was a second cousin of Jesus, because their mothers were cousins. He also had been born through a miraculous intervention, but not to the degree that Jesus was. His mother was old and barren, as was Sarah, Abraham's wife. John the Baptist was six months older than Jesus, and was filled with the Holy Spirit from the womb. This fact reinforces the belief that life begins at conception, and not just at birth.

John was a man with a message. His job was to prepare the way for the Messiah, the delivering King of the people of God. John the Baptist was not given to "the finer things of life," but rather, he was sold out to God. His zeal for righteousness finally cost him his life, because he rebuked Herod the governor for his adulterous relationship. He is remembered as a great man. It is better to die for what is right than to live for nothing.

After people accepted John's message of repentance, he would baptize them in the Jordan River to symbolize their cleansing. Many Pharisees and Sadducees began coming to see what John the Baptist was doing. While they were there, John

attacked their Jewish pride and warned them of God's wrath. He told them that there was coming Someone Who was more powerful than he was. This Man would baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. Fire is a symbol of purification.

One day while John the Baptist was baptizing, he introduced a man from Galilee, named Jesus. Jesus had come to be baptized by John. John resisted at first, because he did not feel worthy to baptize Jesus. But Jesus insisted that it be done at that moment.

We, also, need to be baptized to show that we have repented from our sins and have been cleansed spiritually by Jesus. Baptism is a burial in water.

Some people do not understand the difference between John's baptism and Christian baptism. John's baptism was a sign of repentance -- that the people were turning from their sins and confessing their need for mercy. But Jesus had never sinned. This is why John was confused. John knew his baptism was as a sign of repentance. Jesus encouraged John the Baptist to baptize Him, because He was being baptized as his sign of complete surrender to God. He was being buried to symbolize His' death, and to confirm His covenant with God the Father. When we are baptized, we are *"...buried with him...into death...."* (Romans 6:4) We seal our covenant with God as believers. Baptism does not save us, because we should already be believers before we experience baptism. However, baptism is an important command of God, and a part of the spiritual life of the believer.

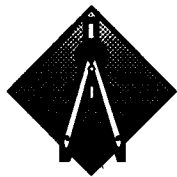
As soon as Jesus was baptized, heaven opened, and the Spirit of God descended like a dove, which landed on Jesus. Then a voice from heaven said, *"...This is my*

beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17)

After that, no one saw Jesus for quite some time. Jesus had been led by the Spirit into the desert, to be tempted by the devil. Jesus fasted for forty days and nights. Satan came to Jesus and asked Him to prove He was the Son of God by turning stones into bread. Jesus replied, *"...It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."* (Matthew 4:4) The Word of God is still our best defense against temptation today.

After that, the devil took Jesus to the highest point of the temple and tried to persuade Jesus to jump, even using scripture in his words of temptation. Jesus answered him, *"...It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."* (Matthew 4:7) Finally, the devil took Jesus to a high mountain and offered Him the kingdoms of the world if Jesus would bow down and worship him. Jesus then told him, *"...Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."* (Matthew 4:10) Then the devil left Jesus and angels came and ministered unto Him.

Jesus was tempted as we are tempted. (Hebrews 2:18) He was tempted by the three basic areas of temptation that we all face. John called these *"the lust of the flesh"* -- to turn stones to bread; *"the lust of the eye,"* -- the desire for money and things, to gain the world's kingdoms; and *"the pride of life"* -- the pride of jumping off the temple's tower and surviving. (1 John 2:16) The fact that it was a temptation to Him meant that He wanted to do these things, but He was faithful to resist; and Jesus never sinned in His life.



Methods

The teacher should dress in a robe and sandals, and tell the story of Jesus' baptism as if the teacher were at the Jordan watching it occur.

Turning Water into Wine

Volume 4

Lesson 38

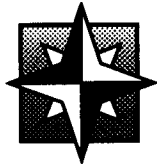


Bible References

John 2:1-11

Romans 8:28

James 1:17



Theme

God wants us to have fun and enjoy life, yet trust Him as we grow through difficult times.



Scripture Reading

John 2: 1-11

1 *"And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there:*

2 *"And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage.*

3 *"And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine.*

4 *"Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.*

5 *"His mother saith unto the servants, Whatsoever he saith unto you, do {it}.*

6 *"And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.*

7 *"Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim.*

8 *"And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare {it}.*

9 *"When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom,*

10 *"And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: {but} thou hast kept the good wine until now.*

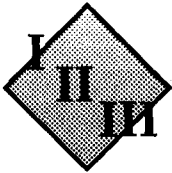
11 *"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him."*



Memory Verse

James 1:17

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father...."



Outline

I. Jesus Wants Us to Have Fun.

- A. Jesus, His mother, and His disciples were at the wedding and feast.
- B. It was a time of celebration and happiness.

II. God Wants Us to Trust Him.

- A. In simple everyday things -- such as the people running out of wine.
- B. We learn to trust God for the more difficult things, because we have "practiced" trusting Him in less trying situations.

III. Do Not Be Afraid of Change in Your Life.

- A. Sometimes God asks us to do things differently than what we are used to.
- B. Be ready for change.
- C. Accept change.

IV. When We Follow Jesus, He Makes Our Lives Better Than Ever.

- A. This does not mean we will not have hard times.
- B. If we keep our trust in the Lord, we can be assured that *"...all things work together for good to them that love God...."* (Romans 8:28)
- C. Let others see Jesus in you, regardless of what is happening in your life.
- D. Always be ready to tell others about Jesus and what He has done for you.



Spiritual Truths

- God wants us to have times of fun.
- God wants us to trust Him.
- God uses change in our lives to make us more like Him, and to teach us to trust Him.

- When we trust Jesus and let Him direct our lives, He makes our lives better than we ever could, because He loves us.
- Do not be afraid of change -- trust God and allow Him to shine through your life, so that He is glorified through you.



Lesson Material

Jesus, His mother, and His disciples, who were His special friends, were at a wedding. They were helping friends to celebrate a happy time in their life. There was probably lots of good food, music, children running about having fun and playing games, and lots of laughter. Jesus was having fun. He wants us to have fun, too. God is happy when we are happy.

God also wants us to trust Him. Trust means that when something goes wrong, you do not get all upset. Instead you pray, tell God what is happening, and let Him take care of it. Sometimes He will let us know something we should do. He might send someone to help us, or use someone else to do something that helps our situation. They may not even realize what they did! At the wedding, when the family ran out of wine, Jesus' mother simply went to the servants and told them to do whatever Jesus told them to do. Wow, that is trust! Mary knew Jesus could help, even in this simple problem.

Now it is interesting, because there were jugs there at the wedding. These jugs were to be used for the purpose of "purification." This was a special custom the Jews had of washing their hands and

feet to make themselves clean, not just physically, but also spiritually. Jesus decided to make a change. He told the servants to take those jugs and use them for a different purpose. So, they also trusted Jesus, and filled the jugs up, even though that was not what the jugs were supposed to be used for. And look what God did! He turned the water in those jugs to wine.

Just as the jugs were used for something different from what they were usually used for, God will do the same thing with us. There will be times in our lives when God will ask us to do something we have never done before -- change. Or He may ask us to do something differently than we usually do it -- change. Maybe our mom or dad will get a new job and we have to change schools, or even move. Maybe a friend moves away. We never know what may happen. But God wants us just to trust Him during those times. Prayer is talking to God, and He wants to hear from us. When a change comes, and you are afraid or unsure, tell God. Then say, "God, I will let you take care of this. I know You will help me." That is trusting God. He may send you a new friend, or put you in a school you like better than your old one. He will help you, if you will let Him. Try to realize that when God puts a change in our lives, He is trying to make things better for us. So relax, trust God, try to be ready for change, and accept it when it occurs.

This does not mean everything will always be easy. God allows little problems to come into our lives to help us learn to trust Him; and sometimes He allows more difficult things to occur.

This is when we really learn to pray and trust God. Just remember that,

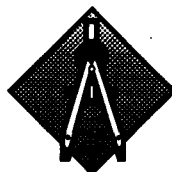
"...All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to (his) purpose." (Romans 8:28)

When we trust God and are obedient to Him, even in difficult times, He will bless us in many delightful ways. When other people see that we are different, that we remain calm and do not get upset in difficult situations, they will want to know why. This will give us an opportunity to tell them about Jesus, and be a witness for Him.

After the servants at the wedding banquet filled the jugs with water, which became wine, they took some to the person in charge. He tasted that wine, and it was so good that he called the bridegroom and complimented him. He said that usually people serve the good wine first, then when everyone is tired and full, they get out the wine that is not as good. But this wine which Jesus made, was the "good wine." He told the bridegroom that it was nice that he left some good wine for later. Now remember, the headwaiter and the bridegroom did not know where the wine had come from.

That is just like Jesus. When He does something, He does it really well. He does it better than we ever could. So, we can

trust Him. Even if things are difficult, we can trust Him, because we know in the end, everything works out for the best. Our lives will be better than ever, just as the wine was. And do not forget to tell others what Jesus does for you!



Methods

Does God really want us to have fun? Or does He expect us to be serious all the time? Does He like us to laugh? Does God have fun?

Probably someone in the class has had to move to a new location, make new friends, or get used to a new house or church. Ask them to tell you how they felt. Discuss how they can share their feeling with God in the same way. Ask them to think of ways God did something special for them during that time.

Ask the students if there is something in their lives right now which makes them afraid. Pray with them. Assure them that God knows and cares.

Give further examples of what trust is and how we can trust God.

The Transfiguration

Volume 4

Lesson 39



Bible References

Matthew 16:13-18

Matthew 17:1-9

Romans 1:16

Romans 12:2

1 Corinthians 15:51-52

2 Corinthians 3:18

2 Corinthians 4:7

2 Timothy 1:12

2 Peter 1:17-19

Revelation 1:13-18



Scripture Reading

Matthew 17:1-9

1 *"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,*

2 *"And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.*

3 *"And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.*

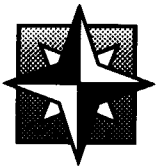
4 *"Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.*

5 *"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.*

6 *"And when the disciples heard {it}, they fell on their face, and were sore afraid.*

7 *"And Jesus came and touched them, and said, Arise, and be not afraid.*

8 *"And when they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no man, save Jesus only.*



Theme

Before Jesus died and rose from the dead, He showed His close friends what it is like to have a resurrection body!

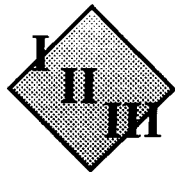
9 "And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead."



Memory Verse

1 Corinthians 15:51-52

"Behold, I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye...."



Outline

I. Four Close Friends Go to the Mountain.

- A. Jesus took Peter, James and John to a high mountain by themselves. (Matthew 17:1)
 - 1. It is similar to Jesus knocking at the door of our hearts.
 - 2. He is hoping to transform our lives.
- B. Jesus is transfigured.
 - 1. His face shone like the sun.
 - 2. His clothes were as white as light.
 - 3. Moses and Elijah appeared with Him.
 - 4. They represented the law and the prophets.

- 5. Jesus is the fulfillment of the law and the prophets.

II. A Secret Revealed in Our Hearts.

- A. Prior to the mountain top, God the Father showed Peter and the disciples how Jesus must first be revealed to each person in their hearts.
 - 1. "...Blessed art thou Simon Barjona...." (Matthew 16:17)
 - 2. Revealed by God the Father alone.
- B. "...Upon this rock I will build My church...." (Matthew 16:18)
- C. A more sure word.
 - 1. Peter later recounted his experience.
 - 2. 2 Peter 1:17-18.
 - a. "We were with Him in the holy mount."
 - b. "And this voice which came from heaven we heard...."
 - 3. "We have a more sure word of prophecy...." (2 Peter 1:19)
 - a. What is this more sure word of prophecy?
 - b. The Bible.

III. We Are Transfigured, Too.

- A. While Jesus was changed before the apostles, Father God spoke from heaven.
 - 1. God the Father authorized His Son's credibility.
 - 2. God commanded the disciples to listen to Jesus.
- B. When we believe in the Gospel, we can be transfigured, or changed.

1. "Transfigured" comes from the word "metamorpho" which means "to change into."
2. It is the same word in 2 Corinthians 3:18 which says we are "changed," or transformed, from glory to glory. (Romans 12:2)



Spiritual Truths

- As we behold Jesus in intimate, honest, on-going fellowship, our lives are changed.
- The Bible is a way to behold Jesus.
- The Gospel has the power to bring radical change into the lives of people who receive it wholeheartedly. (Romans 1:16; 2 Timothy 1:12)
- Jesus was the fulfillment of all the Old Testament law and prophets.
- Jesus will continue to fulfill the Bible and all its prophecies.
- We shall be changed with glorified bodies, for an eternity in heaven.



Lesson Material

Transfigured! More awesome than any science fiction movie. Changed before their eyes! For a moment, the Apostles looked directly into heaven. Take time to

read Revelation 1:13-18, and consider how glorious Jesus really is. We are made of clay, earthen vessels (2 Corinthians 4:7), yet in the image of God. For a moment, a snapshot, we see what it will be like to possess a glorified body -- forever.

Jesus is knocking at the door of our hearts, desiring to transform our lives. Often we allow Him in only to shut Him out again, or close off a room of our heart where pain, sickness, or sin dwells. Why is it that sin seems to have a life of its own -- hating to die, only wanting to crouch in the shadows until it can strike out again. Simple pleading with sin and sickness will not do. It must go. We must allow the transforming power of Jesus through the Holy Spirit to change us.

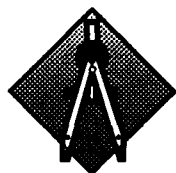
In Matthew 16:13, Jesus asked the disciples who the people believed Him to be. It was Peter through whom the Father spoke: "*Thou art the Christ....*" (Matthew 16:16) And Jesus replied,

"Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed (it) unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."
(Matthew 16:17)

God does not want to see His church built and established upon signs and wonders, or upon what someone else has said. God has chosen to reveal Himself intimately and personally to each one of us. What a gift! We can know God! Jesus told His disciples not to tell any one of the wonders they had seen. God the Father must speak directly and individually to each of us.

While we behold Jesus, we are changed. (2 Corinthians 3:18) Prayer to God, be it God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit, takes many forms. Someone has said, "prayer is talking with

God." Prayer is just that simple -- a two-directional conversation. At times, prayer is centered in His book, the Bible; or perhaps a heart's cry of desperation; or corporate praise and worship. We can be transformed by the living God by spending time with Him.



Methods

1. Take butterflies and frogs to class (or pictures of them), and discuss how they are transformed from a caterpillar and a

tadpole into a beautiful butterfly and a jumping bullfrog.

2. Ask if anyone has had a dramatic transformation in their life because of Jesus, or if someone in their family has.

3. Discuss how you can transform your friends and your school with the love of Jesus.

4. Discuss that there are areas of society and the world which need the transforming power of the Gospel. Examples -- hatred, violence, drugs, alcoholism, immorality.

The Crucifixion of Christ

Volume 4

Lesson 40



Bible References

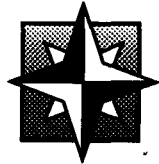
Psalms 22:1-18

Matthew 27:46

Luke 23:33-47

2 Corinthians 5:8,17

1 John 1:9



Theme

Easter -- Jesus' death on the cross brings life to me!



Scripture Reading

Luke 23:33-47

33 *"And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.*

34 *"And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.*

35 *"And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.*

36 *"Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take {it}, and likewise {his} scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.*

37 *"For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.*

38 *"And they said, Lord, behold, here {are} two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.*

39 *"And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him.*

40 *"And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation.*

41 *"And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,*

42 *"Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.*

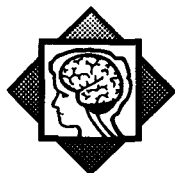
43 *"And there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him.*

44 *"And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.*

45 *"And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow,*

46 *"And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.*

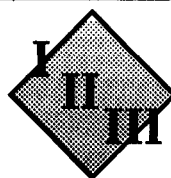
47 *"And while he yet spake, behold a multitude, and he that was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before them, and drew near unto Jesus to kiss him."*



Memory Verse

Luke 23:34

"Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."



Outline

I. Why Was It Necessary for Jesus to Die?

A. Sin always "takes" and someone must "repay."

1. Sin in our lives always costs someone something. It makes us lose money, property, relationships, self-respect, and peace.
2. Father God allowed His Son to stand in for us and pay sin's cost.

B. Jesus willingly suffered the cross.

1. Because of Jesus' great love for us.
2. Because of Jesus' obedience to the Father.

II. What Was Jesus' Crucifixion Really Like?

A. The Roman soldiers had crucified many people.

1. To them it was a job.
2. First, the soldiers beat Jesus.
3. The soldiers made fun of Jesus and pressed a crown of thorns into His head.

B. Jesus on the cross. (Psalms 22:1-18)

1. Large six-inch spikes were nailed through Jesus' wrists and feet.
2. Hanging from the cross, Jesus could barely breathe.
3. Jesus was mocked by the crowds.

4. Jesus cried out in agony when Father God had to turn away from Him because He was carrying the sin of the whole world.
5. In spite of all Jesus' suffering, He said, "...Father, forgive them...!" (Luke 23:34)

III. What Does Jesus' Crucifixion Mean To Us?

- A. We are free from eternal judgment and hell.
 1. If we make a relationship with Jesus a reality in our lives.
 2. If we have accepted His forgiveness and death on the cross in our place.
 3. Whenever we sin or "blow it" we can go back to Jesus for forgiveness. (1 John 1:9)
- B. We have a relationship with God while we are here on earth.
 1. We are new creatures -- new creations.
 2. 2 Corinthians 5:17.
- C. When we die, we go straight to heaven. (2 Corinthians 5:8)

- Because of God's righteousness, He had to judge sin.
- We can now have a relationship with God, because of what Jesus did.
- God living inside of me means I can be new in every area of my life.
- We never have to fear death, because we know we will be with Jesus in heaven forever.



Lesson Material

"But the other answering rebuked him saying, Dost thou not fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly...but this man hath done nothing amiss." (Luke 23:40-41)

Two thieves were on crosses beside Jesus -- one honest with himself, and the other a liar and an accuser. All mankind stands condemned to hell for their sin and accusations before a Holy God. The Father had to judge sin, and the price had to be paid. Eternity in heaven would have to begin with a fresh start and the reconciliation of "unpaid bills."

The Father allowed His Son to take our place on the cross and to suffer the penalty of sin. What a terrible death it was. Jesus was beaten and whipped beyond what nine out of ten men could withstand. His strong carpenter's shoulders felt the crush of the cross. His hands, which had smoothed intricate wood, felt iron spikes driven through them. Hanging from that cross with lungs burning, He could only



Spiritual Truths

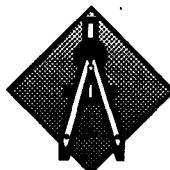
- Jesus' death on the cross opens up life to me!
- Dying on the cross was the most important thing Jesus did in His entire life.

breathe when He found the strength to stand up on the spike driven through His feet. What agony he felt.

"...Father forgive them..." (Luke 23:34) Jesus proclaimed this, in spite of pain and in spite of the accusations of the crowd. Jesus was unbelievably alone, without the presence of the One He loved so deeply -- the Father. Jesus still interceded for us: *"...My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me"?* (Matthew 27:46) Out of a heart soon to be broken for all mankind, Jesus cried out to the only One who could save Him. He was most likely reciting Psalms 22:1, a psalm written 800 to 900 years before the Roman style of execution, crucifixion, had been instituted. So completely does the Word describe the agony on the cross that Jesus would, and did suffer; yet, it is a psalm of hope.

It was a psalm of hope for Jesus, as He bore the sin and sickness of the world. And it is hope for us today. Amidst all the pain and confusion, we can hope in God and remember His faithfulness to deliver us. We have hope, now that we are free from eternal damnation -- hope to receive

the fullness of God's salvation. Jesus bore our passion in His spirit, soul and body. So today, we can receive from Him grace, power and His healing balm in our lives -- spirit, soul and body. And when we die, we will be with Him! (2 Corinthians 5:8)



Methods

1. Ask the students who have never received Jesus in their heart to pray and ask Him for the gift of eternal life.
2. Discuss how painful and terrible the crucifixion was for Jesus.
3. What could it have been like for Jesus to be separated from Father God for the only time in His life?
4. Have the students who ask Jesus into their hearts for the first time remember this day as their spiritual birthday.

The Resurrection

Volume 4

Lesson 41



Bible References

Psalms 46:1

Luke 23:50-56

Luke 24:1-7,13-53

John 14:18

Romans 6:4

Romans 8:11

Galatians 2:20

Hebrews 7:25

1 John 3:2



Scripture Reading

Luke 24:1-7

1 *"Now upon the first (day) of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain (others) with them.*

2 *"And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre.*

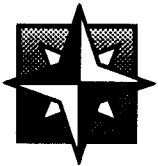
3 *"And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.*

4 *"And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments:*

5 *"And as they were afraid, and bowed down (their) faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead?*

6 *"He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee,*

7 *"Saying, The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again."*



Theme

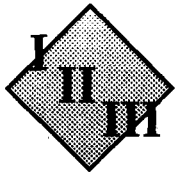
Easter -- Jesus is alive!



Memory Verse

Romans 8:11

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."



Outline

I. Sunday Morning.

A. *"...Why seek ye the living among the dead?"* (Luke 24:5)

1. The women who had followed Jesus returned to the grave to anoint His body. (Luke 23:55-56)
2. They found the stone rolled away and the tomb empty.

B. Two angels in shining clothes greeted them.

1. They spoke to the women: *"He is not here, but is risen..."* (Luke 24:6)
2. The women went and told the news to the apostles.

II. Sunday Evening.

A. Early in the evening, two of Jesus' disciples walked with a "stranger" on the road to Emmaus. (Luke 24:13-32)

1. The disciples were confused and disheartened over the crucifixion of their Lord.
2. Jesus' words encouraged them.
3. As He ate dinner with them, He opened their eyes and revealed Himself as the risen Christ. (Luke 24:31,45)

B. Jesus suddenly appeared in the room.

1. *"...Peace be unto you."* (Luke 24:36)
2. *"Why are ye troubled...?"* (Luke 24:38)
3. *"Behold my hands and my feet...."* (Luke 24:39)

III. Tomorrow and Forever.

A. *"I am crucified with Christ..."* (Galatians 2:20)

1. *"...Nevertheless, I live...."*
2. My new life is full of Jesus.

B. My baptism represents my dying with Jesus and being raised to a new life in Him. (Romans 6:4)

C. The power of the resurrection.

1. I receive healing in my body through the power of the resurrection. (Romans 8:11)
2. The resurrection provides power over sin.



Spiritual Truths

- Jesus is alive!

- The resurrection brings power into our lives.
- Baptism is a way for me to identify with Jesus' death and resurrection.
- Jesus is the main theme of the whole Bible. (Luke 24:44)
- Jesus wants us to be witnesses of His everlasting life. (Luke 24:48)
- The resurrection of Jesus fills all His people with joy and praise. (Luke 24:52-53)



Lesson Material

"...Why seek ye the living among the dead?" (Luke 24:5) Dead works, Ouija boards, and vain religion have no answers for the real needs of life. These things only lead to a dead end. The resurrection was also the acceptance by the Father of the work Jesus did on the cross, and the receiving back of His Son to Himself.

Many times, people go to church and involve themselves with elaborate religious activities, yet have no personal relationship with Jesus. They look to their good works for acceptance from God. For 2,000 years the Jewish people sought to please God with various religious activities and many different rules. Father God wanted a relationship. He said, *"...The just shall live by faith."* (Romans 1:17) Jesus paid the price for our not measuring up to God's standards, rose from the dead, and now, along with the gift of salvation, offers the gift of the resurrection -- the power to do something in our lives today!

Have you ever seen someone play with a Ouija board, try to have a seance, or contact the dead? Christians who have physically died have been raised with Jesus, and have neither the desire nor the authority to speak with us here on earth. Jesus has promised, *"I will not leave you comfortless...."* (John 14:18) We do not contact Jesus through an Ouija board or any artificial method -- He lives within our hearts. To foolishly open yourself up to other spirits with a Ouija board or other contrivances is to open up your life and your heart to deceiving spirits.

The disciples who walked along the Emmaus Road were also confused and disheartened. It took the Lord Jesus to "open their eyes" to all they had experienced. The resurrection means today we can walk and talk with God through a personal relationship with Him. God no longer needs to be distant in the heavens above, but with the Holy Spirit in our hearts, He has come closer than the breath we breathe, in order to "open our eyes."

There are several aspects to the resurrection which we need to consider. The first is obvious: the Christian faith is based on the realization that Jesus Christ is risen indeed. The Moslems are still looking for Mohammed to rise; but he will not, until the end of the millennium (unto judgment). Jesus Christ, however, is alive, and He is coming back. This means that He is *"...a very present help in trouble."* (Psalms 46:1) and that *"...he ever liveth to make intercession for them."* (Hebrews 7:25)

Another aspect of resurrection is that *"...we shall be like Him; for we shall see Him as He is."* (1 John 3:2) There will be a great resurrection of the dead "in Christ," (believers) as well as the catching up (rapture) of the living saints before Jesus

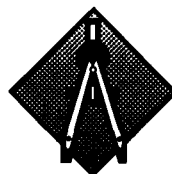
comes to reign for a thousand years. We believe also that the rapture will occur before the Great Tribulation. What a glorious hope!

One other aspect of resurrection is that when we are baptized in water, we are "buried with Him...to walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:4) We are symbolizing the fact that we are "...crucified with Christ." (Galatians 2:20) We are transformed by the Holy Spirit as believers, so that we do not have to be dominated by the flesh. We can walk and live in love as Jesus did, because the Holy Spirit is living inside us with the same kind of supernatural power that was in Jesus.

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." (Romans 8:11)

What awesome power it must have taken to remove the stone from the tomb and bring Jesus' body back to life again. Because of Jesus' resurrection, His body is now glorified, which means it will never die, never be tired, never get sick, is able to transcend physical barriers, and travel faster than the speed of light. "...Why seek ye the living among the dead?" (Luke 24:5)

Look only to Jesus and the power of His resurrection in your life -- a power to heal, a power to save, a power to live in victory over sin, a power to strengthen, and a power to fill His people with joy and praise!



Methods

1. Dramatize the resurrection with the two angels and the ladies who visited the tomb.
2. Find out who has not yet been baptized, and encourage the students to be baptized.
3. Find out who has not yet been saved, and lead them in the sinner's prayer.
4. Pray for any students who are sick, and believe God to heal them through the resurrection power of Jesus.

Joseph's Coat of Many Colors

Volume 4

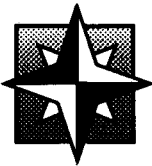
Lesson 42



Bible References

Genesis 37

1 John 3:1



Theme

Joseph experiences a "life-saving rejection" and begins to learn what it means to have a true sense of security.



Scripture Reading

Genesis 37:2-11, 18-24, 28

2 "These {are} the generations of Jacob. Joseph, {being} seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren; and the lad {was} with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives: and Joseph brought unto his father their evil report.

3 "Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he {was} the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of {many} colours.

4 "And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

5 "And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told {it} his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.

6 "And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed:

7 "For, behold, we {were} binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

8 "And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

9 "And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

10 "And he told {it} to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What {is} this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy

mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?

11 "And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying."

18 "And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near unto them, they conspired against him to slay him.

19 "And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh.

20 "Come now therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

21 "And Reuben heard {it}, and he delivered him out of their hands; and said, Let us not kill him.

22 "And Reuben said unto them, Shed no blood, {but} cast him into this pit that {is} in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him; that he might rid him out of their hands, to deliver him to his father again.

23 "And it came to pass, when Joseph was come unto his brethren, that they stripped Joseph out of his coat, {his} coat of {many} colours that {was} on him;

24 "And they took him, and cast him into a pit: and the pit {was} empty, {there was} no water in it."

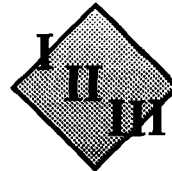
28 "Then there passed by Midianites merchantmen; and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit, and sold Joseph to the Ishmeelites for twenty {pieces} of silver: and they brought Joseph into Egypt."



Memory Verse

1 John 3:1

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."



Outline

- I. **Joseph Illustrates Everyone's Need to Feel Good About Themselves and Feel Liked by Others.**
 - A. Surface security.
 1. Works for a while, but is temporary.
 2. Clothes.
 - a. We feel good if we can dress in "cool" clothes.
 - b. Joseph's coat was definitely cool.
 - c. In fact, it was so cool that he became the envy of all his brothers.
 3. Popularity.
 - a. We feel good if we are in with the popular kids.
 - b. Joseph was not popular, but he did have a very special relationship with his father.
 - c. This was the problem.
 - d. Joseph's father, Jacob, loved Joseph more than his other sons.

- e. This made Joseph's brothers jealous.
- f. Joseph's brothers envied Joseph and eventually hated him.

B. God's true security.

1. Lasts for a lifetime. (1 John 3:1)
2. If we have accepted Jesus as our Savior, we are God's child.
 - a. God wants us to be deeply assured that we are His children.
 - b. If we know we are God's child, we can survive any of life's ups and downs.
3. God's unconditional love.
 - a. God's love does not depend on how "cool" we are, or whether we are "in" with the popular kids.
 - b. He loves each one of us and accepts us totally.

II. Life-Saving Rejections.

A. "Rejection" comes from a root word meaning "to throw back."

1. Fishing illustration. (Refer to Lesson Material)
2. God uses rejection as a tool to produce true security in our lives.

B. God gives us the choice to cut through the surface, go deeper with Him, and live and grow.

III. Joseph's Brothers Rejected Him and Stripped Off His Coat of Many Colors.

A. Joseph lost his surface security.

1. The coat was taken from Joseph.

2. Joseph's relationship with his father -- who showed favoritism toward Joseph over the other sons -- was severed.

B. God used the experience to build true security in Joseph's life.

1. Joseph became a man of strong faith, and rose to a place of responsibility.
2. When Joseph's brothers needed him, he was able to help.

IV. Jesus Is the Most Important Example of a Life-Saving Rejection.

A. Jesus was rejected by His brothers, family and friends.

1. It was the worst thing which could happen.
2. Jesus was killed.
3. However, Jesus lives again, because He was resurrected.

B. God has taken the worst situation -- Jesus' death -- and has done the best thing with it.

1. God purchased our salvation.
2. Now this a LIFE-SAVING rejection!



Spiritual Truths

- God does not want His children to be in bondage to the love of clothes and popularity, in order to feel secure.

- God wants to put a deep sense of security in our lives based on His unconditional love.
- Unconditional love means that no matter what our problems are, we can always go to God and be accepted.
- Jesus experienced rejection and knows how painful it feels.
- Jesus' rejection turned into something good -- our salvation.
- Our experiences of rejection can turn into something good -- a deeper sense of true security.



Lesson Material

Nothing gives you an emotional boost like something new to wear that everyone thinks is "cool". Even people in the Bible felt like that. In Genesis 37, we meet a teenager named Joseph who had a totally awesome coat of many colors. When Joseph wore it, he felt great; but it led to many problems.

Just as Joseph, everyone needs to feel good about themselves and feel liked by others. On the surface, we can build a sense of security through clothes and popularity. Having the right clothes makes you feel good about yourself, or gives you a sense of identity. Being popular makes you feel accepted. We all need a positive sense of identity and acceptance in our lives. The problem with building our identity on the surface with such things as clothes and popularity is that they are too

easy to lose. "Surface" people are on shaky ground!

God does not want His children to be in bondage to surface security. In 1 John 3:1, God gives His ideal for our sense of security. He wants our identity to be rooted in knowing that we are His child. If we really know this truth, we can survive all of life's ups and downs. God wants us to feel accepted because He loves us. God does not love us because we are good enough -- He simply chooses to love us. It is unconditional love. Having our identity and purpose come from God gives us a much greater sense of security than if we base our self worth on our popularity, which is temporal. Some people only love you when you are "cool"; but God loves us even when we are not.

How does God teach us His sense of true security? He uses a strange tool -- life-saving rejections. "Rejection" comes from a root word meaning "to throw back."

Imagine a small fish which is caught by a fisherman. The fisherman reels the fish into the boat and determines the fish is too small to keep, so he tosses it back into the water -- sploosh. The little fish swims away. This fish may begin to wonder why he was thrown back, and become depressed because he was rejected. The little fish may have seen a large fish in the bottom of the fisherman's boat and thought, "What is the matter with me? Am I not good enough to keep?" The little fish does not realize he has just experienced a life-saving rejection.

God uses rejection as a tool in our lives to help us cut through our facades, obtain a deeper relationship with God, and live and grow.

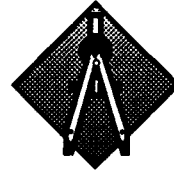
On the surface of Joseph's life, he seemed to have it all together with his

special coat. None of his brothers had anything similar to it. This was because it was a special gift from his father, Jacob. Joseph also had a relationship with his father which was unlike that of any of his brothers. Joseph was Jacob's favorite son. Joseph's brothers felt envy, which turned into jealousy, which turned into hatred.

One day, Joseph lost the surface security of his life. His brothers stripped off his coat and threw him into a pit. They talked about killing him, but instead sold him as a slave. Joseph was taken to Egypt. He was only seventeen years old; and as far as he knew, he might never see his father again. His brothers had rejected him and hurt him badly.

But God used the rejection in Joseph's life as a tool to accomplish His plan of saving the lives of all of Joseph's family. God in His wisdom knew that a great famine was coming, so He actually sent Joseph to Egypt to prepare for it. Eventually, Joseph became the prime minister of Egypt and the head of a massive grain storage program. Joseph was

ultimately able to save his entire family -- it was a life-saving rejection.



Methods

Discuss as a class the importance that many people place on clothes and fashion, and how difficult it is to have all the money necessary to purchase the latest fashions.

What article of clothing do you like to wear that makes you feel comfortable?

Discuss with the class that many people believe God speaks in dreams. Remind the class, however, that dreams from God always are for encouragement, comfort, or conviction to keep you in God's will. A dream from God will never go against His written Word.

The Best Slave in Egypt

Volume 4

Lesson 43



Bible References

Genesis 37:6-11

Genesis 39:1-6

Genesis 41:52

Proverbs 3:5-6

Matthew 25:14-30

Ephesians 6:5-9

Philippians 4:6-7



Scripture Reading

Genesis 39:1-6

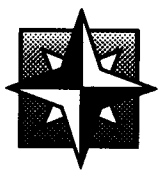
1 *"And Joseph was brought down to Egypt; and Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh, captain of the guard, an Egyptian, bought him of the hands of the Ishmeelites, which had brought him down thither.*

2 *"And the LORD was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.*

3 *"And his master saw that the LORD (was) with him, and that the LORD made all that he did to prosper in his hand.*

4 *"And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all {that} he had he put into his hand.*

5 *"And it came to pass from the time {that} he had made him overseer in his house, and over all that he had, that the LORD blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake; and the blessing of the LORD was upon all that he had in the house, and in the field.*



Theme

Joseph's belief and faith in God, even in the midst of terrible circumstances, led to his ultimate blessing and promotion by God.

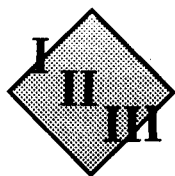
6 "And he left all that he had in Joseph's hand; and he knew not ought he had, save the bread which he did eat. And Joseph was {a} goodly {person}, and well favoured."



Memory Verse

Matthew 25:21

"His lord said unto him, Well done, (thou) good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."



Outline

I. Joseph Was a Teenager in a Very Bad Situation.

- A. Joseph was rejected by his brothers.
 - 1. He was nearly killed, because Joseph's brothers envied his father's love and his dreams from God.
 - 2. Joseph was sold as a slave in Egypt.
 - a. No human rights.
 - b. No family.
 - c. Unfamiliar language.
 - d. Forced into hard labor.
- B. At first, Joseph must have been emotionally devastated.

- 1. Joseph was probably homesick and scared -- wondering if he would ever see his father and younger brother, Benjamin, again.
- 2. Joseph was probably angry and hurt over the rejection of his brothers.

II. Joseph Had a Spirit of Excellence.

- A. Joseph said to himself, "If I must be a slave, I will be the best slave anyone has ever seen."
- B. Joseph dried his tears and went to work.
- C. Joseph was determined to make something good out of this terrible situation.

III. Work Can Be a Cure for an Emotional Disaster.

- A. Sometimes when we go through an emotional upheaval in our lives, God knows it is not the right time to try and figure everything out.
 - 1. God knows how much it hurts when your family goes through problems, such as divorce, sickness, death, etc.
 - 2. God gives us a job to do to keep us busy and distract our attention from how poorly we feel.
- B. Joseph's job turned out to be very interesting.
 - 1. Potiphar worked for the king as chief body guard, similar to the head of the Secret Service in the United States.
 - 2. Potiphar's household was a large estate with livestock, crops, and

even a dungeon where political prisoners were kept.

3. Joseph was very busy administrating all of Potiphar's estate. Not bad for a young man in his early 20's!

IV. Joseph Provided a Pattern of Faithfulness and Promotion.

- A. Joseph believed that God was real, and that, through two dreams, God had spoken to him concerning his future. (Genesis 37:6-11)
 1. Joseph was faithful to serve God, even in Egypt, where no one he knew was watching him.
 2. God saw Joseph's faithfulness, and He rewarded him by promoting him to be second in command. This became a pattern in Joseph's life, and occurred three different times.
- B. The same pattern can happen in our lives.
 1. Jesus gave the principle in Matthew 25:14-30.
 2. The Apostle Paul repeated the principle in Ephesians 6:5-9.

V. Joseph Decided to Be Fruitful, Even Though He Did Not Understand the Way God Was Working in His Life.

- A. Joseph knew his destiny was to be in authority over his brothers.
 1. Joseph never forgot his dreams.
 2. Joseph had no idea how God was going to work things out.

- B. Later Joseph named his son "Ephraim" -- meaning "fruitfulness."

1. Joseph said, "...God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction." (Genesis 41:52)
2. Even though Joseph did not understand what God was doing, he refused to feel sorry for himself; and he decided to help others by going into famine relief work. (Genesis 41:46-52)

- C. Understanding is often outrun by peace.

1. The Olympics are exciting to watch, especially when someone gets a burst of energy and is the first to cross the finish line.
2. Do not worry. Pray, and thank God -- and peace will pass understanding. (Philippians 4:6-7)
3. Sometimes we lag behind when we try too hard to figure out what God is doing in our lives, and we become upset. Instead, we must run onward in God's peace which passes all understanding. His joy will be our strength; and He will work out everything that concerns us.
4. "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." (Proverbs 3:5-6)



Spiritual Truths

- God is with us and will bless us for being faithful, even when everything around us is disastrous.
- By faith and hard work, a terrible situation can become a great situation.
- God sees us and rewards our faithfulness, even when no one else we know is around.
- Sometimes we do not understand what God is doing, but He is always working things out for our good.
- Sometimes God does not change our circumstances; but He changes our hearts, so we have peace and joy to handle our situation.
- It always makes you feel better when you help someone else.



Lesson Material

Joseph was a 17-year-old boy who had very human emotions. When his brothers sold him as a slave, he was devastated! He must have cried himself to sleep every night, homesick for his father and younger brother, Benjamin. He felt rejected and angry, and he was terrified of the future. After all, he was headed into slavery in a foreign country, where he did not know the language or anything about what might happen to him.

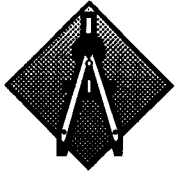
At some point, Joseph dried his tears. He did not like the situation at all, but he squared his shoulders and made a decision. He decided to believe God and serve Him, even as a slave in Egypt. God saw Joseph's heart and rewarded him for his faith and faithfulness. God's hand of blessing was on everything Joseph did. His master, Potiphar, noticed Joseph and began promoting him, until Joseph became Potiphar's own personal servant in charge of the entire household.

Every one of us goes through an emotional upheaval in our lives at some point in time. God knows how bad we feel when we are facing a divorce in our family, sickness, the death of someone we love, or having to move to a new place where we do not have any friends. Usually what the Lord will do is get us busy. He knows it is not a good time to try and figure things out. He distracts us with hard work.

Joseph had a really interesting job. He worked for Potiphar, who was the chief body guard for the king of Egypt -- similar to the head of the Secret Service in the United States. Joseph was in charge of Potiphar's whole household, which was an estate with livestock, crops, and even a dungeon for political prisoners. Not a bad job for a young man in his early twenties!

God had very special plans for Joseph's life; but God did not explain it all to Joseph as he was in the midst of his difficult situation. Joseph had to exercise faith in God's goodness in order to serve Him faithfully, even though he did not understand everything that was happening. This faith pleased God tremendously!

We can exercise this same faith in God's good plan for our lives and please God just as much as Joseph did.



Methods

Discussion:

What was it like to be a slave in Egypt?
Slaves were treated very poorly, and had

no rights. They worked without pay, and were considered property, like animals are today.

Did it make things worse, because Joseph had been rejected by his brothers and cut off from his family?

Suffering for Doing Right

Volume 4

Lesson 44



Bible References

Genesis 37:6-11

Genesis 39:7-20

Genesis 40:15

Genesis 41:52

Psalms 105:17-18

Proverbs 3:5-6

Matthew 5:11-12

Matthew 18:21-22

Matthew 25:14-30

1 Peter 3:16



Scripture Reading

Genesis 39:7-20

7 *"And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me.*

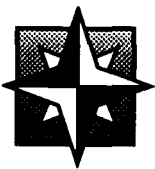
8 *"But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what (is) with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand;*

9 *"(There is) none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou (art) his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?*

10 *"And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, (or) to be with her.*

11 *"And it came to pass about this time, that (Joseph) went into the house to do his business; and (there was) none of the men of the house there within.*

12 *"And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.*



Theme

Joseph took a stand for purity, and was ultimately put into prison for it. He learned to forgive those who had wronged him.

13 "And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth,

14 "That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice:

15 "And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out.

16 "And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home.

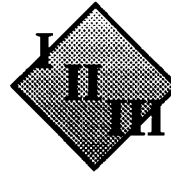
17 "And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me:

18 "And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out.

19 "And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled.

20 "And Joseph's master took him, and put him into the prison, a place where the king's prisoners {were} bound: and he was there in the prison."

"Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great (is) your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you."



Outline

I. Joseph Was Tempted -- Pressured by Someone Close To Him to Do Something Wrong.

A. Potiphar's wife tempted Joseph.

1. Potiphar's wife, being older and in authority, should have been a good example to Joseph.
2. Instead, Potiphar's wife was definitely a bad example.

B. Joseph resisted the temptation with God's help.

1. Joseph stood up for what is right -- his conscience told him not to sin.
2. Joseph knew God was watching him, even if no one else could see what was going on.

II. Joseph Suffered for Doing the Right Thing.

A. Potiphar's wife became angry and lied about Joseph, accusing him of something he did not do.

B. Joseph was thrown into the dungeon.

1. Joseph was in fetters and irons (Psalms 105:17-18), at least for a time.



Memory Verse

Matthew 5:12

2. Joseph suddenly had time on his hands, and probably relived the rejection of his brothers and the persecution of Potiphar and his wife.

III. Forgiveness Saved Joseph from Becoming Bitter and Rotting in Jail.

- A. God knows how our minds work when we go through bad experience in a relationship.

1. It is our desire to forgive.
2. However, it is hard to forgive, because of the way our minds replay painful scenes over and over.

- B. Jesus gives us a way to forgive.
(Matthew 18:21-22)

1. Peter asked Jesus how many times he should forgive his brother.
2. Jesus answered "...seventy times seven..." which means "every time you think of it."

- C. We know that Joseph forgave. (Genesis 40:15)

1. Because Joseph spoke up for himself but never incriminated anyone else.
2. If Joseph had not forgiven, he would have said, "Potiphar's wife lied about me, and my dirty rotten brothers sold me as a slave!"

IV. Something Incredible Happened in Prison That Ultimately Changed Joseph's Life Completely.

- A. The Pharaoh's butler and baker were thrown in jail with Joseph.

1. They dreamt strange dreams.
2. Joseph interpreted the dreams correctly.

- B. Eventually, the Pharaoh dreamt a strange dream.

1. Joseph was set free from jail, because he gave the interpretation of Pharaoh's dream from the Lord.
2. Joseph was now much closer to seeing his own dreams from God come true.

V. Suffering for Doing Right Is Painful.

- A. Remember that God rewarded Joseph's purity and forgiveness.

- B. Remember that Jesus said we will be rewarded, too, when we stand up for what is right and forgive others -- even if they persecute us for doing right.
(Matthew 5:11-12)



Spiritual Truths

- Those who want to be pure will sometimes find themselves tempted and pressured by others to do wrong.
- It is your choice! You do not have to commit the sin someone else wants you to commit.
- Jesus is the perfect example of someone who did the right thing and suffered for it.

- Because Jesus was willing to suffer, He was able to pay the price for our sins and purchase eternal life for us.
- God loves to reward us when we are patient and forgiving about suffering for doing right.
- When we forgive people who hurt us, our hearts are set free from pain and anger.



Lesson Material

Joseph was a handsome young man who had a very exciting job. Even though he was a slave, he was in charge of his master, Potiphar's, big household -- his livestock, his crops, and even his dungeon. Joseph felt very blessed by God to be in this important position.

Then something sad and scary began to happen. Potiphar's wife began to try to talk Joseph into "fooling around" with her. Joseph flatly refused to do what she wanted. His conscience told him it was wrong. And besides, he knew God would not approve at all!

But Potiphar's wife did not want to take no for an answer. One day when nobody else was around, she grabbed Joseph by his coat. The only way he could get away was to run from her and leave his coat in her hands. She was so mad that she lied about Joseph and said that he had been trying to tempt her.

When Joseph's master, Potiphar, came home, he heard his wife's story. He threw Joseph into the dungeon beneath the

house. Poor Joseph had done the right thing, but ended up in jail.

At least for a time in the prison, Joseph was chained down in fetters and irons. Suddenly this young man, who was used to being busy, had a lot of time on his hands. He probably spent the time thinking about his misfortunes and reliving the way his brothers had rejected him and sold him as a slave, and how Potiphar and his wife had mistreated him.

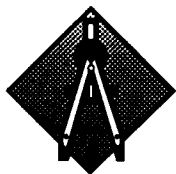
Why did not Joseph become bitter? He forgave! We know he must have forgiven, because when he had a chance to speak up for himself, he did not criticize anyone else. He said, *"For indeed I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews: and here also have I done nothing that they should put me into the dungeon."* (Genesis 40:15) If he had not forgiven them, he would have said, "My dirty rotten brothers sold me as a slave, and Potiphar's wife lied about me -- she is the one who was really bad!"

Jesus told Peter how to forgive when people hurt him very badly. He said to forgive seventy times seven, which means every time you think of the offense. God knows that our minds have a way of replaying painful scenes when we have been hurt. All we need to do is release forgiveness for each specific memory that comes to mind. After a while, all the pain and anger is washed out of our hearts. That feels a lot better than harboring unforgiveness.

Joseph is a good example of what a young person should do when people try to tempt you to do something wrong. Sometimes, friends try to get you involved in things your conscience tells you are wrong. Flatly refuse to do give into them! Perhaps even an older person, who should

be a good example, is being a bad example instead. You do not have to do anything you know is wrong. Get as far away from that person as you can.

Do not forget that if you suffer for doing the right thing, you are being just like Jesus; and He said God will greatly reward you for your purity and forgiveness.



Methods

Discussion:

We have all suffered for doing wrong things. But have you ever suffered because you did the right thing?

What is a "good conscience?" (1 Peter 3:16)

How could Joseph have rationalized that it would be all right to sin, since it was the boss's wife who was making the request?

Did God eventually honor Joseph for being true to his moral convictions?

Why do you think God waited so long to vindicate Joseph?

Set Free to Serve

Volume 4

Lesson 45



Bible References

Genesis 37:7

Genesis 41

Genesis 42

Genesis 50:15-21

Psalms 105:17

Psalms 121:1-8

Jeremiah 29:11

Romans 8:28



Scripture Reading

Genesis 41:25-36

25 *"And Joseph said unto Pharaoh, The dream of Pharaoh {is} one: God hath showed Pharaoh what he {is} about to do.*

26 *"The seven good kine {are} seven years; and the seven good ears {are} seven years: the dream {is} one.*

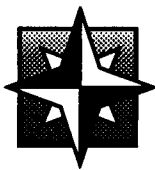
27 *"And the seven thin and ill favoured kine that came up after them {are} seven years; and the seven empty ears blasted with the east wind shall be seven years of famine.*

28 *"This {is} the thing which I have spoken unto Pharaoh: What God {is} about to do he showeth unto Pharaoh.*

29 *"Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt:*

30 *"And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land;*

31 *"And the plenty shall not be known in the land by reason of that famine following; for it {shall be} very grievous.*



Theme

Because Joseph relied on God in the midst of his trials, he was able to save his nation and his family from famine.

32 "And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; (it is) because the thing (is) established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

33 "Now therefore let Pharaoh look out a man discreet and wise, and set him over the land of Egypt.

34 "Let Pharaoh do (this), and let him appoint officers over the land, and take up the fifth part of the land of Egypt in the seven plenteous years.

35 "And let them gather all the food of those good years that come, and lay up corn under the hand of Pharaoh, and let them keep food in the cities.

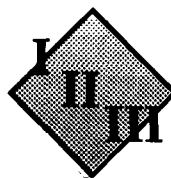
36 "And that food shall be for store to the land against the seven years of famine, which shall be in the land of Egypt; that the land perish not through the famine."



Memory Verse

Psalms 121:7-8

"The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul. The LORD shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore."



Outline

I. Dreams Were an Important Part of Joseph's Life.

A. God spoke to Joseph through his own, and other people's, dreams.

1. When Joseph was only 17 years old, even though he was the second to the youngest, he dreamed that he would be in authority over his brothers.
2. Joseph interpreted Pharaoh's dreams, and was rewarded with a powerful position in government.

B. Perhaps God spoke to people so much in dreams because the Bible had not yet been written for them to read.

1. God speaks to us today mainly through His Word, the Bible.
2. We can receive dreams from God today; but if they are truly from God, they will never disagree with the Bible.

II. Pharaoh Had Dreams Which Troubled Him Because He Knew They Were Important, But He Could Not Understand Their Meaning.

A. The butler finally remembered Joseph.

1. Joseph had been forgotten by the butler for two long years.

2. Even when we feel forgotten, God has a good plan for our lives; and His timing is perfect. He never forgets us for a moment.

B. Joseph received the interpretation of Pharaoh's dream from God.

1. God was planning seven years of plenty and seven years of famine.
2. Joseph told Pharaoh to appoint a faithful person to gather food together for the famine.
3. Pharaoh gave the job to Joseph and made him the prime minister, second in command over the entire kingdom.

III. Joseph's Own Dreams Finally Came To Be.

A. Joseph's brothers come to Egypt to buy grain.

1. Joseph's brothers bowed before him, just as in his dreams.
2. Joseph's first dream had even been about "sheaves of grain." God is interested in the details. (Genesis 37:7)

B. Joseph's family is reunited after twenty years of separation.

1. Joseph's father, Israel, and his whole family moved to Egypt.
2. Joseph was glad he could offer them a good place to live, so they would not starve.

IV. Joseph Learned That God Is Sovereign -- He Is the King of Everything!

A. God is in charge of our lives and has a good plan for us.

1. God's plan for us is for our good. (Jeremiah 29:11)
2. God's plan for us is to use our lives to help others. (Genesis 50:20)

B. Joseph viewed his troubles as tools which God could use to assist his family.

1. It was frightening and painful to be sold as a slave and then thrown into prison.
2. Yet God had it planned all along, so that Joseph could become the prime minister of Egypt and eventually save his family.

V. God Is in Charge of Our Lives, Too!

A. His plan for us is good -- the best!

1. Sometimes difficult things happen which we cannot understand.
2. It pleases God when we believe Him and serve Him faithfully, anyway.

B. God's plan for us cannot be stopped by other people.

1. People can hurt and hinder us, but they cannot stop God's plan for our lives.
2. God causes all things to work together for our good. (Romans 8:28)



Spiritual Truths

- God speaks to us today mainly through the Bible.

- We do not understand God's timing, but it is perfect.
- God cares about the little details of our lives.
- Even if it takes a long time, God always does what He says He will do.
- No matter what other people do, God's plan cannot be stopped.
- The greatest person is the one who forgives and blesses those who have hurt him.



Lesson Material

When Joseph was only seventeen years old, he dreamt that he would be in authority over his family. This was unusual, because Joseph was the eleventh of twelve brothers. But the dream was from God and eventually came true. At first, however, the dream caused Joseph's brothers to hate him and become jealous of him. They sold him as a slave and sent him off to Egypt. From their point of view, they had gotten rid of their annoying brother.

From God's point of view, it was a different story. Psalms 105:17 says that God sent Joseph to Egypt. You see, God had a plan for Joseph's life, which would be fulfilled if Joseph kept trusting God. No matter what other people did, God's plan could not be destroyed. In fact, God actually used all of the strange events of Joseph's life in a wonderful way.

While in Egypt, Joseph continued to believe God and serve Him, even though he was a slave. Joseph was promoted to the position of head personal servant, and did an honest, faithful job. But he was rejected again and thrown into prison! If that was not enough, a man in prison, to whom Joseph was very kind, forgot Joseph for two whole years.

All along, God's plan was ticking like a perfect clock. At the exact time God specified, Pharaoh dreamt a troubling dream. Joseph interpreted the dream, and was promoted to prime minister in charge of gathering food, so the people would not be destroyed by starvation.

When the years of famine came, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt to buy grain. They bowed before Joseph, not knowing who he was. Joseph recognized them, though, and was amazed to see his dream coming true. His first dream had even been about sheaves of grain bowing before him -- and here were his brothers, asking him for grain. What an amazing God, Who controls even the smallest details!

Joseph then realized that although he had traveled a strange and difficult road in his life, God had always been in control. He saw that God's plan was to save his family from starvation and build them into a strong nation. Joseph invited his whole family to come and live in the best part of Egypt. They prospered and grew, and became a great people.

When Joseph was an old man, his brothers came and asked him to forgive them for selling him as a slave many years previously. Joseph's answer showed that he had already forgiven them long before. He said,

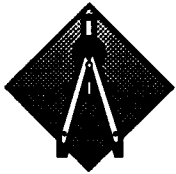
"...Ye thought evil against me; {but} God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as {it is} this day, to save much people alive." (Genesis 50:20)

For our lives, too, God has a good plan. It is important for us to believe Him and keep serving Him, no matter what troubles we go through. It is true that people will hurt us sometimes; but, the God we know and love is so great, that He causes even our hurts to work together for good, to bring about His wonderful plans.

The world focuses on fantasy, which is "vain imagination." Fantasy can lead to disillusionment and even depression. A true dream, or vision, comes from God. If it comes from Him, it involves things in life which are obtainable with God's help.

Be sure your dream is from God, and not just a fantasy.

When you build your life on God's Word, you are on solid ground.



Methods

Discussion:

What is the difference between a dream and a fantasy?

The Mother's Role

Volume 4

Lesson 46



Bible References

Psalms 37:4

Proverbs 19:17

Proverbs 31:1-9

Ephesians 6:1,3



Scripture Reading

Proverbs 31:1-9

1 *"The words of king Lemuel, the prophecy that his mother taught him.*

2 *"What, my son? and what, the son of my womb? and what, the son of my vows?*

3 *"Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.*

4 *"(It is) not for kings, O Lemuel, (it is) not for kings to drink wine; nor for princes strong drink:*

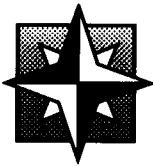
5 *"Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted.*

6 *"Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy hearts.*

7 *"Let him drink, and forget his poverty, and remember his misery no more.*

8 *"Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction.*

9 *"Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy."*



Theme

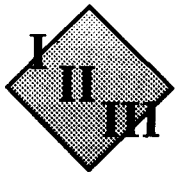
God has given us mothers and fathers to teach us. He promises us that if we listen to and obey them, He will bless us.



Memory Verse

Ephesians 6:1,3

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right...That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth."



Outline

I. A Mother's Words of Wisdom for Her Son.

A. "Lemuel." (Proverbs 31:1)

1. The identity of King Lemuel and his mother are unknown.
2. Ruth is the only woman in the Old Testament described as "virtuous."
3. Proverbs 31 is not necessarily a description of a single individual.

B. "Give not thy strength unto women...." (Proverbs 31:3)

1. She had seen people sidetracked from their goals because of their pursuit of a mate.
2. Keep your eyes on Jesus. He will give you the desires of your heart. (Psalms 37:4)

C. Do not drink. (Proverbs 31:4-5)

1. She had seen that alcohol hinders.

- a. It hinders our control.
 - b. It hinders our relationship with God.
 - c. It hinders our judgment.
2. Seek God and face your problems -- do not try to "drown" them.

D. Help the poor and needy.

1. Do not be selfish -- help meet other's needs.
2. Then your needs will be met. *"He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD...."* (Proverbs 19:17)

II. God Wants Us to Learn from Those Older Than Us.

- A. In the Bible, God recognizes the wisdom of older people.
- B. As we grow in the Lord and in years, we can be an example to others through the lessons we have learned in our lives.

III. God Always Honors and Blesses Obedience.

- A. To our parents.
- B. To Himself.
 1. God's ways are higher than our ways.
 2. God's wisdom is higher than our wisdom.
 3. God knows our future.
 4. God loves us and wants to bless us.
- C. Lemuel listened to his mother and became king!



Spiritual Truths

- God has given us parents to teach us.
- We are to honor and obey our parents.
- If we obey our parents, we will learn to hear and obey God.
- If we obey our parents, we will learn to take a stand for God, even if our peers disagree.
- God always honors obedience.
- If we listen to our parents, God will direct our lives. They have wisdom gleaned from their lives' experiences.



Lesson Material

The mother of Lemuel was probably very proud of her son, since he was a king. That would be like your son becoming President. Would not you be proud? But do you think Lemuel's mother was a big influence in his life? From the scripture verses we read, it would seem that his mother was a very smart, or wise, woman. She gained this wisdom from following God and from living -- learning from her own mistakes and maybe watching other people and learning from the things they did. Are not you glad God gave us mothers and fathers, who are wiser than us because of their maturity, to guide us through life and love us? Listed is some of the advice

that King Lemuel's mother told him, as recorded in Proverbs 31:1-9.

King Lemuel's mother told him not to give his strength to women. This means he was to keep his life pure, and allow God have control of his relationships. Maybe his mother had watched people who were so worried about finding someone to marry, that they put all their strength into finding that person and forgot about God. Maybe they missed some of life's great opportunities, because they were not listening to God, but were always looking for a new date. Maybe Lemuel's mother saw people who could have gone on a missions trip or visited someone who loved God and served Him; but they turned it down, because they were more concerned about a boyfriend or girlfriend. Maybe she saw someone who dated a person who did not also love the Lord, so then slowly that relationship became more important than their relationship with the Lord. Possibly that person stopped going to church, reading the Bible, praying, and spending time with Christian friends. She knew that God would give to her son the desire of his heart -- the right kind of wife who would be best for him. She wanted her son to trust God for that.

She also told Lemuel not to drink wine for the purpose of getting drunk. Maybe she had seen people in her life who had started out drinking because it was "fun," but then found out that the alcohol took over their lives. She told Lemuel that when people drink too much, some things happen to them:

They lose control. The alcohol makes them feel silly and giddy. They laugh over things which are not funny, which might hurt someone's feelings. Because they have had too much to drink, they lose track of time, and maybe miss an

important appointment, or forget to do something they promised someone they would do. When this occurs, people will not trust them any more. They may physically hurt someone. They might get too rough. Sometimes when people drink, they let very small things make them very angry; and so they become mean, when normally they are very nice. When the alcohol wears off, the person feels very guilty and sad about what they have done. Is it worth the consequences to lose your control and hurt people who are important to you? Lemuel's mother was very wise to tell him not to drink.

She also told him that drinking hinders a person's judgment. She told King Lemuel that drinking is bad for a king, because he is in charge of other people, and must make decisions which affect other people. While we may not be kings, we do not want to lose our judgment because we, too, can cause bad things to happen when we are not careful. We want to keep our minds clear, so that God can use us. Someone may come to us with a problem, and we want to help them. If we have let alcohol take over, we lose our feeling of caring for others, and we lose our ability to listen carefully and suggest ideas to help someone. If we neglect our areas of responsibility too much, we will lose the responsibility we had. God will give it to someone else.

She also told Lemuel that alcohol hinders our relationship with God. A person who drinks too much feels a lot of guilt. They know that God is not pleased when they drink and hurt other people and become irresponsible. Then their guilt prevents them from talking to God. God loves us so much; and He is ready to help us stay away from things which are not good for us, if we will ask Him. He will also give us wisdom when we ask for it;

and God is always ready to help us with our problems. We do not have to "drown" away our problems by drinking. That does not help anyway, because our problems are still there when the alcohol wears off.

Lemuel's mother also told him to help people who are poor, and who have needs. This also was very wise advice. She must have been someone who did that very thing herself. Maybe if she saw someone without food, she had them over to eat with the family. Maybe she saw someone who needed clothes, and she gave them clothes. She also reminded King Lemuel that since he was a king, he could set an example to others by helping the poor. Likewise, we can do the same thing. She told him to stand up for the rights of people who could not help themselves, who had no one else to help them. When we do that, we become compassionate, caring people. Plus, God tells us in Proverbs 19:17 that when we lend to the poor, we lend to God. God always repays us more than we can imagine. When Jesus was on earth, He helped people who were poor and alone.

God wants us to learn from those who are older than us -- including our moms. In the Bible, God recognizes the wisdom of older people, and He tells us to respect them. Also, as we grow older ourselves, if we have learned from our parents, then we can be an example to people younger than us. We can help them through difficult times because of what we have learned from God when we went through hard times ourselves. If you know a younger child who is afraid to enter third grade, you can help that child, because you have already had that experience. Or maybe someone is afraid of swimming lessons, or gymnastics, or dance class -- something you have done. Maybe you were afraid the first time you went, but

now it is fun for you and you can hardly wait to go each week. We can help other people in all areas of life.

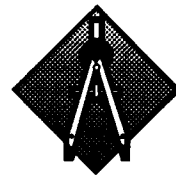
God wants us to be obedient to our parents, because of the things they have learned in life, and because they are wiser. God always blesses obedience. Our memory verse tells us: "*Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.*" (Ephesians 6:1) Then, God gives us a promise -- He tells us that if we obey our parents, our life will be long. Obedience is very important to God.

God wants us to obey Him. If we obey our parents, we will be trained to obey God. We need to listen to God, because He is wiser than any person could ever be. God knows our future. He works things out, because He has a plan for our lives; and all the pieces of our life end up fitting together like a puzzle. Something may happen which does not make sense to us when it occurs; but later on, something else will happen, and suddenly we understand why the first thing happened, because it all fits together. God loves us very much, and He wants to bless us. It is easier for Him to bless us if we obey Him. This does not mean everything in life will be easy, because in difficult times we learn to trust God and pray. When something is going on we do not understand, which makes us sad or afraid, these are the times we pray more and read our Bibles to see what God has to say. When we pray and read our Bibles, we are gaining wisdom.

This wisdom helps us through our difficult times, and allows us help other people who go through the same problem. When we do not obey, we may have to face consequences that God did not want us to have to go through. But because He knows our future, and what we need to learn, He sometimes allows the difficult times to teach us.

King Lemuel is a good example. He listened to his mother, and he became king! God will use each of us, if we will be obedient.

Are you thankful for your mother?



Methods

Discuss with the students times they did something their parents asked them to do, even though they did not want to, and the result turned out to be for the best.

Discuss times they did not listen to their parents and things did not turn out well.

Have each child tell something they learned from their mother which makes her special to them.

Good People and Hard Times

Volume 4

Lesson 47



Bible References

Job 1

Job 2

Job 3

Job 42:12-17

Matthew 10:22

Romans 8:28

James 1:1-4

James 5:11



Scripture Reading

Job 1:1-22

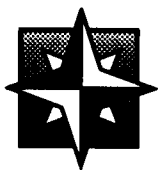
1 *"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name (was) Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil.*

2 *"And there were born unto him seven sons and three daughters.*

3 *"His substance also was seven thousand sheep, and three thousand camels, and five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she asses, and a very great household; so that this man was the greatest of all the men of the east.*

4 *"And his sons went and feasted (in their) houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.*

5 *"And it was so, when the days of (their) feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings (according) to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.*



Theme

The age-old question of why bad things happen to good people is studied through the life of Job.

6 "Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them.

7 "And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

8 "And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that (there is) none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?

9 "Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought?

10 "Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.

11 "But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

12 "And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath (is) in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

13 "And there was a day when his sons and his daughters (were) eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

14 "And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them:

15 "And the Sabeans fell (upon them), and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

16 "While he (was) yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

17 "While he (was) yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

18 "While he (was) yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters (were) eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

19 "And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

20 "Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

21 "And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

22 "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly."

Job 2:1-10

1 "Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them to present himself before the LORD.

2 "And the LORD said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan

answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.

3 "And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that (there is) none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him, to destroy him without cause.

4 "And Satan answered the LORD, and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life.

5 "But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse thee to thy face.

6 "And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, he (is) in thine hand; but save his life.

7 "So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown.

8 "And he took him a potsherd to scrape himself withal; and he sat down among the ashes.

9 "Then said his wife unto him, Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die.

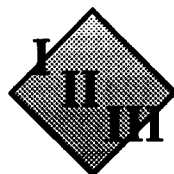
10 "But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips."



Memory Verse

Jeremiah 29:11

"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."



Outline

I. Job.

- A. A wealthy man.
- B. A godly man.

II. Trials.

- A. First catastrophe.
 - 1. Job's cattle and livestock were stolen and killed. (Job 1:14-17)
 - 2. Job's children were killed in a windstorm. (Job 1:18-19)
- B. Second catastrophe.
 - 1. Job was physically afflicted. (Job 2:4-8)
 - 2. God would not allow Satan to kill Job. (Job 2:6)

C. The reaction of Job's wife.

1. She told Job to curse God and die.
(Job 2:9)
2. Her response was not one of faith.
(Job 2:10)

D. The response of Job's friends.

1. Job's friends accused him of secret sin in his life.
2. Job's friends accused and condemned him.
3. Job's friends told him God was punishing him.

III. Job's Response.

A. Errors.

1. Job cursed the day he was born. (Job 3:1-26)
2. Listened to friends who did not have the mind of the Lord.

B. Conclusions.

1. Realized that God is sovereign.
2. Learned that bad things do happen to good people.

- God is concerned with our attitudes, regardless of the circumstances.
- God wants us to learn from our sufferings.
- Trials will bring changes in our lives.
- Through trials, God can build us up.
- God is worthy of worship in whatever He chooses to do.



Lesson Material

As we read the Book of Job, we find that Job is a very wealthy man. Wealth during this period of time was measured in the number of livestock a man possessed, especially camels. Job is described as "... *the greatest of all the men of the east*" (Job 1:3) -- great in wealth and importance; a very successful man.

Not only was he successful in his profession, Job was a very godly man; so much so, that God talked about him in a heavenly get-together with all the angels. Now, that is success! Job did all the right things -- he was a caring father and a providing husband. Yet in the midst of all this, calamity struck. In the first series of catastrophes, he lost all of his possessions plus his family, except for his wife. At least he had his wife and good health.

The second happening cost him his good health. So great were his losses that his wife suggested that he curse God and die.



Spiritual Truths

- God is sovereign.
- Everything which touches our lives, first has to pass through God.

Job sat in an ash heap, and scraped himself with broken pottery. His three friends, Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar came to see him. They came to be with him during his time of trouble. Instead of encouraging him, they added to his problems with a series of condemnations and accusations about his relationship with God.

A young preacher, Elihu, came along and gave Job a better insight to what was happening; and he advised Job to humble himself before God and submit to the way of God, thus bringing purity into his life.

Finally, Job had a conversation with God. God revealed His power and wisdom as Creator and Keeper of the world. Job realized his lack of importance and knowledge. Job finally realized that God is sovereign and can do what He wants whenever He chooses.

Many times we ask God "Why?" and get no answer. Dr. P.J. Titus, a missionary in the nation of India, said there are two questions God does not answer in the Bible: "Why?" and "When?" Often, we try to understand the "why's" of suffering; yet, if we study Job carefully, God does not speak of Job's suffering. Suffering is not the issue, but rather what Job learned from the suffering. Job learned that God is in charge. God is sovereign and worthy of worship, regardless of the circumstances. Job was not the same man after the trials as he was before. The trials gave Job a new perspective regarding God -- an insight which could only be gained through trials and suffering. God was able to take that which Satan meant for bad and turn it into something good for Job.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called

according to (his) purpose."
(Romans 8:28)

The story has a happy ending. God restored more to Job after his ordeal than what he had before the trials. (Job 42:12-17)

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing (this), that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have (her) perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." (James 1:2-4)

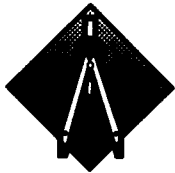
This passage has a more complete meaning after reading the book of Job. Somehow, many Christians have the same mindset as did Job's friends, who believed that if bad things happen, you are not in God's will or have secret sin. They also seem to believe that if things are going well, then you are in victory and in the midst of God's will.

James 5:11 teaches that we become mature and are blessed as we persevere. Maturing is a process -- not an aging process as much as it is a learning process. It is learning to trust in God as we pass through the times of trouble. Admittedly, it is easier and more fun to go through good times; but in what Bible stories do we read about men and women of God who had no trials, no problems or no suffering?

We can resist everything God sends us, or mature and learn from these lessons. We need to remember God is sovereign and that He is worthy of worship, regardless of the circumstances. Many times we want to be like Jesus, but even the Son of God suffered when He was on earth. He was hated and despised; and scripture says we who believe will be hated and persecuted. (Matthew 10:22)

Our human nature causes us to struggle when we hear of good people experiencing trouble. It goes against our understanding. This was also true of Job and his friends. God knows what we need and how to teach us. In reality, we do have some understanding. Have you ever asked yourself the question, "Why do I have to learn the hard way?" Perhaps there is no other way to learn that particular lesson.

Why do bad things happen to good people? God is sovereign, and He knows what He is doing!



Methods

Discuss the concept of "fair" with the student. It is commonly taught that we can expect things to be "fair." Emphasize the

point that God's ways do not always seem fair, but we can *know* that His ways are the best for each person involved.

Have the students draw a dot on a piece of paper. This dot represents them. Have them draw a circle around the dot. The circle represents God. *Nothing* can get to that dot without crossing through the circle around it. For Christians, nothing touches us that God has not first looked at, examined, and then determined we are ready to go into, for our training and maturing. Emphasize that *nothing touches us without first passing through God and gaining His approval.*

The Parable of the Sower

Volume 4

Lesson 48



Bible References

Isaiah 6:3,9-10

Hosea 10:12

Matthew 13:1-23

Mark 4:1-20

John 14:6

Acts 28:27

Galatians 5:7

Hebrews 6:8

1 Peter 1:23

Revelation 3:14-22



Scripture Reading

Matthew 13:3-9

3 *"And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow;*

4 *"And when he sowed, some {seeds} fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured them up:*

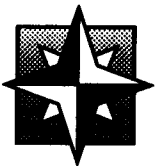
5 *"Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth:*

6 *"And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away.*

7 *"And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them:*

8 *"But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold.*

9 *"Who hath ears to hear, let him hear."*



Theme

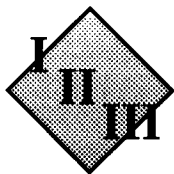
As we as Christians come to know Jesus in a more intimate way, we will better be able to understand the mysteries of His teachings.



Memory Verse

Isaiah 6:9-10

"And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed."



Outline

I. The Sermon, as Given by Jesus.

- A. Jesus had preached earlier in the day, and was faced with opposition.
 1. Jesus persevered in sharing truth.
 2. Doing God's work requires courage and zeal.
- B. Jesus preached to a great multitude.
 1. The location was informal.
 - a. "...he began again to teach by the sea side...." (Mark 4:1)
 - b. The people could gather as they wished to hear Jesus teach.
 2. A king has his court, which is always a formal setting.
 3. Jesus has His church.
 - a. The church is wherever God's people are.

- b. Jesus had no house.
- c. Jesus did not have a chapel or church.
- d. However, circumstances did not hinder Jesus.

II. What and How Jesus Preached and Taught.

- A. All that Jesus taught dealt with eternal values.
- B. Jesus used parables, which reached the understanding of His hearers. (Matthew 13:11-17)
 1. There are hearers who are willingly taught.
 - a. True believers have an experiential edge on God's Word.
 - b. They are able to understand and discern spiritual things.
 2. There are the willingly ignorant.
- C. Jesus taught concerning the dispensing of gifts. (Matthew 13:12)
 1. Jesus blesses those who properly use their gifts.
 2. Jesus takes away from the negligent hearers.
- D. A description of the willfully ignorant. (Matthew 13:13-15)
 1. Blindness is in their sinning.
 - a. Sensuality.
 - b. Senselessness.
 2. Note: Seeing, hearing, and understanding are important elements leading to conversion.
- E. God deals with us as rational individuals.

1. If we turn to God, He will spiritually heal us. (Acts 28:27)
2. We must be spiritually awake to hear God.

F. Christians are to desire Jesus' teachings. (Matthew 13:16-17)

1. They are blessed.
2. Those who know Him will strive to learn more.

III. Jesus Used Parables to Teach Wisdom to His Disciples.

A. Spiritual truth cannot be received through carnal understanding.

1. We are to meditate with delight on His Word.
2. We want His Word to speak into our lives.

B. The seed sown is the Word of God. (Matthew 13:18-23)

1. 1 Peter 1:23.
2. The seed is scattered by His ministers/believers.
3. Give the multitudes:
 - a. Good seed -- His Word.
 - b. Clean seed -- Honesty.
 - c. Plenty of seed.

C. The ground on which the seed is sown:

1. The hearts of mankind.
2. Each heart is capable of improvement and bearing good fruit.
3. Seed sown by the wayside. (Matthew 13:4,19)
 - a. Careless hearers are prey for Satan.
 - b. They do not want to understand, or cannot understand.

- c. Characterizing religion without a true relationship with Jesus Christ.
4. Seed sown in stony places. (Matthew 13:5-6,20-21)
 - a. Do not retain the truth heard.
 - b. Those who do not grow in the Lord.
 - c. Receive with joy, but do nothing with the truth.
 - d. Endure for awhile, but soon grow weary. (Galatians 5:7)
 - e. Testing will destroy some, while it strengthens others.
 - f. Refers to "hardened hearts," and "fallow ground." (Hosea 10:12)
5. Some seed fell among thorns. (Matthew 13:7,22)
 - a. The seed took root.
 - b. Prosperity and persecution can destroy the Word planted in our heart.
 - c. Too much concern for this world will cause us to become lost.
 - d. The cares of this world are thorns.
 - e. People often rely too much on this world's resources.
 - f. The end result is destruction. (Hebrews 6:8)
6. Some seed fell on good ground. (Matthew 13:8,23)
 - a. One who hears and understands will be fruitful.
 - b. We might encounter stones and thorns, but will not be hindered by them.
 - c. We are freed from the reign of sin.
 - d. Fruitful hearers put the Word into practice.
 - e. Not everyone is given the same responsibility. (Matthew 13:23)



Spiritual Truths

- We should be persistent in doing God's work.
- Be willing to share God's Word wherever you are.
- We must not be hindered by circumstances.
- We need to be careful and open-minded hearers of God's Word.
- Our response to each truth has eternal consequences.
- If we are negligent, then God might take away all He has given us.
- Each Christian is responsible to spread God's Word.



Lesson Material

The multitude gathered on the shore of the Sea of Tiberias. They were close to Jesus, so they could hear Him. Imagine this large crowd listening to Jesus, as He taught on eternal values.

The word "parable" comes from the Greek language and means "to compare together," -- using natural objects to explain spiritual truth. Jesus never deceived His hearers, but sometimes He veiled truth in the form of parables. The disciples asked Jesus, "...Why speakest

thou unto them in parables?" (Matthew 13:10) Jesus replied,

"...Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all (these) things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and (their) sins should be forgiven them." (Mark 4:11)

In other words, Jesus said, "I am giving truth to the crowd through parables, because I do not want people to understand the things of the spirit with their natural minds. I desire those who are people of faith and covenant. Faith is a function of the spirit, not of the mind. God is seeking worshippers, not clients. I will explain the parables to you, so that you will understand, but I will not reveal spiritual mysteries to the crowd, who is looking for a carnal gospel they can relate to in the flesh." Much concerning Jesus -- His doctrine, His life, His design in coming, and His claims -- is contained in our Lord's teachings.

The parable of the sower of seed was of a farmer doing his work. There were probably some farmers in the crowd. It is most desirable for sown seed to spring forth and to become fruitful. Obviously, some seed fell by the wayside, where no plow could break up the soil. Such seed cannot get into the heart, where it can grow. The wayside is that area which seems to be going the same direction, but it is not on the right road. Many people in cults are seeking to go to heaven, but only Jesus is "...the way, the truth, and the life...." (John 14:6)

The stony places are like hearers who have their hearts hardened. Farmers know

about the "fallow ground" mentioned in Hosea 10:12. Fallow ground is hard and "stony." The rain comes down, and it washes off. Only when the ground is plowed by praise to God and humility will it be able to absorb the moisture of the Spirit.

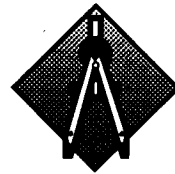
The seed sown among thorns and shrubs gets too much shade. Therefore, it gets choked out. Jesus spoke of the thorny ground as being the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches. Natural riches give the illusion that we are all right and do not have desperate needs. The church in Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22) had this problem. They thought they were rich, but God considered them "...wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." (Revelation 3:17) Their riches deceived them. Thank God that some of the seed will find good and fertile ground.

In Matthew 13:9, Jesus challenged every listener to be very attentive. The "mysteries" simply refer to truth not yet revealed. The truth could be understood, if taught. Jesus wanted His disciples to understand that His message was for all mankind, not just the Jews.

"Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Matthew 13:9) This is the call to those who have spiritual understanding. When we listen and improve on what we have, we can experience increase. Many simply closed their eyes and minds to the truth, which caused them not to understand. This was not Jesus' fault. We each must accept responsibility for our response to rightly presented truth. Isaiah 6:3 says, *"...the whole earth is full of His glory."*

They had no acceptable excuse for not understanding the prophet, Isaiah. In Isaiah's day, in Jesus' day, and today, most people choose to reject the Word. The burden is still ours to spread the Gospel.

When Jesus said, *"...I should heal them"* (Matthew 13:15), He was referring to healing or recovering from their sin. It is always exciting for new converts to have their eyes and hearts opened to be able to receive the Word. It is through His Word that we become born-again, purified Christians.



Methods

Discussion:

Define and explain the various types of people who hear the Word.

What is the Christian's responsibility toward those who are not believers?

What is the most important truth?

What hinders people from allowing the seeds of truth to grow?

What is meant by "good ground?"

Is Jesus only talking about our physical ability to hear in Matthew 13:9 and Mark 4:9?

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Volume 4

Lesson 49



Bible References

Proverbs 1:23

Joel 2:28

Matthew 3:11

Mark 1:8

Mark 16:17

Luke 3:16

Acts 2:4,15-16

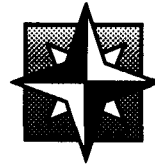
Acts 10:44-46

Acts 11:15

Acts 19:6

1 Corinthians 14:2,39

Jude 20



Theme

The baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of tongues.



Scripture Reading

Acts 1:1-18

1 *"The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,*

2 *"Until the day in which he was taken up, after that he through the Holy Ghost had given commandments unto the apostles whom he had chosen:*

3 *"To whom also he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God:*

4 *"And, being assembled together with {them}, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, {saith he}, ye have heard of me.*

5 "For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

6 "When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?

7 "And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.

8 "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

9 "And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight.

10 "And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel;

11 "Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

12 "Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey.

13 "And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James {the son} of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas {the brother} of James.

14 "These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women,

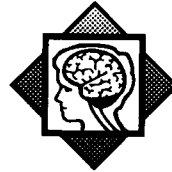
and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

15 "And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)

16 "Men {and} brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.

17 "For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry.

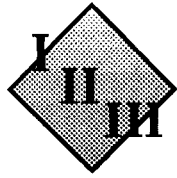
18 "Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out."



Memory Verse

Mark 16:17

"And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;"



Outline

I. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit is Prophesied in the Scriptures.

A. Old Testament.

1. "And it shall come to pass afterward, {that} I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions." (Joel 2:28)
2. "Turn you at my reproof: behold, I will pour out my spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you." (Proverbs 1:23)

B. New Testament.

1. "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and {with} fire." (Matthew 3:11)
2. "I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." (Mark 1:8)
3. "John answered, saying unto {them} all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." (Luke 3:16)

II. Fulfillment of Prophecy.

- A. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:4)
- B. "For these are not drunken, as ye suppose, seeing it is {but} the third hour of the day. But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." (Acts 2:15-16)

III. Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit.

- A. "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God...." (Acts 10:44-46)
- B. "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning." (Acts 11:15)
- C. "And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied." (Acts 19:6)

IV. The Reason for Tongues.

- A. Evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit.
- B. One way to communicate with God. (1 Corinthians 14:2)
- C. Builds up your spirit. (Jude 20)



Spiritual Truths

- The baptism in the Holy Spirit is for the New Testament church.
- The baptism in the Holy Spirit with the evidence of tongues is normal in the New Testament church.
- The baptism in the Holy Spirit is for today, and you can have it.



Lesson Material

The baptism in the Holy Spirit has been misunderstood from the very beginning. On the day of Pentecost, the disciples and believers were in the Spirit, and received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. Those who did not receive the baptism did not understand, and made fun of what was happening.

The prophet, Joel had prophesied this would happen, approximately 835 years before Christ was born. The Gospels record that John the Baptist prophesied that the Messiah, Jesus, would come after him, baptizing with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Matthew 3:11)

The prophecy began being fulfilled and will continue until Jesus returns. (Acts 2:18-20) The biblical accounts which relate those people who were baptized in the Holy Spirit give a pattern to be observed. First, they believed that Jesus was the

Messiah, their Savior. Secondly, when the Holy Spirit came on them, they spoke in tongues. Some people have a fear of tongues, but 1 Corinthians 14:2 says that with these tongues, or prayer languages, we can speak in a heavenly language to God. In 1 Corinthians 14:39, we are told not to forbid speaking in tongues as we gather as a church.

To understand the baptism in the Holy Spirit, we can compare it with water baptism. In water baptism, there is an element -- water; there is a baptizer -- the Pastor, elder, or another Christian; and there is the person who receives the baptism.

Element -- Water

Baptizer -- Pastor

Baptized -- Believer

When we are baptized in the Holy Spirit, we have the element -- the Holy Spirit; the baptizer -- Jesus; and the baptized -- the one who receives.

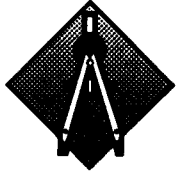
Element -- Holy Spirit

Baptizer -- Jesus

Baptized -- Receiver

Jesus set the example on the day of His baptism. He received the Holy Spirit, was lead out into the desert, fasted for 40 days, and was tempted. Jesus then returned in the power of the Holy Spirit and performed miracles.

We have been given the promise of this in Mark 16:17. *"And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;"*



Methods

It would be appropriate at this time to ask if any would like to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Questions:

1. When did the prophecy of Joel take place?

"And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams." (Acts 2:17)

2. Where?

"And, being assembled together with {them}, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, {saith he}, ye have heard of me." (Acts 1:4)

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." (Acts 2:1)

3. Who?

"And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,)" (Acts 1:15)

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place." (Acts 2:1)

"And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." (Acts 2:4)

4. Why?

"And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:7-8)

5. How?

- A. Baptizer -- Jesus
- B. Element -- Holy Spirit
- C. Baptized -- Believer

Fathers of the Bible

Volume 4

Lesson 50



Bible References

Deuteronomy 6:3-13

Judges 8:30-31

Psalms 27:10

Psalms 68:6

Proverbs 3

Proverbs 4

Isaiah 64:8

Philippians 2:3

1 Peter 5:5



Scripture Reading

Deuteronomy 6:3-13

3 *"Hear therefore, O Israel, and observe to do {it}; that it may be well with thee, and that ye may increase mightily, as the LORD God of thy fathers hath promised thee, in the land that floweth with milk and honey.*

4 *"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God {is} one LORD:*

5 *"And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might.*

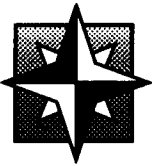
6 *"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart:*

7 *"And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.*

8 *"And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes.*

9 *"And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.*

10 *"And it shall be, when the LORD thy God shall have brought thee into the land*



Theme

The Bible teaches wisdom by giving both good and bad examples, so that we can know how to respond when life is not "storybook" perfect.

which he swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give thee great and goodly cities, which thou buildedst not,

11 "And houses full of all good {things}, which thou filledst not, and wells digged, which thou diggedst not, vineyards and olive trees, which thou plantedst not; when thou shalt have eaten and be full;

12 "Then beware lest thou forget the LORD, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage.

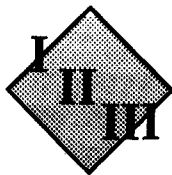
13 "Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God, and serve him, and shalt swear by his name."



Memory Verse

Isaiah 64:8

"But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand."



Outline

I. God's Plan for Fathers.

A. A picture of our Heavenly Father.

1. Primary teacher.
2. Goal: to impart wisdom, as well as understanding.

- a. A Christian world view.
- b. Teach the fear of the Lord.

B. The father's role.

1. Primary provider.
2. Greatest protector.
3. Wise guide -- teacher, counselor.
4. Head of the home.
5. We tend to look like him, and inherit his traits.

C. God.

1. Our Provider.
2. Our omnipotent (all powerful) Protector.
3. The Holy Spirit: our Teacher.
4. Our Lord and Master.
 - a. God is our Creator.
 - b. Christ is Head of the church.
5. As we, as believers, walk with God, we tend to look and act more and more like Him.

II. Good Men Who Were Not Good Fathers.

A. Gideon.

1. Fathered seventy-one sons. (Judges 8:31-32)
2. Gideon apparently failed to raise up even one son to be a leader -- a successor to his ministry.
3. He had one illegitimate son by a heathen woman.
4. This illegitimate son rose up and killed all of Gideon's other sons except Jotham, the youngest.

B. Noah.

1. Noah failed to set an example for his sons.
2. Noah became drunk; and his son, Ham, saw his father's nakedness.

3. Ham had not learned to respect his father, and God cursed him and his descendents.

C. Aaron.

1. Failed to teach his sons the fear of the Lord.
2. They did their own thing, and God killed them.

D. Eli.

1. He refused to correct his two sons.
2. Hophni and Phinehas were wicked and self-indulgent.
3. Eli was a respectable man, but lacked self-discipline.
4. Eli's two sons magnified their father's weakness.
5. When parents excuse a sin, their children tend to indulge in the same kind of sin in far greater ways.

E. Samuel.

1. Samuel was a faithful, godly man
2. But Samuel failed to train his sons to be faithful to God.
3. There is a difference between training and teaching.
 - a. You do not train someone by telling him how.
 - b. Training involves working side by side -- doing the job together.
 - c. Training involves inspiration as well as information.

F. David.

1. David refused to talk things out with his sons.
2. When Absalom had problems, David turned him away.
3. David failed to punish Amnon's great moral sin.

4. David's sin was in leaving his children alone, and failing to talk with them.
5. The sons of David also greatly magnified his sins.

III. God's Priority.

A. The spirit of Elijah.

1. *"And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse."* (Malachi 4:6)
2. "Elijah" means, "God is the Lord."
3. When we recognize that everything belongs to God, we become more responsive to our parents, and parents place greater importance on their children.
4. Sin turns hearts away from children and fathers, and causes us to want to relate primarily to peers.

B. When a nation turns to God, there is a stronger emphasis on the family.

1. Parents recognize that their children are God's "assignment," and that they belong to God.
2. Children recognize that their parents are very important people in their lives.
3. God gave parents, and not the state, the role of primary educators.



Spiritual Truths

- God designed the family to be the world's greatest and most important educational institution.
- The role of an educator is primarily to shape character and guide in the development of moral and spiritual values, and not only to inform.
- David was a failure as a father, because he did not spend the time to talk with his sons.
- Samuel failed as a father, because he neglected to pass on his values to his sons.
- Gideon failed as a father, because he never trained any of his many sons to be a leader; and he produced one out of sin who should never have been born, who destroyed his family.
- Eli failed as a father, because he lacked self-discipline in his own lifestyle, and because he refused to discipline his sons in their carnal excesses.
- God still values the family as the most important discipling unit in society; and He demands that we give more time and attention to those to whom and for whom we are responsible.



Lesson Material

The family is still the building block of a strong society. Generally, society is in a state of decline, and the family structure is no longer valued. In fact, often the family is under attack -- particularly the Christian family. When we view life as a cosmic accident in which we just happened to develop from apes by chance, then we lose the sense of accountability. The purpose of life becomes vague -- we seek to have as much fun and as little discomfort in life as possible. This secular mind set is the basis for abortion, crime, and many other damaging attitudes.

When we realize that God is the Lord and Owner of us all, it changes the way we relate to the family. We gain an attitude of responsibility. I am responsible to my parents. I am responsible to God for my children. God put us in families (Psalms 68:6) as His training unit for maturity and for eternity. We realize that we need His help to grow, relate, and become all that we should be. We comprehend that we are preparing for eternity, and that all God-ordained relationships are important. The family is a place of education, worship, fellowship, and fun.

A secular world view destroys that concept. Authority figures are held suspect -- a hindrance to our willful ways. The focus is on personal rights, rather than responsibilities. The goal is to be with peers, because we are not responsible for or to any authority figure. This mind set believes parents are not "cool," and should be avoided at all costs. They are an necessary evil, because they are the most willing to give us money. But the most

important thing is peer approval and self-expression.

Wisdom paints a far different picture of life. God teaches parents that children are a divine gift, a blessing from the Lord. God teaches children that parents are for them, and that they should be honored. The way to a longer, better life is by submission to parents, not by demanding rights. In God's economy, we earn freedom by submitting, because we earn trust. But the flesh tempts us to seek freedom by asserting self-will, and by seeking to be equal with our parents. The devil's game plan is not superiority, but equality. He sought to be equal with God. The key word in rebellion is "equality." Christianity does not emphasize equality, but honoring others. *"...But in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves."* (Philippians 2:3)

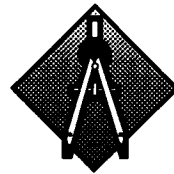
"Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all (of you) be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." (1 Peter 5:5)

When wickedness prevails, there is a decline of interaction and communication between fathers and children. When there is a revival, the hearts of children and fathers are turned to one another. The more we learn wisdom, the more we will want to be close to our parents, and learn all we can from them. We may discover that they are really nice people whom we can enjoy being around. They are certainly more generous than the person down the street.

What do you do when your father is not a perfect father? What if your father is like David's father? David had a hard time talking with his sons, possibly because David's father did not have much to do

with him. David intensely loved his sons, but he did not know how to show it. Maybe your father is like that sometimes. If he is, go to him. Talk to him. Tell him how you feel. Let him bless you.

If you have no father, or if your father has forsaken you, do what David did. David turned the Lord as his Father, and learned to find in God everything that he needed from a father. David did not talk negatively about his imperfect father, but he did say, *"When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up."* (Psalms 27:10) Only our Heavenly Father is a perfect father. Trust Him completely. He has never failed. Trust Him to bless you, even through your natural father. Honor your father and your mother. Your life will be better because of it.



Methods

The Bible really has more to say about imperfect fathers than about good ones. It is important that we teach from a real world view. We often present storybook portrayals of perfect families, and this can actually have a negative effect on those who do not live in the best of home situations. How many of your students have a happy home life, with both parents present? How many are blessed with daily family devotions and Christian music at home?

You cannot take an open census, because it would be embarrassing. But when you deal with the reality of an imperfect world, you can at least assure

students that they are not alone, if they have troubles. You can let them know that the Bible has real answers for real people. You can teach your students to honor their parents because of their position and not because they do everything perfectly. Teach students to learn to focus on their parent's good qualities, and to appreciate

what they have done. Emphasize the need for your students to believe God to bless them through their parents, and the students' need to pray for their parents everyday. The closer parents are to God, the more they will tend to bless their children.

The Rapture of the Church

Volume 4

Lesson 51



Bible References

Zechariah 14:5

Matthew 16:18

Matthew 24:36,42-51

Luke 17:34-37

Acts 1:1-11

Colossians 3:4

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

Jude 14

Revelation 7:14

Revelation 20:1-6



Scripture Reading

1 Thessalonians 4:11-18

11 *"And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you;*

12 *"That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and {that} ye may have lack of nothing.*

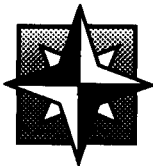
13 *"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope.*

14 *"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*

15 *"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive {and} remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep.*

16 *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:*

17 *"Then we which are alive {and} remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."*



Theme

We believe that the church will be taken from the earth before the second coming of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

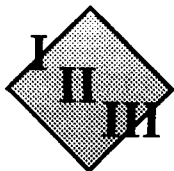
18 "Wherefore comfort one another with these words."



Memory Verse

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive (and) remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."



Outline

I. Christ's Return.

A. Prophecy. (Matthew 24:42-51; Acts 1:1-11)

B. Purpose.

II. Events Leading Up To His Return.

A. Rapture.

1. Who. (1 Thessalonians 4:16,17)
 - a. The dead in Christ will rise first.
 - b. Living Christians will be caught up next.

2. When. (Matthew 24:36)
 - a. No one knows the specific time.
 - b. We should avoid any teaching which tries to predict a date for the Lord's return.
 - c. We have been given the general season of the Lord's return.
3. Where. (Luke 17:34-37)
4. How. (1 Thessalonians 4:17)
 - a. The Lord will meet us in the clouds.
 - b. His power will take us to Himself.
5. Why. (Matthew 16:18)

B. Tribulation. (Revelation 7:14)

1. Seven years of trouble on the earth.
2. The Antichrist will rule on earth during this time.
3. The Lord will pour out His judgment upon the earth.
4. Christians will have been raptured to heaven to be with the Lord, and will not face this time of wrath upon unbelievers.



Spiritual Truths

- There will be a time when the church will be taken up in the rapture.
- The dead in Christ shall rise from their graves.
- There will be a great tribulation, lasting seven years after the rapture.
- People who become believers during the tribulation will be put to death.

- The rapture is merely one of the steps necessary to occur in preparation for Christ's second coming.



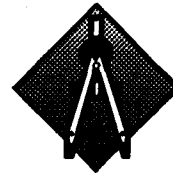
Lesson Material

The word "rapture," like the word, "Trinity," is not found in the Bible. It is a term we use to describe the event explained in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17. Jesus will remove the saints from the earth. The rapture has been talked about so much that one would believe that it was the most important event in Church history; when in reality, it is only one of the events that will take place before Jesus returns at His second coming.

During Jesus' early ministry, He spoke to His disciples about those things which would take place in the last days, before Jesus' return. Matthew 24:42-51 records these words of Jesus. In Acts 1:1-11, we hear the prophesy that His return would be like the way He left. Revelation 20:1-6 records the purpose of His return -- to come back and set up an earthly kingdom, where Jesus will rule and reign for 1,000 years. This is known as the Millennial kingdom. This will take place before the last judgment. As we look at 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, we see that two groups of people will be raptured. The first to be caught up will be Christians who have already died. What a scene it will be, when all the saints come from their graves. Imagine all of those empty graves! Then all the true Christians who are still alive will be caught up into the clouds

with Jesus. This event will take place prior to Jesus' return, but the day and hour is unknown to man. (Matthew 24:36) When we read the account of the rapture in Luke 17:34-37, we realize it will be people, men and women, from all over the world. We can only visualize with our imaginations what it will be like. However, it will be tremendously exciting.

Some believe that the only thing holding back the wrath of God is the church universal. When the church is out of the way (after the rapture), then the forces of evil will become the world government and the abomination which causes desolation will take place. Matthew 16:18 says that the gates of hell shall not prevail against the church of Jesus Christ. The great tribulation (Revelation 7:14) will come; and during that time, many believers will be martyred. The book of the Revelation reveals the great plagues and happenings during the tribulation, as well as the great destruction prior to Jesus' return and His millennial reign.



Methods

Ask the students to use their imaginations about the rapture. Let them discuss some of the lighter things: driverless cars on freeways, bathtubs running over, millions of people in churches disappearing. Keep the conversation light and alleviate fear; but, bring them to the conclusion that they need to be ready to "fly away" at any moment.

Section 9

Activity Pages



Word Search

Drawn From the Waters

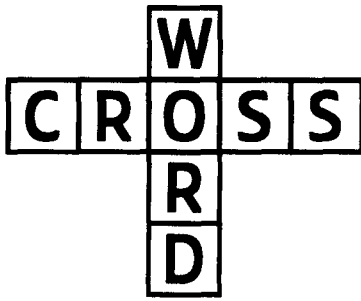
Find the hidden words in the puzzle below.
Circle the words when you find them.

M	G	B	X	U	G	F	W	B	D	X	E
P	O	E	A	X	X	R	R	I	S	S	F
H	I	S	D	B	I	Z	A	P	R	N	E
A	W	L	E	A	Y	M	N	U	S	M	B
R	M	C	F	S	U	A	N	R	H	H	W
A	O	Z	S	O	I	G	O	A	G	K	U
O	A	L	I	T	R	R	H	N	T	G	M
H	J	F	P	E	P	A	E	T	I	V	S
M	K	Y	V	R	A	B	Z	E	E	L	Q
D	G	I	L	B	B	P	P	K	D	R	E
E	R	V	C	B	Q	C	A	R	K	S	Q
M	B	P	N	L	H	E	B	R	E	W	S

ARK
BABY
DAUGHTER
EGYPTIAN

HEBREWS
MAID
MOSES
NILE

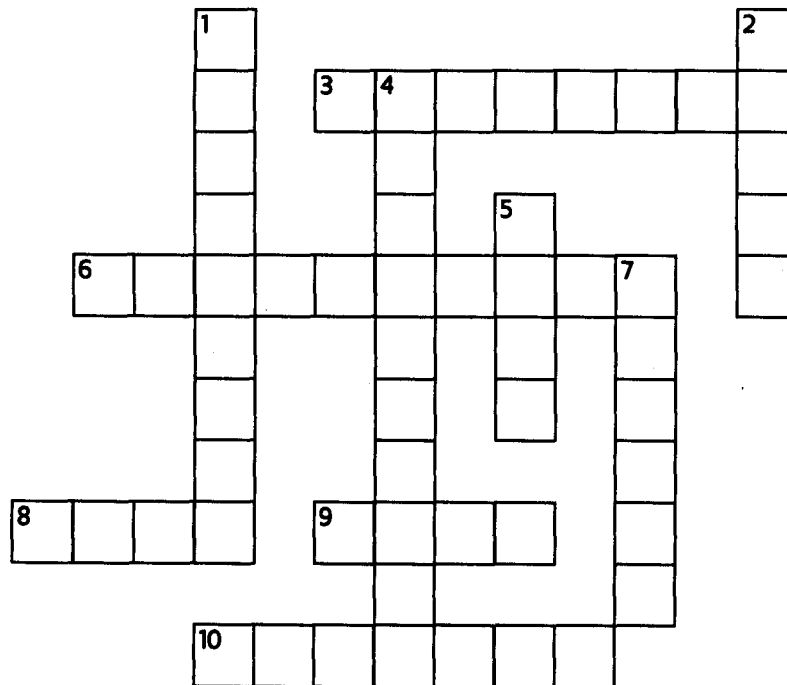
NURSE
PHARAOH
REEDS
RIVER



Crossword Puzzle

The Burning Bush

Using the clues below, solve this Crossword Puzzle!



ACROSS

3. Horeb was the ___ of God. (Exodus 3:1)
6. God told Moses to take off his shoes because he was standing on ___. (2 words) (Exodus 3:5)
8. Moses hid his ___ because he was afraid to look at God. (Exodus 3:6)
9. Our God is a consuming ___. (Hebrews 12:29)
10. God spoke to Moses out of the middle of a ___ bush. (Exodus 3:2-4)

DOWN

1. "The ___ of the holy is understanding." (Proverbs 9:10)
2. The ___ of the Lord appeared to Moses in a flame of fire. (Exodus 3:2)
4. God saw the ___ Israel faced under the Egyptians and chose Moses to lead them to freedom. (Exodus 3:9)
5. Although it burned with fire, the ___ was not consumed. (Exodus 3:2)
7. Moses tended his father-in-law's flocks on the backside of the ___. (Exodus 3:1)



Mystery Word

Ten Plagues and a Cow

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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Fill in the missing letters in each of the words below.
To discover the Mystery Word, write the letters in the numbered boxes
below in the box with the same number above.

"Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my

_____ go." (Exodus 5:1)

"And God said unto Moses, I AM _____ I AM."

(Exodus 3:14)

_____ was the spokesman for Moses.

(Exodus 4:14-16)

"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou

_____ _____." (Luke 4:8)

Moses took the _____ of God in his hand. (Exodus 4:20)

Moses' father-in-law was named _____ _____.

(Exodus 4:18)

Solve the Code

Passover

Use the code at the bottom of the page to solve this message.



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z



Scrambled Words

Living Water

Unscramble the words below and write the correct word in each blank.

1. UDRUMMER

4. CORK

2. BOREH

5. RATEW

3. HIMBEAR

6. IFATNOUN

1. The people _____ against Moses.
(Exodus 17:3)
2. Moses smote the rock in _____. (Exodus 17:6)
3. Moses called the place where he smote the rock
_____. (Exodus 17:7)
4. The _____ is Christ Jesus. (1 Corinthians 10:4)
5. The _____ that Christ gives us springs up into
everlasting life. (John 4:14)
6. "In that day there shall be a _____
opened to the house of David..." (Zechariah 13:1)



Word Search

Good Advice

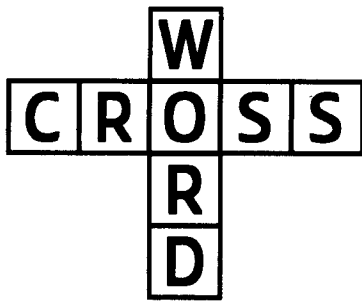
Find the hidden words in the puzzle below.
Circle the words when you find them.



ADVICE
COUNSEL
ELDERS
FATHER IN LAW

HEARKEN
ISRAEL
JETHRO
JUDGE

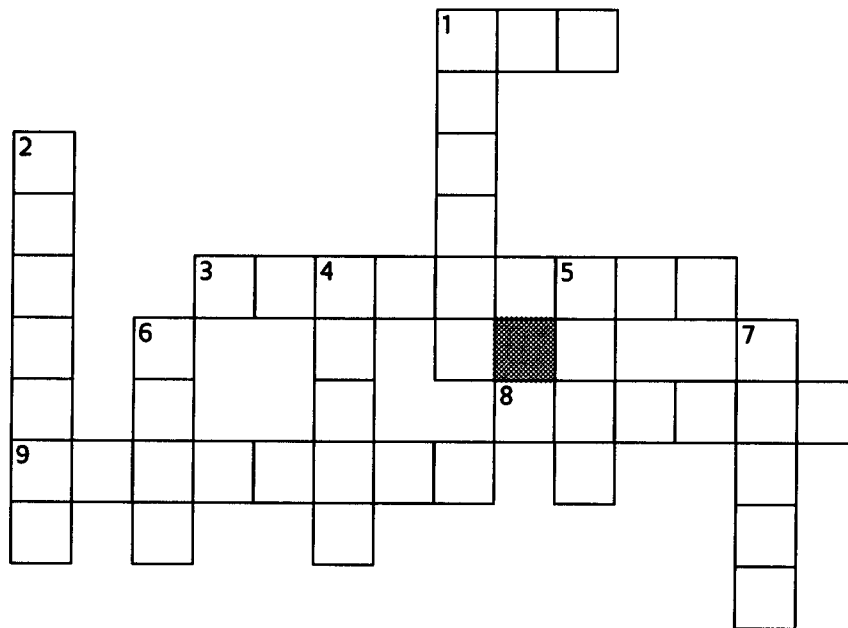
MOSES
RULERS
STATUTES
VOICE



Crossword Puzzle

The Ten Commandments

Using the clues below, solve this Crossword Puzzle!



ACROSS

1. ___ is the transgression of the law. (1 John 3:4)
3. "The ___ of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." (Psalm 19:7)
8. The ___ of the law kills. (2 Cor. 3:6)
9. God said that if the Israelites would keep His ___, they would be a peculiar treasure to Him. (Exodus 19:5)

DOWN

1. The ___ of the law gives life. (2 Cor. 3:6)
2. "The law of the Lord is ___, converting the soul." (Psalm 19:7)
4. God gave Moses the ten commandments at Mount ___. (Exodus 19:20)
5. God told the Israelites to ___ His voice. (Exodus 19:5)
6. ___ is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 13:10)
7. Jesus said the greatest commandment is to love God with all our ___, soul and mind. (Matthew 23:37)



Mystery Word

No Other Gods

1	2	3	4
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5	6	7
---	---	---

Fill in the missing letters in each of the words below.
To discover the Mystery Word, write the letters in the numbered boxes
below in the box with the same number above.

Fear of the Lord causes us to depart from ___ ___ ___ ¹
(Proverbs 16:6)

God is a ___ ___ ___ ___ ² ___ ___ God. (Exodus 20:5)

We are not to make any ___ ___ ___ ³ ___ ___ images.
(Exodus 20:4)

God brought the Israelites out of the land of ⁴ ⁵ ___ ___ ___.
(Exodus 20:2)

We are to ___ ___ ⁶ ___ ___ in the Lord. (1 Corinthians 1:31)

We are to love God with our heart, soul and ___ ___ ___ ⁷.
(Matthew 22:37)

Solve the Code

God's Name and the Sabbath

Use the code at the bottom of the page to solve this message.



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z



Scrambled Words

Honor Parents and Respect Life

Unscramble the words below and write the correct word in each blank.

1. THERA

4. THEFAR

2. TERFOG

5. ASKFORE

3. ECAPE

6. NICERDOT

1. Trust in the Lord with all your _____.
(Proverbs 3:5)

2. Do not _____ God's law and commandments.
(Proverbs 3:1)

3. Keeping God's laws will give us _____.
(Proverbs 3:2)

4. "Hear ye children the instruction of a _____."
(Proverbs 4:1)

5. Don't let mercy and truth _____ you.
(Proverbs 3:3)

6. The _____ God gives us is good.
(Proverbs 4:2)



Word Search

Love Thy Neighbor

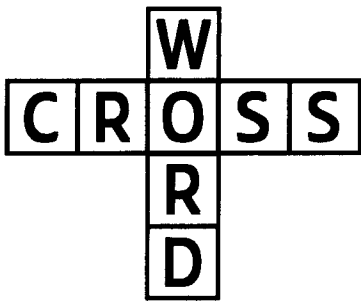
Find the hidden words in the puzzle below.
Circle the words when you find them.



ADULTERY
COMMANDMENT
CONTENTMENT
COVET

FALSE
HEART
LOVE
NEIGHBOR

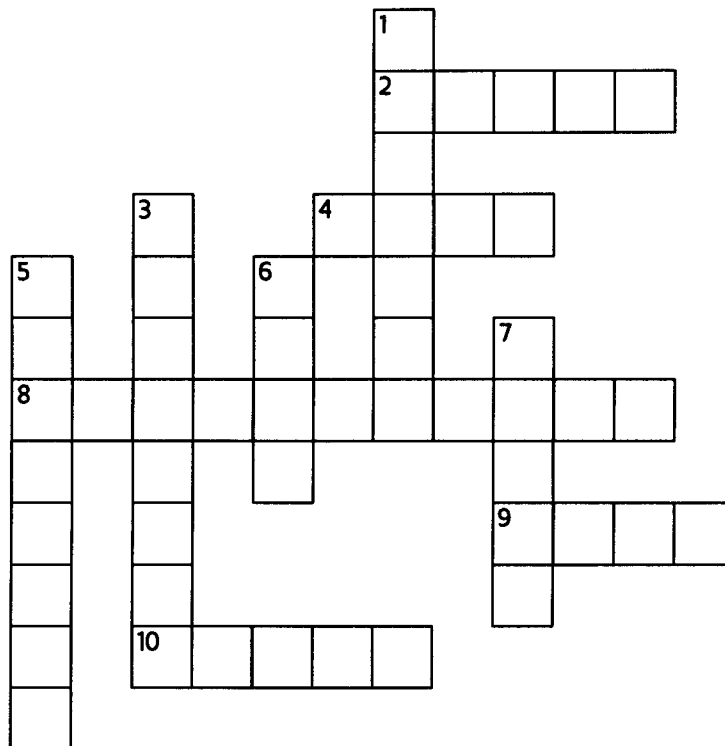
RESTORATION
STEALING
TRUTH
WITNESS



Crossword Puzzle

The Golden Lampstand

Using the clues below, solve this Crossword Puzzle!



ACROSS

2. God's Word is a ___ unto our paths.
(Psalm 119:105)
4. ___ men of old were used by God to write the Scriptures. (2 Peter 1:20, 21)
8. Another name for the lampstand.
(Exodus 37:17)
9. "Thy Word is a ___ unto my feet."
(Psalm 119:105)
10. The ___ lamps were made of pure gold.
(Exodus 37:23)

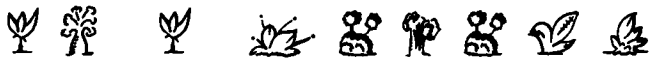
DOWN



























1. The bowls of the lampstand looked like _____. (Exodus 37:19)
3. The lampstand had six ___ coming out of its sides. (Exodus 37:18)
5. All Scripture is profitable for _____.
(2 Timothy 3:16)
6. The lampstand was made of pure _____.
(Exodus 37:17)
7. The lampstand is a symbol of the ____.

Solve the Code

The Tabernacle of Moses

Use the code at the bottom of the page to solve this message.



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
												
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
												



Scrambled Words

World Evangelism

Unscramble the words below and write the correct word in each blank.

1. WROPE

4. LILEAGE

2. CHEAT

5. SOCLEAR

3. DROWL

6. HERIPS

1. All _____ in heaven and earth is given to Jesus.
(Matthew 28:18)

2. "Go ye therefore and _____ all nations."
(Matthew 28:19)

3. Jesus is with us even to the end of the _____.
(Matthew 28:20)

4. Jesus gave the great commission to the disciples in a mountain in _____. (Matthew 28:16)

5. "If any man speak, let him speak of the _____
of God." (1 Peter 4:11)

6. It is not God's will that any should _____.
(Matthew 18:14)



Word Search

The Role of a Pastor

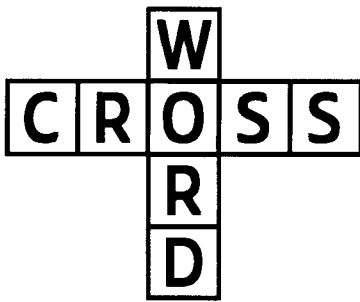
Find the hidden words in the puzzle below.
Circle the words when you find them.

H	T	H	E	O	C	R	A	C	Y	Q	H
O	O	P	A	S	T	O	R	F	D	C	G
B	P	N	C	I	J	J	Q	E	R	T	R
P	B	R	O	X	T	O	T	U	J	E	S
R	Q	G	O	R	G	N	H	R	J	A	H
E	D	N	Z	T	I	C	E	O	F	C	E
A	U	B	X	O	E	L	S	B	I	H	P
C	Q	C	P	E	J	C	E	M	C	E	H
H	U	P	D	Q	D	Y	T	A	P	R	E
E	A	I	G	R	Z	U	U	O	D	A	R
R	U	S	W	U	E	K	X	Y	R	E	D
G	O	V	E	R	S	E	E	R	M	K	R

APPOINTED
CHURCH
GUIDE
HONOR

LEADER
OVERSEER
PASTOR
PREACHER

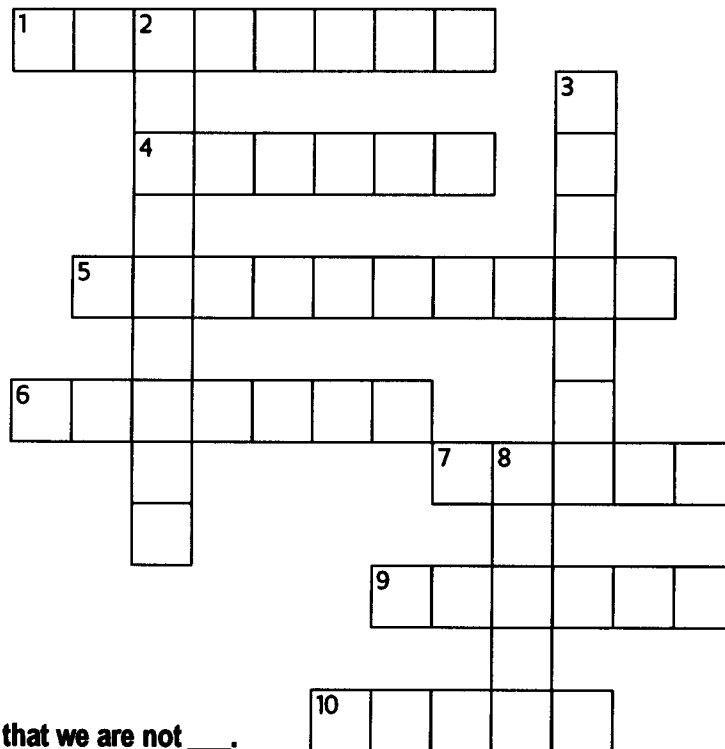
PROTECTOR
SHEPHERD
TEACHER
THEOCRACY



Crossword Puzzle

Spiritual Warfare

Using the clues below, solve this Crossword Puzzle!



ACROSS

1. We are to be careful that we are not _____.
(Luke 21:8)
4. "For we _____ not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord." (2 Corinthians 4:5)
5. Our battle is against spiritual _____ in high places. (Ephesians 6:12)
6. Satan has _____ the minds of unbelievers.
(2 Corinthians 4:4)
7. We do not war after the _____. (2 Cor. 10:3)
9. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but _____. (2 Corinthians 10:4)
10. In the last days, some people will depart from the _____. (1 Timothy 4:1)

DOWN

2. We must bring every thought into _____ to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. 10:5)
3. "For we _____ not against flesh and blood."
(Ephesians 6:12)
8. Jesus is the _____ of the world. (John 8:12)



Mystery Word

Believe God for an Answer

1	2	3	4	5	6	5
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Fill in the missing letters in each of the words below.
To discover the Mystery Word, write the letters in the numbered boxes
below in the box with the same number above.

Jesus healed a woman having an issue of _____.
(Luke 8:43,44)

Jairus was a _____ in the synagogue. (Luke 8:41)

We are to _____ ourselves in the Lord.
(Psalms 37:4)

All things are _____. (Mark 9:23)

The daughter of Jairus was _____ years old.
(Luke 8:42)



























Jesus knew someone touched him because He felt
 _____ leave Him. (Luke 8:46)

Solve the Code

God's Mercy For All

Use the code at the bottom of the page to solve this message.



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
												
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
												



Scrambled Words

When Jesus Rules the World

Unscramble the words below and write the correct word in each blank.

1. BEDLESS

4. WOVERSHOE

2. ANDSHOUT

5. SISTER

3. GRANDO

6. CDSOUL

1. "_____ and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." (Revelation 20:6)

2. Christ shall reign on earth for a _____ years. (Revelation 20:6)

3. The _____, which is the devil, will be cast into the bottomless pit. (Revelation 20:3)

4. "_____ shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved. (Acts 2:21)

5. "_____ the devil and he will flee from you." (James 4:7)

6. "Behold he cometh with the _____; and every eye shall see him." (Revelation 1:7)



Word Search

Anger

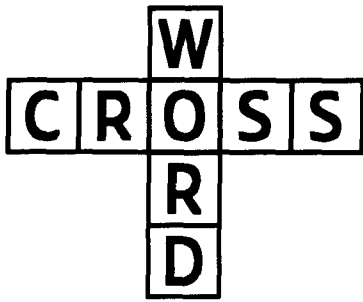
Find the hidden words in the puzzle below.
Circle the words when you find them.



ANGER
CAST OUT
EMOTION
HOUSE

MONEYCHANGER
PEACE
PRAYER
RESTORE

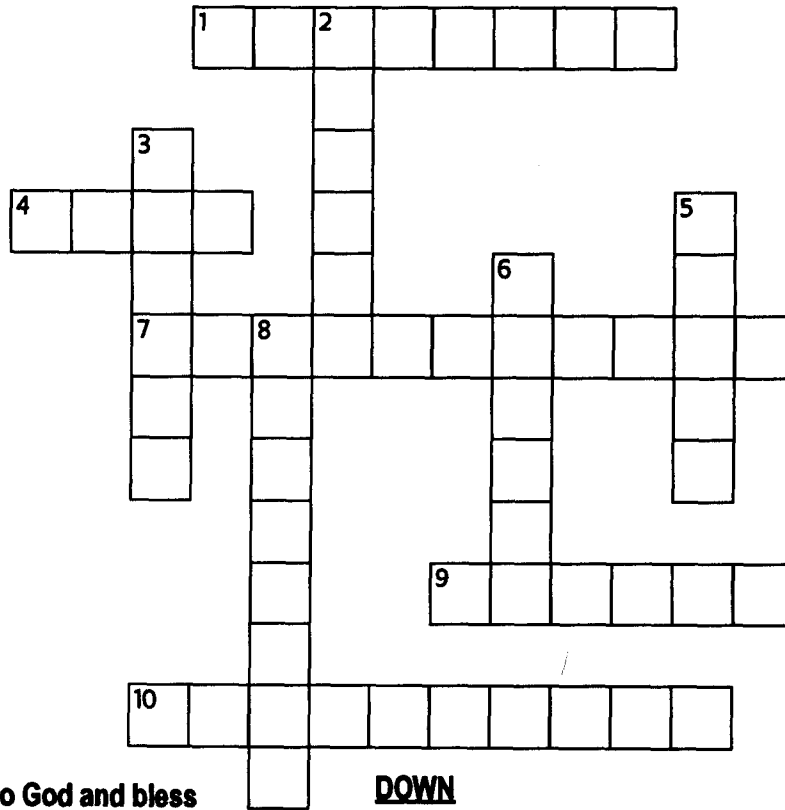
SIN NOT
TEMPLE
THIEVES
WRATH



Crossword Puzzle

Thanksgiving

Using the clues below, solve this Crossword Puzzle!



ACROSS

1. We are to be ___ to God and bless His name. (Psalm 100:4)
4. "O give thanks unto the Lord for He is ___." (Psalm 106:1)
7. "Honor the Lord with thy substance and with the ___ of all thine increase." (Proverbs 3:9)
9. "... Let us offer the sacrifice of ___ to God continually." (Hebrews 13:15)
10. "In ___ give thanks for this is the will of God..." (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

DOWN

2. "Giving thanks ___ for all things unto God..." (Ephesians 5:20)
3. "My soul shall be ___ in the Lord, it shall rejoice in his salvation." (Psalm 35:9)
5. "I will ___ thee O Lord for thou hast lifted me up..." (Psalm 30:1)
6. "Continue in ___ and watch in the same with thanksgiving." (Colossians 4:2)
8. "Let the ___ of the Lord say so..." (Psalm 107:2)



Mystery Word

The Trinity

1	2	3	4	4
---	---	---	---	---

5	6
---	---

7	6	4
---	---	---

Fill in the missing letters in each of the words below.
To discover the Mystery Word, write the letters in the numbered boxes
below in the box with the same number above.

After Jesus was baptized, the _____⁵_____¹ of God
descended upon Him. (Matthew 3:16)

And the Word was made _____² . (John 1:14)

"In the beginning was the _____³_____." (John 1:1)

God the Father is _____⁴ all, through all and in you
all. (Ephesians 4:6)

_____⁶_____ lied to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3)

Jesus received honor and _____⁷_____ from God.
(2 Peter 1:17)

Solve the Code

They Said He Would Come

Use the code at the bottom of the page to solve this message.



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z



Scrambled Words

The Christmas Story

Unscramble the words below and write the correct word in each blank.

1. INAGLEE

4. HERGTTOE

2. BORSTFIRN

5. THIGSLED

3. OSUSPEED

6. SORRED

1. Joseph was of the _____ of David.
(Luke 2:4)

2. Jesus was the _____ son of Mary.
(Luke 2:7)

3. Mary was Joseph's _____ wife.
(Luke 2:5)

4. "...All things work _____ for good..."
(Romans 8:28)

5. A good man _____ in his way.
(Psalm 37:23)

6. God _____ the steps of a good man.
(Psalm 37:23)



Word Search

In the Beginning

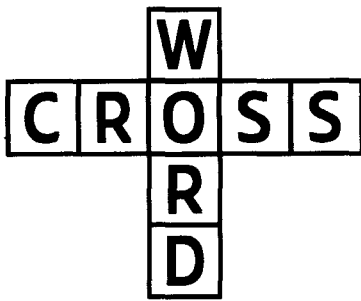
Find the hidden words in the puzzle below.
Circle the words when you find them.



ATMOSPHERE
BEGINNING
CREATION
DARKNESS

EARTH
FIRMAMENT
GOOD
HEAVENS

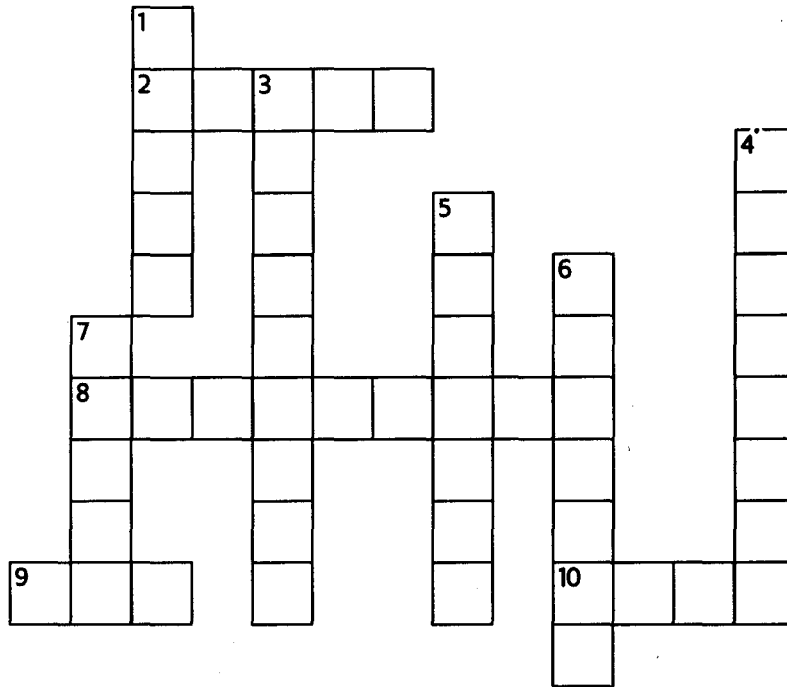
INFINITE
LIGHT
UNIVERSE
WATERS



Crossword Puzzle

The Re-Creation

Using the clues below, solve this Crossword Puzzle!



ACROSS

2. "And the ___ was without form and void..." (Genesis 1:2)
8. "I beheld the ___, and, lo, they trembled..." (Jeremiah 4:24)
9. "...Old things are passed away; behold all things are become ___" (2 Cor. 5:17)
10. Jesus came so we could have ___ more abundantly. (John 10:10)

DOWN

1. One day with the Lord is as a thousand ___. (2 Peter 3:8)
3. God told Adam and Eve to ___ the earth. (Genesis 1:28)
4. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new ___." (2 Corinthians 5:17)
5. God made man ___, but man sought out many inventions. (Ecclesiastes 7:29)
6. God created all things in heaven and earth, both ___ and invisible. (Colossians 1:16)
7. God created man in his own ___ (Genesis 1:27)

Solve the Code

The Firmament

Use the code at the bottom of the page to solve this message.



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z



Mystery Word

Adam and Eve

1	2	3	4	1	5	1	6	7	8
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Fill in the missing letters in each of the words below.
To discover the Mystery Word, write the letters in the numbered boxes
below in the box with the same number above.

God _____ _____ man in his own image.
(Genesis 1:27)

The _____ _____ was more subtle than any
beast God created. (Genesis 3:1)

Adam and Eve were not to eat from the tree in the
 _____ of the garden. (Genesis 3:3)

The forbidden tree was " _____ _____ to
the eyes." (Genesis 3:6)

Adam and Eve made _____ out of fig leaves
to cover their nakedness. (Genesis 3:7)

Adam and Eve "heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the
garden in the _____ _____ of the day." (Genesis 3:8)



Scrambled Words

The Man Who Pleased God

Unscramble the words below and write the correct word in each blank.

1. RIVETS

4. SEARIP

2. NICKSWEEDS

5. DEWRAN

3. EVERDIG

6. PREDRAPE

1. God's Spirit shall not always _____ with man.
(Genesis 6:3)

2. In Noah's time there was great _____
on the earth. (Genesis 6:5)

3. God was _____ in his heart at what man was
doing. (Genesis 6:6)

4. God's _____ endures forever. (Psalm 111:10)

5. God _____ Noah of things that would happen.
(Hebrews 11:7)

6. Noah _____ an ark to save his family.
(Hebrews 11:7)



Word Search

The Tower of Babel

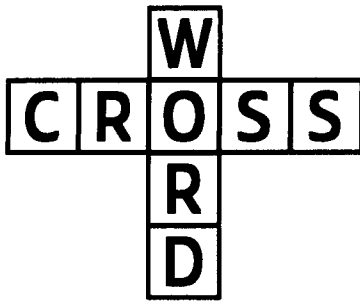
Find the hidden words in the puzzle below.
Circle the words when you find them.



BABEL
BABYLON
BRICK
BUILDERS

CONFOUND
CONFUSE
LANGUAGE
MONUMENT

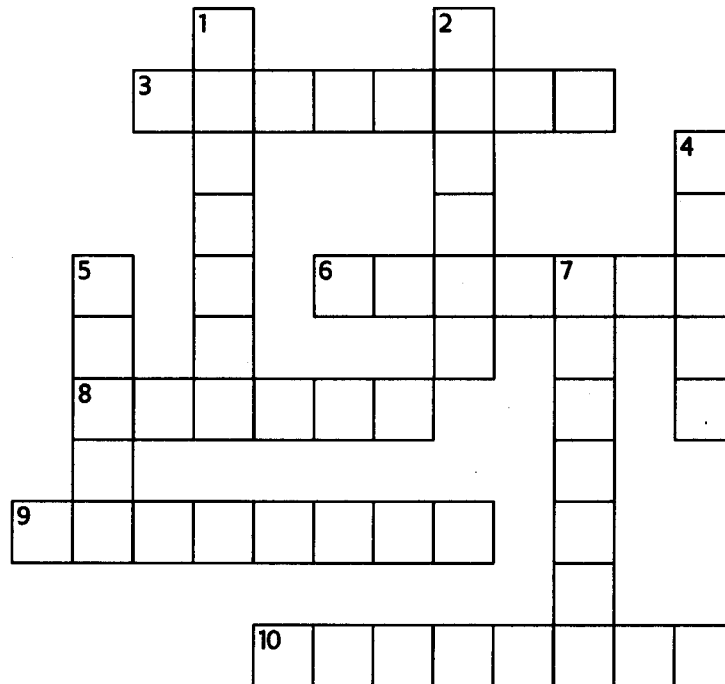
MORTAR
SCATTERED
SPEECH
TOWERS



Crossword Puzzle

Captivity

Using the clues below, solve this Crossword Puzzle!



DOWN

ACROSS

3. It was the king's desire to ___ the house of the Lord. (Ezra 7:27)
 6. It ___ the king to honor Nehemiah's request. (Nehemiah 2:6)
 8. Ezra had the ___ of God. (Ezra 7:25)
 9. "...The powers that be are ___ of God." (Romans 13:1)
 10. ___ was to be executed on anyone who did not obey the law. (Ezra 7:26)
1. The king gave Nehemiah ___ to allow him safe passage back to Jerusalem. (Nehemiah 2:7)
 2. "Let every soul be subject unto the ___ powers." (Romans 13:1)
 4. Nehemiah asked the king's permission to return to ___ to rebuild the city of his fathers. (Nehemiah 2:5)
 5. "For there is no ___ but of God." (Romans 13:1)
 7. "Jesus increased in wisdom and ___, and in favour with God and man." (Luke 2:52)



Mystery Word

Babylonian Exodus

1	2	3	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Fill in the missing letters in each of the words below.
To discover the Mystery Word, write the letters in the numbered boxes
below in the box with the same number above.

Zerubbabel rebuilt the altar of God to offer burnt

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ to God. (Ezra 3:2)

"For where your treasure is, there will your ___ ___ ___
be also." (Matthew 6:21)

Jesus is "the ___ ___, the truth and the ___ ___ ___."
(John 14:6)

If we ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ our sins, God is faithful to
forgive us. (1 John 1:9)

___ ___ ___ , king of ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ set the
Hebrews free to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. (Ezra 1:2-3)

Zerubbabel was the son of

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ . (Ezra 3:2)

Solve the Code

Exodus From Babylon II

Use the code at the bottom of the page to solve this message.



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z



Scrambled Words

Exodus Part III

Unscramble the words below and write the correct word in each blank.

1. ELFWARE

4. ATEPEARS

2. REKNOB

5. SEEDDIPS

3. MINDKOG

6. REPROPS

1. Nehemiah came to seek the _____ of the Israelites. (Nehemiah 2:10)

2. The walls of Jerusalem were _____ down. (Nehemiah 2:13)

3. Seek first God's _____. (Matthew 6:33)

4. Nothing shall _____ us from the love of God. (Romans 8:39)

5. Sanballat, Tobiah and Geshen _____ Nehemiah. (Nehemiah 2:19)

6. Nehemiah knew that God would _____ him. (Nehemiah 2:20)



Word Search

Restoration

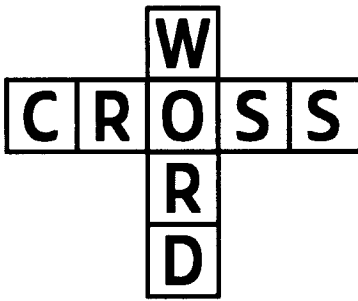
Find the hidden words in the puzzle below.
Circle the words when you find them.



EZRA
GATES
HEART
ISRAEL

JERUSALEM
LEVITES
NEHEMIAH
RELATIONSHIP

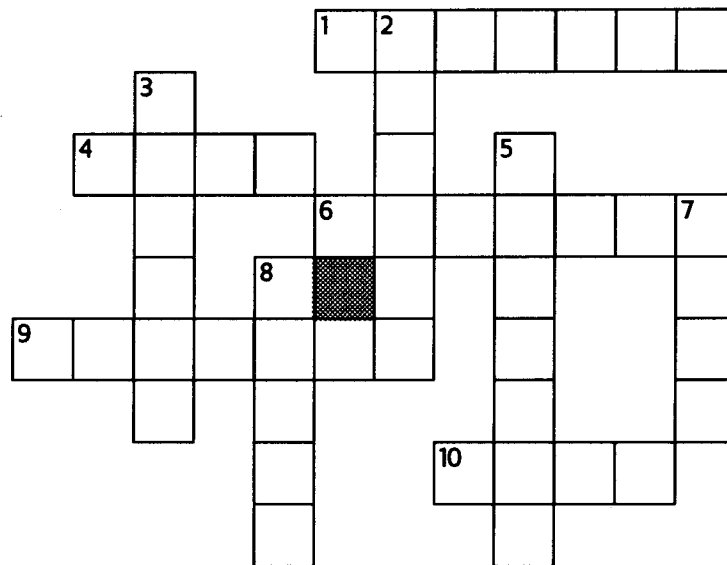
RESTORE
TEMPLE
WALL
WORSHIP



Crossword Puzzle

Water and Fire

Using the clues below, solve this Crossword Puzzle!



ACROSS

1. Jesus came from ___ to be baptized by John. (Matthew 3:13)
4. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every ___ that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." (Matthew 4:4)
6. After Jesus was baptized, a voice from heaven said, "This is my ___ Son in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17)
9. After Jesus was baptized, the ___ were opened. (Matthew 3:16)
10. Jesus baptizes us with the Holy Ghost and with ___. (Matthew 3:11)

DOWN

2. After Satan left Jesus in the wilderness, ___ came and ministered to Him. (Matthew 4:11)
3. John baptized Jesus in the ___ River. (Matthew 3:13)
5. "...Thou shalt ___ the Lord thy God..." (Matthew 4:10)
7. The Spirit of God descended upon Jesus like a ___. (Matthew 3:16)
8. "...Thou shalt not ___ the Lord thy God." (Matthew 4:7)



Mystery Word

Turning Water Into Wine

1	2	3	4	1
---	---	---	---	---

5	6	7
---	---	---

Fill in the missing letters in each of the words below.
To discover the Mystery Word, write the letters in the numbered boxes
below in the box with the same number above.

Every good ___ ___ ___ ¹ ___ comes from God. (James 1:17)

Jesus performed His first miracle by turning

___ ___ ___ ___ ² ___ into wine. (John 2:1-11)

"...All things work ___ ___ ⁵ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ for good to

them that ___ ⁶ ___ ___ God, to them who are called

according to His ___ ³ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ . (Rom. 8:28)

With the Father, there is no

___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ⁴ ___ .

(James 1:17)

After the miracle in Cana, Jesus'

⁷ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ ___ believed in Him.

(John 2:11)

Solve the Code

The Transfiguration

Use the code at the bottom of the page to solve this message.









A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z



Scrambled Words

The Crucifixion of Christ

Unscramble the words below and write the correct word in each blank.

1. SNIPOR

4. DILUTETUM

2. SOEVIL

5. GOFIVER

3. ANYGO

6. TEARCURE

1. Peter said he was ready to go to _____ for Jesus. (Luke 22:33)

2. Jesus went to the Mount of _____ to pray. (Luke 2:39, 40)

3. Jesus was in _____ as He prayed. (Luke 2:44)

4. Judas came with a _____ to betray Jesus. (Luke 2:47)

5. If we confess our sins Jesus is faithful to _____ us. (1 John 1:9)

6. "...If any man be in Christ, he is a new _____." (2 Corinthians 5:17)



Word Search

The Resurrection

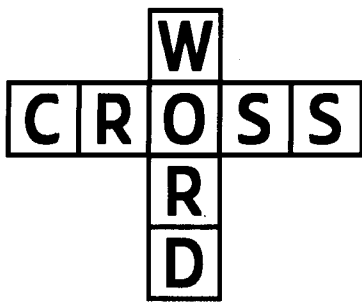
Find the hidden words in the puzzle below.
Circle the words when you find them.

R	A	V	S	A	H	V	I	E	B	Y	E
R	E	L	K	D	D	T	W	M	T	R	S
A	V	S	I	T	E	Q	O	P	H	M	P
I	I	M	U	V	C	T	M	C	Q	E	I
S	O	D	U	R	E	E	L	I	K	V	R
E	M	Y	K	H	R	U	T	A	R	F	I
D	R	D	Y	E	P	E	P	H	R	U	T
B	C	O	N	E	F	X	C	O	I	S	B
V	S	O	S	Q	A	T	O	T	W	R	U
B	T	W	Y	Y	P	Y	P	O	I	E	D
S	N	W	M	O	R	N	I	N	G	O	R
C	F	E	P	G	A	L	I	L	E	E	N

ALIVE
EMPTY
GALILEE
MORNING

POWER
RAISED
RESURRECTION
SEPULCHRE

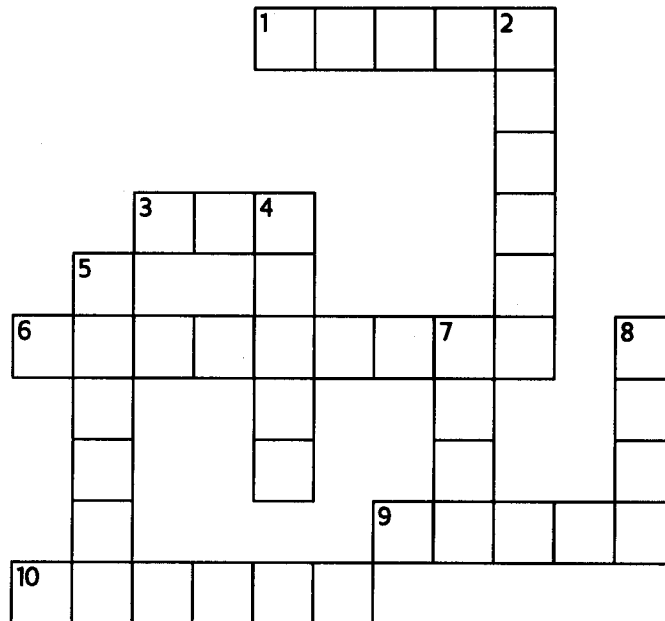
SPIRIT
STONE
THIRD
TOMB



Crossword Puzzle

Joseph's Coat of Many Colors

Using the clues below, solve this Crossword Puzzle!



ACROSS

1. The traveling merchants bought Joseph and took him to _____. (Genesis 37:28)
3. Joseph was the son of Israel's _____ age. (Genesis 37:3)
6. Joseph's brothers could not speak _____ unto him. (Genesis 37:4)
9. The brothers wanted to kill Joseph and say some evil _____ ate him. (Genesis 37:20)
10. Joseph's brothers _____ him. (Genesis 37:11)

DOWN

2. Joseph was sold to merchants for _____ pieces of silver. (Genesis 37:28)
4. Joseph had a _____ that he would reign over his family. (Genesis 37:8)
5. _____ did not want to kill Joseph and convinced his brothers to cast Joseph into a pit. (Genesis 37:22)
7. "Behold what manner of _____ the Father hath bestowed upon us." (1 John 3:1)
8. Israel gave Joseph a very special _____. (Genesis 37:3)



Mystery Word

The Best Slave in Egypt

1	2	3	4	5	1	6	7
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Fill in the missing letters in each of the words below.
To discover the Mystery Word, write the letters in the numbered boxes
below in the box with the same number above.

Potiphar was an ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ of Pharaoh.
(Genesis 39:1)

"Be not wise in thine own eyes: ____ ____ ____ the Lord and
depart from ____ ____ ____ . (Proverbs 3:7)

Joseph found grace in Pharaoh's ____ ____ ____.
(Genesis 39:4)

"____ ____ ____ in the Lord with all thine heart..."
(Proverbs 3:5)

When we acknowledge God, He will direct our
____ ____ ____ _____. (Proverbs 3:6)



























Joseph was the overseer over Pharaoh's ____ ____ ____ ____.
(Genesis 39:4)

Solve the Code

Suffering for Doing Right

Use the code at the bottom of the page to solve this message.



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
												
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
												



Scrambled Words

Set Free to Serve

Unscramble the words below and write the correct word in each blank.

1. INFAME

4. SMEARD

2. VERPEERS

5. HERTAG

3. MULBERS

6. THUGSHOT

1. Joseph told Pharaoh that seven years of _____ would follow seven years of plenty. (Genesis 41:29,30)

2. The Lord will _____ us from all evil. (Psalms 121:7)

3. "...He that keepeth thee will not _____." (Psalms 121:3)

4. Joseph interpreted the _____ of Pharaoh. (Genesis 41:25)

5. Joseph told Pharaoh to _____ food during the good years. (Genesis 41:35)

6. God has _____ of peace toward us and not of evil. (Jeremiah 29:11)



Word Search

The Mother's Role

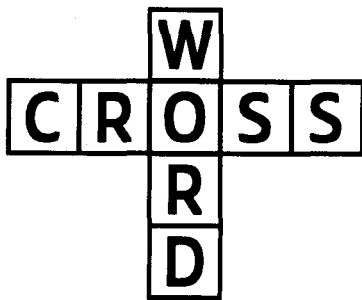
Find the hidden words in the puzzle below.
Circle the words when you find them.



CARING
CHILDREN
HONOR
LEMUEL

LOVE
MOTHER
OBEDIENCE
PARENT

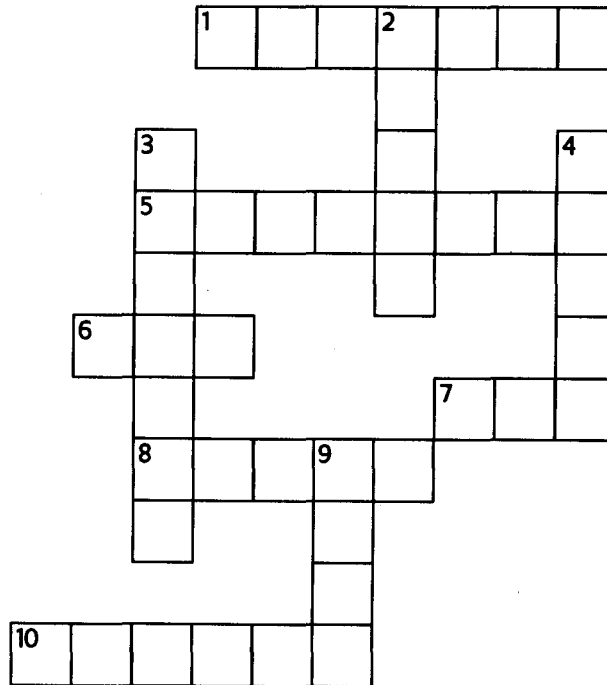
TEACHER
VIRTUOUS
WISDOM
WOMAN



Crossword Puzzle

Good People and Hard Times

Using the clues below, solve this Crossword Puzzle!



ACROSS

1. "...The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. ___ be the name of the Lord." (Job 1:21)
5. The trying of our faith works ___ in our lives. (James 1:3)
6. In the midst of all his troubles, Job did not ___ with his lips. (Job 2:10)
7. We are to count it all ___ when we fall into various trials. (James 1:2)
8. God had placed a ___ of protection around Job and his family. (Job 1:10)
10. Job ___ God and eschewed evil. (Job 1:1)

DOWN

2. "...He that endureth to the end shall be ___." (Matthew 10:22)
3. Job was a perfect and ___ man. (Job 1:8)
4. The ___ of the Lord endures forever. (Psalm 106:1)
9. "...All things work together for ___ to them that love God. (Romans 8:28)



Mystery Word

The Parable of the Sower

1	2	3	4	5	1	3	6
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Fill in the missing letters in each of the words below.
To discover the Mystery Word, write the letters in the numbered boxes
below in the box with the same number above.

The _____ ate the seed that fell by the wayside.
(Matthew 13:4)

Sow in righteousness, reap in _____ _____.

(Hosea 10:12)

"Ye did _____ well; who did hinder you that ye should not
obey the truth?" (Galatians 5:7)

"Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the
_____ _____ of God." (Mark 4:11)

The _____ sprung up and choked some of the
seed. (Matthew 13:7)

Jesus spoke many things in _____ _____.

(Matthew 13:3)

Solve the Code

The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

Use the code at the bottom of the page to solve this message.



A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z



Scrambled Words

Fathers of the Bible

Unscramble the words below and write the correct word in each blank.

1. PETTRO

4. FIREST

2. INTEAR

5. ITHYLUMI

3. PICPARLIN

6. TEEMES

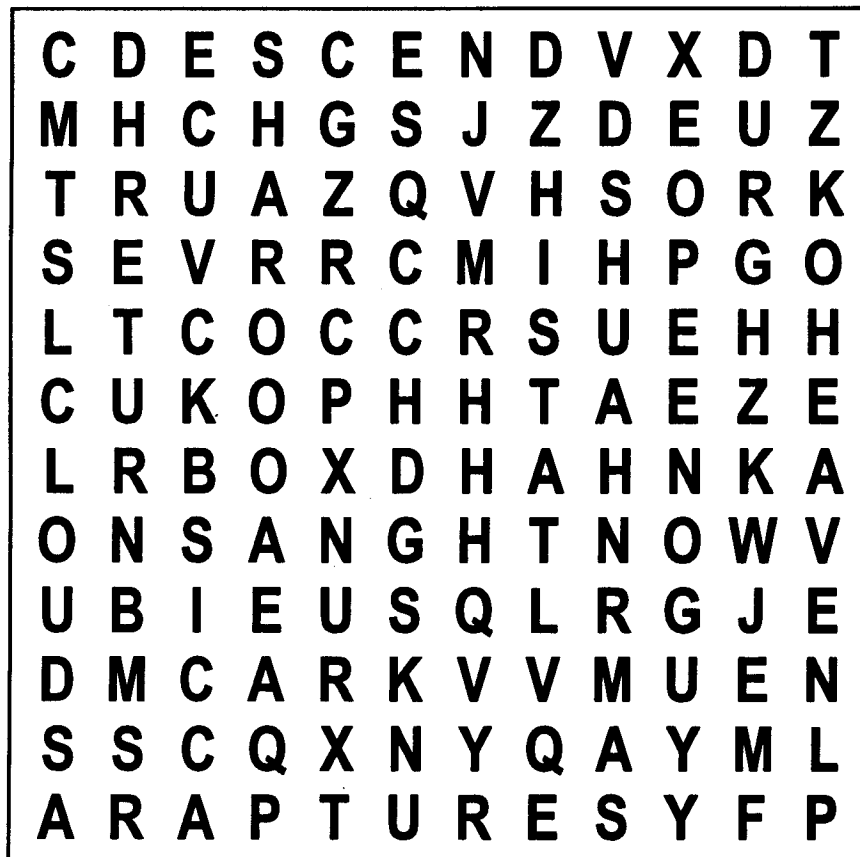
1. God is our Father and our _____. We are the works of His hand. (Isaiah 64:8)
2. "...Let thine heart _____ my words; keep my commandments and live." (Proverbs 4:4)
3. "Wisdom is the _____ thing; therefore get wisdom..." (Proverbs 4:7)
4. "Let nothing be done through _____ or vainglory..." (Philippians 2:3)
5. "...Be clothed with _____ for God resisteth the proud..." (1 Peter 5:5)
6. We are to _____ others better than ourselves. (Philippians 2:3)



Word Search

The Rapture of the Church

Find the hidden words in the puzzle below.
Circle the words when you find them.



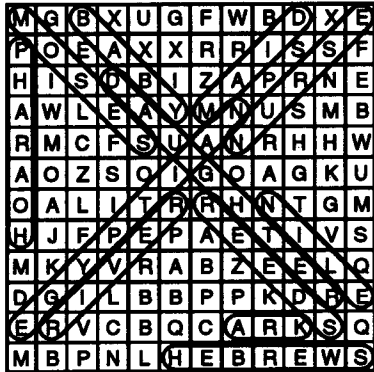
ARCHANGEL
ASCEND
CAUGHT UP
CHURCH

CLOUDS
DESCEND
HEAVEN
RAPTURE

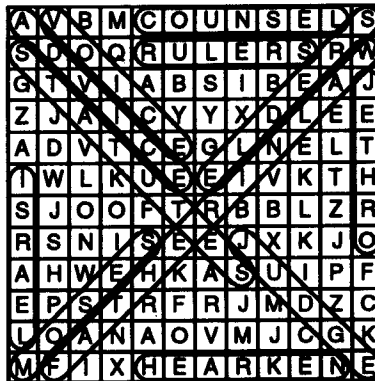
RETURN
RISE
SHOUT
TRUMP

Activity Sheet Answer Key for Volume 4

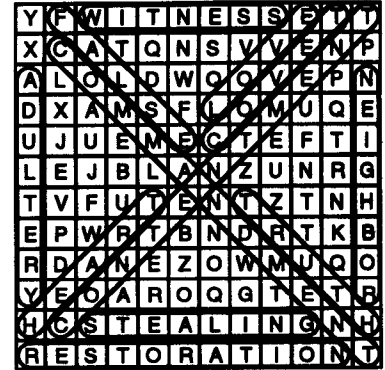
Lesson 1



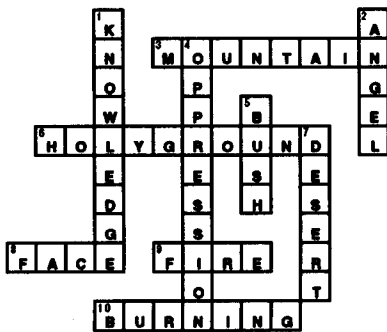
Lesson 6



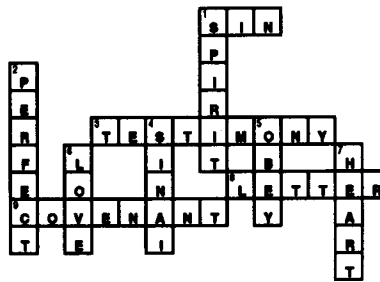
Lesson 11



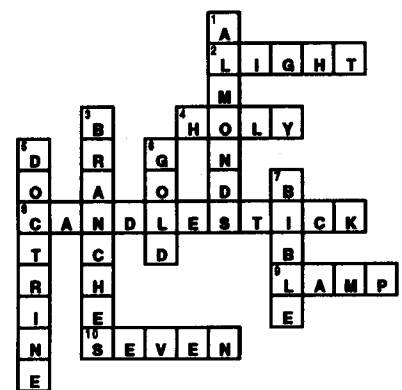
Lesson 2



Lesson 7



Lesson 12



Lesson 3

Mystery Word = Pharaoh

1. People
2. That
- 3,5. Aaron
4. Serve
6. Rod
7. Jethro

Lesson 8

Mystery Word = Love God

1. Evil
2. Jealous
3. Graven
- 4,5. Egypt
6. Glory
7. Mind

Lesson 13

Mystery Word = Prayer

1. Opened
2. Instruction
3. Vain
4. Diligently
5. Given
6. Requests

Lesson 4

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Lesson 9

Do not take the name of the Lord in vain.

Lesson 14

Present your body as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to God.

Lesson 5

1. Murmured
2. Horeb
3. Meribah
4. Rock
5. Water
6. Fountain

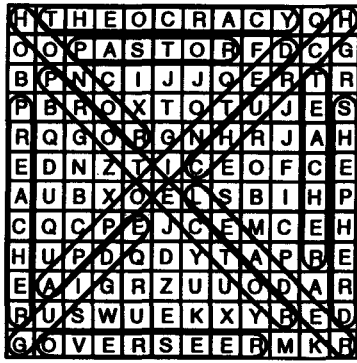
Lesson 10

1. Heart
2. Forget
3. Peace
4. Father
5. Forsake
6. Doctrine

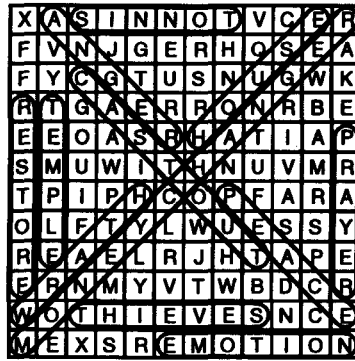
Lesson 15

1. Power
2. Teach
3. World
4. Galilee
5. Oracles
6. Perish

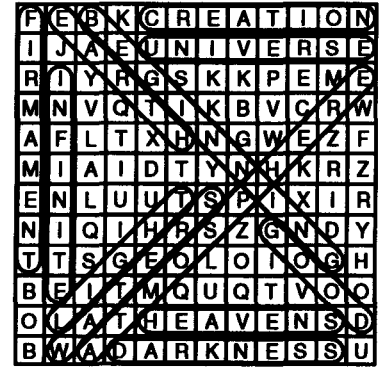
Lesson 16



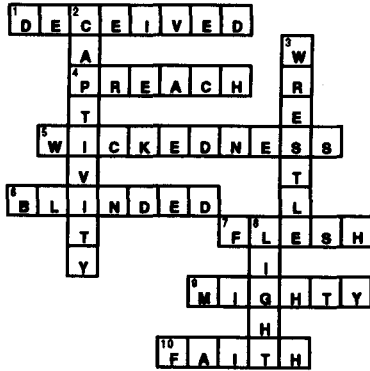
Lesson 21



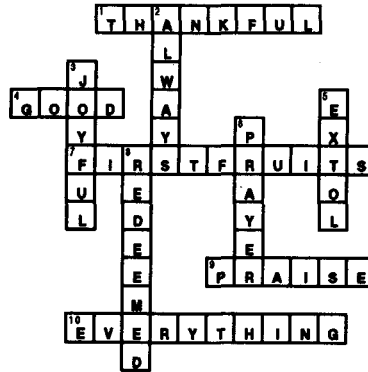
Lesson 26



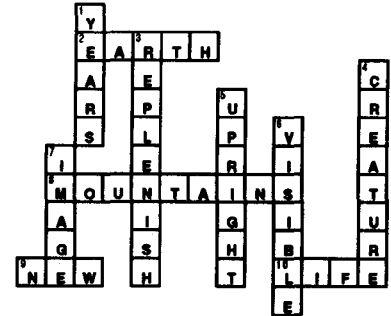
Lesson 17



Lesson 22



Lesson 27



Lesson 18

Mystery Word = Believe

- 1. Blood
- 2. Ruler
- 3. Delight
- 4. Possible
- 5. Twelve
- 6. Virtue

Lesson 19

Give thanks unto the Lord for He is good.

Lesson 20

- 1. Blessed
- 2. Thousand
- 3. Dragon
- 4. Whosoever
- 5. Resist
- 6. Clouds

Lesson 23

Mystery Word = Three in One

- 1,5. Spirit
- 2. Flesh
- 3. Word
- 4. Above
- 6. Ananias
- 7. Glory

Lesson 24

The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Lesson 25

- 1. Lineage
- 2. Firstborn
- 3. Espoused
- 4. Together
- 5. Delights
- 6. Orders

Lesson 28

God created the heavens and the earth by His word.

Lesson 29

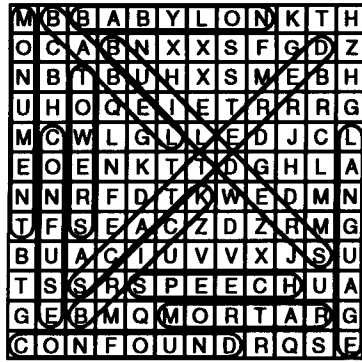
Mystery Word = Temptation

- 1. Created
- 2. Serpent
- 3,6. Midst
- 4,8. Pleasant
- 5. Aprons
- 7. Cool

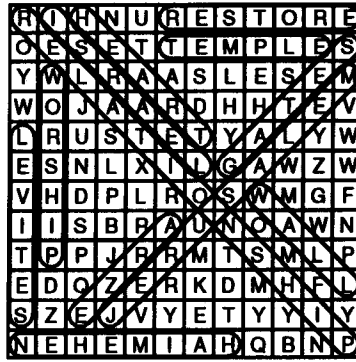
Lesson 30

- 1. Strive
- 2. Wickedness
- 3. Grieved
- 4. Praise
- 5. Warned
- 6. Prepared

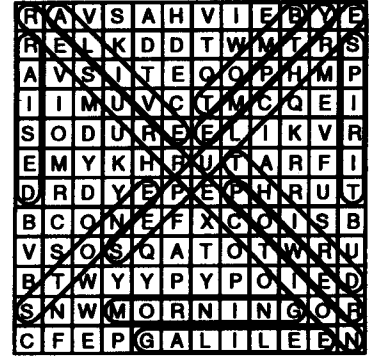
Lesson 31



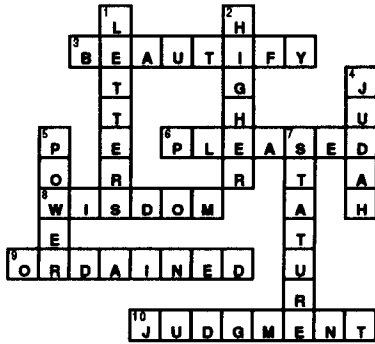
Lesson 36



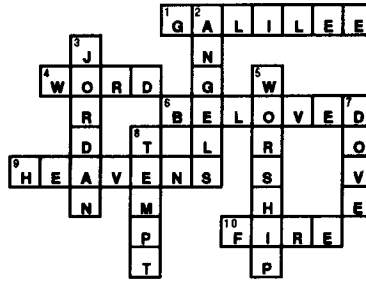
Lesson 41



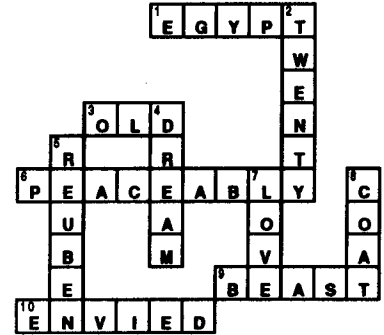
Lesson 32



Lesson 37



Lesson 42



Lesson 33

Mystery Word = Fellowship

- 1. Offerings
- 2,7. Heart
- 3. Life
- 4. Confess
- 5. Way
- 6. Cyrus
- 8. Shealtiel
- 9. Persia

Lesson 34

But be ye doers of the word and not hearers only.

Lesson 35

- 1. Welfare
- 2. Broken
- 3. Kingdom
- 4. Separate
- 5. Despised
- 6. Prosper

Lesson 38

Mystery Word = Trust God

- 1. Gift
- 2. Water
- 3. Purpose
- 4. Variableness
- 5. Together
- 6. Love
- 7. Disciples

Lesson 39

But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Lesson 40

- 1. Prison
- 2. Olives
- 3. Agony
- 4. Multitude
- 5. Forgive
- 6. Creature

Lesson 43

Mystery Word = Faithful

- 1. Officer
- 2. Fear
- 3. Sight
- 4. Trust
- 5. Paths
- 6. House
- 7. Evil

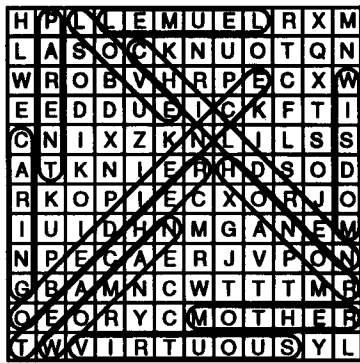
Lesson 44

But rejoice in as much as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings.

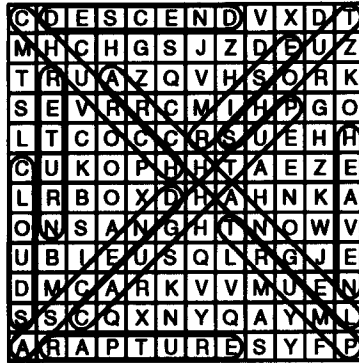
Lesson 45

- 1. Famine
- 2. Preserve
- 3. Slumber
- 4. Dreams
- 5. Gather
- 6. Thoughts

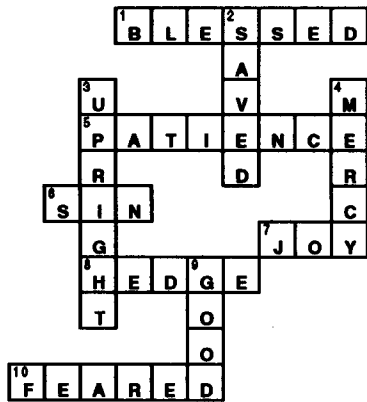
Lesson 46



Lesson 51



Lesson 47



Lesson 48

Mystery Word = Fruitful

- 1. Fowls
- 2. Mercy
- 3. Run
- 4. Kingdom
- 5. Thorns
- 6. Parables

Lesson 49

He that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh unto God.

Lesson 50

- 1. Potter
- 2. Retain
- 3. Principal
- 4. Strife
- 5. Humility
- 6. Esteem