



**What is
Christianity?**



O.J. Gibson

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INSTRUCTIONS TO STUDENTS

HOW TO STUDY

Begin by asking God to open your mind and heart to receive the truths He would teach you from His Word. Read each study through at least twice, once to get an overall view of its contents and then again, slowly, looking up all Scripture references, for these are the most important parts of the course.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

At the end of each exam you may freely state your own views on the question asked. You can also add further comments regarding the whole or any part of this course.

QUESTIONS

It is recommended that students answer the **STUDY QUESTIONS** for their own benefit.

To complete the **TEST QUESTIONS**, first write down the answers and then enter them into the **EXAM FORM** on the website. Complete the other details and **SUBMIT** the form to Emmaus for marking.

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Lesson 1

Notes

GOD'S WORD IS TRUTH

"PEOPLE WHO LOVE THE TRUTH LISTEN TO ME."

These words were spoken by the Lord Jesus. He said them to Pilate, a high Roman official. Pilate then asked Him, "What is truth?" (John 18:37-38). Pilate was like many people today. They do not understand what truth is. Some people think that there is no such thing as truth. Others believe that truth is always changing or that it is not possible to know the truth for sure.

People who believe these things cannot expect to learn anything when they study. Therefore, we must define truth or say what it is before we begin to study. Truth: 1) agrees with fact or with what is real; 2) agrees with what is, what has been, or what must be. Truth is the opposite of false, wrong, error, or lie. Truth is always the same and it does not change. It is the same for people in every country and at every time in history. Truth stands by itself, it does not change when the situation changes. What happens when people believe there is no truth? They cannot learn properly and they cannot know or live by the rules for good, moral living.

How Do We Search for Truth?

Many years ago a man cried out to God, "Lead me in Your truth and teach me" (Psalm 25:5). He believed that God's truth lasts for ever, that it is eternal (Psalm 117:2). The truth is very precious, and we are told, "Buy the truth, and do not sell it" (Proverbs 23:23). The prophet Isaiah spoke of "the God of Truth" (Isaiah 65:16). The Lord Jesus said, "I am...the truth" (John 14:6) and He spoke to God in prayer saying, "Your Word is truth" (John 17:17).

It is natural to think that all men want to “come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4). But the Bible tells us that most of mankind has “exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature [any created being] rather than the Creator” (Romans 1:25). Many people say they are seeking for the truth, but they do not love the truth (2 Thessalonians 2:10). Instead, they seek their own way, and that way is false. But Jesus made a promise to true seekers: “You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8:32). Men and women need to know the truth about God, about life, and about what happens after death.

Where Do We Find the Truth?

Where shall we look for the truth? Some people look for it *inside themselves*. They know they are able to think and to feel, and they believe their desires are enough to guide them to the truth. Some people seek for it *among themselves*. They seek the advice, the experiences, and the teaching of other people in order to find out what truth is. Some seek it *beyond themselves*. They believe that truth is greater than our own ability as men to understand things without help. They believe it requires the help of God or of a spiritual power.

Revelation means that God tells us things which we could not know unless He told us or revealed them to us. *Inspiration* means that God guided certain men to write down the truth He wants to reveal to us or tell us. The prophets of the Old Testament claim that God gave us the books of the Bible by means of inspiration. The apostles of the New Testament also claimed this, as did Jesus Christ Himself. God inspired men to write all 66 books of the Bible. He guided them to write down the things He wants us to know.

The Bible is called the “Scripture” and the “Scriptures” (Mark 12:10; 12:24). Scripture means “holy writings”. It is called the Bible because that means “the Book”. This shows us that it is above all other books. It is also called “the Word of God” (Mark 7:13; Romans 10:17; 2 Corinthians 2:17;

1 Thessalonians 2:13; Hebrews 4:12).

We read words like “God said”, “the Lord spoke”, and “the Word of the Lord came” perhaps 3,000 times in the Old Testament. This shows that God spoke directly to His people many different times, for example, Exodus 24:12 and Deuteronomy 10:1-2. God used men to write the Scriptures, and they said that God gave His words to them so that they could give them to men. Think about these statements made by holy men of God:

- Moses: “And God said”; “the Lord said”
(Exodus 3:14-15; Deuteronomy 1:42)
- Joshua: “The Lord spoke” (Joshua 1:1)
- Jeremiah: “The Lord said”; “says the Lord”
(Jeremiah 1:7-9)
- Ezekiel: “He said to me” (Ezekiel 3:4)
- Malachi: “Thus says the Lord” (25 times)
- Jesus: “All [will be] fulfilled” (Matthew 5:18.
This refers to the Old Testament Law.)
“The commandment of God” (Mark 7:8.
This refers to the Old Testament Law.)
“It is written” (John 6:45.
This refers to the Old Testament Prophets.)
“They have Moses and the Prophets”
(Luke 16:29-31)
“Written in the law...the prophets...the
psalms” (Luke 24:44)
- The Apostles: “Holy Spirit spoke” (Acts 1:16)
“The Holy Spirit spoke rightly”
(Acts 28:25)

Some verses in the Bible speak about all Scripture. They tell us that it all came from God. “All Scripture is God breathed”

(2 Timothy 3:16 NASB, marginal reading). “Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (2 Peter 1:21). “Not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches” (1 Corinthians 2:13).

How to Recognize the Truth

How do we know that the statements made above are true? Think about the following:

1. The men who said they spoke God’s message lived good lives and lived for God. People could not accuse Moses, Paul, or Isaiah of being bad men. They could not accuse the Lord Jesus of doing even one wrong thing.
2. The teachings of all 66 books of the Bible agree with each other. This is amazing because the Bible was written by over 40 different men who lived at different times and places during a time period of 1,500 years. Who could have arranged for this to happen except God?
3. Archaeologists and other modern scientists go to the location of old, old cities to dig up the ruins and study how ancient people lived and what they did. Their studies have agreed with what the Bible has already told us about these old cities and people. Scripture speaks about people and historic happenings that are also spoken about in other old history records.
4. The Bible is the most important book ever written. It has been printed and spread abroad for hundreds of years. It has always had a big influence on the world. It has also been attacked more often and more violently than any other book, but many efforts to destroy every copy have failed. No other book has had so many enemies yet still continues to be sold in very large numbers year after year.
5. The Bible continues to change lives in a very powerful way even today. The message of the Bible touches and changes violent criminals and also gentle people. It has given hope,

comfort, and encouragement to millions of people at the darkest time in their lives. What other book has changed so many lives and made them better?

6. Bible prophecies tell what will happen at some future time, and hundreds of these prophecies have already happened exactly as the Bible said they would. What other book tells what will happen in the future and then it always does happen exactly as it says?

Many great men have tried to understand the great problems of life and what happens after death. However, these things are explained only in Scripture. The lessons in this book were prepared to help you understand exactly what the Bible teaches about God, man, sin, salvation, eternity (what happens after death), and Jesus Christ. It is important to learn what the Bible really says before we decide whether we agree or disagree. Jesus said that the religious leaders of His day were wrong because they did not know the Scriptures (Matthew 22:29). The book of Daniel speaks of Scripture as “the Scripture of truth” (Daniel 10:21). Do you know the truth?

Lesson 1

Study Questions

GOD'S WORD IS TRUTH

Man has a strong desire to know the truth. However, he cannot trust many people who say they have the truth. The Bible claims to be the truth revealed by God to man.

1. What does the Bible teach about truth? (choose only one)
 - a. There is no such thing as truth.
 - b. Truth changes all the time.
 - c. It is not possible to know the truth for sure.
 - d. Truth stands by itself and it can be known.
2. How did God give man the truth before the birth of Christ (Hebrews 1:1)?

How could people know if the prophets were speaking for God and spoke the truth (Deuteronomy 18:22)?

Where did the prophets say they got their words?

3. What was God's final way of giving man the truth (Hebrews 1:2; Matthew 17:5)?

What did Jesus say about truth (John 14:6; 17:17)?

4. Jesus believed that the writers of the Old Testament Scriptures spoke for God. How does He show this by what He says in Luke 24:44?

Many people think that some of the events in the Old Testament were only stories. What did Jesus think about the following events in the Old Testament?

Creation of Adam and Eve (Mark 10:6)

Jonah and the fish (Matthew 12:39-40)

Noah and the ark (Matthew 24:37-39)

5. Some people say that they accept the teaching of Jesus, but that they do not accept the teachings of other parts of the Bible, such as Genesis (John 5:46-47). Why does it not make sense to think in that way?
6. The New Testament writers wrote down the words and teaching of Jesus. Why did they think they were writing truth when they wrote these things (1 Corinthians 11:23; 2 Peter 1:16-21)?
7. The religious leaders of Jesus' time made some very great mistakes. What was one of the greatest mistakes they made (Matthew 22:29)?
8. Write 2 Timothy 3:15-17 in your own words.

What is one of the best reasons to study the Bible (John 5:39)?

9. *What do you say?* Which of the following statements best say what you believe about the Bible? You may choose more than one.
 - a. I believe the Bible is God's Word to man. I believe that it does not have mistakes in its original writing. I believe that we can trust both its historical information and its spiritual teaching even though it was written by many different men over a period of many years.
 - b. I believe that only the words of Jesus in the Bible are inspired.
 - c. I believe that many stories in the Bible did not actually happen, for example, Adam and Eve, and Noah and the ark, but that they still can teach us something.
 - d. I believe that some parts of the Bible disagree with other parts.

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- e. I believe that the Bible contains all I need to know about God, life, and what happens after death.
 - f. I believe that the Bible has many good moral teachings but is not perfect truth. I believe that it does not apply to everyone in every place at every time in history.
 - g. The truth of the Bible is for all people of every country, every culture, and every race who have ever lived.
10. Ask other Christians what they think about some of these questions.

What is Christianity? – TEST 1 – God’s Word is Truth

(Use EXAM FORM on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. When people believe there is no truth
 - (a) they are wise.
 - (b) they can learn properly.
 - (c) they cannot learn properly.

2. The Bible tells us that most people
 - (a) believe the truth.
 - (b) have exchanged the truth of God for a lie.
 - (c) want to know the truth.

3. We should look for the truth
 - (a) inside ourselves.
 - (b) among ourselves.
 - (c) beyond ourselves.

4. The Bible was written by more than
 - (a) 20 men.
 - (b) 40 men.
 - (c) 60 men.

5. The Bible was written during a time period of
 - (a) 500 years.
 - (b) 1,000 years.
 - (c) 1,500 years.

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. Truth is always the same and never changes.
7. Many people say they are seeking for the truth and these people always love the truth.
8. Revelation means that God tells us things we already know.
9. God spoke directly to His people many times.
10. The message of the Bible gives hope, comfort and encouragement.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

What would you say to someone who asked “Why should I believe the Bible?”

Lesson 2

Notes

GOD: WHO HE IS AND WHAT HE IS LIKE

"I AM GOD, AND THERE IS NO OTHER; I am God, and there is none like Me" (Isaiah 46:9). God uses the Bible to speak to us and tell us what He is like. He is the Supreme Being, the One Who is above every other being. He is "the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity," the One who always was and always will be (Isaiah 57:15). We can never understand Him completely because He has no beginning and no end, but He makes Himself known to us as "the living God" (Psalms 42:2; 84:2; Daniel 6:20; 1 Timothy 4:10; 6:17; Hebrews 9:14; 10:31). We can never understand fully how very great He is (Psalm 145:3). He is so great that "in Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). Again and again people cry out, "O God, who is like You?" (Psalm 71:19; see also Psalms 89:8; 113:5). The answer is always the same: "There is *no one* like You."

Common Ideas about God

Many people use the name "God" when they speak, but they do not mean the same thing the Bible usually means when it speaks of God. Some say that He does not exist, others use His name as a curse, and still others speak about Him in a false, confusing way. *Atheists* say that there is no God and that they can prove it. *Agnostics* say it is not possible to know for sure that God exists, and they work hard to lead millions of others to join them in their claim to be ignorant. *Pantheists* say that God is the same thing as nature and that man is part of it. *Polytheists* say there are many gods, not just One; the people of ancient Greece and Rome as well as modern day Mormons believe this.

People have other ideas about God also. Some people say that everything is God, including you and me; others say that

God is just a law or some sort of power, not a person. Some say that God is only an idea in a person's mind, something to lean on for support, or a fear that has no real basis. Men have made images or idols to show what they think the gods they worship are like (Acts 19:23-28), but the Bible tells us not to do this (Exodus 20:4-5). Many times men have called themselves gods, and then ordered the people to worship them. Some people will not admit that they are responsible to a Supreme Being for how they live. Instead they act as if they are their own gods.

God Does Not Need to Prove that He Exists

The Bible does not even try to prove there is a God. The writers understood that men already know this deep down in their heart. It says that the fool denies that there is a God (Psalms 14:1; 53:1). It tells us that wicked men seek to forget Him (Psalm 10:4). Cruel governments and kings have tried very hard to make people stop believing in God. However, for most of history, man has been completely convinced deep down in his heart that there is a God and that man must some day give answer to Him for how he has lived. Man knows that God exists. This is how he knows that he is responsible to God for how he lives. God has shown men His power and that He is God by means of all He has created, so men have no excuse to say they do not believe there is a God (Romans 1:19-20).

Men have firmly believed for many, many years that God exists. It is mostly in modern times that men have argued for or against believing in God. Usually the government can weaken belief in God only by a strong attack through the educational system, and newspapers, radio, and TV. Many people do not start questioning God's existence until they become more wicked, or become very proud of their intelligence and education, or sin against other people in wicked ways. Some even ask, "Why should we believe in God? We can explain everything in a natural or evolutionary way." Do you feel you are more intelligent than people who believe in God? You should

think about the following:

1. NOTHING STARTS BY ITSELF. Men of science have never been able to show the end result of something that started from nothing. In fact, nothing ever comes out of nothing. The Bible says, “every house is built by someone, but He who built all things is God” (Hebrews 3:4).
2. SOMEONE MUST MAKE OR DESIGN ANY BUILDING OR MACHINE. A man’s brain or his eye is more wonderful than a watch. No one would believe that the watch “just happened” by chance, and was not made by a very skillful person. Yet some teachers try to say that the whole world just happened, without God.

What the Bible Teaches about God

1. THERE IS ONE GOD. The Old Testament and the New Testament both teach that there is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 45:5; 1 Timothy 2:5). Jews and Muslims also believe this. Men often speak of other gods (1 Corinthians 8:5-6) and the Bible sometimes uses the word in a different sense (Exodus 7:1; Psalm 82:6), but there is only one true God.
2. GOD EXISTS IN THREE PERSONS. He is one in His basic nature but Scripture reveals Him to us as three in personal characteristics. The Old Testament uses the name *Elohim* for God about 2,600 times. It means “Gods” although sometimes it is used with a singular form of the verb or action word that goes with it. For example, Jewish people often use Deuteronomy 6:4 to show why they believe there is only one God. “The Lord our God is one Lord.” This verse uses *Elohim*. God often speaks of Himself even in the Old Testament as “us” or “we” (Genesis 1:26; 3:22). No other single person, not even a King of Israel, speaks of himself in this way in the Bible. In the New Testament, God reveals to us that He exists as Father, Son, and Holy

Spirit. Each is clearly called God, but the New Testament just as clearly teaches that there is only one God.

- a. The Father is God. See 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Peter 1:17.
- b. The Spirit is God. See Acts 5:3-4; 2 Corinthians 3:17.
- c. The Son is God. See 1 John 5:20; Titus 2:13; John 1:1,14; 20:26-28; Acts 20:28; Romans 9:5; Colossians 2:8-9; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:8; Revelation 1:8,17-18.

The Bible teaches that each One has all of the characteristics that belong to God. They each are able to decide matters by their own will, to feel, and to reason. Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are separate from one another, but the New Testament often speaks of them together in a way that clearly shows that they are God (1 Peter 1:2; Jude 20-21). Their names are used when people are baptized (Matthew 28:19) and the Apostle Paul used their names together when he blessed the believers at Corinth (2 Corinthians 13:14). Matthew uses all three names in his description of the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:16-17), and Jesus speaks of all three persons of the Godhead in His teaching in the Gospel of John (John 14:16-20; 15:26; 16:7-16).

The New Testament also shows the *oneness* (John 14:9; 17:22). They are called the persons of the Godhead although they are not exactly the same as what we mean by "persons." They are not three different gods, and they are not a god with three heads. There is only one God in substance, that is, in terms of what makes Him what He is. The word "Trinity" and the expression "Triune God" are not in the Bible, but they are words we can use to describe the Godhead. We have no single word in our language that can fully explain this truth that the only God exists as three Persons. The Bible does not explain it. We should accept what the Bible says and leave it at that.

3. GOD IS SPIRIT. See John 4:24. He is able to appear as a man

or to speak in a voice that can be heard. Sometimes He shows Himself in some happening in nature such as thunder or lightning. However, He is a spirit being, we cannot see Him, and He is not limited by space, time, and form.

4. GOD IS A PERSON. He is not just an idea. He has personal characteristics such as knowing things (1 John 3:20). He has feelings (Genesis 6:6) and He can decide matters by His own will (James 1:18). He shows both love and anger. He remembers — or He chooses to forget. He makes laws and reveals the future. God is not a machine that keeps itself going. Believers know that *God is love* (1 John 4:8,16) and this comforts them very much. “Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:7) would not make sense if God were only an idea or some sort of power.

The word for “God” in our language is taken from “good”. He is certainly good. He is also called the Lord, the Almighty, the Creator, the Savior, the Redeemer, and many other names. The name Jehovah is taken from JHVH, four letters that stood for the Name of God in the Old Testament. No one ever said it out loud, and no one knows for sure how to spell or say it. Scripture does not teach that there is only one name that people can use for God. However, it is absolutely necessary for us to know the God of the Bible. He is the One who commands us to know His Son Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ is the only way to God (John 14:6).

Lesson 2

Study Questions

GOD: WHO HE IS AND WHAT HE IS LIKE

It is important that we know in whom we believe. What is He like? Do you have false ideas about Him?

1. God is (choose one)
 - a. an idea.
 - b. a power.
 - c. a man.
 - d. a spirit.
2. Which of the following best describes *your* idea of God?
 - a. a policeman
 - b. a manager
 - c. your own father on earth
 - d. a machine
 - e. none of the above
3. How would you describe God to someone who has never heard of Him?
4. Does the Bible try to prove that God exists, or does the Bible expect that people can see for themselves that God exists (Genesis 1:1)?

How can a person know there is a God even if he does not have the Bible (Psalm 19:1-4; Romans 1:19-20)?

Why do you believe God exists?

5. The Bible teaches that
 - a. there is one God.
 - b. there are three gods.
 - c. there are many gods.
 - d. we all worship the same god.
6. How does the Bible explain the other “gods” that men worship (1 Corinthians 8:5-6)?

Explain 1 Corinthians 8:5-6 in your own words.
7. Explain the following: The Father is God. The Son is God. The Spirit is God. There is only one God.
8. God is a spirit means:
 - a. We cannot know Him.
 - b. We cannot see Him.
 - c. He cannot show Himself in a form we can see.
 - d. He is not personal.
9. *What do you say?* It is possible to have a personal relationship with God because He is a person. How would you describe your present relationship with Him?
10. Ask other Christians what they think about some of these questions.

What is Christianity? – TEST 2 – God: Who He is and what He is like.

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. Atheists
 - (a) believe in God and obey Him.
 - (b) believe in God but do not obey Him.
 - (c) say there is no God.

2. Polytheists
 - (a) say there are many gods.
 - (b) believe in one God.
 - (c) say we can't know that God exists.

3. The Bible says that the fool
 - (a) believes in God.
 - (b) denies that there is a God.
 - (c) tries to please God.

4. The Bible uses the name Elohim for God
 - (a) only once.
 - (b) only twice.
 - (c) many times.

5. The word Trinity
 - (a) is not found in the Bible.
 - (b) is found only once in the Bible.
 - (c) is found many times in the Bible.

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. We can never understand God completely.
7. The Bible tries to prove that there is a God.
8. The Bible teaches that there is only one God.
9. Father, Son and Holy Spirit are separate persons and yet they are one God.
10. The Bible teaches that there is only one name for God.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

What is the greatest proof to you that God exists?
Why do many believe that He does not exist?

Lesson 3

Notes

WHAT IS GOD LIKE?: A WORD PICTURE OF GOD

“TO WHOM THEN WILL YOU LIKEN GOD? Or what likeness will you compare to Him?” (Isaiah 40:18). The prophet Isaiah asked these questions many years ago. The Bible tells us that God is not exactly like anything or anyone we know. However, the Bible uses common words to describe Him, and these help us understand what He is like. For example, it speaks of the arm, eye, hand, or mouth of the Lord. This does not mean that He has arms, eyes, hands, or a mouth. The verse, “He shall cover you with His feathers” (Psalm 91:4) does not mean that He looks like a bird. These words help us understand some of His characteristics, what He is like. Man cannot completely understand, explain, and study Him, because He does not exist at man’s level. We must not refuse to believe facts about God just because we cannot compare Him with anything else in our own experience. Long ago a man asked Job, “Can you find out the limits of the Almighty?” (Job 11:7). The answer, of course, is “no”. God chooses to reveal some things about Himself to us in Scripture. That is what we can know about Him — and no more. Some things go beyond what we can understand.

Characteristics that Belong Only to God

God has chosen to reveal some of His characteristics to us. He has revealed them to us in the Scriptures. These characteristics are sometimes called “attributes”.

1. God is SELF-EXISTENT. This means that He has life in Himself (John 5:26). He does not come from anything that existed before He did. He already existed in the beginning (Genesis 1:1; John 1:1).

2. God is ETERNAL. He is God from “before time started to after time ends” (Psalm 90:2; see also Habakkuk 1:12). “He who is” explains His name “I AM” (Exodus 3:14). He is the only One who was, who is, and who will be (Revelation 4:8).
3. God is INFINITE. This means that He has no limits and no boundaries. Nothing can contain God (1 Kings 8:27). Nothing can measure Him.
4. God is ALL-POWERFUL. The Almighty God has the power and authority to do whatever He chooses (Job 42:2; Matthew 19:26). This is called His “omnipotence”.
5. God is ALL-KNOWING. He knows and understands everything (Psalm 147:4-5). Nothing can be added to this in any way. Nothing can either surprise or deceive Him (Hebrews 4:13; 1 John 3:20). This is called His “omniscience”. He knows how things will turn out from the very beginning (Isaiah 46:10). He knows what will happen before it happens (Acts 2:23).
6. God is ALL-PRESENT. This means that He is present everywhere. Place and time do not limit Him. He is everywhere all of the time (Psalm 139:7-12). This is called His “omnipresence.” We can never escape from His presence (Jeremiah 23:23-24; Amos 9:2).
7. God is CHANGELESS. He never changes in His eternal character and purposes although He may change how He does something and how He treats people (Malachi 3:6; James 1:17). He is neither changeable nor unfaithful. This is called His “immutability”.
8. God is SELF-SUFFICIENT. He does not need to receive anything from anyone because He does not lack anything. He is complete in Himself (Acts 17:24-25).
9. God is SOVEREIGN. He rules and controls everything, and no one can stop Him from doing so. He does everything without seeking the advice of anyone else because only He knows what is right to do and does it (Ephesians 1:11;

Isaiah 40:13-14). He always has the right to do whatever pleases Him because He is God (Romans 9:15-18). He does not owe anything to anyone.

God Has Some Characteristics that Man Can Share

1. **LOVE.** This kind of love wants the very best for someone else. It leads a person to make sacrifices without counting the cost. It is practical and helpful. God gave His Son to die for us because He loved us (John 3:16). God's love does not wait until there is someone lovely or understanding to love. In fact, God loves people who are angry towards Him, unthankful, and sinful, although He hates their sin (1 John 4:10; Ephesians 2:4-5; Romans 5:8; Jeremiah 31:3). Compassion is almost like love, but it includes understanding what someone feels like when he or she is suffering. It is taking pity on them and doing something to help them (Psalm 86:15; Matthew 9:36; 14:14).
2. **WRATH.** God shows strong, holy anger against all people who continue to do evil and never repent or show they are sorry for the evil they have done (Colossians 3:5-7; Romans 2:4-6). This does not mean that He is not loving, but it shows us a different part of His character. Romans 1:18 tells us that God shows His wrath against all who are sinful and unrighteous.
3. **GRACE.** God freely gives His approval and support to those who do not deserve it. He is not "paying a debt" to people who have done good works (Romans 4:4-5; 11:6). It is because of God's grace that He offers salvation freely to all mankind even though no one deserves it (Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11).
4. **MERCY.** God shows active pity or compassion to people who have sinned against Him and to those in need so that they are given relief (Psalm 103:8). Mercy is like grace, but is not exactly the same. God is rich in mercy (Ephesians 2:4).

5. **HOLINESS.** God is separate from all other beings. There is no evil and nothing impure in Him (Psalm 99:9; Isaiah 57:15). He is called “The Holy One”. Heavenly beings sing about His holiness (Revelation 4:8; Isaiah 6:3). No one but God is completely holy (Revelation 15:4; Hebrews 7:26). God must punish sin because He is holy (Isaiah 59:2). The Bible tells us to live holy lives because God is holy and He expects His people to live holy lives and to be separate from sinful ways (1 Peter 1:16).
6. **RIGHTEOUSNESS AND JUSTICE.** These two words are from the same basic word in Greek, the original language of the New Testament. That word means “to be fair” and “not having favorites in how we treat others”. God is never wrong in what He does or how He treats people (Nehemiah 9:33; Psalm 145:17). He is the only completely fair Judge (2 Timothy 4:8) and He will always do what is right (Genesis 18:25). Because He is just and fair, He must punish each person for every sin that they do. But He loves us, so He Himself suffered the punishment we deserve for our sins, so that He can be both “just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus” (Romans 3:26).
7. **TRUTH.** God does not lie, He cannot be unfaithful, and He never acts differently from His character (Numbers 23:19; 1 John 5:20). He is the truth (John 14:6). He is always completely faithful (2 Timothy 2:13; Revelation 19:11).
8. **PATIENCE.** He does not take immediate action against sinners even though He has the power to do so. He puts up with things for a long time although they displease Him (Romans 9:22; Acts 13:18). He does this because He is patient and He is seeking to do us good (2 Peter 3:9).
9. **WISDOM.** God knows everything, and He also knows how to use His knowledge well. This is called “wisdom” — a deep understanding together with good, reliable judgment (Romans 11:33; Ephesians 3:10). We cannot understand the greatness of His wisdom (Isaiah 40:28), but He is all wise and

understands all our hidden thoughts and the real reasons we do things (Romans 8:27; 16:27).

10. GOODNESS. His wonderful kindness is for the purpose of leading men to repent (Romans 2:4). God is full of this kindness and good will (Psalm 119:68; 145:9). We should never doubt His goodness even if we have difficult problems or sorrows.
11. GENEROSITY. God is the greatest giver. He showed this by giving the best gift of all, His Son (John 3:16). That is why He loves people who give cheerfully and gladly (2 Corinthians 9:7). God Himself gives abundantly and generously (James 1:5). It is as if He opens the windows of heaven to pour down blessings. His habit or practice is to give a *full* measure, "that there will not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10).

Lesson 3

Study Questions

WHAT IS GOD LIKE?: A WORD PICTURE OF GOD

God's character and His characteristics or attributes control the way He acts towards men and towards everything else He has created. The following questions should help us to understand Him better.

1. It is difficult for man to understand what God is like because (choose one)
 - a. Man thinks God is like he is.
 - b. The way God does things is "higher" than the way man does things.
 - c. We cannot compare God with anything or anyone.
 - d. God cannot be known.
 - e. all of the above.
 - f. *a., b., and c.* above.

2. What is God's relationship to everything that exists (Acts 17:24-25)?

Read the following verses. Then explain in your own words how these verses show that God does not depend on or need anyone at all.

John 5:26; 1:1; Genesis 1:1

Exodus 3:14; Psalm 90:2; Revelation 4:8

1 Kings 8:27

3. Read Psalm 139. This psalm gives at least three characteristics of God. List them.

4. Write Romans 8:28 in your own words.
How does this verse comfort Christians?
5. Choose the one statement below that is *not true* of God's love.
- God loves the whole world.
 - God loved us before we loved Him.
 - God's love is everlasting.
 - God's love means that He will not punish sin.
6. God's strong anger or wrath is as real as His love. What does God show wrath towards? (choose three)
- all sinful and evil ways of men
 - the hard heart that will not repent
 - those who continue to disobey
 - the sinner who is forgiven
7. Match the following characteristics of God with the explanation on the left. (Write the correct letter on the line at the left.)
- | | |
|--|--|
| ___ Undeserved and freely-given approval and support toward others. | a Grace (Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11) |
| ___ Active pity or compassion toward sinners or those in need. | b. Holiness (Psalm 99:9; Revelation 15:4) |
| ___ Perfectly pure without any evil at all. Set apart from all other beings. | c. Mercy (Psalm 103:8; Ephesians 2:4) |
| ___ Completely fair and not having favorites in how one treats others. | d. Righteousness and Justice (Nehemiah 9:33; Genesis 18:25) |

8. The Bible says that God is holy. That means (choose one)
- a. He is without sin.
 - b. He hates sin and loves all that is good.
 - c. He is separate from sinners.
 - d. All of the above.
9. *What do you say?* Carefully think about the characteristics of God that you studied in Lesson 3. Which of His characteristics are especially comforting to you?

Do any of God's characteristics upset you? Why or why not?

Often people say, "I think God would do this" or "I don't think He would do that." Why is it important to understand the character of God before guessing what He might or might not do?

10. Ask other Christians what they think about some of these questions.

What is Christianity? – TEST 3 – What is God like?

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. “Can you find out the limits of the almighty?” This question was asked by
 - (a) Abraham.
 - (b) Job’s friend.
 - (c) David.
2. God chooses to reveal
 - (a) some things about Himself.
 - (b) everything about Himself.
 - (c) nothing about Himself.
3. Omniscience means that God is
 - (a) all-powerful.
 - (b) all-knowing.
 - (c) all-present.
4. Compassion is
 - (a) almost like love.
 - (b) nothing like love.
 - (c) the same as love.
5. Mercy is
 - (a) the same as grace.
 - (b) not exactly the same as grace.
 - (c) the opposite of grace.

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. We can understand all the characteristics of God.
7. God has no limits and no boundaries.
8. God knows and understands almost everything.
9. God shows anger against all who do evil and never re pent.
10. We can understand the greatness of God’s wisdom.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Which of the characteristics of God are especially comforting to you?

Lesson 4

Notes

MAN

“WHAT IS MAN THAT YOU THINK ABOUT HIM?” asks the writer of Psalm 8:4. Our bodies were created from the dust and they will return to dust (Genesis 3:19). What are we? Why are we important? What is our purpose in life? The answers to these questions will have a big influence on how we look at life and how we live.

Man’s Beginning

Many say that life started in the universe by accident, and that man is only one of many forms of life that started in this way. They say he is a “higher animal”, the “highest point of evolution”, and that his life just comes and goes without having any long-time meaning. People who believe this often live like animals. They seek every selfish pleasure they can find. They live empty lives and don’t have any hope because they are simply waiting for death to bring them into nothingness. Other people have a kind of “spiritual” view. They think that life is like some sort of wheel that keeps going round and round and never stops or comes to a definite end. They say that there was always life in some form. They believe that man comes into the world, lives for a while, dies, then is mixed into a kind of “nothingness”, and comes back into the world in some other form of life. They call this “re-incarnation”. They do not believe there is a personal God or a controlling intelligence, and they do not even try to explain how man started.

Compare the following two ways of believing. Which seems wiser?

That Man Started by Chance

1. This belief says that there was nothing in the beginning. Material things or energy started to exist without anything causing them to do so, then formed themselves into the world and all it contains — all by chance.

2. It further says that life began all by itself. It went from simple to more developed forms just by chance. No one planned it and no one intelligent was behind it.

3. It also teaches that man developed from an ancient ancestor similar to the monkeys or apes. This teaching is called “evolution”. It says that man is no more than an animal that does not have any spiritual part. He is just an accident of life in the universe and he has no purpose and no future.

That Almighty God Created Man

1. God created all that we can see or know about, including the earth, man, animals, sea life, birds, and other creatures (Genesis 1:1-2:25; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 11:3).

2. God is the Highest Intelligence. He is the source of planning, order, and laws. He is the source of all life. He made man special because He made him with a spirit. That means that man is able to have a relationship with God.

3. The first two human beings were created by God, and they are the ancestors of all other human beings. (Genesis 1-2). Man is different from animals because he has a spirit and therefore he can know and worship God, he is able to talk and write, and he has a soul and spirit that will never cease to exist.

The Bible says, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth...God created man” (Genesis 1:1,27). “It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves” (Psalm 100:3). God knew all about us before we were born (Psalm 139:13-16). Why did He

make us? He created us for His own pleasure (Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11). He is like a Potter and we are like the clay the potter uses to make his clay pots (Romans 9:20-21). Why are we here? God created us to honor Him (Romans 1:21; Psalm 86:9,12; Matthew 5:16). In spite of that, man has refused to worship and serve Him, the very One who created him (Romans 1:25). Instead he has chosen to live only to please himself.

Man's Nature

God made man in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:26; 5:1; 9:6). God is a Spirit, so man is like Him spiritually, not physically (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10). This makes man different from every other created being.

Man is partly a physical being, that is, he has a body. His body is like the bodies of other creatures in many ways. However, man's body is like a "tent" or "earthly house" which he lives in for a little time on this earth (2 Corinthians 5:1-4; 2 Peter 1:13-14). More important, man has a soul and a spirit. Thus he is a three-part being (1 Thessalonians 5:23). The soul and the spirit are sometimes hard to tell apart (Hebrews 4:12). The body makes it possible for us to see, hear, touch, taste, and feel what is going on in the world around us. That is why the body is called the location of our *world-consciousness*. The soul makes it possible for man to feel emotion, to reason, and to make choices (Psalm 13:2; 42:5). That is why the soul is called the location of our *self-consciousness*. The spirit makes it possible for us to know God and understand spiritual things. The spirit is called the location of our *God-consciousness* (Romans 8:16). A person has a spirit even if he does not know God (James 2:26).

The inner being of man is sometimes called the "heart" (Deuteronomy 29:4; Psalm 40:8,10,12; Proverbs 14:10; Isaiah 44:18). Desires and inner attitudes come from the heart, or inner being, of a person. Our conscience makes us know the difference between what is right and wrong, good and evil (Romans 2:15; Hebrews 5:14). The conscience also makes us know our duty or responsibility. We often say, "let your con-

science tell you what to do.” It is wise never to ignore and go against our conscience even if it is weak (1 Corinthians 8:10). However, we may have a good conscience (Acts 23:1; 1 Timothy 1:5,19; Hebrews 13:18) or an evil one (1 Timothy 4:2; Hebrews 10:22). We may have a pure conscience (1 Timothy 3:9; 2 Timothy 1:3) or a defiled or unbelieving one (Titus 1:15). We should always try to have a clean conscience (Acts 24:16).

Man Must Make a Choice

Man has a very serious duty, that is, he must make a definite choice about moral and spiritual things. It will affect him for ever and ever, for all eternity. God gives man the right to choose. Man’s choice then forms the basis for God’s righteous judgment (Deuteronomy 30:15,19; Joshua 24:15; Revelation 20:12-13). Man enjoys making choices, but he does not like the bad results that follow a bad choice. He blames God, parents, society, the government, the schools, and even the changing events of life. He does this in order to avoid responsibility, and then he continues to make bad choices! Some religious systems teach that God made man like a machine which does not have any chance to choose. But there is no basis for that teaching. God asks man to choose. So, a man who chooses to turn away from God does not have any excuse (Romans 1:20).

Man’s Fall and Its Results

People have known for thousands of years that something is wrong with man. Even some kinds of animals are able to live together agreeably, so why does man kill, hate, act cruelly, and let others starve and die? Why do even very small children act selfishly and behave badly? No one has to teach them to do these things! Why do we have to teach children to be good, but we do not need to teach them to do evil? Some people suggest that man’s basic problem is caused by our surroundings, our parents’ habits, things that influence our minds and feelings, or our government or educational system. However, no one has yet proved that any of these are the problem. And no one has ever changed man’s nature by changing any of these things.

The Bible tells us what went wrong with man. The very first human beings had perfect surroundings, but they made a wrong choice: they chose to disobey God (Genesis 3). Right then sin came into the world (Romans 5:12-19), and at the same time a chain of terrible results began. God judged man quickly because man was clearly guilty (Genesis 3:16-24). Those first human beings lost their perfect surroundings, and instead received the certainty of physical death and also pain and difficulty for themselves and all their descendants, including us. This sad happening is called the Fall of Man. You can read about the results of the fall in Genesis 6:5; 8:21; Psalm 12:1-3; and Romans 3:10-23 as well as other places in the Bible.

The effects of the fall on man's nature continue even today. Sin makes it impossible for man to understand spiritual things without the help of God (Ephesians 4:18; 1 Corinthians 2:14). Sin also gives man a heart that lies and is deceitful (Jeremiah 17:9) and a body and spirit that are defiled and spoiled (Ephesians 2:3). The Bible clearly states that **sin** is the source of all human fighting, sorrows, and evil — and that man's nature is full of sin through and through. The Bible also teaches that sin affects the entire creation, and that is why there are thorns on some plants and there is violence and fighting amongst animals.

Man's Responsibility

Man is responsible to a loving and caring God. God considers man to be very valuable (Matthew 10:31) and gave the greatest sacrifice for him (John 3:16). Jesus showed this love and concern when He cried over a city which rejected Him (Luke 19:41). He was willing to save them, but the people refused Him (Luke 13:34).

Man sometimes thinks and acts as if he is independent and can rule himself, but that is not true. God created man and keeps him alive, and man depends on God even for his next breath (Isaiah 42:5). Man must some day stand before his Creator and explain what he has done with his life (Romans 14:12; Hebrews 9:27). John 3:36 and 1 John 5:12 give two different choices. Man must make the choice.

Lesson 4

Study Questions

MAN

It is important to understand what it means to be a human being. To do that, we must answer some questions: where did we come from, why do we exist, and what is the cause of our problems?

1. Man's beginning is explained by the following (choose one):
 - a. He developed from lower forms of life through the process of evolution.
 - b. It is a mystery and we cannot understand it.
 - c. God created man.
 - d. He is part of a circle of existence and does not have a beginning.
2. We exist (choose one)
 - a. to complete our personal fate.
 - b. to develop our own abilities.
 - c. to enjoy life the best we can.
 - d. only to honor God.
3. What is man able to do because he has the following:
 - the body?
 - the soul?
 - the spirit?
4. What do you think "likeness" means in Genesis 1:26 and 5:1?
How are we like God?

5. The Bible teaches that man is a sinner by nature and by choice. What evidence of that do you see in the world?
6. Man's free will or his ability to choose (choose one):
 - a. is not real because God always does what He plans anyway.
 - b. is very limited, so God does not hold him responsible for his choices.
 - c. gives man the right to choose to love and obey God.
 - d. is made impossible because of difficult situations.
7. Explain Psalm 139:14-16 in your own words.
8. Explain how the following verses show that God gives man a right to choose and that He makes man's choice the basis of His righteous judgment (Deuteronomy 30:15,19; Joshua 24:15; Revelation 20:12-13).
9. *What do you say?* What do you feel your own personal duty to God is? How does your life give pleasure and honor to God?
10. Ask other Christians what they think about some of these questions.

What is Christianity? – TEST 4 – Man

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. God created man to
 - (a) live as he pleases.
 - (b) please others.
 - (c) honour Him.

2. Man is like God
 - (a) physically.
 - (b) spiritually.
 - (c) intellectually.

3. The spirit makes it possible for man to
 - (a) see, hear, touch, taste and feel.
 - (b) feel emotions, reason and make choices.
 - (c) know God and understand spiritual things.

4. When sin came into the world, God
 - (a) judged man quickly.
 - (b) forgave man.
 - (c) judged man slowly.

5. God considers man to be
 - (a) valuable.
 - (b) of little value.
 - (c) of no value.

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. All men believe that God created the universe.

7. Man is a three-part being.

8. The soul is the location of our self-consciousness.

9. Man must make a definite choice about moral and spiritual things.

10. Sin makes it possible for man to understand spiritual things.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

How does your life give pleasure and honour to God?

Lesson 5

Notes

THE PROBLEM OF SIN

There is much evil, sorrow, suffering, war, and hatred in this world. Have you ever wondered why? Many people want more than their fair share of things, they are proud or cruel, or perhaps they want the good looks or the opportunities that others have. Why is that? Even children want their own way, lie, disobey, and cause much sorrow to their parents — and yet no one *taught* them to do these things. Are all these bad things caused by bad surroundings? No!

The Bible tells us that the root of the problem is sin. Sin is already a part of man at the time he is born (Psalms 51:5; 58:3). It is a part of man before anything good or bad can influence him. We must recognize and admit the fact that there is sin — then we can understand the problems of man.

Common Ideas about Sin

What is sin? An ordinary dictionary will say that sin is “breaking a moral law or breaking God’s law”. That is clear enough. However, men ignore this and try to say that sin is something else. Examples of common ideas about sin:

1. **THERE IS NO SIN.** People who believe there is no sin say that “right” or “wrong” depends on the customs of the people, nothing more. There is nothing that is always right and nothing that is always wrong.
2. **SOMETHING IS SIN IF IT HARMS SOMEONE ELSE.** You can do whatever you like unless it hurts someone else.
3. **VARIOUS BAD HABITS ARE SIN.** Different groups consider different bad habits to be sin. One group considers one

bad habit to be sin; a different group considers a different bad habit to be sin.

4. SIN IS NOTHING MORE THAN THINKING WRONGLY OR MAKING BAD JUDGMENTS.
5. SIN DISTURBS GOD BUT IT IS NOT SERIOUS. People who believe this think, "Everyone sins and we are only human. God won't mind very much."

The Bible's Idea of Sin

The common ideas of sin are quite different from the Bible's idea of sin. The Bible teaches that sin is:

1. Turning to our own way (Isaiah 53:6).
2. Breaking God's law (1 John 3:4).
3. Rebelling against God (1 John 3:4 NASB).
4. Knowing to do good and not doing it (James 4:17).
5. Acting in a way that does not agree with what we believe (Romans 14:23).
6. Not believing in Jesus (John 16:9).
7. All evil or doing wrong (1 John 5:17).
8. Anything that is contrary to God's character (Romans 3:23).

Mark 7:21-23 lists various evil things that start inside of man, in his heart or inner being: evil thoughts, sexual sin before or after marriage, wanting what other people have, saying wrong things about others, being proud, and being foolish. God sees all our sins — we cannot hide even one from Him (Psalm 90:8). They come from our sinful nature (Romans 7:18). God hates our sin because He is completely holy (Psalm 145:17; Isaiah 6:3-5; Habakkuk 1:13). God is perfect and He is the only measure of what is right. We only know what sin is, because we fall short of His perfect standard.

How Sin Started and What Happened Afterwards

The Bible tells us that the first sin happened in heaven. The angel Lucifer desired to be equal with God (Isaiah 14:12-14). His sin was pride (Ezekiel 28:15-17). God punished him for his sin by throwing him out of heaven, and he then became the Devil. He brought sin into the world by tempting the first human family to sin. The sin he suggested to them was *to disobey God* (Genesis 2:16-17; 3:1-6). God said that man was responsible for his sin, and He judged him for it (Genesis 3:16-24).

Genesis 3 tells us that the first human beings lost their friendship and fellowship with God. He judged them for their sin by sending them away from His presence. They would have to die physically some day because they had sinned, but they became spiritually dead as soon as they sinned. In physical death, the soul is separated from the body. In spiritual death, the soul is separated from friendship and fellowship with God. The Bible tells us in other places why these things happened to them: "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Wages are something that we earn and deserve; they are paid to us for what we do. In another place we are told, "The soul who sins shall die" (Ezekiel 18:4). Death is the only payment there is for sin. This death includes what the Bible calls "the second death" (Revelation 20:14). The second death is when God sends people away from His presence for ever and ever. All sins of all men are written in books in heaven. This written record will be used by God to judge the sinners who never repent (Revelation 20:12). Giving money, praying, going to church, and doing good works will not pay the debt of sin. Only death will do that.

God Loves and Receives Sinners

It is amazing but it is true: the holy God hates sin but He still loves the sinner. God shows His own love to us in this way: Christ died for us while we were still sinners (Romans 5:8). This is real love: "not that we loved God, but that He loved us" (1 John 4:10). He showed His love for us by sending His only-begotten Son to save us (John 3:16). God is able to offer forgiveness to us because

His Son died for us (Acts 13:38; Ephesians 1:7).

A man must admit his sin before he can have a true desire for God to forgive him. The writer of Psalm 51:3 said, "I admit that I have broken God's law: I can never forget about my sin." He cried out to God to make him clean, and he did not deny that he had sinned against God. The lost son decided to return to his father and say, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you" (Luke 15:18). Our Savior told about two men who prayed. One man did not even look up to heaven but hit himself and cried out, "God, have mercy on me, a sinner." Jesus said this man was forgiven (Luke 18:13-14). God's Holy Spirit speaks to a man deep inside and convinces him that he is a sinner (John 16:8-11).

God Tells Sinners to Repent

Jesus said, "I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance" (Luke 5:32). The Holy Spirit works to convince men that they sin so that they will repent (John 16:8). "To repent" means "to change your mind". The Bible uses "repent" or "repentance" to show that a person changes his mind and then intends to turn from his sin in order to turn to God. The Old Testament told the people "Return to God" (Zechariah 1:3). God is good to us so that we will repent (Romans 2:4). Sin is a very important matter; it should cause us to be sorry (2 Corinthians 7:9-10). Real repentance results in real change, not just empty words (Matthew 3:8; Luke 13:3,5; Acts 26:20). The first Christians preached to men to repent (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30). A person does not earn his way to God by repenting — he is recognizing and admitting his terrible condition. A right attitude to God must include both repenting towards God and showing faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21). Repenting is not a good work to earn salvation. It is agreeing with God and admitting that our sin is an important matter and that we desire to change (Isaiah 55:7).

The Need to Test Ourselves

It is important for us to know that *we are lost*. Otherwise, we

will not be able to meet our Savior (Luke 19:10). We are lost because of sin — and we must repent of our sin and turn to God.

Check List

1. Have you always thought of others before yourself?
2. Have you always been free of wanting what others have?
3. Have you always done every good thing you could do, never missing even one opportunity?
4. Have you always been kind and helpful to everyone?
5. Have you always loved God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength?
6. Have you always loved others just as much as you love yourself?
7. Have you always been as perfect as the Lord Jesus Christ?

The Bible says you are a sinner if you had to answer “NO” to any of these questions. A person might be able to keep all of God’s law except for one law. The Bible says that person is just as guilty as the person who has broken all of God’s laws (James 2:10). This is because God is perfectly holy, so breaking even one of His laws makes a person a sinner.

The Lord Jesus came to “save His people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21). The punishment and power of sin is terrible. The possibility of the second death is horrible. The writer of the Psalms said, “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute iniquity [count sin],” Psalm 32:1-2.

Are you a person who says he is a Christian but who still keeps on sinning as a way of life? You should think about this question: “What is a man saved from if he is not saved from his sins?”

Lesson 5

Study Questions

THE PROBLEM OF SIN

The following questions will help you understand what is man's greatest problem.

1. Read and think about what the following verses say: Matthew 5:28; Romans 3:23; James 4:17; 1 John 3:4; then describe what "sin" is, using your own words.

Explain what Isaiah 53:6 means.

2. Isaiah 14:12-14 and Ezekiel 28:15-17 say that sin started in the heavens and had its roots in (choose one)
 - a. being proud.
 - b. not having good judgment.
 - c. a misunderstanding.
3. Genesis 2:17 and 3:1-6 say that the first sin on earth had its roots in (choose one)
 - a. not believing and disobeying.
 - b. wrong desires and immoral actions.
 - c. being angry and disappointed.
 - d. a misunderstanding.
4. What does God think about sin (Habakkuk 1:13)?

What payment for sin did God require in Old Testament times (Ezekiel 18:20)?

What payment for sin did God require in New Testament times (Romans 6:23)?

5. There are three kinds of death mentioned in Scripture:
- a) physical death (when the body dies and the soul is separated from it);
 - (b) spiritual death (when man's spirit is separated from friendship and fellowship with God);
 - (c) the "second death" (when man's spirit is separated from God's spirit for ever and ever; this happens when a man dies physically who is still spiritually dead, or in other words, when a man has not placed his faith in Jesus Christ to save him before he dies physically).

Match the verses on the right with the kind of death it describes. (Write the correct letter on the line at the left.)

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| ___ physical death | a. Ephesians 2:1-3 |
| ___ spiritual death | b. Hebrews 9:27 |
| ___ "second death" | c. Revelation 20:11-15 |

6. Romans 5:8 says that Christ died for what kind of person? Luke 18:10-14 describes two kinds of sinners:
- (1) those who admit that they are sinners and
 - (2) those who do not admit that they are sinners. Why is it important to understand that you are a sinner?
7. To repent means (choose one)
- a. to take part in a religious service on certain days.
 - b. to change your mind and then to change your actions.
 - c. to tell God you are sorry.
 - d. to be unhappy with the way things happened.

8. For God to forgive us personally, we must (choose one)
 - a. admit that we sin.
 - b. admit that we are responsible for our sin.
 - c. cry out to God to wash our sins away.
 - d. be willing to give up our sin.
 - e. all of the above.
9. *What do you say?* How and when did you first realize that you are a sinner and that you need a Savior?
10. Ask other Christians what they think about some of these questions.

What is Christianity? – TEST 5 – The Problem of sin

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. Sin
 - (a) does not exist.
 - (b) is breaking God's law.
 - (c) is when you hurt someone else.
2. God hates our sin because
 - (a) He is powerful.
 - (b) He is wise.
 - (c) He is completely holy.
3. The first sin happened
 - (a) in heaven.
 - (b) in hell.
 - (c) on earth.
4. God is able to offer forgiveness because
 - (a) He ignores our sin.
 - (b) of our good works.
 - (c) His Son died for us.
5. The Holy Spirit works to convince men that they sin so that they will
 - (a) despair.
 - (b) repent.
 - (c) give money to the church.

Write **TRUE** or **FALSE** after each statement

6. Sin disturbs God, but since everyone sins, He does not mind very much.
7. God sees all our sins.
8. The first sin was pride.
9. The second death is when God sends people away from Him forever.
10. Repenting is a good work that will earn salvation.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

How and when did you first realise that you were a sinner and that you needed a Saviour?

Lesson 6

Notes

THINKING ABOUT ETERNITY

“BUT MAN DIES AND IS LAID AWAY; indeed he breathes his last and where is he?” (Job 14:10). Many people see that there are funerals and death notices every day, and they realize that they too will die some day. This makes them stop to think about what will come after death for *them* — do they have any hope of living beyond the short time they are here on this earth? Other people may try to ignore death; they live as if it will never be their turn to die. Of course, ignoring death does not mean it isn't real — it only avoids the pain of thinking about it. At some time or other most people will ask themselves the question, “What happens after death?”

People have various ideas about the answer to that question. Some people think:

1. WE STOP EXISTING. We no longer exist. This is sometimes called “annihilation”, a word which means to be totally destroyed. They think, “When you are dead, you are dead.” There is nothing after death.
2. WE COME BACK IN ANOTHER FORM OF LIFE. A person comes back to earth as a different form of life or in the body of another person. This is sometimes called “re-incarnation”. This would, of course, require supernatural or spiritual power of some kind.
3. AS SPIRITS, WE CONTACT PEOPLE STILL LIVING ON EARTH. The dead live in a mysterious spirit world and they may try to keep in contact with people still living on earth. This is sometimes called “spirit communication”.
4. WE CANNOT KNOW. We cannot know what happens after death. Maybe we have life after death — or maybe we don't. All we can do is wait and see, and hope that fate will

be kind to us or that we have lived a good enough life — if indeed there is something after death.

None of these ideas agrees with what the Bible teaches. The Bible tells us that people who die are awake and know what is going on. There are only two places that people go after death: into the presence of God (2 Corinthians 5:8) in a place of great happiness (Revelation 14:13), or away from the presence of God in a place of great pain and suffering (Revelation 20:10,15).

Raised from the Dead

The Bible word for being raised from the dead is “resurrection” and it means a “standing” or “rising up”. Some people denied that there was any resurrection at the time when the Lord Jesus lived on earth. He answered them from the Bible by showing that God’s name was used in connection with great men who died long before. “For He is not the God of the dead but of the living” (Luke 20:37-38). The apostles taught the resurrection as a basic part of the gospel message (Acts 1:22; 4:2; 17:18; 23:6). Paul said that more than 500 people saw Christ after He was raised from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:4-8). If the resurrection was not true, their faith was not worth anything (1 Corinthians 15:12-17). The most important thing Scripture teaches about the resurrection, however, is that there are two groups in the resurrection, and they are quite different from each other.

“And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to *everlasting life*, some to shame and *everlasting contempt*” (Daniel 12:2).

“...all who are in the graves will...come forth — those who have done good, to the *resurrection of life*, and those who have done evil, to the *resurrection of condemnation*” (John 5:28-29).

“...there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust” (Acts 24:15b).

When we think about God’s judgment, there are only two possibilities. *Eternal judgment* is one terrible possibility

(Hebrews 6:2; 9:27). The other is *eternal life* (John 3:16) that gives freedom from God's condemning judgment (John 5:24; Romans 8:1).

How Long is Eternity?

Some people try to teach that Bible words such as "eternity", "everlasting", and "for ever and ever" have a time limit. They try to show that these words only mean a long or indefinite period of time. However, the way these words are used in Scripture makes clear that there is no limit to how long eternity will last.

The following verses show that the words "eternal" and "everlasting" mean the same thing when used in the Bible:

1. WHEN THEY ARE USED ABOUT GOD. "The everlasting God" (Romans 16:26), "the eternal Spirit" (Hebrews 9:14), "His eternal glory" (1 Peter 5:10), "power everlasting" (1 Timothy 6:16), "everlasting kingdom" (2 Peter 1:11).
2. WHEN THEY ARE USED ABOUT THE BELIEVER'S FUTURE. "Eternal redemption" (Hebrews 9:12), "eternal salvation" (Hebrews 5:9), "everlasting life" (John 3:16,36), "life everlasting" (Luke 18:30), "eternal life" (John 3:15).
3. WHEN THEY ARE USED ABOUT THE UNBELIEVER'S FUTURE. "Everlasting fire" (Matthew 18:8), "everlasting punishment" (Matthew 25:46), "everlasting destruction" (2 Thessalonians 1:9), "eternal fire" (Jude 7).

The words "for ever and ever" are also used about God and His throne (Revelation 4:9-10; 10:6; 15:7), about the believer's future reign with the Lord (Revelation 22:5), and about endless pain for the unbeliever (Revelation 14:11; 20:10).

Some people assume that words such as "destroy" and "perish" mean that something stops existing. However, it is clear that the Devil was destroyed (Hebrews 2:14) but did not stop existing (Revelation 20:10). The talk of others may "destroy" believers but not cause them to stop existing

(Galatians 5:15). The wasteful son felt he was “perishing”, but he did not stop existing as a person (Luke 15:17). The fate of the unsaved is eternal destruction (2 Thessalonians 1:9). It is *eternal* destruction, and this shows that the unsaved do not stop existing. They lose their well-being but do not lose their being, they continue to exist.

The Condition of Those Who are Lost

1. JESUS DESCRIBES THE CONDITION OF THE LOST AND WHAT IT MEANS TO BE LOST. The Lord Jesus told about The Rich Man in Hell (Luke 16:19-31). Some people think this story is just a parable although the Bible does not call it that. We do not need to decide whether or not it is a parable. The Savior used it to teach us some important things that God wants us to know and think about:
 - a. The people did not stop existing after they died.
 - b. The people were able to think and their soul was not asleep.
 - c. Not everyone was saved.
 - d. God did not offer a second chance to the man in hell.
 - e. No one was “reincarnated” or able to go back to earth from the dead in the form of another person.
 - f. The pain of the unsaved man never ended and he had no hope for a change.
 - g. The man in hell was there to be eternally punished, *not* to be made pure.
2. OTHER TEACHINGS OF JESUS AND THE SCRIPTURE ABOUT THE CONDITION OF THE LOST. Jesus described the frightening things that will happen to the lost. These people ignored or refused Him while they were alive in this world. Remember, He is the One who loved us with the greatest love and proved it by giving Himself to save

men. He is just telling the truth about people who leave this world after ignoring Him all their lives. These people refused to come to Him to be saved. The following describes what will happen to them:

- a. Fire that can't be put out (Matthew 3:12; 18:8; Mark 9:44,48)
- b. Great pain for ever (Revelation 14:11)
- c. Great darkness away from all light (Matthew 22:13; 25:30)
- d. Crying and grinding of teeth (Matthew 13:42,50; 24:51; Luke 13:28)
- e. Lake of fire (Revelation 20:15)

Protests About the Teaching of Eternal Punishment

Some people disagree with this unpopular teaching. They say:

1. IT DOES NOT AGREE WITH THE LOVE OF GOD. “ ‘As I live,’ says the Lord God, ‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways! For why should you die?’ ” (Ezekiel 33:11). The Lord Jesus cried over the city that rejected Him (Luke 19:41). He is certainly a loving God, but He is also righteous, so He cannot forgive guilty people who refuse to accept the salvation He has provided (Numbers 14:18).
2. FEAR SHOULD NOT BE USED TO PERSUADE PEOPLE TO TURN TO GOD. It is probably true that loving God or wanting the best are better reasons than fear to turn to Him. However, it is common for us to fear the results of some of our common actions even in everyday living. This keeps us from doing wrong or doing things that will hurt us. The Lord Jesus taught that people should fear God and His coming judgment (Matthew 10:28). Being wise starts with fearing God (Proverbs 9:10). The entire Bible teaches men to fear God and to give Him proper

respect (1 Peter 2:17; Revelation 14:7; 15:4).

3. **GOD IS UNFAIR TO BE SO SEVERE WITH PEOPLE.** God loves men, and He has offered them a way to escape from His holy judgment. Men should not be surprised that God judges them if they refuse what His love has provided or ignore it or put off receiving it. God's justice is certain. "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap" (Galatians 6:7). Men will receive an endless punishment for insulting the endless love and patience of the eternal God. Justice demands it.

The Condition of the Redeemed and What it Means to be Redeemed

Saved people can look forward to a very different final situation than lost people. "In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore" (Psalm 16:11). "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord" (Revelation 14:13). The believer looks "for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10). This place is better than anything the world knows about. The believer's eternal situation and home is described further below:

1. **THE BELIEVER WILL BE WITH CHRIST.** "I go and prepare a place for you...that where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3; see also John 17:24). When the believer dies, he leaves his body and goes to be "present with the Lord" (2 Corinthians 5:8).
2. **THE BELIEVER WILL HAVE A CHANGED BODY.** The believer's body will be like the Lord's body (Philippians 3:21), so it will never be able to die again (1 Corinthians 15:35-44). Others will be able to recognize us as they did the Lord (Matthew 28:9,17; Luke 24:31,39-40). This changed body will be given to Christian believers at the Second Coming of Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17).
3. **THE BELIEVER'S ETERNAL HOME IS HEAVEN.** What is heaven like?

- a. HEAVEN IS A PLACE OF “NO MORES”. In heaven there is no more death, sorrow, crying, or pain. The difficult and unhappy things of life in this world will not be there (Revelation 21:4).
- b. HEAVEN IS A PLACE OF GREAT BEAUTY. “The city was pure gold, like clear glass” (Revelation 21:18-21). All kinds of precious jewels are used to make it more beautiful.
- c. HEAVEN IS A PLACE WHERE NOTHING UNHOLY OR UNCLEAN ENTERS (Revelation 21:27).

The believer’s eternal home is sometimes called the “New Jerusalem”. We call it “Heaven”. Jewish believers called it “Paradise” or “Being with Abraham”. That was before Jesus came and died. No matter what we call it, all believers should strongly desire to be there. Paul showed this attitude when he said, “...to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21). The thief on the cross repented of his sins and believed on the Lord Jesus. The Lord told him, “Today you will be with Me in Paradise” (Luke 23:43). Will you be there with the Lord?

Lesson 6

Study Questions

THINKING ABOUT ETERNITY

“If a man dies, will he live again?” This question was asked by a famous teacher long ago, and it is still very important today. What happens after a person dies?

1. The Bible teaches that people die and are then awake and know what is happening in either one of two places. What are those two places (2 Corinthians 5:8; Revelation 20:10,15)?
2. The Bible also teaches that God will raise all people from the dead. Describe the two different conditions of people in the end (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15b).
3. Explain the following verses: John 3:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9.
4. How long is eternity? Can you think of an example or a word picture to describe it?
5. Jesus told about a man who went to hell (Luke 16:19-31). According to these verses, which of the following is true (choose one)?
 - a. A person stops existing when he dies.
 - b. A dead person is in a state of sleep called “soul sleep”.
 - c. Hell is a place of pain that never ends, and people know how they feel.
 - d. All men will be saved.
 - e. Men will get a second chance even if they go to hell.

6. Which of the following did Jesus *not* use to describe hell (choose one)?
 - a. Fire that cannot be put out
 - b. Great pain for ever
 - c. Darkness without any light
 - d. Crying and grinding of teeth
 - e. A place for a person to be made pure for a limited time
 - f. Lake of fire
7. How would you answer the following objections?

“Hell” and “the love of God” cannot both be true.

Fear should not be used to turn people to God.

God is unfair to be so severe with people.
8. The Bible describes the future of the believer in heaven as (choose one):
 - a. being with Christ for ever.
 - b. existing in a changed body.
 - c. being without sorrow and pain.
 - d. being in a place where nothing unholy enters.
 - e. all of the above.
 - f. *a.* and *c.* above.
9. *What do you say?* Think about your own spiritual experience. Have you ever come to the place where you know for certain that you will go to heaven as soon as you die? Explain.
10. Ask other Christians what they think about some of these questions.

What is Christianity? – TEST 6 – Thinking about Eternity

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. The Bible teaches that
 - (a) there is one place that people go after death.
 - (b) there are two places that people go after death.
 - (c) there are three places that people go after death.

2. The unsaved will be punished
 - (a) with a destruction that will last forever.
 - (b) by ceasing to exist.
 - (c) but they will be given a second chance.

3. People who refuse to come to Christ to be saved
 - (a) will come back to earth in another form
 - (b) will be punished until they are pure.
 - (c) will experience great darkness and great fire forever.

4. God is a loving God
 - (a) and will not punish the unsaved.
 - (b) but is righteous and cannot overlook sin.
 - (c) but unable to provide a way of salvation.

5. Being wise starts with
 - (a) doing good works.
 - (b) pleasing ourselves
 - (c) fearing God.

Write **TRUE** or **FALSE** after each statement

6. "Annihilation" means to be totally destroyed.
7. If the resurrection is not true, our faith is not worth anything.
8. God is unfair to treat sinners so harshly.
9. God cannot forgive guilty people who refuse to accept His salvation.
10. The difficult and unhappy things in this world will not be in heaven.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

How would you answer the following objection?
'Hell' and the 'love of God' cannot both be true.

Lesson 7

Notes

GOD SENT JESUS THE MESSIAH

“I KNOW THAT MESSIAH IS COMING’ (who is called Christ),” said the woman of Samaria. “Jesus said to her, ‘I who speak to you am He’” (John 4:25-26). A short time earlier, a fisherman from Galilee said to his brother, “‘We have found the Messiah,’ (which is translated, the Christ)” (John 1:41). God had promised to send the Messiah to “bring eternal righteousness”. He would do this by establishing His everlasting kingdom.

Jesus of Nazareth was born almost 2,000 years ago. We now describe all history as happening either before or after His birth. That is why historical dates are followed by “B.C.” or “A.D.” – to show how long before or after the birth of Christ they happened. People recognized Him as the Anointed One the Old Testament prophecies said would come some day.

1. He was the King and Deliverer that God had promised to send to the Jewish people (2 Samuel 7:11-13).
2. God sent Him to be the Savior of the world (Luke 2:11; John 4:42).
3. He was “God with us” (Immanuel), a Deliverer who was God (Matthew 1:23; Isaiah 7:14).

Old Testament Prophecies about Jesus Christ

No one can deny that the life of Jesus the Messiah had a very important influence on world history. No one has ever had the same influence. Old Testament prophecies gave details about His life many years before He was born. These prophecies can be matched with the details of His life to show that He is the One of whom they spoke. There are over 200 such

prophecies. The following are a few examples:

1. He would be the Son of a human mother (Genesis 3:15; Galatians 4:4).
2. He would be born at Bethlehem (Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1,4-6).
3. His mother would be a virgin (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18,23-25).
4. God would send someone to announce His coming (Isaiah 40:3; Matthew 3:1-3).
5. He would enter Jerusalem (Zechariah 9:9; Luke 19:35-38).
6. The people would reject Him (Isaiah 53:3; Psalm 69:8; John 7:5; 19:15).
7. Someone would betray Him (Zechariah 11:12; Matthew 10:4; 26:14-15).
8. People would strike Him and spit on Him (Isaiah 50:6; Matthew 26:67).
9. He would suffer for the sins of others (Isaiah 53:5; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18).
10. He would be pierced on the cross (Psalm 22:16; Zechariah 12:10; John 19:34,37).
11. He would pray for His enemies (Isaiah 53:12; Luke 23:34).
12. Men would crucify Him with criminals (Isaiah 53:9,12; Matthew 27:38).
13. He would be buried in the grave of a rich man (Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57-60).
14. God would raise Him from the dead (Psalm 16:8-10; Luke 24:46; Acts 13:33-37).

Some of the same Old Testament Scriptures tell us that He will come again (Psalm 50:3-6; Daniel 7:13; Zechariah 12:10; 14:4).

Many New Testament verses also tell us this will happen some day. Other Old Testament Scriptures tell us that He will some day rule everything and everyone (1 Chronicles 17:11-14; Isaiah 9:7; Daniel 7:14; Psalms 2:6-8; 45:6-7; 72:8; 110:1-3).

The Offices of Jesus Christ

In the past, God chose men for three high positions or “offices”, so that they could do special work for Him. The Lord Jesus is the only One who ever had all three offices.

1. **HE IS A PROPHET.** He is the greatest prophet of them all (Mark 6:4; Acts 3:22). Moses said that God would send another Prophet, and he was speaking about the Lord Jesus (Deuteronomy 18:15-19).
2. **HE IS A GREAT HIGH PRIEST.** He stands before the Father on behalf of His people, and He prays for them (Hebrews 4:14-16; 7:25). 1 Samuel 2:35 speaks of Him.
3. **HE IS A KING, THE KING OF KINGS** (Revelation 19:16). He came at first as King of the Jews (John 19:19). He is King today in the hearts of His people. Everyone will have to acknowledge Him as King in a coming day (Philippians 2:9-10).

Jesus Christ is God

The Bible says that Jesus Christ was God in human form (1 Timothy 3:16). He was the exact likeness of the unseen God (Colossians 1:15). It is amazing that the living God came as a human (John 1:1,14). How sad that “He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him”! (John 1:10).

God was the only One who could save us. He alone had the power. “I, even I, am the Lord, and besides me there is no savior” (Isaiah 43:11). He came as Jesus of Nazareth to be our “great God and our Savior” (Titus 2:13 KJV). Mary said, “My spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior” (Luke 1:47). She was going to have a man-child, and she knew that He was her Savior and her God. Many Bible verses teach that Jesus is God.

1. HE IS CALLED GOD (John 1:1,14; 20:28; Romans 9:5; 2 Peter 1:1; 1 John 5:20). The Father speaks to the Son as God, calling Him God (Hebrews 1:8).
2. HE IS CALLED THE SON OF GOD. People clearly understood that He claimed to be God by saying that He was the Son of God (John 10:33-36). Jesus is the only Son of God (John 1:14,18).
3. ALL THAT GOD IS, IS FOUND IN HIM; HE IS EVERYTHING THAT GOD IS (Colossians 1:19; 2:9). He is not less in any way than what God is or less than God.
4. OTHER NAMES USED FOR GOD ARE USED FOR HIM. He is called the Alpha and Omega, the First and Last, the Beginning and End (Revelation 22:13; 1:8,17; Isaiah 44:6). He is also the I AM (John 8:24,58; Exodus 3:14). He called Himself "I AM" — this was the same as calling Himself God.
5. MEN AND ANGELS WORSHIPED HIM AS GOD (Matthew 14:33; John 20:28; Philippians 2:10; Hebrews 1:6; Isaiah 45:23). Worship should only be given to God (Matthew 4:10; Revelation 22:8-9).
6. MEN ARE TO HONOR HIM THE SAME AS THEY HONOR GOD (John 5:23). God does not give His glory to others (Isaiah 42:8).
7. HE HAS HIGH POSITIONS THAT ONLY BELONG TO GOD. He is Creator — He created everything (Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:2,10). He is Judge — He judges all (John 5:22). He is the One who forgives sins (Matthew 9:2-6), but only God can do this (Isaiah 43:25).
8. HE HAS LIFE WITHIN HIMSELF; HE IS THE SOURCE OF LIFE (John 5:26). He gives life to others, but He did not receive life from anyone. He always has existed and always will.
9. HE HAS ALL THE CHARACTERISTICS OR "ATTRIBUTES" OF GOD. He does not change (Hebrews 13:8). He has all power (Revelation 1:8). He is present everywhere (Matthew 28:20). He knows everything (John 21:17). He is eternal, that is,

He always existed and always will (Micah 5:2; 1 Timothy 1:16-17). He has every attribute that God has.

10. HE DID THE WORKS OF GOD, THINGS THAT ONLY GOD CAN DO. He commanded the wind and the waves to be still (Matthew 8:26-27; Mark 4:39-41). He created food for a large group of people (Matthew 14:19-21; 15:36-38). He raised the dead (John 11:32-44; Luke 7:12-16).

Jesus Christ is Human

He was completely and eternally God, yet He was also “the *man* Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5). Jesus often called Himself the Son of Man. He became a man in order to be like us in all things except sin. He felt the same feelings we feel. He was hungry, thirsty, and tired. He suffered and He cried with tears. The devil tempted Him (Matthew 4:1-11). He suffered, bled, died, was buried, and rose again from the dead. He was different from ordinary men, but He was completely human.

1. HE HAD HUMAN PARENTS, and was a *true descendant* of David and Adam (Luke 3:23-38), *but* He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin (Matthew 1:18-23).
2. HE HAD AN ORDINARY BODY, and He looked like other people (Romans 8:3; John 4:9). He grew up in the ordinary way (Luke 2:40,52), *but* He never sinned (Hebrews 4:15).
3. HE WAS A THREE-PART BEING, like others. He had a body (Hebrews 10:5), a soul (Matthew 26:38), and a spirit (Luke 23:46); *but* He spoke with the Father and listened to Him in a way no other man ever has.

We must remember that He was human, and this helps us understand many of the things He said, for example, His cry on the cross (Matthew 27:46), and His death.

The most important question that Jesus asked people was “Who do you say that I am?” (Matthew 16:15). He told them they would die in their sins *unless* they believed the truth about Him (John 8:24). Who do you say Jesus is?

Lesson 7

Study Questions

GOD SENT JESUS THE MESSIAH

Jesus asked, "Who do you say that I am?" It was very important for people to recognize Him fully and to admit who He is. Test yourself.

1. The Samaritan woman was looking for someone special to reveal to her the truth of God (John 4:25). Who was she looking for?

What did Jesus tell her (John 4:26)?

2. The Old Testament told about the coming of Messiah hundreds of years before He actually came. (Messiah is translated "Christ" in Greek, the language used to write the New Testament.) Match the following verses on the right with the prophecy on the left. (Write the correct letter on the line at the left.)

- | | |
|--|---|
| ___ He was born at Bethlehem | a. Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18, 23-25 |
| ___ His mother was a virgin | b. Isaiah 40:3; Matthew 3:1-3 |
| ___ Someone announced His coming | c. Isaiah 53:5; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18 |
| ___ He entered Jerusalem | d. Isaiah 53:9,12; Matthew 27:38 |
| ___ Someone betrayed Him | e. Isaiah 53:9; Matthew 27:57-60 |
| ___ He suffered for the sins of others | f. Micah 5:2; Matthew 2:1, 4-6 |
| ___ They pierced Him on the cross | g. Psalm 16:8-10; Luke 24:46; Acts 13:33-35 |
| | h. Psalm 22:16; Zechariah 12:10; John 19:34, 37 |

- ___ They crucified Him with criminals i. Zechariah 9:9; Luke 19:35-38
- ___ He was buried in the grave of a rich man j. Zechariah 11:12; Matthew 10:4; 26:14-15
- ___ God raised Him from the dead.

3. List the three high positions or “offices” of Messiah (Christ):

Deuteronomy 18:15-19; Mark 6:4

1 Samuel 2:35; Hebrews 4:14-16; 7:24,25

Revelation 19:16; John 19:19; Philippians 2:9-10

4. How was Jesus like other men while He was here on earth?

How does that help you understand that Jesus felt common human feelings?

How was Jesus different from other men while He was here on earth according to the following verses?

Matthew 1:23

John 8:46

John 7:46

Mark 4:37-41

Luke 7:22

5. What attributes or characteristics of God did Jesus Christ have according to the following verses?

Matthew 28:20

Mark 2:5-7

1 Timothy 1:17

Hebrews 13:8

Revelation 1:8

6. Are the following statements "true" or "false"?
 - a. God the Father spoke to Jesus, calling Him God. (Hebrews 1:8) True or False?
 - b. Jesus would not let men worship Him. (Matthew 14:33; John 20:28,29) True or False?
 - c. The Lord Jesus never claimed to be God. (John 8:58; 10:30) True or False?
7. When Jesus was born on earth (choose one)
 - a. He stopped being God when He became man.
 - b. He was God and man at the same time.
 - c. He was not truly man because He was God.
 - d. His real father was Joseph just as His real mother was Mary.
8. Use your own words to explain John 1:1-3,14.
9. *What do you say?* Philippians 2:9-11 tells us that every creature will "bow the knee" before Christ at a future time to show that He is Lord. How and when will you do this in your life?
10. Ask other Christians what they think about some of these questions.

What is Christianity? – TEST 7 – God Sent Jesus the Messiah

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. God had promised to send the Messiah to
 - (a) bring eternal righteousness.
 - (b) condemn the world.
 - (c) destroy the world.
2. Old Testament prophecies gave details about the Messiah. There are
 - (a) over 100 such prophecies.
 - (b) over 200 such prophecies.
 - (c) over 2,000 such prophecies.
3. In the Bible we read that the Lord Jesus is
 - (a) a Prophet.
 - (b) a Great High Priest.
 - (c) a King.
 - (d) all of the above.
4. Worship should be given
 - (a) to God and the holy angels.
 - (b) to God alone.
 - (c) to God and the holy angels and the saints.
5. The most important question that Jesus asked people was
 - (a) "How can a man be born when he is old?"
 - (b) "Who is my neighbour?"
 - (c) "Who do you say that I am?"

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. God sent Jesus to be the Saviour of the world.
7. Zechariah prophesied that Jesus would be pierced on the cross.
8. The Lord came as Jesus to be our great God and Saviour.
9. The Lord Jesus has always existed and always will.
10. Jesus seldom called Himself the Son of Man.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

In what ways did Jesus show that He was God , while He was on earth?

Lesson 8

Notes

THE CROSS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

When people see a cross, it makes them think of the Christian faith. The cross is the great symbol of Christianity. Our Savior died on a cross. God has commanded believers to preach the message of the cross (1 Corinthians 1:17-18). Millions know that Christ died on the cross for our sins. But what does this mean? Why was it necessary? What did it accomplish? Many people who think of themselves as Christians are confused about the answers to these questions.

Why the Cross was Necessary

Why was Christ's death on the cross necessary? Consider the following:

1. **GOD IS RIGHTEOUS AND HOLY** (1 Peter 1:16; Isaiah 6:2-3). Nothing that is morally unclean can enter His presence (Revelation 21:27).
2. **GOD MUST JUDGE SIN** (Romans 2:3,12). God cannot ignore sin but must punish guilty sinners (Exodus 34:7; Job 10:14). Everyone in the world is guilty before God (Romans 3:19). Sin requires capital punishment, which is death (Romans 6:23).

The punishment or "sentence" for sin must be paid. God wanted to find a way to be entirely just and be able to clear the sinner from the guilt and the punishment of his sin (Romans 3:26). How could God remain righteous and true and still be able to show mercy?

God Provided a Substitute

A substitute is someone or something that takes the place

of another. In the Old Testament, an animal was the substitute for the sinner. The animal substitute made it possible for the sinner to come near to God. The Passover lamb died in place of the firstborn, to protect the firstborn from God's judgment (Exodus 12:3-17). Millions of animal sacrifices were offered to God, just as He commanded the people to do. These sacrifices made what was called "atonement" for the sin of the people (Leviticus 5:10). This meant that sin was "covered" by the death of some animal which was not guilty.

It is important to remember that John the Baptist pointed to Jesus as "the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). He saw that Jesus would be the true sacrifice provided by God. All the earlier sacrifices had been pointing forward to Jesus, the true and final Substitute. The prophets said very clearly that God would punish the promised Messiah for the sins of others, and in that way He would suffer the judgment they deserved (Isaiah 53:4-6). The main teaching of the Christian message is that "Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3).

Carefully study the following Scriptures: Romans 5:6-8; 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18. They teach that God provided a Substitute to die for the sinner. The Savior took the place of the sinner. The just One took the place of the unjust ones. The innocent One took the place of the guilty ones. Jesus did not die just as a good example. Our sins made it necessary (Romans 4:25). It was God's plan for Him to die (Acts 2:23). He died willingly, and no man took His life from Him (John 10:17-18). He gave Himself for us (Galatians 1:4). He was made sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21). He was made a curse for us (Galatians 3:13). In that way, Jesus bought us, He redeemed us (1 Peter 1:18-19; Matthew 20:28). He made peace with God by dying for us on the cross (Colossians 1:20). The death of Jesus makes it possible for God to treat the sinner just as if he or she had never sinned. Then He can have a friendly relationship with them once again — only because of the death of Jesus (Romans 5:9-10).

The Sacrifice Provided by God was Perfect

Sacrifice is a word that is used over and over again in the Bible, and it is the important part of the Christian message. The Lord Jesus was the sacrifice who died in our place, and we may think about His sacrificial death in various ways.

1. BLOOD SACRIFICE (Hebrews 9:22). Sins cannot be forgiven without someone pouring out their blood.
2. HUMAN SACRIFICE (Hebrews 9:12-14; 10:4). Only a man can die in the place of another man in order for God to forgive sins and still be just.
3. SINLESS SACRIFICE (Hebrews 4:15; 1 Peter 1:19; John 8:29,46). Only One without sin can die for the sins of another.
4. GOD IS THE SACRIFICE (Hebrews 1:1-3; Colossians 2:8-9; 2 Corinthians 5:19). He made us clean from our sins. None but God can do this (Isaiah 43:25).
5. LOVING SACRIFICE (Ephesians 5:25; Revelation 1:5). The cross is the greatest way God could show how much He loves sinful men.
6. SUFFICIENT SACRIFICE (1 John 2:2; Hebrews 10:14). By dying He fully satisfied God's just claims of judgment against sinners completely and for all time.

Christ Finished the Work

The Lord Jesus said to the Father, "I have finished the work which You have given me to do" (John 17:4). On the cross His last cry was a cry of victory: "It is finished!" (John 19:30). What was the great work that He came to finish? "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10). "The Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world" (1 John 4:14). His purpose was to "save His people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21).

Think about how completely He finished the work He came to do.

1. He met all the demands of the Law against us

(Romans 8:3-4).

2. He cleared us from all things from which the Law of Moses could not clear us (Acts 13:39).
3. He freed us from all God's judgment (Romans 8:1).
4. He was able to show us mercy but still remain righteous and holy (Psalm 85:10).
5. His work is sufficient to save all sinners (1 John 2:2; John 1:29; 12:32). But He cannot do so unless they come to Him (Matthew 23:37).
6. He "offered *one* sacrifice for sins forever" (Hebrews 10:12) No one should dare to suggest adding any thing at all to His finished work on the cross. It is the only reason our sins can be forgiven and nothing at all needs to be added to it.

Proof that God Accepts the Finished Work of Christ

The early church always taught that God raised Jesus from the dead. That was the reason why they called men to believe on Him (Acts 2:24,32; 3:15,26; 10:40).

1. He rose from the dead according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:4). He fulfilled a thousand-year-old prophecy by rising from the dead (Psalm 16:10; Acts 13:35-37).
2. He rose from the dead according to His own words (Matthew 12:39-40; 16:21; Luke 18:31-33). He told the exact day of His resurrection from the dead (Matthew 27:63).
3. He rose from the dead even though a Roman guard watched over His grave. The Romans did everything they could to make it impossible for the followers of Jesus to tell a lie that He had risen from the dead (Matthew 27:63-66). He was seen by many witnesses after He rose from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:5-8).
4. He rose from the dead by the power of God. God raised Him from the dead to prove for all time that all He said and

did was completely accepted by God (Romans 1:3-4; Ephesians 1:19-20).

5. He rose from the dead because His resurrection is necessary for us to be cleared from all God has against us (Romans 4:25).

Christ's work is great, but men must still choose whether or not to believe. All men are not saved just because Christ died for them. Each person must choose to believe Jesus Christ and His claims in order to be saved (John 3:18; Acts 3:19).

Lesson 8

Study Questions

THE CROSS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

Millions of people say they believe that Jesus died on the cross for the sins of man, but many do not really understand what that means. Ask God to help you understand this great truth as you answer the following questions.

1. Jesus died on the cross because (choose one)
 - a. He was in the wrong place at the wrong time.
 - b. a terrible mistake was made.
 - c. sin must be judged in order for us to come to God.
 - d. He could not escape from the Romans or the Jewish leaders.
2. God is able to free sinners from the punishment of death (choose one)
 - a. by allowing them to do things to show they are sorry.
 - b. by ignoring their failures because He is loving.
 - c. by providing a perfect sacrifice for sins.
 - d. by doing whatever He pleases because He is God.
3. What would have happened to us if Jesus had not died on the cross? (choose one)
 - a. We would have been lost for ever without any hope of ever being saved.
 - b. God would have shown us another way to come to Him.
 - c. We would have been forced to work harder to please God.

- d. God would have accepted us anyway because He is love.
4. Rewrite 1 Peter 3:18 *or* Isaiah 53:4-5 in your own words.
5. The Bible teaches us that God loved His Son. Then why did He allow Him to suffer and die at the cross (Romans 4:25; 5:6-8)?
6. For whom did Jesus die (John 3:16; 1 John 2:2)?
7. What did Jesus mean when He said, "It is finished" (John 19:30)?
8. Give one strong proof of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
9. *What do you say?* Explain in your own words why Jesus died on the cross.
10. Ask other Christians what they think about some of these questions.

What is Christianity? – TEST 8 – The Cross: What does it Mean?

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. God has commanded believers to preach
 - (a) that people must do good works and be religious.
 - (b) that people must attend church and give money to the church.
 - (c) the message of the cross.

2. The Passover lamb die in place of
 - (a) the Egyptians.
 - (b) the firstborn.
 - (c) all guilty sinners.

3. The main teaching of the Christian message is that
 - (a) God ignores sin.
 - (b) Christ died for our sins.
 - (c) everyone will go to heaven.

4. Jesus made peace with God
 - (a) by His death on the cross for us
 - (b) by His good life
 - (c) by His many miracles

5. The Lord Jesus died in our place.
 - (a) His sacrifice satisfies God's just claims of judgement.
 - (b) His sacrifice was the greatest way that God could show us His love.
 - (c) both a and b

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. Nothing that is morally unclean can enter God's presence.
7. The punishment for sin does not have to be paid.
8. "Atonement" means that the sin was covered.
9. Jesus met most of the demands of the Law against us, but we have to do our part.
10. All men are saved just because Jesus died for them.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Explain in your own words why Jesus died on the cross.

Lesson 9

Notes

“BORN AGAIN”

“UNLESS ONE IS BORN AGAIN, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3). Jesus Christ said these extremely serious words to a very religious man named Nicodemus. Nicodemus believed in God, and he was a moral person. He went to see Christ to pay Him honor. Nicodemus was a great man and had done many good works, but all this was not enough to prepare him to meet God after he died. Are you prepared to meet God?

What Does “Born Again” Mean?

To be born again means to be given new life. When Jesus told Nicodemus that he needed to be born again, He was speaking of spiritual birth not physical birth (John 3:4-6). Jesus asked Nicodemus why he did not understand this, for Nicodemus was a teacher of his people (John 3:10). The Old Testament taught that the nation of Israel would be reborn, that is, born again (Ezekiel 36:26; 37:1-10). Jewish people at that time also knew that creation would be reborn from its sin-cursed condition (Matthew 19:28). Nicodemus knew all that, but he did not understand that being born again is how God describes what happens to a person when he becomes a member of the family of God.

Being born again is a personal event. It is a new life, a new family relationship, a new power in one’s life. The Bible says that we pass from death to life when we enter the Kingdom of God (John 5:24). We pass from walking in darkness to walking in light (John 8:12). We pass from the kingdom of Satan to the Kingdom of God’s dear Son (Colossians 1:13). We become a

new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). This new creation is righteous and truly holy (Ephesians 4:24).

Why Must the “Natural Man” be Born Again?

The “natural man” is just what it says: man as he is “naturally” before God gives him new life.

1. HE IS WICKED (Genesis 8:21). Even his inner being, his heart, deceives him (Jeremiah 17:9). Nothing good is found in his own human nature (Romans 7:18).
2. HE IS DEAD BECAUSE OF HIS SINS (Ephesians 2:1). By God’s standard, he is spiritually dead.
3. SATAN CONTROLS HIM (Ephesians 2:2).
4. HE IS AN ENEMY OF GOD (Romans 5:10). He has no hope, and he lives his life without paying attention to God and without receiving any help from Him (Ephesians 2:12).

Every child of God was once like this.

How Can a Person be Born Again?

1. TWO PICTURES OF NEW BIRTH. Many people carefully study John chapter 3 and find that their own ideas about entering the Kingdom of God do not agree with what Jesus taught. Jesus did not talk about doing good deeds, joining a religious organization, or going through a religious ceremony. Instead, He gave two pictures of the new birth:
 - a. The wind (John 3:8). It cannot be seen. No one can say for sure how or where the wind will do its work, but people can clearly see the *effects* of its work. The Source is God, not man. The source of the New Birth is also God (John 1:13). God sends the New Birth to powerfully work in changing lives although no one can see how it does so.
 - b. The snake made from bronze (John 3:14-15; Numbers 21:6-9). One time the people of Israel sinned, and God

sent snakes to bite them and make them sick enough to die. God told Moses to make a snake from bronze and put it on a pole. The people were saved only if they believed what Moses told them and looked to what God had provided to save them. Jesus told the people that He was the Son of Man, and that He would be “lifted up” like that snake on the pole. He was “lifted up” to be the object of their faith for them to be saved. He was “lifted up” on the cross (John 12:32-33). The New Birth happens when a person looks to Jesus as the One who was crucified for our sins.

2. TWO MAIN INFLUENCES IN THE NEW BIRTH.

- a. The Word of God (1 Peter 1:23; James 1:18). The Bible is sometimes called the “Word of truth”. We hear it and believe it in order to be saved (Ephesians 1:13; Romans 10:17). It is like the seed from which salvation grows (Matthew 13:3-9,18-23). The New Birth happens when we sincerely believe God’s Word and obey it.
- b. The Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5; John 3:5,6,8). He makes men see that they are sinful (John 16:8-11), and He leads them to Christ. The New Birth results from the work of the Holy Spirit. That work begins with the Holy Spirit showing men that they are sinful, and it leads to a life that is washed clean by the Holy Spirit’s giving us new life.

Notice that the above has no connection with water baptism. In fact, baptism is not even mentioned. Water is often used as a picture of the Spirit and of the Word in the Bible (John 7:38-39; Ephesians 5:26). Baptism has nothing in common with the word pictures of the new birth that Jesus used: the wind and the snake made from bronze. That is because baptism is a picture of *salvation*, not of the new birth. Baptism is very important, but it comes after the new birth, it does not cause it (Acts 8:12-13,37-38).

What Are the Results of the New Birth?

1. God gives us a new heart and a new spirit (Ezekiel 11:19).
2. God shares His divine nature with us (2 Peter 1:4).
3. The Spirit of God lives in us (Romans 8:9).
4. God makes us children in His family (1 John 3:1).
5. God gives us eternal life (1 John 5:11-12).
6. We love the Lord Jesus Christ (1 John 5:1).
7. We love others, especially other Christians (1 John 3:14; 4:7).
8. We have the desire to obey the Lord Jesus (1 John 2:3).
9. We do not practice sin as our way of life (1 John 3:9).
10. We practice righteousness as our way of life (1 John 2:29).

Have you felt the Holy Spirit convincing you that you are a sinner? Have you turned to Jesus Christ to save you? Have you believed God's good news of salvation and trusted in Christ?

Lesson 9

Study Questions

“BORN AGAIN”

Jesus said that a person cannot see the Kingdom of God unless he or she has been born again. It is very, very important to understand exactly what He meant by that. Please think carefully as you answer the following questions.

1. Are the following statements “true” or “false”?
 - a. A person is born again by being baptized in water. True or False?
 - b. Jesus used two pictures of the new birth; these are “the sea” and “the snake made of bronze”. True or False?
 - c. “Born again” is just another way to say a person has changed their religion. True or False?
2. Nicodemus first came to Jesus (choose one)
 - a. as a believer in God.
 - b. as a moral person.
 - c. as a person who went to religious services at the Jewish place of worship.
 - d. as a person interested in Him.
 - e. all of the above.
3. “Born again” means (choose one)
 - a. to join the church.
 - b. to change your religion.

- c. to receive a new life from God.
 - d. to have a gradual spiritual change.
 - e. to believe in God.
4. The “natural man” must be born again because (choose one)
- a. he is evil through and through.
 - b. he is dead in sin.
 - c. Satan controls him.
 - d. he is an enemy of God.
 - e. all of the above.
5. Rewrite John 1:12-13 in your own words.
6. What does the Word of God do in the new birth (Matthew 13:3-9,18-23; Romans 10:17; Ephesians 1:13; 1 Peter 1:23)?
7. What does the Holy Spirit do in the new birth (John 3:6-8; 16:7-11; Titus 3:5; Acts 2:37)?
8. What are some results of the new birth?
9. *What do you say?* Explain the “New Birth” in your own words.
10. Ask other Christians what they think about some of these questions.

What is Christianity? – TEST 9 – “Born Again”

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. The Lord Jesus spoke about new birth to
 - (a) Nicodemus.
 - (b) Herod.
 - (c) the Pharisees.

2. Nicodemus was a great religious teacher. He
 - (a) was prepared to meet God after he died.
 - (b) believed in God but was secretly a great sinner.
 - (c) believed in God and was a moral person.

3. God told Moses to make a snake from
 - (a) clay.
 - (b) bronze.
 - (c) wood.

4. The New Birth happens when we
 - (a) believe God’s Word and obey it.
 - (b) join the church.
 - (c) are baptised.

5. The Holy Spirit makes men see that they are
 - (a) sinful.
 - (b) without sin.
 - (c) good people.

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. Nicodemus was not a religious man.
7. The Old Testament taught that the nation of Israel would be reborn.
8. Nothing good is found in our human nature.
9. The Bible is never called the Word of Truth.
10. Baptism is a picture of the New Birth.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

If you have been ‘born again’, what results can you see in your life?

Lesson 10

Notes

SALVATION AND THE GRACE OF GOD

“FOR BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). The only reason we can be saved is because God shows grace towards us. What is “grace”? It is showing favor and being kind to people who do not deserve it. “Grace” is a gift. It cannot be bought or earned. It is hard for religious people to accept this teaching about the wonderful grace of God. Often they accept only part of it or they accept it in a way that really denies that it is true.

The Old Testament word for grace meant “to bend down and show kindness to someone much less important”. That exactly describes God’s action toward us. The New Testament word means “favor, giving freely and generously, being kind to someone; or a gift”. This shows that being saved is not something we earn, deserve, or buy, either completely or in part. Being saved by Jesus Christ is “the gift of God”, and no one is permitted to pay the Giver.

False Ideas about Grace

Natural man thinks that certain actions help him gain God’s approval and win salvation. See what the Word of God says about such ideas:

1. **GOOD WORKS OR DEEDS AS A WAY TO GOD.** “If by grace, then it is no longer of works” (Romans 11:6). “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us” (Titus 3:5). God graciously gives righteousness “to him that does not work” (Romans 4:5). Sometimes a person tries to earn God’s favor for salvation through his own human works. That person is trying to make God owe him something (Romans 4:4).
2. **KEEPING THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.** “Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by

the law is the knowledge of sin" (Romans 3:20). "For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace" (Romans 6:14). "You have become estranged [or separated] from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4). Law and grace are two different things, as we can see from the following verse: "For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17).

There is no reason for us to be proud of or boast about the privilege of being accepted by God (Romans 3:27). Our own good works or religious actions are not like stairs that make it possible for us to get to God. Men are not saved by giving up something, by bargaining with God, or by offering to add some of their own efforts to what He has done for them. Salvation is not the result of works, keeping the law, taking part in religious services or rituals, or trying to make God owe us something. Salvation is by grace *without anything else added to it*.

Why is Grace Necessary?

1. **MAN IS WICKED.** Because man is wicked, he is completely unable to approach God (Romans 5:6). Man is a sinner (Romans 3:9), he is an enemy of God (Colossians 1:21), and he is spiritually dead because of his sins (Ephesians 2:1). How then could man make a way to God for himself, since he is a wicked sinner?
2. **GOD IS COMPLETELY HOLY.** Man could never reach God by his own efforts. Even the best of men do not come anywhere near to being as holy as God (Isaiah 6:3-5). God reaches down to man in grace.

What Effects Does Grace Have?

1. **WE ARE SAVED BY GRACE** (Romans 3:24; 4:16). Man can add nothing to what God has already done to save him.
2. **WE ARE KEPT BY GRACE** (John 10:28-29; 1 Peter 1:5; 5:10). God graciously keeps us saved by His power. We are safe

because He holds us in His hand. The law could not save us and it cannot keep us saved (Galatians 3:2-3). Our good works do not keep us saved either. We are no longer under the rule of law but are under the rule of grace (Romans 6:14).

3. WE CONTINUE IN GRACE (Romans 5:2; 1 Peter 5:12). God now deals with us on the basis of grace.
4. WE LIVE BY GRACE (Hebrews 13:21; Philippians 2:13). God works in us to give us the power we need to live the Christian life in a way that is pleasing to Him.

Warnings About Grace

We must not start thinking that God does not require us to live in a godly way since He shows us His grace. We must not think that grace gives us the right to go on sinning.

1. WE DO NOT COMMIT MORE SIN SO THAT GOD CAN SHOW US MORE OF HIS GRACE (Romans 6:1).
2. WE DO NOT TURN THE GRACE OF GOD INTO AN EXCUSE FOR IMMORAL LIVING (Jude 4). We must not use our freedom in Christ as an opportunity to live wickedly. Instead we are to love and serve one another even if it costs us something (Galatians 5:13).
3. WE ARE SAVED TO DO GOOD WORKS (Ephesians 2:10; Titus 3:8). We do not make a habit of sinning (1 John 3:9). We obey God's Word (1 John 2:3-5). But we must always remember that these actions are the *fruits* or results of being saved. They are not a way for us to earn God's favor. We live to please God because we love the Lord Jesus (John 14:15,21).

There is no other message like the Christian message, the message of the Good News of God's Grace (Acts 14:3; 20:24,32). This Good News comes from the God of all grace (1 Peter 5:10). He is the One who receives us at the "throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16). Grace is a permanent part of the character of God and of the way He deals with us. We should never come to Him with the idea that He owes us anything.

Lesson 10

Study Questions

SALVATION AND THE GRACE OF GOD

Only the Christian faith gives special importance to the teaching that salvation is by grace. Other ways of coming to God deny that this is true, either completely or in part. Be sure that you understand this teaching by answering the following questions.

1. Obeying the Ten Commandments (choose one answer)
 - a. is necessary for the Christian to be saved.
 - b. is required along with Christ's death on the cross.
 - c. is not important now.
 - d. is the perfect standard God requires for man to obtain His righteousness.
 - e. is none of the above.
2. Which statement is the *most* correct? Grace is God (choose one)
 - a. reaching down to undeserving people with His kindness and favor.
 - b. reaching down to deserving people with His kindness and favor.
 - c. reaching down to people deserving His judgment.
3. According to the Bible, all men (choose one)
 - a. are good.
 - b. are seeking God.
 - c. are corrupt.
 - d. mean to do well, but are weak.

4. God can save sinners by grace and still be holy because (choose one)
 - a. Christ took the sinner's place and suffered for us.
 - b. God can do whatever He pleases, even if it is against His nature.
 - c. sin is not really that serious.
 - d. that is His duty to His creatures.
5. Rewrite Ephesians 2:8-9 in your own words.
6. List two things that are opposite or different from each other in each of the verses given below:
Example: 1 Peter 5:5 pride and humility
Jude 4
Galatians 5:4
Romans 11:6
Romans 4:4
7. Which of these statements from the Bible is an example of grace?
 - a. "This do and you will live."
 - b. "You shall love the Lord your God."
 - c. "We love Him because He first loved us."
 - d. "The soul that sins, it shall die."
8. Read Jude 4 and 1 Peter 2:16. What false idea about grace do these verses correct?
9. *What do you say?* Use your own words to tell what the grace of God means to you.
10. Ask other Christians what they think about some of these questions

What is Christianity? – TEST 10 – Salvation and the Grace of God

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. The only reason we can be saved is because God
 - (a) ignores our sin.
 - (b) accepts our good works.
 - (c) shows grace towards us.

2. Being saved is
 - (a) the gift of God.
 - (b) something we can earn or pay for.
 - (c) something we deserve for being sincere.

3. Law and Grace are
 - (a) the same thing.
 - (b) almost the same thing.
 - (s) two different things.

4. Men are saved by
 - (a) giving up something.
 - (b) God's grace alone
 - (c) bargaining with God.

5. The Bible tells us that we are
 - (a) under the rule of law.
 - (b) under the rule of grace.
 - (c) free to please ourselves.

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. It is easy for religious people to accept the grace of God.
7. Being saved by Jesus Christ is the gift of God.
8. We can be proud of being accepted by God.
9. The most holy people in the world are nearly as good as God.
10. Our good works can help to keep us saved.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Grace is sometimes described as 'God's Riches at Christ's Expense.'
Explain this statement.

Lesson 11

Notes

BELIEVING ON JESUS CHRIST

The jailer at Philippi asked, "What must I do to be saved?" The apostle Paul answered, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:30-31). Perhaps you are thinking, "But what does it mean to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ?"

Many people have wrong ideas on this very important subject. Here are some common examples of what people think. *None* of these ideas agrees with what the Bible teaches.

1. People say, "I believe" because they accept that Jesus really did live and die here on earth.
2. People say, "I believe" because they respect the righteous life and example of Jesus.
3. People say, "I believe" because they belong to a religious group.
4. People say, "I believe" because they pray to God.
5. People say, "I believe" because they repeated a prayer after someone, or made a public statement about what they believe in front of many people.

Is this what it means to believe on Christ the Bible way? Do these ways of believing change people's lives? Does someone who believes this way know for sure that they are going to heaven?

What is Faith?

What does it mean to "believe on Christ"? The Bible teaches that faith includes the ideas of trust, *personal* confidence, being

completely convinced, and depending on something. We say, "I believe in that person." Believing in them is the opposite of doubting them. This kind of faith is not the same as believing anything and everything, or trusting blindly. True faith includes the following ideas:

1. **FAITH HAS AN OBJECT.** Faith must be *in* someone or something. For Christians, their faith is *in* someone. The object of their faith is a Living Person, the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 20:21). "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent" (John 6:29). The Lord Jesus asked the blind man, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" (John 9:35). The thief on the cross had to believe on Jesus *and do nothing else at all* in order to enter Paradise (Luke 23:42-43). Believing was the important part of the Gospel message (Acts 8:35-37; 1 John 5:13). It is not *how much* we believe, but *in whom* we believe. Faith receives *Him*, the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:12).
2. **FAITH MUST HAVE CONTENT.** A book has a "table of contents" at the front to tell what the book contains. In the same way, faith as in the Bible must contain certain parts. We must hear the Gospel and believe it (Acts 15:7). The Corinthians were saved when Paul preached the Gospel to them. What is that Gospel? We are told the complete Gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4: Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, He was buried and rose again according to the Scriptures. A person trusts Christ *after* he hears the Gospel. The Gospel is called the Word of Truth (Ephesians 1:13). This Gospel is precious and is necessary for salvation, so that God will curse any man or angel who changes it (Galatians 1:6-9).
3. **FAITH IS BASED ON SOMETHING.** Faith is based on the Word of God (1 Thessalonians 2:13; Romans 10:17). Christian faith is based on "the witness of God". This "witness of God" is given to us in the Scriptures (1 John 5:9). Faith accepts God's words as true (1 Thessalonians 2:13)

and believes that God speaks the truth even if every man says He does not (Romans 3:3,4). We are not “jumping into the dark” when we believe God. Faith as the Bible teaches is not blind faith and it is not trusting in our feelings. We believe and depend on God’s Word.

4. FAITH RESULTS IN ACTION. Some people have the idea that faith is only saying they agree with a certain statement, but that is not true. The Bible uses action words when it talks about faith. For example, people *came* to Jesus, *fell down* before Him and *obeyed* His Word; He told a man to *stretch out* his hand (Matthew 12:13); He told another man to *pick up* his bed (Matthew 9:6); He commanded another man to *wash* in a certain pool of water (John 9:7). Many, many times He told people to do something to show that their faith was real.

Abraham is the best example of a man who believed God. Read Genesis 12:1-4, Acts 7:2-3, and Hebrews 11:8. These three parts of God’s Word tell us that Abraham heard God’s word and did what God told him. He left his home town even though he did not know where God would lead him. He showed his faith in God by believing Him and doing what He told him to do.

The faith that saves is a faith that results in action. Saving faith has never been just thinking something, just agreeing with certain facts of history. A “faith” that does not produce good works is a “dead faith” — it is not real faith at all. When a person truly believes in Christ, he will live a life of good works. (Read James 2:14-26 to see what the Bible says about “saving faith” and “dead faith”.) Faith that saves is more than “believing *that*” the facts about Christ and His death are true. We must “believe *in*” or “believe *on*” the Son of God, and we must be personally committed to Him.

Examples of Faith

The Scriptures have many examples of faith. Hebrews chapter 11 has been called the “Honor Roll of Faith” because it

tells about some men and women who had great faith. Study Hebrews 11 and pay special attention to the actions taken by each man or woman to show their faith.

We will now think about two other examples of faith. We see the faith of a Roman military officer in Matthew 8:5-10. He believed that Christ could heal his servant by simply saying a word without even coming to see the servant and touch him. The faith of the woman of Canaan is seen in Matthew 15:22-28. She begged the Lord to set her daughter free from demons. Her faith was humble but determined. She kept on asking and believing until the Lord rewarded her faith.

How to Come to Christ

When we come to Christ in true faith, several things must happen.

1. **THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS CONVINCED US THAT WE ARE SINNERS** (John 16:8-11). We admit to God, "I am a sinner" (Luke 15:18; 18:13-14).
2. **WE REPENT OF OUR SINS** (Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30; 20:21). We want to change, and so we turn away from our sins and the sinful things we do, and instead we choose to follow Christ and His ways.
3. **WE KNOW AND UNDERSTAND THE GOSPEL MESSAGE**. We must believe the Gospel to be saved (Acts 15:7-9; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4). The most important part of the Gospel message is the Lord Jesus Christ.
4. **WE BELIEVE GOD'S WORD** (Mark 4:20; John 5:24).
5. **WE RECEIVE GOD'S SON BY FAITH** (John 1:12; 1 John 5:12-13) and we follow Him and do what He says (John 10:4-5,27).
6. **WE OPENLY TELL OTHERS WE BELONG TO HIM** (Matthew 10:32; Luke 12:8; Romans 10:9).

The faith that saves depends completely on the Lord Jesus

Christ and His finished work on the cross. We experience God's grace by means of faith. However, faith is not the source of salvation, and it is not an action that deserves to be rewarded. Faith does not show that we are good, moral people who are worthy of God's grace. Instead, faith is like an empty hand — it accepts what God freely offers. God will judge and punish those who do not obey the Gospel (2 Thessalonians 1:8).

Faith gives all the glory to God. All kinds of people can have faith. It does not depend on age, having an important position, having great riches, or being especially smart or intelligent. Faith is available to everyone.

There is also false faith. False faith uses the name of Christ and may even do some great works, but the Lord will expose and reject those whose faith is not real (Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 13:28). They are like weeds growing along with good grain (Matthew 13:24-30).

True faith will result in a changed life (Hebrews 6:9-10). True believers obey the Word of God (1 John 2:4-5), they love other believers (1 John 3:14), they do good works (Ephesians 2:10), they do right (1 John 3:7,10; Ephesians 4:22-24), and they do *not* make a *habit* of sinning (1 John 3:9-10; Galatians 5:19-21).

Have you believed on the Lord Jesus Christ?

Lesson 11

Study Questions

BELIEVING ON JESUS CHRIST

Here is the most important question for every human being: Will you be with God for ever or will you be separated from Him for ever? This question is very important both for the present and for the eternal future. Carefully think about the following:

1. I can be *sure* I am saved because (choose one)
 - a. I prayed a prayer and asked Jesus to come into my heart.
 - b. God has answered many of my prayers.
 - c. I have given up my old way of life.
 - d. I now read the Bible and attend church.
 - e. none of these.
2. Faith that saves is (choose one)
 - a. agreeing with what the Bible says.
 - b. believing in God with all my heart.
 - c. believing that spiritual or religious things are very important.
 - d. believing that Jesus lived and died and that He was the greatest person who ever lived.
 - e. none of the above.
3. What is faith that saves? Use your own words to explain it.
4. What did the “good thief” believe (Luke 23:39-43)?

What is Christianity?

5. List the three main points of the Gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. Place a mark beside the one that is most difficult for you to believe.

6. Write 1 John 5:9 in your own words.

Do you completely accept this witness? Explain.

7. What proved that the woman of Canaan had true faith in Matthew 15:22-28? Would you take the same position before the Lord Jesus?

8. How have you yourself understood or acted upon the teaching of each of the following verses?

Luke 13:3

Luke 18:13-14

John 16:7-9

Romans 10:9-10

Ephesians 1:13

Revelation 3:20

9. *What do you say?* What questions do you still have about what it means to believe in Jesus?

What would you say, if you died today and stood before God, and He asked you, "Why should I let you into My heaven?"?

10. Ask other Christians what they think about some of these questions

What is Christianity? – TEST 11 – Believing on Jesus Christ

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. Faith includes the ideas of
 - (a) personal confidence
 - (b) being convinced
 - (c) trust
 - (d) all of the above.

2. The object of a Christian's faith is
 - (a) the Lord Jesus.
 - (b) the Law.
 - (c) the church.

3. Our faith is based on
 - (a) the Word of God.
 - (b) the witness of God.
 - (c) the Word of God and the witness of God.

4. A faith that does not produce good works is
 - (a) a living faith.
 - (b) a dead faith.
 - (c) an active faith.

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

5. People who have false faith are like flowers that grow among good grain.
6. Believing is the opposite of doubting.
7. A person can trust in Christ before he hears the gospel.
8. Faith as the Bible teaches is trusting your feelings.
9. The faith that saves produces good works.
10. Faith shows that we are good people who deserve God's favour.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

How would you describe faith that saves?

Lesson 12

Notes

BEING SURE YOU ARE SAVED

People often say, “No one can know for sure that he is going to heaven.” Usually they have several reasons for saying this. They say that we do bad things and this might keep us out of heaven. The question is: How can we know for sure that we have eternal life? This question must be answered from the teachings we find in the Bible.

It is Possible to Know for Sure

“These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:13). Notice that it does not say that you may feel — or hope — or think — or imagine. It says “that you may *know* that you have eternal life.” The apostle John uses the word *know* over 30 times in the little book of 1 John. Think about these things John tells us we can know: “we know that we know Him” (2:3), “we know that we have passed from death to life” (3:14), “we know that He abides in us” (3:24), “we know that we are of the truth” (3:19), “we know that we abide in Him” (4:13).

The Lord Jesus said “Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 7:21). The Lord will refuse to let some people into heaven. These are people who said they were believers but really weren’t. They may have spent a lot of time with Christians, but they never really accepted the Lord by faith for themselves (Luke 13:25-27). The Lord taught us how to know the difference between a real believer and those who only *say* they believe: “By their fruits you will know them” (Matthew

7:20). God puts His Holy Spirit in us to show that we have truly been born again (Ephesians 1:13) and our lives will show that this is true (1 John 2:6). This is why a true believer can know for sure that he has eternal life even before he gets to heaven (2 Timothy 1:12; Romans 8:38-39).

Knowing for sure means “having confidence” or “being certain”. *Knowing for sure that you are saved* means being certain that you yourself have eternal life. The Bible tells us very clearly that God wants the Christian believer to know he is going to heaven. Knowing for sure that we are saved is not simply “hoping for the best” or human boldness without any reason behind it. It is a fact that is based on God’s promise that He accepts us after we accept Jesus as our personal Savior and Lord.

Three Things that Help the Believer Know for Sure that He is Saved

God has given the believer three things that tell about or show that he has a new relationship with God. These three things help him know for sure that he is saved.

1. **THE WORD OF GOD.** This gives us our strongest certainty. Our salvation is based on belief in God’s Word (Genesis 15:6; Romans 10:9-10), and our certainty and knowing for sure are also based on His Word. The one that believes on the Son has everlasting life (John 3:16,36; 5:24). Our salvation is built and established on the *fact* that we have the Son of God; it does not depend on having a special *feeling* (1 John 5:12). The Bible never speaks about “feeling” saved. Jesus has given us His word that He will not cast us out if we come to Him (John 6:37).
2. **THE FACT OF A CHANGED LIFE.** This is another important help to knowing for sure that a person is saved: his life has really *changed*. The thief on the cross did not have very much time to live for Christ before he died. But he did have time to speak openly of his faith. He bravely told the other

thief that he was wrong in insulting the Lord and for not believing in Jesus (Luke 23:40-43).

Some believers seem to live only for this world (1 Corinthians 3:1-4). Lot is an example of this kind of believer (2 Peter 2:7-8). However, their lives will show in some ways that they really do have spiritual life. For example, Lot was oppressed by the way his neighbors lived. The Bible tells us what to do when we do not follow the Lord as we should (1 John 1:9; 2:1-2). This does not mean that a believer should feel free to sin.

The Bible gives believers some “tests” to help them be sure their lives show that they really do have the Lord. None of these “tests” depends on how we *feel*. They depend on what we *do* or *think*. These are things that should *actually* be true in a believer’s life. The following are some “doing” or “thinking” tests:

- a. A believer tells others he belongs to Christ (Romans 10:9-10).
- b. A believer does good works (James 2:14-26; Ephesians 2:10).
- c. A believer obeys the Word of God (1 John 2:4-5; 5:2-3).
- d. A believer does not love pleasures, possessions, or being famous (1 John 2:15).
- e. A believer does what is right (1 John 3:7,10).
- f. A believer does not make a habit of sinning (1 John 3:9-10; Galatians 5:21).
- g. A believer loves other believers (1 John 3:14).
- h. A believer believes and tells others that Christ is God (2 John 9).
- i. A believer is willing to admit and confess sin each time he sins (1 John 1:8-9).

3. INNER WITNESS. But a third way to know we are saved is our own feelings. This way is the weakest of the three because it is personal, and a person may deceive himself. Feelings are an important help to knowing for sure that we are saved. But we must always remember that it is only *one of three* things God gives us to help us know for sure that we have eternal life. The following are personal or “feeling” tests of whether or not a person is really saved:
- a. The Holy Spirit helps our spirit know we are really saved (Romans 8:16).
 - b. We do not feel guilty before God anymore because we know that the Lord Jesus paid the whole debt we owed for our sin (Hebrews 10:2).
 - c. We feel unhappy and uncomfortable when we sin (Psalm 32:3-5).
 - d. Our own way of life has changed (see the “doing” and “thinking” tests above); we know that God is hearing and answering our prayers; we want to share Christ with those who are lost; we desire to read God’s Word, etc.

Are You a Christian with Doubts, or An Unsaved Person who Says He is Saved but Really Isn’t?

Some people are not sure whether they are really saved. This is serious. If the person is really saved, it is also sinful because they are refusing to believe God. However, most Christians do have doubts at one time or another after they are saved. The following are some helpful ways to find out whether you are a Christian with doubts, or if you really are still an unsaved person who only says he is saved.

A Christian with Doubts

1. He is concerned about his relationship to God; he asks questions.
2. He often shows much concern about his salvation.
3. His friends are Christians.
4. He often wonders if he is really saved, especially when his life is full of problems.

An Unsaved Person Who Only Says He is Saved

1. He is usually careless, even confident.
2. He says firmly that he is saved, even though his life doesn't show it. He is angry if anyone suggests he might not really be saved.
3. He often says unkind things about believers and the church. He may blame them for various things, often using hard words.
4. He acts as if he doesn't need anyone's help, even when his life is full of problems.

What to Do about Doubts

1. ADMIT THAT YOU HAVE DOUBTS. Perhaps you have had questions like the following: "When I accepted Christ, nothing happened — I did not feel different." "I don't know whether I believed in the right way." "I don't feel the Holy Spirit helping me be sure I am saved." "I believe I have done a sin that God won't forgive." "My life does not show that I am a Christian. I have failed so much."
2. ASK YOURSELF QUESTIONS. The following questions may help make clear your true spiritual position: "Have you ever felt guilty for sin at some time in your life?" "Why do you expect God to let you into heaven?" "When and how

did you receive Christ?" A true believer has felt guilty for his sin and has repented of it before God. He expects to go to heaven only because Christ died in his place. Usually, a true believer will remember a time when he gave his life to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. He may not know the exact time, but he will at least know that he has yielded his life to the Lord.

3. **MAKE SURE BY PRAYING.** If you still have doubts about whether or not you are truly saved, make sure by praying now and giving your life to Christ as *your* Lord and *your* Savior. Then believe God's Word and rest upon His promise that He has saved you when you come to Him through faith in Christ. Remember that praying over and over again in this way is not necessary and is not good. We must come to a point where we trust God and believe His Word, and not depend on our feelings.

Asking Ourselves Questions is Important

Jesus warned people not to fool themselves about whether or not they are truly saved. Many people will claim that they knew Him and even that they did many things to serve Him, but they will be thrown into the outer darkness because they were never true believers (Matthew 7:21-23; Luke 13:23-28). That is why we should ask ourselves questions to make sure we are truly saved, if we ever have any doubts (2 Corinthians 13:5). To do this we can use the nine "doing" and "thinking" tests given above in items (a)-(i). If there are still doubts, we can yield our lives to Christ as Lord and Savior here and now.

Lesson 12

Study Questions

BEING SURE YOU ARE SAVED

The very best thing in the world is to know God personally. The next best thing is to be sure that we are His for ever. How can we know for sure that we have eternal life? Think carefully about the following questions:

- Which of the following sentences best shows what the Bible teaches about a person being sure that he is saved?
 - A saved person can say, "I think I have eternal life."
 - A saved person can say, "I hope I have eternal life."
 - A saved person can say, "I know I have eternal life."
 - A saved person must say, "I'll find out when I die if I have eternal life."
- Are the following sentences "true" or "false"?
 - It is not possible for a person to know for sure that he has eternal life. True or False?
 - It is possible for a person to feel sure he is saved based on false reasons. True or False?
 - Some people *say* they believe but they will be lost. True or False?
 - Being sure that we are saved is really only human hopefulness and bold pride. True or False?
- Explain 1 John 5:10-13 in your own words.

4. Explain what each of the following verses says about being able to know we have eternal life.

1 John 2:3

1 John 3:14

1 John 3:19

1 John 3:24

1 John 4:13

5. Which of the following are the best ways to know that we have a new relationship with God? List them in order of importance from the most reliable to the least reliable.
- What our friends tell us
 - What the Word of God tells us
 - The test of what we do and think
 - What the Holy Spirit tells our spirit
6. Read Matthew 7:21-23. According to these verses, why is it important to have a dependable foundation for knowing that we are saved?
7. Which of the “doing” and “thinking” tests listed in the NOTES are true of your life?
8. Have you ever had doubts about where you will spend eternity since receiving Christ as Lord and Savior? How did you deal with them?
9. *What do you say?* If someone asked you, “How do you know for sure that you have eternal life?”, what would you say?
10. Ask other Christians what they think about some of these questions

What is Christianity? – TEST 12 – Being sure you are saved

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. God puts His Holy Spirit in us to
 - (a) make us always feel happy.
 - (b) show that we have been truly born again.
 - (c) show us how to be important people.

2. Knowing for sure that we are saved is
 - (a) hoping for the best.
 - (b) human boldness.
 - (c) based on God's promise.

3. The Bible
 - (a) often speaks about feeling saved.
 - (b) says our salvation is based on fact.
 - (c) says we cannot know for sure that we are saved.

4. If a person is really saved
 - (a) it is sinful to doubt his salvation.
 - (b) he will always feel different.
 - (c) he still could sin so terribly that God could not forgive him.

5. A true believer expects to go to heaven because
 - (a) he is a good person.
 - (b) he reads the Bible and prays.
 - (c) Christ died for him.

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. The Lord will eventually let everyone into heaven.
7. A true believer can't know for sure that he has eternal life.
8. A true believer does not make a habit of sinning.
9. Most Christians sometimes have doubts after they are saved.
10. A true believer has felt guilty for his sin and has repented before God.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

Do you know that you have eternal life? If so, how?

Lesson 13

Notes

HOW TO LIVE THE NEW LIFE

“I HAVE COME THAT THEY MAY HAVE LIFE, and that they may have it more fully” (John 10:10b). “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water’” (John 7:38 NASB). “Whatever is born of God overcomes the world” (1 John 5:4). These are wonderful promises, and they are for the person who believes in the Lord Jesus. The New Testament teaches clearly that this is the normal sort of life a Christian should have. Every Christian should normally have peace, rest, and spiritual power — these things should not be unusual in a believer’s life.

The Lord forgives us for the guilt of sin and He helps us be certain that we have eternal life. But He also wants to give us a new life. In this new life the Spirit of Christ works actively to change our way of living and to give us a new way of thinking. These new ways of living and thinking are pleasing to Him. We can have that kind of life if we pay attention to what the Bible says about how we are to live. Spiritual blessing and power do not “just happen” for believers. They depend on certain conditions which must be fulfilled.

Some Advice for the New Believer

We have studied why it is necessary to be sure that we have eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is important for our hopes to rest on the clear promises that we find in the Bible concerning Him. It is also important that others can see that we have a changed life. This will show that we really do know the Lord Jesus as we say we do. Here are some things we should do right from the start after we come to Christ:

1. TELL OTHERS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS YOUR LORD (Romans 10:9-10; Luke 12:8). Refuse to be a silent, secret believer.
2. STOP HARMFUL HABITS AND FRIENDSHIPS (Psalm 1; 2 Corinthians 6:14-18). Do not let others pull you down while you are trying to help them.
3. LOOK FOR AN OLDER, MORE EXPERIENCED BELIEVER TO PRAY WITH YOU AND HELP YOU GROW SPIRITUALLY (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10). You will make better progress if you have someone to help you and encourage you.

Advice for Christian Living

Living a life that pleases Christ is not only for missionaries and advanced, older Christians. It is Christ's will for all His people (2 Corinthians 2:14; Ephesians 4:13). We must do the following things to help us live each day in a way that is pleasing to the Lord:

1. SUBMIT TO JESUS CHRIST AS LORD EACH DAY (Colossians 2:6; 2 Corinthians 8:5). He cannot bless anyone who does not yield to Him as their loving Lord in their daily life. We are His. We are not our own (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).
2. YIELD TO THE HOLY SPIRIT EVERY TIME HE TELLS US TO DO SOMETHING (Romans 6:13-19; 8:14). The Holy Spirit came to live in us when we received Christ as Savior and Lord. He set us apart to live for Christ, and He gives us the power to do so (Romans 8:9; 1 John 2:27). We must not make the Holy Spirit sad, and we must not make it difficult for Him to do His work through us. We must not resist Him in any way by the things we do or say or think. Instead, we are to let Him control us all the time (Ephesians 5:18). When a believer is controlled by the Holy Spirit, he is able to live in a way that is worthy of God (Colossians 1:10).

3. PUT YOUR THOUGHTS ON CHRIST HIMSELF, INSTEAD OF ON YOUR OWN SELF (Hebrews 12:2-3). We are to place our thoughts on Him (Colossians 3:2). Our whole life should be centered on Christ and not centered on just ourself. It is necessary for us to choose to stop thinking only of ourselves in order for the Holy Spirit to change us and make us like Christ.
4. OBEY THE WORD OF GOD (John 14:15,21; 15:10; 1 John 3:24). To obey God is better than anything else we might give to Him (1 Samuel 15:22). We cannot call Jesus “Lord” and then not do the things He tells us to do (Luke 6:46). He does not give us spiritual freedom so that we can do whatever we want. He gives us spiritual freedom so that we will be able to do what pleases Him. When we obey His Word, He helps us understand more and more just what He is saying in His Word and what really pleases Him (Hebrews 5:14). We must choose with our will to do God’s will (John 7:17). God may test us to see if we are truly willing to obey Him (Genesis 22:1-18). We should never talk as if obeying the Word is “legalism”, which means, to keep laws and rules. Legalism is really adding something either to salvation or to living the Christian life – adding something that God Himself does not require. When we obey God’s Word, we are simply doing what He has told us to do – we aren’t adding to what He has said.
5. BELIEVE GOD AND TRUST HIM FOR EVERY NEED (Hebrews 11:8; John 14:1). We must trust God in our lives day by day (2 Corinthians 5:7). Faith is a gift of God, but it is also the responsibility of man. This is why Jesus rebuked some of His disciples. They were responsible for not believing (Matthew 8:26; Luke 24:25).
6. SERVE OTHERS BECAUSE THE LORD HAS DONE SO MUCH FOR YOU (Galatians 5:13; 2 Corinthians 4:5; Colossians 3:23-24). People who bless and help others will find that others bless and help them (Proverbs 11:25). No

believer will grow if he only takes in blessings and doesn't give out blessings to others. God has given us a picture of this in nature: the Dead Sea is dead because water flows into it but no water flows out of it.

7. **CONTROL THE WAY YOU LIVE** (1 Corinthians 9:27). Self control is one result of the Holy Spirit's work in our lives (Galatians 5:23; 2 Peter 1:6). The believer must choose to stop doing wrong things — the wrong things he wants to do because he has a sinful nature (Romans 8:13; Colossians 3:5). God helps us learn to do this (Hebrews 12:6-7).

We must offer our bodies to God every day (Romans 12:1-2). We must resist the Devil when he tempts us to do wrong (James 4:7). We must also be sure our faith stays strong so that we can overcome the temptations that come from our own evil hearts (James 1:12). Besides that we must keep busy doing good works (Titus 2:14) and we must also show our love for others (John 13:34). When we do wrong, we must confess our sin and stop doing it (Proverbs 28:13).

Advice for What to Do When We Fail

Do believers ever make mistakes or fail? Yes, of course they do. Think about David, Peter, or other men in the Bible that God used to do His work. The Bible tells us about their failures as well as the wonderful ways God used them in His work. Although they failed and sinned, they turned back to God. When we sin, we must quickly turn back to God so that He will not need to punish and correct us to make us want to turn to Him again (Hebrews 12:5-9). He has told us what to do in order to turn back to Him when we fail:

1. **DO YOUR PART**
 - a. Confess and give up all thoughts or actions that you know are not God's will (Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:9).
 - b. When you have sinned against another person, confess it to them and ask their forgiveness if it is possible

(Matthew 5:23-24; Romans 12:18).

- c. Forgive others (Matthew 6:14-15; 18:35). Be patient with the mistakes of others (Colossians 3:13). Let your love for others help you forget how they have offended you as often as you possibly can (1 Peter 4:8; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7).
 - d. Make the effort to get back into a happy relationship with God and His people. Do this by reading the Word, praying, and meeting with other believers in the local church again.
2. **DEPEND ON CHRIST'S VICTORY.** Sometimes believers keep sinning the same kind of sin over and over again even though they confess it and want to stop doing it. But we must remember that the Lord Jesus has already done all that is necessary to free us from the power of sin in our day-to-day lives. That means that we do not have to keep sinning the same kind of sin over and over again without any hope of ever being free. We must learn to stop this habit of failure and confession, failure and confession. Here is how we can do it.
- a. The Lord Jesus broke the power of the sin nature (Romans 6:6) and He judged and condemned sin in the flesh (Romans 8:3). We were once the slaves of sin (Romans 6:20), but now we are set free. This does not mean that we no longer have our sin nature (Galatians 5:16-17; Romans 7:21,23; Matthew 26:41). It means that our sin nature no longer has power over us to make us do what it wants us to do.
 - b. Believers do not need to fear Satan any more. The Lord Jesus defeated him at the cross (John 12:31; 16:11), and broke his power over believers (Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14). However, we are told to resist the devil (1 Peter 5:8-9; James 4:7), and we must not give him any opportunity to do his evil work (Ephesians 4:27).
 - c. The "world" is the Christian's enemy (1 John 2:15-16).

This is because Satan influences the world to think that ungodly things are valuable and that doing ungodly things is all right. The “world” is different from the people who live in the world – God loves the people and we must love them too. However, our Lord condemned the world’s evil way of doing things. The world thinks that ungodly things are of great value and that doing ungodly things is quite all right (John 12:31; 1 Corinthians 11:32). The Lord prays that God will keep us safe from the evil one while we are in the world (John 17:15). We have overcome the world (1 John 4:4; 5:4).

Advice for Spending Time with God Each Day

A believer must spend time with God each day. The most important thing in our life should be getting to know the Lord better and better as we spend time with Him day by day. We must start and continue good habits if we want our lives to be used by God to bless others and if we want Him to bless our own lives.

1. **QUIET TIME.** The believer who truly wants to follow Christ has a strong desire to learn what God has to teach him (Isaiah 50:4). The first part of each day should begin with the Lord (Mark 1:35). The Bible tells us that many believers and also the Lord Jesus Himself began the day with God. This shows how important it is for us, too. This regular time in the morning should be used to read a few verses from the Bible and to think about what it means. We should listen to God speaking to us through His Word, and speak to Him in prayer. Evenings and other times can be used for serious Bible study and longer times of prayer.
2. **PRAYER.** Our Savior said, “Men should always pray” (Luke 18:1). He put this into practice in His own life on this earth, and we should follow His example. Prayer is not something we can choose to do or not to do depending on how we feel. It is the only way we can speak to God, and we should never be so careless that we forget about it or

stop doing it. Sometimes we do not seem to receive very much, and one reason may be that we are not praying (Matthew 7:7). It is important to start each day by giving ourselves to the Lord to use according to His plans. We should also ask Him to guide us through the day.

3. **BIBLE STUDY.** God gave us the Bible to be food for our souls (Hebrews 5:12-14; Psalm 19:10). We are told to take God's Word into our hearts in the same way that we eat food. It will give us strength and joy (Jeremiah 15:16). How can a young believer keep his life clean? By reading and doing what the Word of God says (Psalm 119:9). There are various ways to read and study the Bible for ourselves: it is good to read and think about a few verses at the start of each day; it is good to have a plan to read through the whole Bible, chapter by chapter; it is good to be in a Bible study class and to do special study for the lesson assigned to us. It is important to be able to read the Bible for ourselves and to apply the truths in God's Word to our own lives. Memorizing Scripture will help us put God's Word into practice in our lives (Psalm 119:11).
4. **TELLING OTHERS ABOUT CHRIST.** God gives us the power to tell others that Jesus Christ has saved us from our sins and that He can save them from their sins also (Acts 1:8). The natural way to do this is to tell others how the Lord Jesus changes lives and gives a new way of life, and how He can change their lives too. We must forget about what others will think of us, and then we will be able to tell them about Christ. Remember, they are lost and are on their way to eternity without Christ unless they hear about Him and are saved.

Advice for Meeting Together in Church

The Lord Jesus Christ loves His church very much even though it has weaknesses and is not perfect here on earth (Ephesians 5:25). His church consists of only people who are saved. He wants them to meet together in various places so

that they can encourage one another, worship the Lord, preach His Word, and do what He has told them to do. The Bible does not have any instructions for a believer who tries to worship God by himself and does not go to a church. This is because God wants all believers to meet with other believers in a church to worship and serve Him. We can see this from Acts 2:41-42. These verses tell us the duties and activities of a church.

1. **BAPTIZING.** A new believer should be baptized and this tells everyone that Jesus Christ is now his Lord (Acts 8:36-37).
2. **TEACHING THE WORD OF GOD.** The teaching of the apostles is now written down for us in the Bible along with the writings of the Old Testament prophets. These writings are the Word of God. God has arranged various ways to help believers grow spiritually. One important way to grow is for them to gather together in church to hear godly men preach and teach the Word of God. This gives them regular, planned teaching besides their own personal Bible study and reading. It will encourage them in their own Bible study and perhaps give them new ideas of things to study on their own.
3. **FELLOWSHIP.** Believers are told not to stop gathering together with other believers (Hebrews 10:25). Those who stop meeting with other believers are said to be “not of us” (1 John 2:19). A healthy Christian does not stay away from other believers. Notice how the early believers were together (Acts 2:44-47). Most of the letters of the New Testament are written to groups of believers, not to individual persons.
4. **REMEMBERING THE LORD IN THE BREAKING OF BREAD.** The night that the Lord Jesus was betrayed, He asked His followers to do something to remember Him. He asked them to eat bread and drink of the cup in remembrance of Him (Luke 22:19-20). We call this the

“breaking of bread” or “remembering the Lord”. The early believers did as the Lord Jesus asked (Acts 20:7; 1 Corinthians 11:23-34).

5. PRAYING. It is important to pray with other believers as well as to pray by ourselves (Acts 1:14). God has given a special promise to people who agree to pray about something together (Matthew 18:19). The New Testament tells us that many wonderful things happened when believers prayed together.

Perhaps you have given yourself to Christ as Lord and Savior. That is the right beginning, but now you must give yourself to Him so that He can live His life in you day by day (Galatians 2:20). That is the way He will give you a victorious life and use you to be a blessing to others.

Lesson 13

Study Questions

HOW TO LIVE THE NEW LIFE

Being “born again” is only the start of the new life of the believer. There are many special benefits and also duties that go with this new life. It is important to understand the general ideas below.

1. Jesus Christ came in order to give the believer (choose one)
 - a. eternal life.
 - b. a full life in this world.
 - c. victory over the world and its temptations.
 - d. all of the above.
2. When a person becomes a believer in Christ, it is important that he (choose three)
 - a. change the things about him that make him who he is as an individual.
 - b. show publicly that he belongs to Christ.
 - c. stop bad habits and friendships.
 - d. ask a more experienced Christian to help him grow spiritually.
3. Write 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 in your own words.
How do these verses apply to you personally?

4. Each of the verses below has an important instruction to help us live a life that pleases Christ. Write down the instruction beside the verse.

John 14:21

Romans 12:1-2

2 Corinthians 4:5

Ephesians 5:18

Colossians 3:2

Hebrews 11:6

5. Are the following sentences “true” or “false”?
- It is possible to sin after becoming a Christian. True or False?
 - We have to sin. True or False?
 - It does not really matter whether or not we sin after we are saved because “once we are saved, we are saved for ever”. True or False?
 - We do not have to confess our sins after we are saved because God has already forgiven all our sins — past, present, and future. True or False?
6. What is God’s part in forgiving a believer and restoring him to fellowship and having a happy relationship with Him again, and what is man’s part (1 John 1:9)?
7. The following verses tell us some things we can do to be more devoted to the Lord and to get to know Him better. Write what each verse says for us to do.

Mark 1:35

Acts 1:8

Psalm 119:9-11

8. The believers in the early church were actively doing five different things (Acts 2:41-42). What were those five things?

Which of these things are now a part of your Christian life?

9. *What do you say?* What things were happening in your life just before you became a Christian? What have been the most important changes in your life since you were born again?
10. Ask other Christians what they think about some of these questions

What is Christianity? – TEST 13 – How to Live the New Life

(Use **EXAM FORM** on the website menu)

Indicate the letter of the correct answer

1. Every Christian should normally have
 - (a) peace, rest and spiritual power.
 - (b) lots of money.
 - (c) good health.

2. After we come to Christ we should
 - (a) be a secret silent believer.
 - (b) stop harmful habits and friendships
 - (c) avoid other Christians.

3. When we do wrong we must
 - (a) forgive ourselves
 - (b) confess our sin and stop doing it.
 - (c) give money to the church.

4. As Christians we must
 - (a) fear the devil
 - (b) resist the devil
 - (c) give the devil opportunity to do his work.

5. The Lord said that men should
 - (a) always pray
 - (b) never pray
 - (c) pray only when they want to.

Write TRUE or FALSE after each statement

6. The Lord wants to give us a new life.
7. The Holy Spirit gives us the power to live for Christ
8. The Lord gives us spiritual freedom to do whatever we want.
9. The “world” is the Christian’s friend.
10. A healthy Christian does not stay away from other believers.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

What have been the most important changes in your life since you were born again?

If you are not born again, why not trust Jesus as your Saviour today?

WORD LIST OF SALVATION WORDS

The following words are used in the Bible to talk about salvation. The explanations in this word list will help you to understand what these words mean.

1. REGENERATION. "Regeneration" is another word for the new birth, or being born again. It is the beginning of spiritual life for every believer (John 3:3-8). God gives a person eternal life as soon as he believes in Christ, and at that moment the Holy Spirit comes into the new believer's body. Three things cause this miracle to happen: a person hears and believes God's Word (Romans 10:17; Ephesians 1:13; 1 Peter 1:23); the Holy Spirit works in the person's life (John 3:5-6; Titus 3:5); the person believes the truth God tells us in His Word (2 Thessalonians 2:13).
2. RECONCILIATION. This means to bring together those who have been separated (2 Corinthians 5:18-20). For example, a king might forgive someone who did something wrong against him. Then he and the other person would be *reconciled* to each other. There would be no more angry, bad feelings between them.
3. REDEMPTION. This means to set free by paying a price (Romans 3:24; Hebrews 9:12). Believers were once the slaves of sin and of moral and spiritual uncleanness (Romans 6:17-20). They were slaves because of the curse of the Law, that is, the terrible judgment that all sinners deserve (Galatians 3:13; 4:5). They were slaves because of the fear of death that could happen at any time (Hebrews 2:15), and they were slaves under Satan's power (Colossians 1:13; 2:15; Hebrews 2:14-15). Now Christ has *redeemed* us, He has set us free (John 8:36) by paying the price with His own precious blood (1 Peter 1:18-19).

4. ATONEMENT. This refers to all that the Lord Jesus did on the cross as the basis for our salvation. Atonement is available for all who want to come to God (2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; Hebrews 2:9). In the Old Testament, the word "atonement" mainly means "to cover". But it is also used to show that God's justice was satisfied when the people offered the sacrifice for sin which He required. He did not find them guilty after they had offered the sacrifice. The Jewish *Day of Atonement* (Leviticus 16:33-34) is an example of the use of this word in the Old Testament. (Modern Jews call the Day of Atonement "Yom Kippur".) The words "atonement", "reconciliation", "expiation", and "propitiation" mean almost the same thing. Sometimes one translation of the Bible will use one of these words in a certain verse, but a different Bible translation of the same verse will use another of these words, for example, Romans 5:11 or Hebrews 2:17.
5. JUSTIFICATION. Justification is the action of a holy God when He says that a sinner is righteous and declares him "not guilty" of his sins. God can only do this when a person believes in Christ. It has nothing to do with any "good" things the sinner might try to offer to God. God justifies the believer *freely* because of His grace (Romans 3:24). Notice that God says a person is justified when he believes in Christ. So it is a fact, it is not something that depends on how we feel (Romans 4:4-5; 5:1; Galatians 2:16; 3:11). How do we become justified? It is by grace, by faith, and by His blood, without works and without our keeping the Law. The book of James speaks about "justification by works" (James 2:14-24). This does not mean that we are saved by good works. It means that our lives and our works will *show* that we are really saved. Works show other people that something real has happened to a believer on the inside through faith.
6. IMPUTATION. This means to put something to someone's account. An example of this is found in Philemon 18. In sal-

vation, God the Judge put our sins to Christ's account, when He put our sins upon Christ at the cross. He puts Christ's righteousness upon us as believers (2 Corinthians 5:19,21).

7. MEDIATOR. Sinful men need someone in the middle to bring them together with a holy God. Job wanted to find someone like that (Job 9:33). The only One who can do it is Christ (1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24).
8. PROPITIATION. This word is related to the word "mercy". The "mercy-seat" was in the inner part of the Tabernacle in the Old Testament. Blood from the sacrifice was sprinkled on the mercy-seat once a year to satisfy the just demands of God's law. God would see the blood and then He could forgive the sins of the people and be *propitious* or merciful towards them (Romans 3:24-25; Hebrews 9:5-7; 1 John 4:10). Now God has become *propitious* towards us through Christ's sacrifice of Himself on the cross. The requirements of justice have been completely satisfied and so God can now show mercy to us. One way to translate the prayer in Luke 18:13 is, "God be *propitious* to me a sinner."
9. SANCTIFICATION. A person is sanctified by faith in Christ (Acts 26:18). "Sanctify" means "to set apart" *from* the sinful things in this life and "to set apart" *to* the holy purposes of God. Because we are in Christ, we have already been sanctified in Him for ever (Acts 20:32; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Hebrews 10:10; Jude 1). This is the believer's *position in Christ*, and even the sinful Corinthian believers were sanctified (1 Corinthians 1:2; 5:1-2). All believers are sanctified by being *in Christ* and that is why they are called "saints" or "holy ones". They are united with Him. However, it is also true that there is a *continual* sanctifying work done by the Holy Spirit in the believer's life. All believers should cooperate with the Holy Spirit as He works in their lives to make them more like the Lord Jesus (Romans 8:29). Believers must be in *practice* what they are in *position* in Christ.