

A RESOURCE FROM
SANCTUARY OF PRAISE

HOME BIBLE STUDY

FUNDAMENTALS OF
APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE

Student Guide



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In case of loss, please return to:

.....
.....
.....
.....

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LESSON 1:

p.5

.....
Who is God?" A lesson on understanding the oneness and nature of God, and why we should choose to follow Him

LESSON 2:

p.11

.....
The Word of God & Faith: A lesson on understanding the two foundational elements of the Apostolic faith.

LESSON 3:

p.16

.....
What is Repentance? What repentance means, and why we should obey Scripture concerning it.

LESSON 4:

p.24

.....
The Necessity of Baptism: Why baptism is important, and the Scriptural mandate behind it.

LESSON 5:

p.31

.....
The Gift of the Holy Ghost: What it means to be “filled with the Holy Ghost” and how to receive it.

LESSON 6:

p.37

.....
What now? Living a Christian Life: A lesson on what to do after you've received the Holy Ghost and have been baptized in Jesus name.

INTRODUCTION TO THIS HOME BIBLE STUDY

Welcome to our home Bible study! We are excited to come together as a community of believers to study God's Word and grow in our faith. A home Bible study is a wonderful opportunity to gather as fellow believers in a close-knit setting to explore and discuss what the Bible has to teach us.

In this study, we will dig deeper into the Scriptures, ask questions, and share insights as we seek to understand God's plan for our lives. Through this study, we hope to not only gain knowledge and understanding but also to apply what we learn to our daily lives and grow in our relationship with God.

At a home Bible study, you can expect to experience a warm and welcoming environment, where you are free to share any thoughts, questions, struggles, and triumphs in a loving, safe and supportive space. It is a time to build friendships, pray together, and encourage one another in our faith.

We believe that studying the Bible together can deepen our faith, strengthen our understanding of God's love, and bring us closer to Him. We hope that this home Bible study will be a meaningful and transformative experience for each of us as we grow in our knowledge and love for our Lord Jesus Christ.

BIBLE STUDY STRUCTURE

Each lesson will last around an hour. You will be given a student booklet that contains scriptures for each lesson that you are welcome to look up on your own during and after the each study. It also contains a place for you to take notes, however, we highly recommend bringing your own Bible and a notebook so that you can take notes, and read/highlight as you wish. If you are in need of a Bible or note-taking materials, please let us know and we can get that for you.

Your student workbook will contain other reference materials written by Apostolic authors that will help you to solidify what you learn during these six weeks.

We want you to make the best out of each Bible study lesson, so we will begin and end with prayer. If you have any particular need, we welcome you to let us know so that we can pray specifically for that need.

If you have questions at any time, please don't hesitate to ask. The Bible is full of so much information. It can be overwhelming to take it in and understand it all yourself. We are here for you to answer any question you may have, and if we don't have the answer we will find it or be in prayer about it for you.

We are so excited to get started in this study, and are delighted to have you with us over the next six weeks. Let's dig in!

***WE ARE A REAL
CHURCH WITH REAL
PEOPLE AND REAL
LOVE. GET READY TO
BE TAKEN ON A
JOURNEY THROUGH
A BOOK THAT WILL
CHANGE YOUR LIFE!***

LESSON 1: WHO IS GOD?

Who is God? This is a fundamental question that has been asked by humans throughout the ages. By answering that question, we will discover who we are, why we worship and begin to understand what life living for God may look like.

THE NATURE OF GOD

GOD IS A SPIRIT

When you begin to study the Godhead, it is important to start with the understanding that God is a Spirit. The Bible says they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth. A spirit is a being that does not have any physical elements. In other words, a spirit has no body. A spirit is also invisible to the human eye. When you see the term *Holy Spirit*, it is not referencing an entity separate from God. The Holy Spirit *is* God. God is a spirit, and is often referenced as the Holy Spirit.

"God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth." —John 4:24

GOD IS ONE

When studying the Bible, it is important to understand that the Bible is rooted in Judaism. Jews are monotheistic believers. This means that they believe in *one* God and *one* God alone. God does not share his throne with anyone else.

"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD" —Deuteronomy 6:4

GOD IS OMNIPOTENT

One of the characteristic of God is His omnipotence. This means by definition that He has unlimited power and is able to do anything.

"for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth" —Revelation 19:6b

GOD IS OMNISCIENT

Another characteristic of God is His omniscience. This means that God is all-knowing and infinite in knowledge. After all, He is the creator of the Universe.

"Great is our Lord, and of great power: his understanding is infinite." —Psalm 147:5

"For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things." —1 John 3:20

GOD IS OMNIPRESENT

God is omnipresent, meaning He has the ability to be everywhere at the same time. His spirit knows no bounds.

"Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord." —Jeremiah 23:24

"The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good." —Proverbs 15:3



Monotheism defined:

Monotheism is a term used to describe the belief in one God or deity. The prefix "mono" comes from the Greek word for "one," while "theistic" refers to the belief in a God or gods. Thus, monotheism literally means the belief in one God.

Those who adhere to monotheistic beliefs are often called "oneness believers." This term emphasizes the idea that there is only one true God, and that all other gods or deities are either non-existent or false.



God and Gender: God is a spiritual being and does not possess physical characteristics of either male or female. However, all evidence in Scripture indicates that God chose to reveal Himself to humanity in a male form, using masculine pronouns and titles. When God came as Jesus, he took on a male role. God's spirit is genderless but the flesh of God was male.

THE NAMES OF GOD

The Bible does not reference God in only one way. Listed below are examples of titles that God is given in scripture:

- Elohim
- YHWH/Yahweh
- Jehovah Jireh
- Jehovah Nissi
- Jehovah Shalom
- The Most High
- The Lord
- The Lion
- The Lamb
- The I AM
- The Shepherd
- El Shaddai
- Immanuel
- Adonai
- Jesus

GOD IS OUR CREATOR

Knowing who God is will help us to be able to better understand ourselves. God was not created. He is an uncreated being. It is hard to fathom someone existing from eternity, but this is true of God. He has always been and will always be. This is why He calls Himself the "I AM."

God created us in His image for His glory. He gives us all a choice to worship Him by giving us free will to make our own decisions.

When He first created man and woman, He created them to be perfect. Man was created to live forever in communion and fellowship with God. Unfortunately, man gave into the temptation of the enemy and decided they wanted to be *like* God, which gave way for sin to enter into their lives. Because of the original sin, each human is now born with a sinful nature. The Bible, in simple terms, is a story of a loving and just God calling for all of humanity to return to communion with Him. We will dig into the creation story in our third lesson, but for now, it is important to understand the fall of mankind in relation to a perfect God.

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

"This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise." —Isaiah 43:21

"Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." —Psalm 51:5

TITLES OF GOD

In the New Testament, you'll see God referenced to us as *God the Father*. Father is a term of relationship, so *God the Father* represents His relationship to humanity. He is our Creator, the source of life, and our authority.

Another term you'll see in the New Testament is the *Holy Ghost/Holy Spirit*. As we already learned, God is a spirit. A spirit is not a separate being from God; it's His very essence/being.

Lastly, you'll see the scriptural reference to *the Son*. The son is a reference to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is a physical manifestation of God in the flesh. Jesus is God. He has been referenced as *Immanuel* meaning *God with us*.

It is important to note that the titles of God are not the names of God. Let's find out what His name is.

WHO IS JESUS?

In the midst of all the hopelessness of sin comes the hope and promise of salvation. Salvation is deliverance from the power and effect of sin on your past, and present. This hope is found in Jesus Christ.

"Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." —John 14:6

Jesus made it abundantly clear that salvation can come only through Him. Who is Jesus? Jesus is God in flesh. Remember how we talked about how Christianity is rooted in monotheism? Everything the Bible says is built on the foundation that there is only one God.

We know that God is a spirit, and we cannot see spirits with our human eyes. So in order to come to earth to save His people, God came in the form of a man, Jesus. Because a spirit has no "image," meaning nothing that is visible to a human eye, God made that image by coming as Jesus. The Bible says that the Holy Spirit, who is God, overshadowed a virgin named Mary, and she became pregnant with a baby named Jesus, who was God come in the flesh. God's name is Jesus. God Himself chose the name "Jesus" for His human form and exalted that name above all others, which makes all of the titles given in the Old Testament for God subordinate to this name.

The Bible says that the fullness dwelt in only one person, but that the one person was fully divine and fully flesh. This is what is referred to as the "dual nature" of God. In this, God still maintains His oneness.

Instead of saying "I am the father," Jesus said "I and my father are one." This is because Jesus was both the Father, and the Son. He was both an invisible spirit and visible flesh.

"Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature" —Colossians 1:15

"I and my Father are one. —John 10:30

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." —John 1:14

"Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit, according to the tradition of men, according to the basic principles of the world, and not according to Christ. 9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily" —Colossians 2:8-9 NKJV

The word manifest means to appear. When God was manifest in the flesh, that means that He appeared in the flesh. God came into His own creation. Jesus was the image of the invisible God. Jesus was fully God and fully man.

"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." —1 Timothy 3:16



The word *trinity* is not in the Bible. The concept is unbiblical as it separates God from the Spirit as two separate beings. This concept was created by the Council of Nicea in 325 AD by local scholars.



Gentile defined: The term "gentile" describes any person of non-Jewish heritage. The Old Testament often describes the gentiles as tribes who worship other gods.

SO WHY CHOOSE GOD?

As we consider the question of why we should choose to follow God, it's important to remember that God created us and loves us unconditionally. He has a plan for our lives and desires for us to have a meaningful and fulfilling existence.

Choosing to follow God means choosing a life of purpose, hope, and joy. It also means experiencing forgiveness and the assurance of eternal life. By choosing to walk with God, we align ourselves with the One who is all-knowing, all-powerful, and all-loving. We can trust that He will guide us through the challenges of life and provide us with everything we need. It doesn't mean that we won't face challenges. It just means we'll have God to help us through those challenges: our eternal hope of glory.

Ultimately, choosing to follow God means choosing a relationship with Him and the opportunity to experience His presence and love in our daily lives.

GOD CHOSE US

Despite the fact that we make the decision to believe on and follow God, it is God that chooses us first. The Bible tells us that God chose us before the foundation of the world.

God's choice to adopt us into His family was not based on anything we have done or could do, but purely out of His love and grace towards us. He saw our brokenness and sin, yet still chose to make a way for us to be reconciled to Him through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. God choosing us is not something we can earn or deserve, but it's a gift of His love that we can receive through faith in Jesus.

As we respond to God's choice by choosing to follow Him, we experience the joy and blessings of being part of His family and fulfilling the purpose for which we were created.

"[God] desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." —1 Timothy 2:4 NKJV

"We love him, because he first loved us." —1 John 4:19

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." —John 15:16

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you." —John 15:16

"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb." —Psalm 139:13

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart;" —Jeremiah 1:5a

As we conclude this study on the question, "Who is God?", we are reminded of the vastness and greatness of our Creator. We have seen that God is holy, loving, just, merciful, and sovereign, and that He desires a relationship with us. Through the Bible, we have learned that God has revealed Himself to us in many ways, from the wonders of creation to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As we seek to know God more deeply, we are called to respond with humility, faith, and obedience, trusting that He is who He says He is and that His promises are true. May we continue to seek and worship the one true God, giving Him the honor, glory, and praise He deserves.

APPLICATION:

Based on what we have studied, how would you describe the nature of God?

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What aspects of God's nature do you find most difficult to comprehend or accept? How can you reconcile these with your faith?

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How do you think your understanding of God influences your relationship with Him? How can you deepen this relationship?

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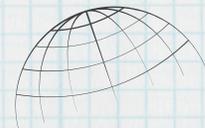
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Fun Fact: There are about 2.3 billion Christians world-wide. That's about 31% of the entire world population.

LESSON 2: THE WORD OF GOD AND FAITH

This lesson, the Word of God and faith, is so beneficial because they will act as two foundational principles that we can build upon as we go through the rest of the lessons of this Bible study. We will establish that the Word of God is infallible and that you can put your faith in every word that is written in your Bible. When you put your faith in His Word, God will begin to do some amazing things in your life.

BIBLE BACKGROUND AND FACTS

- There are 66 books in the Bible
- The Bible is broken into two different sections: the Old Testament, and the New Testament
- The Old Testament is made up of 39 books
- The New Testament is made up of 27 books
- God used over 40 different men to write the Bible
- The first book of the Bible is Genesis, and the last is Revelation
- In some Bibles there are red letters in the New Testament that represent words spoken by Jesus
- The Bible contains 1,189 chapters, 31,102 verses, and 783,137 words
- The longest verse in the Bible is Esther 8:9
- The shortest verse in the Bible is John 11:35, “Jesus wept.”
- According to the Bible Society in Israel, there are approximately 50 Bibles sold every minute throughout the world

QUICK TIPS ABOUT READING THE BIBLE

When a preacher or teacher says, “Please turn in your Bibles to Acts 2:38,” we understand that:

- **Acts** is the name of the book you would turn to
- **“2”** means to look for the second chapter
- **“38”** is the verse that will be read from the second chapter

Let’s take some time to turn in our Bibles to Acts 2:38 and read it.

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” —Acts 2:38 KJV

When you first get a Bible, it looks like a huge book that will take forever to read. However, there are one-year Bible reading programs available to help you read through the entire Bible in a year, taking less than 10 minutes each day. Think about it: you could read the entire Bible twice each year with just 20 minutes of reading! In fact, many smartphones and tablets now have Bible reading programs that will send you a daily notification to remind you to read each day. If you do not have time to sit and read, the apps will often times read the Bible to you as you continue throughout your day.



The Bible holds the Guinness World’s Record for the Best Selling Book of Non-Fiction. Recent estimates state that there are more than 5 billion copies in print in more than 2,123 languages!

HOW SCRIPTURE REFERENCES WORK:

ACTS 2:38

The book of the Bible where you’ll be reading from.

The chapter of the book (numbering begins again in each new book)

Individual verses in each chapter are numbered. So in this example, you’ll read the 38th verse of the 2nd chapter.

OLD TESTAMENT BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

LAW Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy

HISTORY Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings, 1 & 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther

POETRY Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon

MAJOR PROPHETS Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel

MINOR PROPHETS Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

New Testament Books of the Bible

GOSPELS Matthew, Mark, Luke, John

HISTORY Acts

LETTERS: CHURCHES Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians

LETTERS: PEOPLE 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon

LETTERS: GENERAL Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1-3 John, Jude

PROPHECY Revelation

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THE BIBLE?

- You will learn about the Creator of this world
- You will learn how to make it through tough situations that life throws your way
- You will learn about the love that Jesus has for you
- Every question you have can be answered by the Word of God
- Even though the Bible is thousands of years old, it still has the ability to speak to us today

WHO IS THE AUTHOR OF THE BIBLE?

“Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” —2 Peter 1:20-21

There is only one Author of the Word of God, and the Author is God Himself. God would move upon men of God with His Spirit, and they would begin to write the words that He spoke to them.

A great example of God speaking to a holy man of God can be found in the Book of Exodus.

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon these tables the words that were in the first tables, which thou brakest. And be ready in the morning, and come up in the morning unto mount Sinai, and present thyself there to me in the top of the mount. And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount; neither let the flocks nor herds feed before that mount. And he hewed two tables of stone like unto the first; and Moses rose up early in the morning, and went up unto mount Sinai, as the LORD had commanded him, and took in his hand the two tables of stone.” —Exodus 34:1-4

This instance was with a man whom God chose to write what is now called the 10 Commandments. God spoke to Moses and said that He needed him to bring two stones so He could write upon them. Then Moses could bring the law, or the commandments, back to the people he was leading into the promised land God had given them.

The Lord would speak and then the men of God would write as the Lord spoke to them.

Here’s an example: You go into a doctor’s office and the doctor takes his phone out, pushes the record button on the phone, and begins to speak. When he gets finished he pushes the stop button, and emails the audio files to his secretary.

The secretary then puts her head phones on and begins to type, word for word, everything the doctor recorded. When she finishes, she quickly edits to check her punctuation, and then, when she is satisfied with the final product, she prints the document.

The question is, who is the author of the publication? The doctor, or the secretary? The answer, of course, is the doctor.

The Bible only has one Author, and that Author is God. This is the same approach God took when He wanted to send His Living Word to all of us today. God spoke, or moved, upon holy men of God. When God spoke, they wrote His word. God is the Author of the Holy Scriptures.

WHERE IS THE PROOF?

The proof of the authenticity of the Word of God can be found in its archaeological proofs and in its consistency from Genesis to Revelation.

Many times when archaeologists are going to go on a dig in the Middle East, they will reference the scriptures to find historical factors to determine where they should dig to find historical artifacts.

Faithfacts.org is a wonderful resource to use to find historical proofs of the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures.

One fact taken from this resource is about the walls of Jericho. A man by the name of John Garstang discovered in the 1930s that “the walls fell suddenly, and outwardly (unique), so Israelites could clamber over the ruins into the city (Joshua 6:20).”

Another fact that proves the Word is infallible, and God is the Author, is the fact that the Bible was written over 1,600 years by 40 different men who came from different backgrounds. Some were doctors, tax collectors, learned men, and unlearned fisherman. Despite the different backgrounds and levels of education, however, there is a solid continuity and consistency throughout the Scripture. There is continuity and consistency because there is only one Author—God.

THE WORD OF GOD WILL ALWAYS BE WITH US.

“The grass withereth, the flower fadeth : but the word of our God shall stand for ever.” —Isaiah 40:8

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT ADDING TO AND TAKING AWAY FROM IT?

“For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. — Revelation 22:18-21



The Bible claims the universe had a beginning. Philosophers and scientists rejected that claim for over two thousand years, but now astronomers believe the universe had a beginning, the so-called “big bang.”



The Bible claims that God destroyed the earth and the creatures inhabiting it in the worldwide Flood. Nineteenth-century geologists argued that rock layers and the fossils found in them were formed as sediments were deposited slowly, but today geology confirms that many rock layers were deposited catastrophically, burying fossils within only minutes or hours.



Faith defined: “Complete trust or confidence in someone or something. Also a strong belief in God or in the doctrines of a religion, based on spiritual apprehension rather than proof.”

***THE ONLY WAY WE
OBTAIN FAITH IS
BY HEARING OR
READING THE
WORD OF GOD***

Now that we have identified some facts about the Bible, and we have established Who the Author of the Bible is, we need to talk briefly about the role faith plays in our lives.

According to dictionary.com, “Faith is complete trust or confidence in someone or something. Also a strong belief in God or in the doctrines of a religion, based on spiritual apprehension rather than proof.”

We must all have faith in God and His Word if we are going to be established Christians. There are times when you just have to have faith and believe that God has everything under control. We must put our faith in God and His word.

There are some people that want proof for everything. There are times when we just have to exercise our faith and believe that God is God, and He will work everything out according to His Word.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY FAITH IS?

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” —Hebrews 11:1

Faith, according to the scripture, is having the substance of something that doesn’t physically exist yet. Then the scripture says faith is the evidence of things not seen! This means that there is already evidence of something that has not yet happened physically. However, if God speaks it or you read it in His Word, you can already act as if what you hope for or need in life is already done. You can have faith and know that if God said it, it will happen.

How can we get this faith? The Bible tells us how in Romans 10:17.

“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” —Romans 10:17

The only way we get faith is by hearing or reading the Word of God.

There is an entire chapter in the Bible dedicated to men and women who had great faith. You should read about them sometime in Hebrews chapter 11.

As you begin your journey into this Christian faith God has many great things in store for you. You cannot see them yet, but God already does. He already has a plan and path of greatness for you. All you need to do is obey His Word and walk by faith!

“For we walk by faith , not by sight:” —2 Corinthians 5:7

Your journey starts with putting your faith in God’s word. Are you ready to start? Begin your journey to knowing more about the Bible and God by reading His Word, attending an Apostolic church, and living a lifestyle that is pleasing to God.

APPLICATION:

CHECKLIST:

- Begin to read the book of Matthew and look out for the red letters that represent the words spoken by Jesus Christ.
- Download a Bible app on your phone or tablet.
- When you start reading your Bible, write down a verse that spoke to you so we can discuss it at our next session.

What does faith mean to you?

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Has your faith ever been tested?

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NOTES:

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LESSON 3: WHAT IS REPENTANCE?

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” —2 Chronicles 7:14

ΜΕΤΑΝΟΕΩ

Repentance defined: The Greek word you see above is the word most often used for “repent” or “repentance” in the original New Testament text. This word means to “change one’s mind.” It represents not just sorrow, but a complete turning away, to embrace another pattern of thought.

Many times we think of repentance in a negative way. When some people think about repentance, they think about someone judging them. They may think, “Who are they to tell me that I need to repent?”

The fact of the matter is that repentance is a wonderful and glorious opportunity for everyone which was given to us by Jesus Himself. Repentance simply means a turnaround. We all need a “do-over” or a turnaround in life from time to time.

Have you ever made a mistake, or messed up and wished you could have a do-over, or a second chance? Repentance is that second chance! All of this is possible because Jesus died for us!

Read the following verses:

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:” — 1 Corinthians 15:1-4

These scriptures tell us exactly what the Gospel is.

- Jesus died for us
- Jesus was buried
- Jesus rose again on the third day

This is known as the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Bible tells us we can receive this gospel, we can stand upon this gospel, and we are saved by this gospel. The only way we can receive, stand, and be saved by the gospel, is by applying it to our lives.

HOW TO DIE

The first part of the gospel is simply that Jesus died. So we apply this part of the gospel by dying with Jesus.

I know what you are thinking: “How in the world do I die with Jesus?” In order to understand this concept, we have to go all the way back to the beginning of

How do we obey the gospel of Jesus Christ in our lives?

1

Just as Jesus died, we must die to our sins through repentance.

2

Just as Jesus was buried, we must be “buried” through baptism.

3

Just as Jesus rose again, we rise in “newness of life” when we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

humanity and look into the lives of the first humans ever to walk on this earth.

“And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh. And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.

Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.” —Genesis 2:21-3:10

These scriptures tell us about the first sin ever recorded—sometimes called the “original sin.” If you read the highlighted scripture again, you’ll also read the greatest tragedy and consequence of sin. When we mess up and make mistakes in life, there is a separation that takes place between us and God.

You can read about the separation that was caused because of the choice Adam and Eve made in Genesis 3:21-24:

“Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree



Sin begins: Before Adam and Eve ever touched the “forbidden fruit,” sin presented itself as a simple question, “Hath God said?” Sin comes the same way today, in the form of questions designed to make us question the validity of the Bible, and the very existence of God.



***“FOR THE WAGES OF
SIN IS DEATH; BUT THE
GIFT OF GOD
IS ETERNAL LIFE
THROUGH JESUS
CHRIST OUR LORD.”***

—ROMANS 6:23



Adam & Eve’s decision to listen to the serpent wasn’t just the introduction of sin into the timeline of humanity, it was also the introduction of **death**.

of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.” —Genesis 3:21-24

The Garden of Eden before sin represented a place of total presence and purity of God. The Garden was a place where Adam and Eve had dominion over everything and had a beautiful communion with God. Then, because of the sin of Adam and Eve, sin entered into the equation and caused a separation or a wedge between humanity and God.

Romans tells us about the debt that is required to remove sin from our lives:

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” —Romans 6:23

The only way to get rid of or to pay the debt of sin is death. We must all realize that we are all sinners. The Bible explains this to us.

“Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” —Psalms 51:5

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;” —Romans 3:23

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” —1 John 1:8-10

We are all sinners. We all make mistakes. We all have the same debt to pay for sin, and that debt is death.

You may have noticed when we were reading about Adam and Eve that they clothed themselves in fig leaves. However, by the end of the reading the Bible says that they were clothed by God in coats of skins. We realize through this scripture that God had a plan the entire time. The plan was for something else to be a sacrifice for the sin of humanity. From the beginning, something had to die for our sins. There has to be bloodshed for the sins of man.

“And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.” —Hebrews 9:22

Death is required to wash away our sins. In the Old Testament, people would

bring animals to the priest to sacrifice for their sins. If there is not death for our sins, then we are left with the debt to pay. Without the opportunity of repentance and remission of sins, we would all die a death with a debt of sin to pay.

This is where Jesus comes into the picture.

“The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.” —John 1:29

John the Baptist introduced Jesus as the “Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world.” This was a prophetic word spoken by John.

Jesus came to this earth to teach us how to live. He came to be an example to us all. Most importantly, Jesus came that we might have life through His death. He came to reconcile all of us back to Him through His death.

You can read about the death of Jesus Christ in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Jesus died a terrible death on a cross. The people of that day mocked Him, spit on Him, beat Him until He was unrecognizable, put a crown of thorns on His head, and then nailed Him to a cross.

Jesus endured all that pain, hurt, and agony for you and me. He paid the debt of sin for you and me on that day. This is why we must repent. When we repent we apply His death to our lives.

Peter told the people in Jerusalem about repentance in Acts 2:38:

*“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”
—Acts 2:38*

Repentance is our way of dying out to our old sinful ways and turning our lives over to God. Repentance is turning away from evil ways, denying our flesh, and walking towards God.

Repentance is saying, Jesus, I am sorry for everything I have done wrong. It is feeling sorrow for our sins and asking God for His forgiveness.

*“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”
—2 Corinthians 7:10*

Repentance is not thinking, “Well, I will sin and then just ask God to forgive me later.” Repentance is not asking God to forgive you when you know the next day you are going to do the same thing again.

Repentance is confessing our sins to God in prayer, and making up our minds that we are going to do everything possible in our lives to turn away from sin.

JESUS ENDURED ALL THAT PAIN, HURT, AND AGONY FOR YOU AND ME. HE PAID THE DEBT OF SIN FOR YOU AND ME ON THAT DAY. THIS IS WHY WE MUST REPENT. WHEN WE REPENT WE APPLY HIS DEATH TO OUR LIVES.

Sure, we are going to make mistakes. Yes, we are going to let God down. But we must try our best to live right, talk right, and please God every single day.

Repentance is a daily dying out to self and becoming obedient to the will of God. Paul said it like this:

“I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.” — 1 Corinthians 15:31

We must die daily through repentance and pick up our cross. Jesus tells us about this daily death:

“And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father’s, and of the holy angels. But I tell you of a truth, there be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the kingdom of God.” —Luke 9:23-27

SO, HOW DO WE REPENT ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE?

The simple answer is that every day we are to confess our sins to Jesus in a place of prayer and ask Him to forgive us.

“Behold, the LORD’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.” —Isaiah 59:1-2

When we come to God with a Godly sorrow, He removes that separation between us and forgives us every time. His hand can reach us no matter how far we think we are from God. He can save anyone from any mistake.

The following verse gives us four steps of repentance we can all go through to get the attention of God to hear our prayers, heal our land, and to forgive us of our sin:

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.” —2 Chronicles 7:14

WHEN WE COME TO GOD WITH A GODLY SORROW, HE REMOVES THAT SEPARATION BETWEEN US AND FORGIVES US EVERY TIME.

STEP #1: GO TO GOD IN REPENTANCE AND HUMBLE YOURSELF

When we mess up and make mistakes, the enemy of our soul likes to trip us up and tell us we do not need to humble ourselves. The enemy says we need to be prideful and act like everything is ok.

The Bible says that we need to humble ourselves before the Lord. We humble our lives before the Lord by simply acknowledging that we need God to forgive us. We cannot make it without Him in our lives

STEP #2: COMMUNICATE WITH GOD ABOUT YOUR SIN

Prayer is nothing more than communication with God. Prayer is talking with God like you are talking with your best friend. When you pray and talk to God about your sin, ask Him to forgive you and confess out loud your mistakes and sin in a place of prayer. Ask God to help you overcome your struggles and shortcomings. God will sometimes lead you to share your mistakes with a friend who can help you overcome weaknesses we all have in our lives.

“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” —James 5:16

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” —1 John 1:9

Through your communication with God, He will forgive your sin and apply His death to your life so you are no longer responsible for the debt required by sin.

STEP #3: SEEK GOD'S FACE

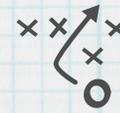
Some may feel like this step is strange and complicated. The fact of the matter is that this step is very important when finding and accepting the forgiveness God has for us through repentance.

When we read about Adam and Eve at the beginning of this lesson, we noticed they hid themselves from the face of God. They were afraid of the way God would look at them. They did not want to see His face of rejection or disappointment.

We know through reading the Word that God came looking for them. His face was not a face of rejection or anger. His face revealed concern, love and forgiveness.

When we seek God's face today through repentance, we will see the same face which has been revealed to us time and time again throughout His Word. Peter denied Jesus three times, but Jesus still came to Peter and asked him, “Do you love me?”

We must all seek God's face in times of sin and mistakes so we can be reminded



“THERE IS A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WANTING TO AND WILLING TO.”

—PAUL “BEAR” BRYANT

This famous former-coach of the University of Alabama was talking about perseverance on the football field. The same can be applied, however, to overcoming sin in our lives. It isn't enough to want to change—you must be willing to go to God and repent.

of the love Jesus has for us. When we see His face we understand the love He has for us. We understand how much our sin pains His heart because of the separation that is caused.

STEP #4: TURN AWAY FROM WICKED WAYS

The final step in repentance is to turn away from our wicked ways. Do not go back to the old ways that led us all down a path of destruction. Begin to walk the path of righteousness. Begin to daily walk the path that God gives. Allow the Bible to lead you and guide in all ways and avenues of life

“Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” —Ps 119:105

Walk the path that God has for you, and you will begin to see greater things in your life. The blessings and favor of God will begin to manifest like never before. God is calling us all out of darkness and into His marvelous light. Repent, ask God to forgive you, and begin your journey with Jesus. Your life will never be the same.

APPLICATION

What is keeping you from finding a place to pray and asking God to forgive you right now?

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What does it mean to daily carry your cross?

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It's tempting to want assurances in life that if we make a certain decision, everything will turn out alright. We rarely get them, but the Bible does offer assurances to believers! Psalms tells us that His Word will be a "lamp" for your feet, and a "light" for your path. As long as we're following His Word, we can be sure where we're headed!

What is the debt that must be paid for our sins?

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Who paid the debt for our sins?

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Can Jesus forgive any sin at any time?

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LESSON 4: THE NECESSITY OF BAPTISM

“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” —John 3:5-7

In our last lesson we learned about repentance and how when we repent we die with Christ. Let's read the following verse again from our last lesson:

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:” —1 Corinthians 15:1-4

These scriptures tell us exactly what the Gospel is:

- Jesus died for us
- Jesus was buried
- Jesus rose again on the third day

This is known as the death, burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Repentance, as we learned in lesson two, is applying the death of Jesus Christ to our lives. Just like Jesus died, we must die to our old sinful ways through repentance.

In this lesson we are going to cover the second part of the Gospel. This part is the burial of Jesus Christ. The question we must answer is how do we apply the burial of Jesus Christ to our lives? The answer can be found in the scriptures of the Word of God.

“Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” —Colossians 2:12

“Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:” —Romans 6:3-5

**THE GOSPEL
(OR “GOOD NEWS”)
IS THE DEATH, BURIAL,
AND RESURRECTION OF
JESUS CHRIST.**

When we are baptized, we are buried with Jesus into His death. Baptism is a symbol of our faith in Jesus Christ. When we are baptized, we are stating and showing that our old man that is dead is being buried with Christ. We are being born again in the water. We come out of the water a new person.

“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” — Galatians 3:26-29

There is a supernatural transaction that takes place when someone is baptized in the waters of baptism. The old sinful man or woman is buried, sins are remitted, and the individual getting baptized puts on the character of Christ. He or she is being born of the water.

Peter told some people on the day of Pentecost what they should do to find forgiveness of their sin after they realized they had crucified their Messiah.

“Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” —Acts 2:37-39

Peter said you must:

- Repent = death
- Be baptized = burial
- Receive the Holy Ghost = resurrection

Baptism is an essential part of God’s plan for salvation.

Jesus told His disciples before He ascended up into heaven to do the following:

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:” — Matthew 28:19

Jesus in His own words told His disciples to teach and then baptize everyone in the Name! We can then go to the Bible to read where His disciples obeyed the commandment of Jesus Christ.

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.” —Acts 2:38

HOW DO WE OBEY THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST IN OUR LIVES?

1

Just as Jesus died, we must die to our sins through repentance.

2

Just as Jesus was buried, we must be “buried” through baptism.

3

Just as Jesus rose again, we rise in “newness of life” when we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.



Does it really matter how you're baptized? We find in Acts 19 that believers who had already been baptized the way John the Baptist baptized people (unto repentance) were rebaptized in the name of Jesus Christ. So it was important to the early church that believers were baptized the correct way.

“Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.” —Acts 10:47-48

“And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.” —Acts 19:1-5

Something interesting to note from Acts 19 is that Paul went and found believers of God who were already baptized by John the Baptist. He told the believers that there was One that came after John and His name is Jesus. He told them they needed to get baptized again in Jesus' name. They were obedient to the teaching of Paul and were baptized in the name of Jesus.

Please read what the Bible says about baptism:

“One Lord, one faith, one baptism” —Ephesians 4:5

There is only one form of baptism ever practiced in the Bible. Every time someone was baptized in the Bible, he or she was baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Every time you read the word baptism in the Bible, it comes from the Greek word baptizio.

The word baptizio means to be immersed or totally put under the water. When we bury someone we put them all the way under the ground. The same is with baptism. We totally immerse because that is the ONE way the Bible teaches us to baptize.

Here are some scholarly proofs that show the way churches baptized in the past was changed:

The Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics:

As to Matthew 28:19, it says: “It is the central piece of evidence for the traditional (Trinitarian) view. If it were undisputed, this would, of course, be decisive, but its trustworthiness is impugned on grounds of textual criticism, literary criticism and historical criticism.” The same Encyclopedia further states that: “The obvious explanation of the silence of the New Testament on the triune name, and the use of another (JESUS NAME) formula in Acts

and Paul, is that this other formula was the earlier, and the triune formula is a later addition.”

Edmund Schlink, The Doctrine of Baptism, page 28:

“The baptismal command in its Matthew 28:19 form can not be the historical origin of Christian baptism. At the very least, it must be assumed that the text has been transmitted in a form expanded by the [Catholic] church.”

The Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, I, 275:

“It is often affirmed that the words in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost are not the ipsissima verba [exact words] of Jesus, but...a later liturgical addition.”

Wilhelm Bousset, Kyrios Christianity, page 295:

“The testimony for the wide distribution of the simple baptismal formula [in the Name of Jesus] down into the second century is so overwhelming that even in Matthew 28:19, the Trinitarian formula was later inserted.”

The Catholic Encyclopedia, II, page 263:

“The baptismal formula was changed from the name of Jesus Christ to the words Father, Son, and Holy Spirit by the Catholic Church in the second century.”

WHY WAS IT CHANGED?

The anti-Christ spirit of this world wants to remove the Name of Jesus from everything because all power in heaven and in earth is given in that Name. The Bible says:

“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” —Acts 4:12

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: (10) That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; (11) And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” —Philippians 2:9-11

“And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.” —Colossians 3:17

***“THE BAPTISMAL
FORMULA WAS CHANGED
FROM THE NAME OF JESUS
CHRIST TO THE WORDS
FATHER, SON, AND HOLY
SPIRIT BY THE CATHOLIC
CHURCH IN THE SECOND
CENTURY AT THE COUNCIL
OF NICEA IN 325 A.D.”***

—THE CATHOLIC ENCYCLOPEDIA

OTHER SCRIPTURAL REFERENCES TO BAPTISM:

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” —Mark 16:16

“Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:” —1 Peter 3:20-21

Circumcision is likened to being baptized:

“In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.” —Colossians 2:11-12

In the Old Testament, the people of God were brought into covenant with God when the men were circumcised:

“This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised : and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised , that soul shall be cut off from his people; he hath broken my covenant.” —Genesis 17:10-14

Then in the New Testament Paul told the church in Colossae that baptism was the new spiritual circumcision:

“In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead. And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing



“THERE IS A WAY THAT SEEMS RIGHT TO A MAN, BUT ITS END IS THE WAY TO DEATH.”

—PROVERBS 14:12 (ESV)

Opinions matter very little. Everyone has an opinion on any given subject. But once you decide to follow Jesus, you're making the decision to trade out your opinion for the Truth found in the Word of God; a decision to believe there is a right way to live.

it to his cross; And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.” —Colossians 2:11-15

According to this set of scriptures, there are handwritten ordinances that have been written against us when we sin. But through the obedience to the word of God in baptism, we go through a spiritual circumcision.

“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” —Galatians 3:26-29

No longer is the physical circumcision required to show a covenant with God. But through baptism, there is a spiritual circumcision. Being born of the water is when we are baptized

“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” —John 3:5-7

In these scriptures there is a religious leader named Nicodemus that comes to Jesus at night and says, What must I do to get to heaven? Jesus simply and plainly told him: you must be born again of the water (baptism in Jesus’ name) and of the spirit.

What is keeping you from getting baptized in Jesus’ name today? What is keeping you from having all your sins washed away forever? What is keeping you from obeying the scriptures Jesus gave to us?

Will you obey the gospel today?

APPLICATION

How were the early believers baptized in the Bible?

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One scripture, taken out of context, may seem to say something that doesn't make sense. When a subject is in question, it's important to find multiple scriptures that agree—the Word will always agree with itself. For that reason, we can trust that baptism in Jesus' name was the the New Testament church baptized because we see it repeated throughout the Scriptures.

LESSON 5: THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST

“Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” —John 3:5-7

In our last lesson, we were able to learn more about the baptism of water and being born of the water. In this lesson we'll cover being born of the Spirit.

Let's read the following verse again from our last lesson:

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:” —1 Corinthians 15:1-4

These scriptures tell us exactly what the Gospel is.

- Jesus died for us = Repentance
- Jesus was buried = Baptism in Jesus' Name
- Jesus rose again on the third day = Resurrection

The death, burial, and resurrection is the Gospel.

Jesus told Nicodemus that he must be born of the water and the spirit to inherit the Kingdom of God. How are we born of the spirit? In order to answer this question, we must first look into the New Testament after Jesus was resurrected. Jesus told His believers to go to Jerusalem to wait for the promise of the Father:

“And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” —Acts 1:4-8

HOW DO WE OBEY THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST IN OUR LIVES?

1

Just as Jesus died, we must die to our sins through repentance.

2

Just as Jesus was buried, we must be “buried” through baptism.

3

Just as Jesus rose again, we rise in “newness of life” when we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.



Teacher: This is a prime opportunity for you to tell about your experience receiving the Holy Ghost! Prior to teaching, take some time to reflect on that moment—try and remember the message that was preached (if it was during a service), the music...share as many details as you can remember!

Many of the believers followed the instruction of Jesus and went back to Jerusalem to wait for the promise of the Holy Ghost. You can read about what happened next in the book of Acts:

*“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”
—Acts 2:1-4*

They were all filled and began to speak with other tongues. Peter spoke of this promise later on that day to all the people who could hear him.

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” —Acts 2:38-39

The gift of the Holy Ghost is a promise for everyone who will hear the Word of God. Being born of the spirit is very important because Jesus said you must be born of the spirit to inherit the kingdom of heaven.

HOW DO YOU KNOW YOU'RE BORN OF THE SPIRIT?

Because of the importance of Holy Ghost baptism, we all need to know whether or not we are born of the Spirit. Many people have said, “I know I have the Holy Ghost because I went to church and cried.” While it is a great experience to cry in the power and presence of God, there are many reasons why we cry. Crying is not the evidence of being born of the Spirit.

Some have said, “I know I have the Spirit because I am a happy person and I do good things.” However, there are people in this world that are happy and do good things for humanity while professing that God doesn't even exist. Being happy and doing good things does not give us the evidence that we have been born of the Spirit.

There is only one way for us to know that we have been baptized with the Holy Ghost. It is the same way the people in the early church knew they were filled with the Holy Ghost:

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were

all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” —Acts 2:1-4

“While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?” —Acts 10:44-47

“And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John’s baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.” —Acts 19:1-6

Every time someone received the Holy Ghost after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, he or she spoke with other tongues—another language that he or she never knew before. The spirit of God spoke through that person.

WHY SPEAKING IN TONGUES?

When you receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, you will speak in other tongues as the spirit of God gives the utterance. Why did God use speaking in tongues as the evidence of being filled with His Spirit?

“Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.” —James 3:5-8

The Bible says that no man can tame the tongue. Only God can. When we come to God and wholly give our lives to Him, He will take our tongue and use it to give Him praise.

EVERY TIME SOMEONE RECEIVED THE HOLY GHOST AFTER THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST, HE OR SHE SPOKE WITH OTHER TONGUES—ANOTHER LANGUAGE THAT HE OR SHE NEVER KNEW BEFORE.



Teacher: This is a prime opportunity for you to tell about your experience receiving the Holy Ghost! Prior to teaching, take some time to reflect on that moment—try and remember the message that was preached (if it was during a service), the music...share as many details as you can remember!

This is a supernatural heavenly experience that has been going on for over 2,000 years now. Thousands of people all over the world are being baptized with the Holy Ghost evidenced by speaking in tongues each year. Just like the people received the Holy Ghost in the first church, we are still receiving the Holy Ghost the same way today.

When someone wants this gift, there are two things he must do:

- Repent of his sins
- Open his mouth and thank God for the Gift that He is going to give him

As that individual begins to thank God and praise the Lord with words like “Hallelujah,” and “I love you, Jesus,” that individual will begin to speak words of another language that he or she has never learned before.

Something to remember when receiving the gift of the Holy Ghost is that when God begins to take over our tongues or language, we can only speak one language at a time. We must be willing to surrender our known language to speak the unknown language of men or angels.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT THE HOLY GHOST?

“And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” —Romans 8:10-11

The same Spirit that raised up Jesus Christ is the same Spirit that is going to raise us up. If we do not have this Spirit then we will not partake of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If we do not have the Holy Ghost, we have not obeyed the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Always remember that the Holy Ghost is a gift from God. He is the only One that can give it!

There are many benefits to having the Holy Ghost:

- It is a part of God's plan for salvation
- It is a Comforter when we need comfort
- It teaches us all things
- It brings to our memory what we have learned in God and what has been spoken to us.

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” —John 14:26

The Holy Ghost also helps us be used in the Gifts of the Spirit. You can read about the Gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12. I am not going to read through them all but I will show you through the first couple of verses that the gifts come from being filled with the Holy Ghost:

“Now there are diversities of gifts , but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.” —1 Corinthians 12:4-6

I could name many other blessings or attributes that come with being full of the Holy Ghost, but they can all be summed up like this: It is God living in you! God’s plan for you is to obey the Gospel and to be full of His Spirit! You can be born again of the water and the spirit!

SUMMARY

In our lesson today, we learned about the resurrection and Spirit of God that we can all be filled with.

The Bible says:

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.” —1 John 4:4

When God fills you with His Spirit, there will be greatness within you. This greatness is greater than anything in this world. This greatness is a gift given to you to overcome the things of this world. This greatness will one day give you victory over death, hell, and the grave.

When you are born again of the water and the Spirit, there will be nothing holding you back from becoming the man or woman of God that He has created you to become.

If you have not been filled with the Holy Ghost, we are available to pray with you today to receive it! Let your journey to greatness start today and experience everything God has for you in Jesus’ Name!

APPLICATION

How did the early believers know people were filled with the Holy Ghost?

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LESSON 6: WHAT NOW? LIVING A CHRISTIAN LIFE

So, you've learned about who God is, the Word of God, faith, repentance, the necessity of baptism, and the gift of the Holy Ghost. What's next? This is just the beginning of a new life in Christ, and God will not leave you to figure it out on your own. Let's explore some fundamental habits that foster healthy Christians.

DAILY PRAYER

Prayer is communication in relation to God. You can talk to Him as you would talk to anyone else. Praying out loud can help you stay focused, and the deepest things of God can be found in extended prayer.

Daily prayer is essential because it's where we learn to communicate with God and become more like Him through daily repentance and following His will. Consider setting a goal to gradually increase your daily prayer time to 30 minutes or more. Getting up an hour early can help eliminate distractions and ensure a successful devotion.

If you don't know how to pray, you can start by using the Lord's Prayer as a model to pray directly to God.

"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. (10) Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. (11) Give us this day our daily bread. (12) And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. (13) And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen." —Matthew 6:9-13

And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." —Mark 1:25

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." —Philippians 4:6

"And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? 41 Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." —Matthew 26:40-41



ONE HOUR PRAYER-GUIDE

Do each of the following for about 5 minutes each, and you will have completed an hour of prayer by the end.

1. Praise
2. Kingdom Praying
3. Forgiveness & Confession
4. Petition
5. Intercession
6. Bible Reading
7. Meditation
8. Thanksgiving
9. Pray the Word
10. Singing
11. Listening
12. Praise

For more resources on prayer, check out UPCI's World Network of Prayer.



BIBLE READING TIP

Reading the Bible is not a one-time event. The teachings and messages contained within its pages can speak to us in different ways depending on where we are in life. Therefore, it is important to read the Bible repeatedly and consistently throughout our spiritual journey. By doing so, we can continue to deepen our understanding and relationship with God.

READING THE BIBLE

In Lesson 2, we discussed the Bible, which is the Word of God. However, it is not only the Word of God but also the food for our soul.

"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." —Matthew 4:4

We don't accidentally forget to eat breakfast, lunch, or dinner for days, but we often forget to feed our souls. Just as we would be physically weak without food, we are spiritually weak without God's Word every day.

To maintain a regular habit of reading the Bible, try reading Matthew (Words of God), Acts (Church of God), and Proverbs (Wisdom of God) every month. These books are deep but easy to read and have about 31 chapters each. You can read the chapter number that corresponds to each day of the month. However, don't forget to study and read through other books in the Bible as well! Keeping a checklist can help you stay on track.

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God." —Matthew 22:29

"Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." —Psalms 119:11

"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." —Psalms 119:18

GOING TO CHURCH

It is God's will that you faithfully attend a church and have a pastor. The church is full of people whom God has freed from drugs, alcohol, addictions, sexual violence, abuse, and so on. These people will love you and help you.

Make sure not to miss a single Sunday because what keeps us from church will keep us from heaven. If you want to be healthier, you go to the gym. If you want to be saved, you go to church.

"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." —1 Timothy 3:15

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." —Hebrews 10:25

"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.

10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.

11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone?

12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken." —Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

FASTING

Fasting is essentially the act of giving up food or other things for a period of time to focus on one's thoughts on God. While fasting, many people read the Bible, pray, or worship. Fasting can be found throughout the Old and New Testaments of the Bible, over fifty times.

Not only does fasting and prayer help us focus on God, but it also brings us closer to Him and changes our hearts. Niles and Little write, "When we fast and pray, we take time away from a meal or activity to devote our entire being to focusing on God. We find that we are more sensitive to the voice of God, more attuned to hearing what He has to reveal to us."

Typical fasting lasts for 24 hours, from sunset to sunset. However, other things can be fasted, including entertainment and social media. A good rule of thumb for fasting is one day per week. If you have never fasted before, talk to someone who has experience to get guidance on how to do it correctly. Fasting from food and water can be dangerous for someone with health conditions or someone who has never done it before.

"Even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning." —Joel 2:12

"where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone.'" —Luke 4:2-4

HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD

Holiness is the most prominent theme of the Bible. Embracing holiness standards and developing deeper convictions will enable us to stand firm in our faith. Holiness is the greatest word in the Bible, as vast as the oceans, as high as the heavens, as wide as the universe, and as great as God Himself.

"Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. " —1 Peter 1:16

This is the call of God - there is no real choice in the matter! Our end goal is to become more like Christ.

JOHN KNOX, A CHRISTIAN LEADER DURING THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION, FASTED AND PRAYED SO MUCH THAT QUEEN MARY SAID SHE FEARED HIS PRAYERS MORE THAN ALL THE ARMIES OF SCOTLAND.



**THE WORD HOLINESS IS
MENTIONED AT LEAST
600 TIMES IN THE BIBLE!
THAT'S A BIG DEAL!**

"(8) And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein. (9) No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there —Isaiah 35:8-9

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" —Hebrews 12:14

SANCTIFICATION - the process of being made into a "saint"

Sanctification is the process by which God perfects us and produces righteousness in our lives, preparing us for our meeting with Christ as the bride meeting the bridegroom. This period of training sets us apart and separates us from all others, and it is brought about by our dedication and consecration to God. Through the process of sanctification, God sets us apart and makes us holy.

HOLINESS - the process of being "set apart for God"

The visions that God gave to Job, Moses, and Isaiah were visions of the holiness of God. Despite the many things God could have shown them, He chose holiness, and they fell down in reverence before God. After these visions, Moses removed his shoes in reverence and could not speak, Isaiah felt his own unworthiness, and Job saw the vast gap between God's holiness and man's sinfulness.

Because of this gap, God had to find a way to bridge it. The new birth, through faith in Jesus Christ, is the way that God accomplishes this.

"(19) Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; (20) And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; (21) In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: (22) In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. —Ephesians 2:19-22

Holiness is indeed the first call of God to every Christian. And how does one become set apart for God? By continuing to dive into Scripture and learning how to be more like Jesus.

"For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." —1 Thessalonians 4:7

"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation" —1 Peter 1:15

Holiness definitely has a significant impact on our conversations. It enables us to avoid negative behaviors such as gossip and fault-finding. It also empowers us to cultivate a positive and respectful attitude towards others, treating them the way we want to be treated. Moreover, holiness helps us to keep our attitudes in check and become more Christlike in our actions, demeanor, and treatment of others.

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." —2 Corinthians 7:1

As believers, we are called to do everything we do to the glory of God. This means rejecting and renouncing all forms of worldliness that can hinder our spiritual growth. The imprint of holiness is the only way that we can effectively fight against the flesh, the world, and the devil. By seeking to live a holy life, we are empowered to overcome temptation and to stay committed to God's plan and purpose for our lives.

"(11) For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, (12) Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; (13) Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" —Titus 2:11-13

If you lack holiness, pray for convictions. Many people today have fallen away from God because they did not love the conviction of truth. You must fall in love with the truth that is God-given. Truth and holiness are siamese twins. You can't separate the truth. As you continue on your journey of seeking out the truth in His Word, ask God to grow you in holiness so that when people see you, they see Jesus. Remember that holiness is not about being perfect, but it is about surrendering your life to God and allowing Him to transform you from the inside out. Pray for His help and guidance, and He will lead you on the path of holiness.

APPLICATION

CHECKLIST:

- Set a time to wake up each morning to pray.**
- Start getting into the Word, daily.**
- Make sure you're plugged in to church each week.**
- Look into fasting and develop your own routine to make it a regular part of your Christian life.**

In what ways can you grow into holiness?

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THIS BIBLE STUDY IS AVAILABLE AS A FREE DOWNLOAD AT

WWW.SOPUPC.COM