

## Lesson 1: Salvation—My New life in Jesus Christ

Here is how we share with a person the Bible's good news of how to have eternal life.

### 1. We start with the bad news—we all have sinned!

What!? We start with bad news? That's right. To understand why Jesus Christ had to come and die on the cross, we must understand and accept the bad news. The Bible says, *"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23).

"Sin" means anything we think, say or do (or fail to do) that falls short of God's perfect standard. Have you ever been mean to your brother or sister? Have you ever failed to obey your parent? Told a lie? Yes, we have all done things wrong. We are all sinners. We have all fallen short of God's glory, which is perfection. God is righteous, and there is no sin in God's heaven.

The bad news gets worse! *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"* (Romans 6:23). Because of our sins, we have earned "death"—which means separation from God. Until we are saved, we are separated from God spiritually. And if a person does not receive the salvation God offers

through His Son before that person dies physically, then that lost person is lost forever! In a real place called hell! The Bible calls this *"the second death"* (Rev. 20:14).

#### **"Repentance" and salvation**

*Repentance* is a Bible word that means "change of mind." In dealing with the bad news of our sin problem, the Holy Spirit brings repentance and conviction in the sinner's heart as to his or her lost condition and desperate need for salvation. Under that conviction and Spirit-led need for salvation, the sinner trusts Jesus Christ to be saved and receives God's gift of eternal life.

Here is what the Bible teaches about hell (also called *"the lake of fire"*): *"Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast*

*into the lake of fire*" (Revelation 20:15). According to Revelation 20:10, those who are in hell *"will be tormented day and night forever and ever."* The truth of sin, and its *"wages"* or consequences, is really bad news. But the Bible has some very, very good news!

## **2. Now the good news—Jesus Christ, God's Son, died on the cross to pay for your sins!**

Because of our sin problem, we are helpless to save ourselves, but God in His grace has stepped in, and He has made the only way of salvation. God has

**"Gospel"**

*Gospel* is a Bible word that means "good news"! The gospel is clearly defined by the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:1-4. According to Paul, here is the gospel: *"...that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures..."* (1 Cor. 15:3-4).

Himself provided the only way to have eternal life in His heaven. This is the gospel, the good news of the Bible!

*"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"*

(Romans 5:8). God became Man when Jesus Christ was born. Jesus Christ, the Son of God, lived a sinless,

righteous life in complete obedience to the will of God the Father. Then Jesus Christ was crucified on the cross and buried. God the Father then raised Jesus Christ from the dead 3 days later! That is the gospel, which means "good news"! (see 1 Corinthians 15:1-4)

**"That is good news! I am so thankful that Jesus Christ died to pay for my sins...but how can I be saved??"**

The Bible says, "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Do you understand that you are a sinner, guilty before God, and deserving of hell? Do you want to be saved? If so, the Bible says *"whoever believes in Him..."* will be saved. What does it mean to believe? It means to "trust"—and

it's kind of like sitting down in a chair. Just as you trust that chair to hold you off the ground with no strength or effort of your own, you must depend on Jesus Christ alone to give you His life—eternal life!—through no effort or good works of your own. Simply trust the Lord Jesus Christ to save you!

**What about religion? Joining the church? Being baptized in water? Helping the poor? Trying to live a good life? Will any of these things help?**

Not according to the Bible. The Bible teaches that salvation is a free gift, and that Jesus Christ with His death on the cross paid for all of your sins.

*"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).

**So, do you believe this? Have you trusted in Jesus Christ alone to save you?**

If you died tonight, do you know where you would go? If you have questions about this, please ask your pastor or children's director. We would love to help you understand about God's GIFT of salvation!

**Bible Memorization is important.** Practice the verses we talked about this week.

*"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23)

*"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us"* (Romans 5:8).

*"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life"* (John 3:16).



*"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).*

## **LET'S TALK...** Questions from **Lesson 1: Salvation—My New Life in Jesus Christ**

1. Have you personally trusted in Jesus Christ as your Savior?
2. What is the bad news that is plainly laid out in the Bible (and doesn't take much convincing when we look into our heart and actions)?
3. Is there anything we can do on our own to fix our sin problem?
4. What do we earn because of our sin?
5. What does the word "gospel" mean?
6. What is the gospel? (hint: 1 Corinthians 15:3-4)
7. What does it mean to believe in Jesus as your Savior?
8. Why can't we do anything to help out God with our salvation? (hint: Eph 2:9)
9. If you died tonight, where would you spend eternity? Why?

## Lesson 2: Salvation—My Assurance of Eternal life

In this lesson, we will learn that the Bible teaches that a person who has been born again (saved) is eternally secure in Christ. Salvation cannot be lost. Also, we will learn in this lesson about the important activities of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian. When a person is born from above through faith in God's Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, that person enters into a new and wonderful quality of life. The very eternal life of God comes to dwell in the new Christian.

### 1. A New Life of Assurance

There may be times when you wonder about your salvation. "Am I really saved?" "Did I do it right?" "Can I lose my salvation?" Well, the good news of eternal life truly is good news! We did nothing to earn salvation, and therefore we can do nothing that would cause us to lose this new life in Christ (remember, it is the work of Jesus Christ on the cross that saves, and His work is credited to us by faith in Him). When a person is born again, he or she receives the life of the Son of God. Think on these verses of assurance. Some words have been highlighted that emphasize our security in Christ:

#### Not by works...

*Just as a sinner is not saved by any work that he or she does or earns, a saved person cannot "do" anything that would cause God to kick us out of His forever family. We can get out of fellowship with Jesus Christ, but the Bible teaches that eternal life is eternal. We cannot be taken out of God's family.*

- *"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:6).*
- *"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).*

• *"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, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God" (1 John 5:13).*



• *"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life" (John 5:24).*

• *"And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand" (John 10:27-28).*

### **Eternal Security**

*"Eternal" means forever. "Security" means freedom from danger, fear and anxiety. Therefore, "eternal security" means that the Christian can be forever free from the danger, fear and anxiety of having to go to hell. The moment you trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, God gave you eternal life in Christ. God has promised that those who have been saved will spend eternity with Him in heaven.*

There are passages in the Bible that warn the child of God about sinning. When we sin, that sin causes the Christian to lose fellowship with Jesus Christ and to lose joy. But sin cannot cause a Christian to no longer be a Christian.

According to the Bible, when we do sin, the child of God is instructed to confess that sin to the Father, and the Father is faithful and just to provide forgiveness. That is how a Christian who falls into sin is restored to fellowship

with Jesus Christ. This is explained in 1 John 1:9: *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* There will be times that you will have to go before God in prayer and confess to Him that you have sinned. This promise from God's Word is that God will cleanse you and restore you to fellowship with Him.

## 2. The Christian's Life in the Holy Spirit

Our new life is a life of assurance because God the Father sees His child as connected to Jesus Christ. Our new life in Christ is a life of spiritual power because the Spirit of God comes to lives in the child of God at the moment of salvation. It is important for you to learn about the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian. Let's begin by studying what the Bible teaches about the Holy Spirit's role in salvation.

### Ministries of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian

#### 1. The Convicting Ministry of the Holy Spirit

An important ministry of the Holy Spirit is His work to convict sinners (like you and me!) of our desperate need for a Savior because we are sinful beings. It is the Holy Spirit who revealed to us our "lostness" and our need for salvation.

The Lord Jesus Christ explained the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit very clearly to His disciples in John 16:5-11. The explanation came while our Lord was telling them He had come to die, and the news of His death, burial, resurrection was difficult for the disciples to understand and accept. Even after seeing their Lord resurrected, His followers would again be tested when Jesus Christ ascended back to the Father (Acts 1:9). By all appearances, He was leaving them again!

So, Jesus gave them some very good news before He left them: *"Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment"* (John 16:7-8).

If you have friends or family members that you want to share the gospel with, pray and ask God to bring conviction to their hearts of their need for salvation. That is what the Holy Spirit does!



## 2. Regeneration

Next, we will learn about the Holy Spirit's work of regeneration as part of God's mighty work of salvation. "Regeneration" is a Bible word that means to be given new life! Here is one of verses that help to explain regeneration: *"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit"* (Titus 3:5). A person is born again by trusting in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ. At the very moment that happens, that person is regenerated by the Holy Spirit! Washed clean! A lost sinner is made alive! The apostle Paul explains what happens because of the regeneration of the Christian: *"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new"* (2 Corinthians 5:17).

## 3. Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Another important blessing in being a Christian is our union, or spiritual connection, with Christ. This union is accomplished by the baptism of the new believer by the Holy Spirit into Christ. This operation of God places the believer into union with Christ, the source of all of the believer's life and strength. This is a supernatural act of God is at the time of the new birth—and is not connected with water baptism and is not connected to any experience after salvation occurs.

Paul explains the meaning of Holy Spirit baptism: *"For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all be made to drink into one Spirit"* (1 Cor. 12:12-13).

At the moment of salvation, a person goes from being outside of Christ (and lost) to being in Christ (saved!). It is because of our connection with Christ through Holy Spirit baptism that the Bible uses the phrase *"in Christ"* many times. Holy Spirit baptism is not connected to service or experiences. Holy Spirit baptism is God's work at the moment of salvation.



#### 4. Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Another radical blessing that is part of the new birth is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian. This reality is what makes the church age so very special. God has poured out His rich grace to us, as Christians are *"partakers of the divine nature"* (2 Peter 1:4).

The Apostle Paul taught that the Holy Spirit dwells in a Christian (or that person is not a Christian):

*"But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His"* (Rom. 8:9).

*"And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!'"* (Gal. 4:6). So, remember, the Holy Spirit comes to indwell, or to live inside, every person who is saved at the very instant of salvation.

#### 5. Sealing of the Holy Spirit

What a blessing it is to know that I was marked by God by the sealing of the Holy Spirit when I was saved! God put His mark, His seal, on my heart! Here are some two passages from the Bible that explain this work of the Holy Spirit that happens at the time of our salvation:



- *"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory"* (Eph. 1:13-14).

- *"Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us is God, who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee"* (2 Cor. 1:21-22).

The sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit means that the Holy Spirit comes into the believer's heart *"as a guarantee."* This is God's way of guaranteeing He will finish what He has started in your life, and that He will get you safely to heaven.

The Holy Spirit has other ministries that help us live the Christian life with power and victory. We will study those ministries of the Holy Spirit in later lessons. These five ministries of the Holy Spirit that we have learned in this lesson are all connected to the Holy Spirit's work at the time of salvation.

#### **Questions for the week:**

1. What does it mean to have assurance about your salvation?
2. According to 1 John 5:13, do we "hope" that we have eternal life or do we "know" that we have eternal life?
3. Is there anything we can do to earn our salvation?
4. Is there anything we can do to lose our salvation?
5. Does becoming a Christian mean that I will never sin again?
6. What do I do when I commit a sin?
7. List the five ministries of the Holy Spirit that happen at the time of salvation.

## Lesson 3: My Connection to the Church

As you study the Bible as a new Christian, you will discover many wonderful truths about what it means to be spiritually connected to Jesus Christ through the new birth. One of the beautiful truths is that a Christian is immediately connected to the **Body** of Jesus Christ at the moment a person is saved. It works like this: our Lord Jesus Christ has arisen from the dead and has ascended to the right hand of God in heaven. But, Jesus Christ is still at work down here on the earth.

How does He work? He works through His church, His body—which is made up of all Christians. This week we will study about:

- *what* the church is
- *how* God's church works.
- and *what* are the jobs are in God's church.

### The Body of Christ

*Jesus Christ is still at work here on the earth. How does He work? He works through His church, His body—which is made up of all Christians.*

### 1. The 'Big' Church

Here's the big idea of God's big plan called the "*church*." At the new birth, the new Christian is placed into the "*body of Christ*." The "*body of Christ*" is the church. God's church includes all people who are truly saved, no matter where they live. There are saved people (like yourself) here in the United States, and there are also saved people in the other countries of the world. Remember, the salvation is available to anyone who trusts Jesus Christ! Though we don't know them all, these who have been saved are also connected to the body of Christ and our brothers and sisters in Christ. Here are a few of the verses in the Bible that describe this exciting truth:

- "*And He [Jesus Christ] is the head of the body, the church...*" (Colossians 1:18a).

- *"Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually"* (1 Corinthians 12:27).
- *"For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greek, whether slaves or free—and all have been made to drink into one Spirit"* (1 Corinthians 12:13). Remember, this spiritual connection with the Lord Jesus Christ is what happens through the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which happens at the moment a person is saved. Salvation is available to any person in the world who receives God's gift of salvation by trusting Jesus Christ as Savior, and there are Christians all across the world!
- *"And He [God the Father] put all things under His feet [Jesus Christ's feet], and gave Him [Jesus Christ] to be head over all things to the church, which is His [Jesus Christ's] body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all"* (Ephesians 1:22-23).

So, a Christian is placed by God into spiritual union with Christ at the moment of salvation, and becomes part of the body of Jesus Christ. And, just as with our bodies, the Head (where the brain is) gives the orders, and the body obeys. This is how God's purposes get done here on the earth—through the body of

### **The 'Head' Gives the Orders**

*Just as with our human bodies, the Head (where the brain is) gives the orders, and the body obeys. This is how God's work gets done here on the earth—through the body of Jesus Christ, His church!*

Jesus Christ, His church, obeying the Head, which is Jesus Christ! Now, let's study what the Bible teaches about what happens when Christians who live in the same area come together to be used for God's purposes.

## **2. The Local Church**

It's time to study what the Bible says about the local church, the gathering of local Christians. You have just learned that God's "big" church includes all true Christians (those who have been born again through faith in Jesus Christ) who live all over the world. But, that is not the only way we use the word "church." Sometimes we call the building that Christians meet in "the

church.” Actually, this is not correct, because the church is made up of the saved people who meet in the building. The church is not the building that we meet in. When you gather with other Christians for worship, usually on a Sunday, you are gathering with other saved people and coming together as the local church (Christians from the same area) to worship and serve God together in your community.

When we gather to worship the Risen Savior, Christians also use our spiritual gifts to encourage each other and to help each other to grow into mature Christians. God’s Word also tells us about two special activities that Christians participate in when they come together as the local church. These activities are sometimes called “ordinances,” which is a long word that just means a ceremony that God has given to help or teach the church.

### The Lord’s Supper

One ordinance is “the Lord’s Supper” (also called communion). This is a ceremony of remembrance that helps us to remember the broken body and the shed blood of our Savior on the cross. Jesus Christ is the “*Bread of life*” (John 6:35). Shortly before He died on

#### **Two “Ordinances” of the church**

*It is good to remember our Lord’s death, burial and resurrection! God gives us two ways help us remember what Jesus Christ did for us. One way is through our participation in “The Lord’s Supper.” Also, new Christians are baptized in water to show others that they have trusted in Christ for salvation. This is another way God’s helps us to remember Jesus Christ’s saving work on the cross.*

the cross, Jesus Christ told His disciples to take bread, share it, and eat it together. This breaking of the bread together points to the truth that Jesus Christ’s body was broken on the cross. Jesus Christ also told His disciples to drink together from a cup of wine. The wine (our local church uses grape juice) is a reminder that Jesus Christ’s blood was shed on the cross as payment for our sins. The Lord told the

disciples to continue participating in “the Lord’s supper” after He goes back to heaven so that Christians can be



reminded regularly of our Lord's crucified body and His shed blood.

The apostle Paul was instructed by Jesus Christ to be a church planter (a mature Christian who helps lead people to salvation in Jesus Christ and to organize local churches in new areas). Being obedient to Jesus Christ's commandment, Paul taught the Christians in the new churches to keep on doing "The Lord's Supper" to help the Christians remember the death of Jesus Christ on the cross for our sins. In our church gatherings, we continue today (about 2,000 years later) to take part in "the Lord's Supper" together, just as our Lord instructed us to do. You can read more about this ordinance in 1 Corinthians 11:23-31.

### Water Baptism

The second ordinance is water baptism. In the Bible, there are different kinds of baptisms mentioned. One is "spiritual baptism" which we learned about in the last lesson. Spiritual baptism means to be connected spiritually to Jesus Christ, and this is what happens a person at the instant he or she is saved. Water baptism is another ordinance given by God to the church (remember, an ordinance is a ceremony given by God to help us remember our Lord). Through water baptism, a Christian can testify (show others) that he or she has been saved by trusting Jesus Christ as Savior. Water baptism does not help to save a person or give eternal life. Water baptism is a picture of spiritual baptism, and it is a picture of the Christian's spiritual connection with Jesus Christ.

#### Where did water baptism come from?

*Before Jesus Christ went back to heaven (after God raised Him from the dead), our Lord commanded His disciples to preach the gospel to everyone in the world (Matthew 28:19-20). He commanded the disciples to baptize everyone who believed the gospel. Christians today continue to obey His command.*



It works like this: with the assistance of a pastor or church leader, the person being baptized is put under the water (for just a short time). This is a picture of Christ dying and being buried—and the new Christian’s connection

with Him! Then the new Christian is brought up out of the water. This is a picture of Jesus Christ being raised from the dead—and the new Christian’s connection with Him. Water baptism is a way to show and tell others that you are now saved and forever connected to Jesus Christ.

### 3. Your Job in the Local Church

When we come together as the local church, we are gathering for a purpose. The Bible teaches in Ephesians 4:13 that Christians are to gather to worship and praise Almighty God, to love each other in Christ, to experience unity in Christ, and to grow in Christ! Also, God has made plans to use each of us for His purposes as we love, help, and encourage each other to grow to be mature Christians. As a Christian, we are to “grow up” to spiritual maturity, and we have the privilege of helping each other along the way (Ephesians 4:14-15)

God has given every Christian a spiritual gift—a special, supernatural ability—to be used in the local church. Remember, Jesus Christ is the Head of the church, and you and I make up the body. A body has many parts, and all are useful in the way the body works. Paul the apostle explains this: *“For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them...”* (Rom. 12:4-6a).



Here are the gifts of the Spirit listed by Paul in Romans 12:

- prophecy



- ministry
- teaching
- exhortation
- giving
- leading
- showing mercy

The Bible also teaches about spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4:4-16. Here are some additional spiritual gifts listed in these passages:

(From 1 Corinthians 12)

- word of wisdom
- word of knowledge
- faith
- word of knowledge
- faith
- healings
- workings of miracles
- discerning of spirits
- different kinds of tongues
- interpretations of tongues

(Additional gifts listed in Ephesians 4)

- apostles
- evangelists
- pastors/teachers

As you begin to grow in Christ, pray and ask God to show you the spiritual gift that He has given to you. The Bible teaches that God has a plan for your life. As a member of the body of Christ, you have special work to do. Jesus Christ as the Head of the body will show you your job and your purpose. *"For you are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them"* (Eph. 2:10).

## More Insight into Spiritual Gifts

1) God chooses which gift or gifts to give each Christian. *"But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one as He wills (chooses)"* (1 Cor. 12:11).

2) Some spiritual gifts may have ended or become rarely needed after the Bible was completed. Many Bible students believe that some gifts (such as miracles and healing) were only provided by the Holy Spirit to the apostles for use in the early church period. Now that we have the Bible, we are to believe the miracles that are recorded in God's Word rather than for our faith to depend on seeing miracles.

## Questions for the week:

1. Who makes up the church?
2. Who is the Head of the church? Write the verse that teaches this truth (hint: the verse is listed on page 11 of this study).
3. What is the local church?
4. What are two ordinances that we practice in the local church?
5. What is every believer given in order to carry out the work of God in building up His church to maturity?
6. When believers gather as the local church, what are some of the activities that take place as we worship God together and grow into maturity in the Lord Jesus Christ together? (Note: a listing that includes some of the activities of the local church is included on the next page, but try to list some activities yourself before you look at this list 😊)

## Lesson 4: My Daily Growth in the Lord

The salvation of a sinner is a radical miracle of God! At the instant you trust Christ as Savior, the Holy Spirit regenerates your human spirit with newness of life. As we have learned, the saved person becomes a new creature and is connected to the very life of Jesus Christ—a member of His body! *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation”* (2 Corinthians 5:17b). However, there is something that you need to understand as a new Christian. According to the Bible, the new Christian is a babe in Christ (1 Cor. 3:1). When you were born physically on your actual birthday, you were a baby—small and helpless. You needed someone to feed you, to change your diaper, and to protect and care for you. A new Christian is similar to a newborn baby because the newly born Christian needs to “grow up” to spiritual maturity in Christ. That is God’s goal, and God has sent His Spirit into the heart and life of each Christian to make this process of growth possible. So, how does the new Christian grow to maturity in Christ?

### Time to Grow!

*The new Christian is a “babe” in Christ and needs to “grow up” to spiritual maturity in Christ.*

### 1. Time in God’s Word

One very important part of spiritual growth is spending time reading and studying the Bible, which is God’s Word. The truths of the Bible are spiritual food for the Christian. Here are some ways the Bible explains this:

- *“as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby”* (1 Peter 2:2). Those of us who have been around newborn babies understand that those little ones are very interested at being fed their milk any time they are hungry. They will fuss and cry (very loudly) until they are fed. This teaches us about how important “feeding” from God’s Word is for the Christian, especially a new Christian. The *“pure milk of the word”* includes the basic truths about who Jesus Christ is and what He did on the

cross for us, as well as the Biblical truths about creation, sin, serving the Lord, heaven, hell, and plenty of other basic doctrines. This class is about getting the *"pure milk of the word to you"*—our new brothers and sisters in Christ—so you can grow up to maturity and accomplish the purposes of God.

### **Doctrine**

*The Bible is filled with spiritual truths that we need to read, study, remember and share with others.*

- *"But solid food belongs to those of full age..."* (Hebrews 5:14)

A baby feeds only on milk, but, after a period of growth, the little ones begin to eat solid food. In the same way, the baby Christian takes into his mind and heart the basic truths from the

Bible (*"the milk of the word"*), but then it is time to begin to learn more complex truths from the Bible. That is what the writer of Hebrews is talking about in the verse given above. The Bible is filled with spiritual truths (sometimes referred to as "doctrines") that we need to read, study, remember and share with others. In fact, a Christian will spend his or her entire life learning and growing to maturity in Christ, because the Bible is so filled with the truths of God that we will never run out of things to learn about Him. And doing this, we will grow spiritually and also be able to help others to grow as we pass on those truths.



## **2. Time in prayer**

When you read and study the Bible, you are allowing God to speak to your mind and heart. When you pray to God, your mind and heart can speak back to God. And because of your new life in Christ, the great Creator God of the universe will hear you! Prayer is a very special, powerful and important part of the Christian life. Let's talk about some types of prayer by considering these verses from God's Word:

- *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God"* (Philippians 4:6).

The Bible instructs God's people to pray when the struggles, problems and worries of this world are crashing into our

thoughts. In the verse above, the Apostle Paul instructs the believer to engage in:

- Prayer—this is coming to God in the name of Jesus Christ and talking to Him, about anything.
- Supplication—this is coming to God in the name of Jesus Christ and asking Him to meet a specific need (think of this as asking God to reach into His "supply" and meet our need).
- Thanksgiving—this is simply bringing our "thanks" and our praises to God (it is very important to give God thanksgiving, as this helps us to remember that we have been saved by His grace and not by works of righteousness that we have done).

- *"Therefore I exhort [instruct] first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, giving of thanks be made for all men"* (1 Timothy 2:1).

In this verse Paul (the great apostle, missionary and church planter who wrote 13 of the 27 books of the New Testament) tells us that ministry begins with prayer. Paul mentions "*supplications,*" "*prayers,*" and "*giving of thanks*" (thanksgiving), which we've already learned about. But he adds another important category of prayer—"*intercessions.*"

- Intercession—this is bringing another person's life and needs before God's throne and interceding for that person (bringing that person's spiritual or life needs to God and asking that God work in that person's life).

## Prayer Journal

*It is helpful to write down the prayer requests that you have asked of God. Over time, you will see God move in response to prayer, and this will greatly encourage you!*

There is much to learn about prayer, but the main thing to learn is: pray!  
Talk to God as You read His Word. Talk to God and praise Him for His goodness in saving you. Talk to God about the struggles you are dealing with.



How do you get to know a person? You spend time with them. How do you get to know God? You spend time with Him. God has graciously given the Christian brand new life and has given the Christian the opportunity to “walk” with God in a relationship. What a blessing—to be a “walking partner” with the One True God! (See Genesis 6:9 to learn how Noah walked with God).

### **3. Time with other Christians**

When you were saved, you were given at least one spiritual gift. A spiritual gift is a special, supernatural ability to be used to minister to and build up other believers. You may remember from the previous lesson about the church that there are different types of spiritual gifts. When we come together as the local church, or even when we just meet together in small groups, we help each other to grow. For example, if I have the gift of teaching, I can help you to understand the Bible better. If you have the gift of mercy, you can help a person who is in need. If another brother or sister in Christ, has the gift of giving, he or she can use that gift to bring strength to the ministry. All of these gifts working together help us all to grow to maturity in Christ!

When believers in Jesus Christ spend time in worship together, they edify or “build up,” or encourage, one another. This helps bring both accountability and encouragement from other believers into our lives. And even the Apostle Paul—the great missionary and church planter—depended on others for encouragement. Listen to how Paul explained this to the Christians in the Roman church:

*"For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established—that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith of both you and me" (Romans 1:11-12).*

**Questions for the week:**

1. How do you get to know a person?
2. How do you get to know God?
3. Name two ways believers in Jesus Christ spend time with God?
4. After a person is "*born again*" (John 3:3) by trusting in Jesus Christ as Savior, is that person a babe in Christ or already mature in Christ?
5. Do babies eat real food when they are born?
6. Just like babies drink milk, we as Christians should drink what?
7. How does God "talk" to a Christian?
8. What is prayer?
9. What are some of the types of prayers that we studied in this lesson?
10. Memorize two of your Bible verses.



## Lesson 5: Evangelism and Discipleship

One of the exciting realities of being born again to a new life in Christ is that the very life of Jesus Christ lives inside the Christian. One of the ways that the life of Christ is expressed in the Christian is through an overflow of Christ's love. A Christian is

### **The Love of Christ**

*A Christian is known by his or her love for other Christians. A Christian will also be moved to reach out to the hurting and lost people of the world with the good news of Jesus Christ's death, burial and resurrection.*

known by his or her love for other Christians (John 13:34-35). **A Christian will also be moved by love to reach out to the hurting and lost people of this world.** So with this week's lesson we will close our "New Christian" series by studying the Bible's instructions on how to reach others with the gospel and how to help our brothers and sisters to grow in Christ. The process of helping others to grow spiritually is called "discipleship." We will also learn how important it is to share the gospel with people who do not yet know the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. The work of getting the gospel to those who are not saved is called "evangelism." We will learn that all Christians are called to be part of this exciting and important work.

In this lesson we will study some passages that will help us to understand our Lord's instructions:

### **1. "The Great Commission"—Matthew 28:19-20**

After the Lord Jesus Christ was raised from the dead, He spent 40 additional days here on the earth with His disciples before He ascended back to the Father in heaven (His "ascension"—or going back up to be with the Father in heaven—is described in Acts 1:1-9). During those 40 days that He spent with His disciples, the Lord continued to teach them. One of the commands He gave them is this very clear command that is recorded in Matthew 28:19-20:

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."*

The Lord Jesus commands His disciples to go out to all the nations, to instruct them in His teachings and His ways ("*make disciples*") and to baptize those who believe their message and trust Jesus Christ as Savior. The new believer is then baptized in water. Through water baptism, the believer then (and now) testifies that he has trusted in Jesus Christ as His Savior. This passage shows us that the believer's life in Christ is a life of going, making disciples, baptizing and teaching the truths of the Lord Jesus Christ.

#### **b. Jesus Christ's final instructions to His disciples—Acts 1:8**

##### **The Power of the Holy Spirit**

When a person is saved, he or she is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. That means the power of God is within the believer to guide and empower the believer to go forth and be witnesses of Christ.

The very last command that Jesus Christ gave to His disciples before our Lord ascended to heaven was as follows: *"And being assembled together with them [the disciples], He [Jesus Christ] commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, 'which,' He*

*[Jesus Christ] said, you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now"* (Acts 1:4-5). So our Lord instructs His disciples to wait in Jerusalem until God sends the Holy Spirit to indwell them. And then: *"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth"* (Acts 1:8). Immediately after giving these commands, the Lord Jesus ascended to the Father.

As we have learned in this series, when a person is saved, he or she is indwelt by the Holy Spirit. That means the power of God is within the believer to guide and empower the believer to go forth and be witnesses of Christ. The disciples began their work in their home city, Jerusalem. But

we see from this passage that they were to then go beyond Jerusalem into the areas around Jerusalem, and even *"to the end of the earth."* This means that Christians should work to carry the message of God's salvation through Jesus Christ throughout our local area and then also out to the entire world. As the gospel is preached, some will come to faith in Christ and be saved. Then, Christians (using our spiritual gifts that we have learned about) are to work hard to help new Christians (and to heal each other) grow to maturity. That is the work of discipleship.

### c. The power and simplicity of the gospel—Romans 1:16 and 1 Corinthians 15:1-6

It is exciting to preach and share the gospel with others, because the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ alone has the power to save! The gospel is what motivated the apostle Paul in his

#### **Not Ashamed of the gospel**

Christians have the only message that has the power to bring eternal life and salvation from hell—the gospel of Jesus Christ!

ministry: *"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation to everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek"* (Rom. 1:16). What does Paul mean by *"the gospel"*? He carefully explains the gospel (or "good news") in 1 Cor. 15:1-4 (let's open our Bibles to this passage and read it). In this passage, we learn that the gospel is the good news that Jesus Christ died as full and satisfactory payment for our sins, was buried, and was raised from the dead. Because of Christ's death, burial and resurrection, the work necessary for sinners to be saved has been accomplished! God now brings forth great power to save those who obey the gospel by trusting Jesus Christ as Savior!

Romans 1:16 teaches that anyone who believes in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior will receive salvation from God. That is good news! That is how much power is in the gospel! Christians have the privilege (and responsibility) to share this good news with the lost people around us, such as our friends and family members who have not trusted Christ as Savior. We can't make them accept the bad news of their sin problem (repentance), and we can't make them decide to place their faith in Christ as Savior. However, we can pray

for our unsaved friends and work to make the message of the gospel clear to them. That is the work of prayer and the work of evangelism.

## How All of This Works Together...

In the life and ministry of Paul the apostle, we can see how evangelism and discipleship worked in the life of the first churches. Acts 14:21-23 describes Paul's mission team at work, Christians at work, and Christians growing to maturity:

*"And when they [Paul and his mission team] had preached the gospel to that*

### The early church

The Book of Acts tell us how the church started, and how the gospel spread all over the world. The early Christians did the work of evangelism and discipleship in the power of the Holy Spirit.

*city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, 'We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.' So when they had appointed elders [teaching pastors] in every church, and prayed with fasting,*

*they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed" (Acts 14:21-23).*

In this passage, we see a rich flow of spiritual activity:

- *"preached the gospel...and made many disciples"* – This is the work of evangelism (and church planting).

### A 'Heads Up'!

The mature Christians warned the younger Christians that life will include many tribulations ("tribulations" means trials and struggles).

- *"strengthened the souls of the disciples"* – This is the work of discipleship, teaching and exhortation (encouragement). The mature Christians warned the younger Christians that life will include many tribulations (trials and struggles).

- *"appointed elders"* – This is part of the work of church planting.

- *"prayed with fasting"* – This is the work of missionaries, praying for the new churches (fasting means going without food for a period of time in order to have complete focus on praying and serving the Lord). Since all Christians

have missionary responsibilities, we, too, should engage in these spiritual activities.

**As Christians, we are so very privileged to be connected to Christ, and to have the opportunity serve our risen Savior.** During this lifetime, we have the opportunity to walk in the strength of the Holy Spirit and be used by God for His purposes. Because God is so gracious, the Bible teaches the God will reward those who serve Him with the right motives and in the right way. One way we serve our Savior is through the work of evangelism (getting the message of the gospel to others) and discipleship (helping each other to grow to spiritual maturity in Christ).

**Next week, we will have a missions project and get “hands on” with the work of evangelism, discipleship and service to the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**FINAL WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT:**

In the space below, write out what you would like to say to a friend who has not yet been saved. What would you tell him or her about how to go to heaven? How would you explain the gospel to your friend?

