What God Wants Me To Know

Children's Bible Studies
Volume One

What God Wants Me To Know

Children's Bible Studies
Volume One

R. B. THIEME, JR., BIBLE MINISTRIES
HOUSTON, TEXAS

FINANCIAL POLICY

There is no charge for any material from R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries. Anyone who desires Bible teaching can receive our books, MP3 CDs, and tapes without obligation. God provides Bible doctrine. We wish to reflect His grace.

R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries is a grace ministry and operates entirely on voluntary contributions. There is no price list for any of our materials. No money is requested. When gratitude for the Word of God motivates a believer to give, he has the privilege of contributing to the dissemination of Bible doctrine.

A catalogue of available audio recordings and publications will be provided upon request.

R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries
P. O. Box 460829, Houston, Texas 77056-8829
www.rbthieme.org

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN 1-55764-402-0

Contents

Preface

Before you begin your Bible study, if you are a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, be sure you have named your sins privately to God the Father.

> If we confess our [known] sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our [known] sins and to cleanse us from all [unknown, or forgotten sins] unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

You will then be in fellowship with God, filled with the Holy Spirit, and ready to learn Bible doctrine from the Word of God.

> "God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in [the filling of the] spirit and [biblical] truth." (John 4:24)

If you have never personally believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, the issue is not naming your sins. The issue is faith alone in Christ alone.

> "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey [the command to believe in] the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him." (John 3:36)

THE WORD OF GOD is alive and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and the spirit, and of the joints and the marrow, and is a critic of thoughts and intents of the heart. (Heb. 4:12)

All Scripture is God-breathed, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God might be mature, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. (2 Tim. 3:16–17)

Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. (2 Tim. 2:15)

History of *Children's Bible Studies*

Children's Bible Studies were originally published in the 1960s as the *Doctrinal Bible Studies*, a compilation of Bible lessons taught to children in Berachah Church Sunday School. Affectionately referred to as "The Quarterlies," the series comprised thirty-two books addressing eight age levels. Each level was divided into the Quarterlies: Fall, Winter, Spring, and Summer. The series begins with basic doctrines for the very young child and progresses toward more advanced doctrines for the older child.

In 1972, Pastor R. B. Thieme, Jr., disbanded Berachah Church Sunday School to institute Prep School and a new system of teaching. From the Bible doctrine resident in their souls, teachers would prepare their own Bible lessons to teach the children. However, the Quarterlies have remained a treasure-trove of ideas for parents and teachers looking for ways to communicate Bible doctrine at a child's level of understanding. When complete, *Children's Bible Studies* will contain all of the original material in eight volumes: *What God Wants Me To Know*; *What Is God Like?*; *The Persons of the Godhead*; *God's Plan of Salvation*; *The Christian Way of Life*; *The Life of Moses*; *The Mental Attitudes*; and *The Dispensations*.

Children's Bible Studies complement the lesson formats and research guide from *Train Up a Child…Children's Bible Studies Source Book*. The lessons are organized into chapters with an overview outlining the subject, titles of the lessons, story objective, vocabulary and doctrinal concepts, *Source Book* keywords, and activities. New visual aids pertinent to the lessons are included in the back of the book for use in making training aids. The lessons in the *Children's Bible Studies* are easily incorporated into the extensive curriculum found in the *Source Book* enabling parents and teachers to master lesson preparation while providing creative ways to teach Bible doctrine.

What God Wants Me To Know, the first volume in the series, covers both the doctrines of sin and salvation and defines the most basic instructions and techniques for living the Christian way of life. Stories and beginning vocabulary help the young child to understand that Christianity is a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. He learns that God reveals Himself and His divine will in the Bible. He begins to understand that God is vitally interested in him and all his concerns. And most importantly, the child learns that to fulfill God's command, "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18*a*), all God requires of him is his positive volition.

To the Parents

God mandates you, the parent, to study and learn Bible doctrine. With Bible doctrine in your soul, you are the best teacher in the world for your children. From your own doctrinal frame of reference, personality, and approach, you can then fulfill your responsibility to God to teach your children the Word of God.

> "And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; and you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up." (Deut. 6:6–7)

Teach your children Bible doctrine the way you teach them to play ball, to make a bed, to wash their hands, to use table manners. Teach them over and over. Then, check them. Repeat and repeat, until they know Bible doctrine as readily as they know their own name. When the time comes for them to leave home, you can rest confidently in God's promise:

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

Consider how much time you already spend training your children how to live as well-mannered, responsible citizens. How much more time are you willing to spend to insure that they know how to live as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ who reflect the glory of God? You have the privilege of teaching your children that learning and applying Bible doctrine is the most wonderful blessing in life. In fact, Bible doctrine is the most valuable heritage you can give your children.

> I was very glad to find *some* of your children walking in truth, just as we have received commandment *to do* from the Father. (2 John 4)

How To Use This Book

Teaching the Word of God requires careful preparation. You cannot teach what you do not know. To facilitate your preparation, each chapter of the *Children's Bible Studies* begins with an Overview, the plan for developing the subject of that particular chapter. The Overview provides a solid foundation on which you can build your own lesson plans, tailored to your setting, teaching style, and the children's age levels.

THE CHAPTER OVERVIEW:

Subject: The chapter title summarizes the primary doctrinal emphasis and the biblical reference upon which each story is based.

Lesson Titles: The lesson titles reflect a further delineation of the doctrinal concepts taught in each story.

Story Objective: The story objective is a synopsis, from an adult frame of reference, of the doctrines to be taught in each chapter. Each primary doctrine is documented with Scripture references. The story objective includes teaching pointers regarding specifics for presentation of the doctrine in that particular chapter.

Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts: Each chapter has a list of specific, technical vocabulary words that are used in the stories. It is important that the child understand the definitions of these words as the story progresses. The list of doctrinal concepts extrapolated from the stories is provided with Scripture references for preparation.

***Source Book* Keywords:** Keywords provide a link to the corresponding subject in the Research Guide in *Train Up a Child…Children's Bible Studies Source Book*. The Research Guide provides Scripture references, book titles, and audio recordings on keyword subjects taught by R. B. Thieme, Jr. These resources are available upon request at no charge from R. B. Thieme, Jr., Bible Ministries, 5139 West Alabama, Houston, Texas 77056, USA.

Activities: A list of suggested activities is provided to enhance and reinforce the biblical concepts of the lesson. For a comprehensive list of teaching aids and resources, consult the *Source Book*.

Suggested Visuals: Most of the lessons have diagrams that illustrate the doctrinal concepts in the story as it unfolds. These diagrams may be used in any number of applications, including: flannel boards, worksheets, craft projects. The visuals used in assembling these diagrams are located in the back of this book. They may be copied, traced, or scanned and are intended to be colored, glued, glittered, used for models, mobiles, or backed with flannel fabric for use on a flannel board (a piece of board covered with flannel fabric).

Games, Songs, Worksheets: Any or all of these activities can be utilized to enhance the doctrinal concepts in the lessons. Many memory type games can be modified to challenge recall of doctrinal principles and vocabulary. Singing doctrinal lyrics fitted to familiar tunes reinforces biblical concepts. Worksheets provide an effective way to review the key points of each lesson.

Memory Verse: A Scripture verse pertinent to the subject is woven throughout the entire chapter and is for review at the end of each lesson.

Opening and Closing Prayer: Each lesson must begin with the private confession of sin (1 John 1:9). Opening prayer is time for soul preparation, time to request help from God the Holy Spirit for concentration and understanding of the Bible lesson to be taught. Each lesson should end with closing prayer, thanking God for His Son and His gift of our so-great salvation, thanking Him for the opportunity to learn His Word, and asking Him to challenge us in the application of His Word in our lives.

THE LESSONS:

Learning comes by repetition. Teach these lessons repeatedly, drawing the many different applications for the child from them. The lessons are organized so that doctrine is built upon doctrine, from the basic concepts to the more complex. Each lesson has three sections: The Story, What God Wants Me To Know, and the Lesson Review.

The Story illustrates how Bible doctrine can be learned, stored, and applied. The story is presented for a child's frame of reference and can be adjusted to any age level. Each story incorporates the chapter memory verse, weaving it throughout and tying it to the story objective.

What God Wants Me To Know gives the application of the doctrinal concepts to the child's life. In this section, the Gospel is also presented. That a child is saved cannot be taken for granted. Therefore, the need for and the way of salvation can never be presented too often.

Lesson Reviews are specifically designed for a categorical review of the doctrinal concepts, vocabulary words, and memory verse presented in each story. Utilizing the review not only insures that the key points of the lesson are covered, but leaves the children with something to anticipate in the next lesson.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS:

Whether you teach in the classroom or in the home, formally or informally, with complex lessons and many activities or with simple, concise presentations, always make learning Bible doctrine enjoyable for the children. Never bore your children with the Word of God. Remember, "The word of God is alive and powerful" (Heb. 4:12)! Captivate their imaginations with God's truth. Hold their attention so that they eagerly look forward to learning more and more Bible doctrine. Let your children have an active part in the lessons. Encourage their natural curiosity, individual thought, expressions, and questions. For the effective communication of God's Word, the following guidance is provided for your consideration.

Reinforce the lesson subject in different ways. Use whatever methods are comfortable for you and effective with your children: sing songs, use puppets, play games, have surprises, use a variety of teaching aids. Many different teaching aids are readily available such as flannel graph stories, coloring books, recordings, CDs, and storybooks found in Bible bookstores and toy stores. Stores that provide materials for public school teachers are also an excellent source of teaching aids. Chalk or dry erase boards, worksheets, puppets, or craft projects for your children to make can all be adapted to enhance any lesson. Do not limit yourself to your classroom; go on a picnic, or to the zoo, or visit a museum.

Begin each lesson with the private confession of sin. Teach the children that the only way to approach the Word of God is after restoration of fellowship with Him through the filling ministry of God the Holy Spirit. Remind them that the Holy Spirit is the real teacher of God's Word (John 14:26).

Devote part of each lesson to learning the memory verse. Then, make reference to it as it applies to the subject. Help the children look up the verse in the Bible and impress on their minds that God's written Word is the source of all truth. For younger children, paraphrase or shorten

verses for easier memorization. Most importantly, make memorizing verses a delightful part of the lesson.

Present the Gospel in every lesson. You never want to take the salvation of your children for granted. Even though you may feel certain your children are born again, repeat the Gospel. Find the opportunity to talk to each child individually about his eternal relationship with the Lord. Provide for those who want to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior the time and opportunity to make the decision.

Define the vocabulary words. Understanding the doctrinal concepts depends upon understanding the meaning of the technical vocabulary words. Never assume the child already knows the meaning of a word, or is necessarily hearing the word correctly. You need to enunciate the word clearly, and define it in terms of the child's frame of reference.

Review, review, review. The doctrinal concepts, vocabulary words, and memory verse all need to be reviewed, and then reviewed again. When asking questions, provide hints that will help the children to recall the correct answers. Encourage them to express, in their own vocabulary, what they have learned. Make the reviews enjoyable by playing games, singing songs, reviewing teaching aids, and having contests. Always leave your children with Bible doctrine to consider and Bible doctrine to anticipate.

Chapter One

God's Plan for Salvation

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: God's Plan for Salvation—Romans 3:23

B. Lesson Titles:
1. Lesson One: The Need for Salvation
2. Lesson Two: What God Can Do about Sin

C. Story Objective:

Sin takes on many forms. All thoughts and actions which go against the standards set by God, regardless of circumstances or their relative offense, are sin. All who possess the sin nature, and that includes every human being, come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23).

To a young child the word "sin" and the concept of sin has little, if any, meaning. He must be told what sin is and what God can do about sin. In the life of a five- to six-year-old, sin is primarily disobedience to parental authority. But sin also manifests itself in other ways such as selfishness, envy, lying, theft, cheating, and hateful thoughts and actions toward other children.

The child must be made to understand that while the bad or ugly things he will do are sins, the wrong thoughts he might think are also sins. Above all, he must be taught that we are all sinners by birth (Rom. 5:12) long before we have ever committed one act of personal sin. No one is as good as God is good; we all "miss the mark" (Ps. 51:9; 53:1–3; Rom. 3:23; 5:12*b*).

It is only when a person, even a child, realizes the reality and universality of sin and is ready to face his own helplessness with regard to that sin that he sees the need of salvation. Salvation is one thing we are never 'big enough' to do for ourselves by ourselves. We can only find salvation in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 4:12; Titus 3:5) whom the Father sent as the solution to our sin problem.

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:
1. Vocabulary: appropriate, barrier, cross, punishment, sin, transgression
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. Definition of sin according to the Bible:
      1) Transgression: rebellion against, or overstepping the Law (Ps. 51:1)
      2) Missing the mark (Ps. 53:1–3; Rom. 3:23)
      3) Trespass: self-will over God's will; a falling aside (Eph. 2:1)
      4) Lawlessness: under the Mosaic Law (1 Tim. 1:9; 1 John 3:4)
      5) Unbelief: the only unpardonable sin (John 3:18*b*; 8:24; 16:9)
   b. Sin nature: condemns all (Rom. 3:23; 6:7).
   c. Personal sins: the sins of choice (Ps. 19:12; 32:5; 90:8; 1 John 1:7, 9)

E. *Source Book* Keywords: barrier, Christ, God the Father, plan of God, salvation, sin, sin nature

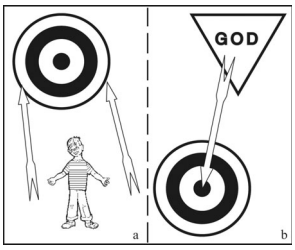
F. Activities:
1. Suggested Visuals: Christ on cross, little boy, sin circle, sin wall, Trinity
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
3. Memory Verse: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23)
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON ONE
THE NEED FOR SALVATION

Johnny was a happy boy. He had a brand new bow with many arrows. He could hardly wait until his dad had finished setting up the target. He drew the bow, just like his dad had shown him. Zoom went the first arrow, and the next, but not one hit the mark. Johnny dropped his new bow and big tears rolled down his cheeks. "What's the trouble, big boy?" called his father. Johnny said, "I tried so hard, but I missed the mark every time." His dad put an arm around Johnny. "Your bow and arrows are going to teach you a very important lesson, son," he said. Would you like to hear what Johnny learned that day?

Missing the Mark

First, Johnny's dad went to get his own big bow. He picked up an arrow and shot it right into the very center of the target. "I wish I could do that," Johnny sighed, "but I am just not as good a shot as you are."



"Yes, Johnny, I can shoot better than you can. I can hit the target every time, but we all miss the mark which God has set for us. God's target is His own perfect goodness. God can do no wrong. He is perfect in all His ways, but we are not. No matter how hard we try to be as good as God is good, we cannot make it; we fail. When we fail, it is just the same as failing to hit the target. The Bible says: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). That means that all of us have missed the mark. We can never reach the perfect goodness of God because we have sinned," said Johnny's father.

Johnny made one perfect hit that day; he learned Romans 3:23. That is a good verse for us to learn, for God wants us to know we are all sinners. First, let's all say this verse together: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Now, let me ask you some questions about that verse. Who has sinned? All, not some; not one or two, but ALL of us. We have all sinned. We "fall short"; we are not good enough; we miss the mark of the glory of God, of God's perfect goodness. Where can we find this verse? In Romans 3:23. Can you make a hit by saying the verse all by yourself?

To God, sin is an ugly thing. Have you sinned? Have I? Yes, we have all sinned. God alone is perfect goodness. He cannot and will not let sin come into His beautiful, heavenly home. He wants you in heaven with Him, but not your sin. Your mother wants you to come home, but she would not want you to come in with mud all over your shoes and track the dirt all over her nice, clean house, would she? Of course not.

What Sin Is

Now we all know what dirty shoes are, but does anyone here know what sin is? To begin with, let's hold up three fingers and count off three sinful things: (1) the bad things we do, (2) the bad things we say, and (3) the bad things we think. These are all sin. Can you remember that? Let's see. First, there are the bad things we do. Next? The bad things we say. And third? The bad things we think.

Can you tell me some of the ways boys and girls your age might sin? When boys and girls do not obey their parents, they sin and miss God's target. The Bible tells us, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right" (Eph. 6:1). When you disobey, you know that this is wrong, and all wrong things are sinful.

I know some boys and girls who do not want to share their toys or candies with anyone else. I have seen some little hands grabbing the biggest piece of cake. Is that a good thing to do? No, that is being selfish and wrong (1 Cor. 10:24). God certainly would not be pleased with such a boy or girl. To tell a lie is a sin. God tells us that He hates a lying tongue (Prov. 6:17*a*). Taking things which do not belong to you is another way to sin. It is even wrong to take one little cookie out of the cookie jar when Mother says not to do it. All these things we have named are the bad things we might do or say.

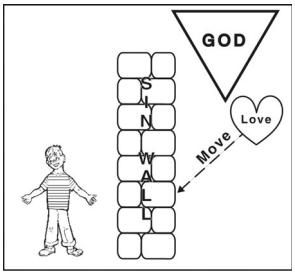
But what about the bad things we think? These are just as sinful. Are you jealous of your little brother or sister, or of your big brother or sister? Do you say, "How come Brother may stay up late and I always have to go to bed early?" Do you complain that you don't get as much attention as Baby does? Well, you don't need all that attention any longer. You are a big boy or a big girl now. Do you whine because you think that your piece of pie is not as big as Older Brother's piece? Or that Sister got a new pair of shoes and you did not? Jealousy does not please God at all (Prov. 6:34). Wouldn't it be much nicer if God saw that

you are glad to have sisters and brothers to share your home with you? Your turn to stay up late will come, as will your turn to get new shoes or the biggest piece of pie.

What about the mean and ugly things you sometimes think against your friends and playmates? Haven't you ever thought of tattling on someone you know? Haven't you ever thought to yourself, "I'll get even with them?" Now don't tell me you have not. I am sure we all have thought it at one time or another.

The Sin Wall

Even if we never did anything bad or wrong and never thought anything bad and never said anything bad, we would still miss God's mark. Why? You and I, every boy and girl, every man and woman is born a sinner. Yes, long before any one of us was big enough to do one bad thing, we were already sinners. We were born that way (Ps. 51:5). We cannot help being born sinners any more than we could help being born a boy or a girl. As sinners, we cannot come near God. We just are not good enough. Remember, we have all missed God's mark, just like Johnny's stray arrows. Sin stands between God and us like a great big wall.



But even though we are sinners, God loves us. He wants us to receive His love, but we cannot come to Him. Something stands in the way. What is it? Yes, sin, your sin, my sin, everyone's sin. Before anyone can come to God, something must be done about that thick sin wall. But what? Shall we bring hammers and axes to knock it down? Shall we call a wrecker to pull it out of the way? Shall we climb over the top of it? Shall we run around it or dig a tunnel under it? Shall we drill a hole through it? No! We can do nothing about the sin wall—only God can.

What God Wants Me To Know

Today, you have listened just as quietly as Johnny did that day his arrows missed the mark. In the next lesson, we will hear more about what Johnny found out that day. Right now, God wants you to know that He loves you even if you do miss the mark. He never misses, and that is what really counts. Just like Johnny knew his dad could do a good job, so we can always trust God to do the very best for us.

Now, even though you must wait to hear the end of Johnny's story, you need not wait a moment longer to receive God's love. I'll tell you this much, the sin wall no longer stands in the way. I'll tell you that you may come to God by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Only Jesus Christ can make you good enough to go to heaven. Will you let Him do it, right now? "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved" (Acts 16:31).

Lesson Review

What did Johnny find out the day his arrows missed their mark? No one is as good as God is good. What did our memory verse say about that? What kind of sins did we talk about? Remember, we counted them off on three fingers. Sins we do, say, and think. God hates sin, but He loves the sinner. He wants us to have His love, but we cannot come to God. Why not? Sin stands in the way like a big wall.

Memory Verse

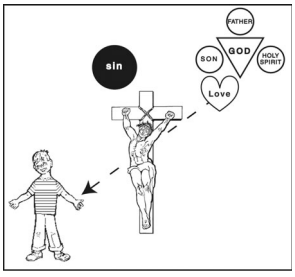
"For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." (Rom. 3:23)

LESSON TWO
WHAT GOD CAN DO ABOUT SIN

Our sins put us on the wrong side, the outside, of the wall, and there is nothing we can do to knock down that wall. Remember, we cannot climb over it, nor tunnel under it; we cannot run around it, nor can we drill a hole through it. If anyone can do something about sin, it must be God. Right now, we are going to learn what God can do about sin—in fact, what He has already done. So be like Johnny and listen carefully as his father talks to him.

Salvation in the Planning

Long before God made man, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit had a long talk. What do you think they talked about? They talked about us; they talked about the first man and woman and how all of us would some day become sinners. The Bible teaches that God the Father must punish sin wherever it is found and that the punishment for sin is death (Rom. 6:23*a*).



You and I have the punishment coming, but God the Father loved us so much that He planned a way to remove the sin wall. The Lord Jesus, God's Son, also loved each one of us so much that He promised to go down to earth and take the punishment for our sins. God the Holy Spirit loved us so much that He promised to show us how our sins will be taken away and we will be made ready for heaven-home.

Salvation in the Making

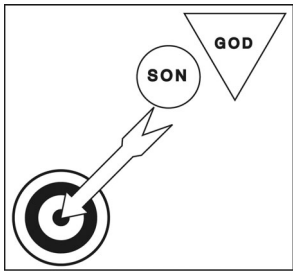
When the right time had come, the Lord Jesus came down to earth in the body of a tiny baby (Gal. 4:4). As He grew up, He never, ever sinned at all (1 Pet. 2:22). He never thought a bad thought, never said a bad word, and never did a bad thing. He could not sin, for Jesus is unique; He is God and man, and as God, He is perfect goodness.

One day, when Jesus was a grown man, He went to the cross to die for the sins of the whole world. Jesus had no sins for which to be punished, but we did. The Bible tells us that He died in our place (Isa. 53:6*b*) and that our sins were laid on Him. When He was nailed to the cross, our sins were nailed to the cross with Him (Col. 2:14). He took them out of the way, and the whole wall between God and sinful man came tumbling down.

Where is the wall now? It is gone. Gone because of what the Lord Jesus did for us. Now, we can come to God. God loved us so much that He sent His perfect Son, who never, ever missed the mark, the Lord Jesus Christ, to remove the sin wall so that we might come to Him and accept God's free gift of eternal life (Rom. 6:23).

Salvation Appropriated

At last, Johnny's father stood up and said, "Now let me show you what God will do for all who trust the Lord Jesus Christ, for all who believe that He has taken away their sins." He picked up Johnny's bow and took one of Johnny's arrows. Then he guided Johnny's arms and sent the arrow flying right into the middle of the target.

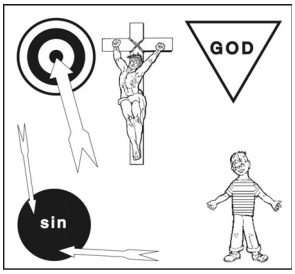


Johnny looked at his dad with big eyes and said, "But I did not do it—you did!" No, Johnny could not be proud of scoring a hit. His father nodded. "That's right," he said. "I helped you. I did it to show you there are some things you are not big enough to do for yourself. Some day, you may be able to hit the mark of this target by yourself. But no one is ever big enough on his own to hit God's target. The Lord Jesus Christ had to come and do it for us. Only He can give us God's goodness and He will do it if we will only believe in Him."

Johnny thought for a little while. Then he said quietly, "Dad, if I let the Lord Jesus help me every day, will that keep me from doing wrong?" "Certainly, son," said Johnny's father. "How will He do it?" Johnny wanted to know, and I'm sure, so do you.

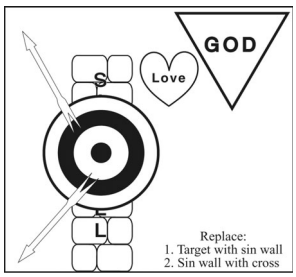
What God Wants Me To Know

Every time we sin, we miss God's target. Let's talk about that for a while. What would happen if Johnny left his stray arrows wherever they fell instead of gathering them up again? He would soon be out of arrows, wouldn't he? God does not want us to keep on sinning, that is, doing, thinking, and saying bad and wrong things. He wants us to know what made us miss His target and gather up these bad things. Then what should we do with them? Tell God we have done them, that's what (1 John 1:9). The Lord Jesus has already been punished for these bad things. When God sees that we love Him and want to please Him, He will guide us through His Word by means of the Holy Spirit (John 14:15, 26; Phil. 3:16).



Johnny and his dad will go to heaven because they have both believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. Will you? Now you must think very carefully: Did you ever tell the heavenly Father that you believe that the Lord Jesus is your Savior? That He is the only One who can take away your sin? You must believe that the Lord Jesus really died for you, that He took the punishment you had coming. Now, Jesus did not stay dead; He is alive and making ready a place in heaven for all who believe in Him. Will you believe right now? If you do, you can come to God and He will make you His own child and you will get to live with Him forever because of what the Lord Jesus did (Eph. 1:5).

Lesson Review



What verse in the Bible tells us that we are all sinners? Yes, Romans 3:23. God is perfect goodness. We are sinners. Just like Johnny in our story, we may try really hard to be as good as God is good, but we always miss His target. Even though God hates sin, He loves the sinner. Yet, we cannot come to God. Can you tell me why not? Sin stands in the way like a great big wall.

What did God do about sin? He sent His perfect Son, Jesus Christ, to die for our sins, didn't He? The Lord Jesus Christ took our sins out of the way and the sin wall came tumbling down. Now, every boy and every girl who will do one thing only can come to God. What can that be? Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ! He did for us what we could never have done for ourselves—make a way for us to be good enough to go to heaven. He wants to help us not to miss the mark. If we will just listen to God's Word and store it in our minds, God will help us to obey and not sin against Him. But, if we do sin, and we will, what does God want us to do? Yes, tell Him what we did wrong (1 John 1:9).

Memory Verse

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

Chapter Two

Where Did Sin Come From?

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: Where Did Sin Come From?—Genesis 3; 1 John 3:8

B. Lesson Titles:
1. Lesson One: The Origin of Sin
2. Lesson Two: The Function of Volition—Choices

C. Story Objective:

According to Romans 5:12, sin came into the world through Adam. Was the first man the originator of sin? No, but through him the sin nature was passed down to the human race. Was God, then, responsible for creating sin? Not at all. Only perfection can come from the hand of the perfect Creator (Gen. 1:31; Mark 7:37; Col. 1:16*a*). Where did sin really come from?

The first sin was a direct result of the negative exercise of the free will of an angel called Lucifer. Created among countless angels to worship and serve God, Lucifer was the wisest and most beautiful of all the heavenly host (Ezek. 28:12–15). His duty was to guard God's throne room. So impressed did he become with his exalted position, his beauty and his power, that he was no longer content to serve God. He purposed within himself to rebel against God's authority and willed himself to be "like the Most High" (Isa. 14:12–14). The rebellion of Lucifer's will against God became the original sin.

God is holy (righteousness and justice). He must judge sin, and so Lucifer was cast down and expelled from God's throne room. From then on, Lucifer became God's adversary, the devil, or Satan, ever ready to recruit his own followers, first from among the fallen angels, then from among mankind. Sin has remained the same in essence as it has from the beginning—rebellion against God's revealed will and Word.

When Adam was placed in the Garden of Eden, Satan and sin were already waiting to incite rebellion. He lured Eve by trickery, and she fell into Satan's snare (1 Tim. 2:14). Then Adam sinned willfully. Sin therefore came through Satan (1 John 3:8*a*), and the sin nature through Adam (Rom. 5:12). But salvation is of the Lord (Ps. 3:8).

Do not give a detailed account of Adam and Eve's sin in this lesson. That theme will be dealt with later in the lesson dealing with the creation and fall of man. Doctrinal emphasis is on the origin of sin.

Be sure to present the invitation so as to leave the children with the correct impression of angels rejoicing in heaven because of the decision they made to receive the same wonderful Savior. The reality of angelic spectators (1 Pet. 1:12), being so vitally interested in the child's own personal decision, will greatly fascinate the child's imagination.

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:
1. Vocabulary: choices, free will, jealous, obey, originator, proud, rebellion, rejoicing, spectator
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. Lucifer: his citation and description (Ezek. 28:11–19; Col. 1:16).
   b. Negative volition: the first sin (Isa. 14:12–17).
   c. Pride: motivation for Satan's sin (1 Tim. 3:6).
   d. The devil: the first sinner (1 John 3:8).
   e. Man becomes a sinner (Gen. 3).
   f. Sin passed down through Adam to entire human race (Gen. 5:3; Rom. 5:12).

E. *Source Book* Keywords: angels, origin of sin, Satan, volition

F. Activities:
   1. Suggested Visuals: Adam, angels, Christ on cross, Eve, heaven, little boy, Lucifer, Satan, sin circle, tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Trinity, volition
   2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
   3. Memory Verse: "For the devil has sinned from the beginning." (1 John 3:8)
   4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON ONE
THE ORIGIN OF SIN

Boys and girls ask lots of questions. They want to know: Where did I come from? Who made God? Why can't we see God? Sometimes your mother and father get tired of answering all the whys and hows and wheres and whens and will say, "Not now, honey, can't you see I'm busy?"

But God is never too busy. He wants us to ask Him questions, for He has all the answers we need to know. Where are His answers found? In the Bible. The Bible is God's own Word. We learn by asking questions and God certainly wants us to learn as many things about Him as we possibly can.

Here is one question you may have wondered about, "Where did sin come from?" Did God make sin when He made the heavens and the earth? No, God made a perfectly beautiful heaven and a perfect and beautiful earth. He did not make sin.

Well then, where did sin come from? Shall we let the Bible tell us the answer?

The Creation of Angels

Long, long ago, before He made the first man, God made the angels (Col. 1:16). Have you ever seen an angel?

No. We don't see angels today. But in the days when the Bible was being written, some people really saw and talked to angels. The angels were to serve God and praise Him. God made thousands upon thousands of angels (Dan. 7:10; Rev. 5:11). All of them were beautiful and good, clever and strong. They could travel as fast as lightning. Now the most beautiful and the most clever of them all was an angel named Lucifer. Lucifer was a super-angel.

God's Word tells us that Lucifer was full of wisdom and perfect in beauty (Ezek. 28:12). His clothing glittered and sparkled in all colors of the rainbow, for God had decorated him with precious jewels. He wore diamonds and rubies and emeralds and gold. Can you imagine what a lovely sight he must have been? And when he spoke, his voice sounded as full as that of a pipe organ. The next time you go and sit in a big church, listen carefully to the sound of the organ and you will know what it must have been like to hear Lucifer speak.

Just where did Lucifer get his beautiful face and voice and his lovely sparkling jewels? Did he buy them? Did he work to earn them? No, all that Lucifer had, his life, his wisdom, his beauty, his voice, and his special job of guarding God's own throne, had been given to him by God. Now there was something else God had given Lucifer which He also gave to the other angels and to you and to me and to every human being. What might this be? Volition.

What is volition? Why would God want all of us to have volition? Our volition helps us many times during the day. How? Well, every time we say yes or no our volition has made a choice, a decision. When we obey our parents, our volition says yes to our parents. The most important decision anyone can ever make is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. That is our volition saying yes to God. Whenever we disobey God's Word, we say no to God and saying no to God's Word is sin.

Lucifer had volition, and so did all the other angels. God let them decide for themselves whether they wanted to serve and obey Him or to turn away from Him forever.

The Bible tells us that at first Lucifer was perfect in his ways. Day after day, he obeyed God and guarded the throne. Day after day, he could be near God and see how wonderful God is. Oh, how thankful and happy Lucifer should have been. Here he was, the greatest super-angel, standing by God's throne, but no, instead of being thankful,

Lucifer became jealous of God's greatness and power. He became proud of his beauty and cleverness. Lucifer was no longer happy to serve and obey God. Do you see which way Lucifer's volition was going to turn? To God or away from God? Yes, away from God. Of course Lucifer did not dare to say no out loud to God; he was going to think no. But thinking and saying no are one and the same. God can look right inside of everyone, angels or people, and tell what they are thinking and which way they are deciding.

Lucifer, the First Sinner

When God looked into Lucifer's mind, he could read Lucifer's thoughts just as clearly as if they were written there. This is what God tells us Lucifer thought: I will put my throne higher than the stars and angels of God; I will rule the earth; I will climb higher than where God is, and I will be just like God (Isa. 14:13–14).

Now when Lucifer thought these things, he really meant them. What happened next had never, ever happened before. Someone turned away from God, sinned against God, and that someone was the super-angel, Lucifer. Can you guess who Lucifer really is? We no longer call him by that name; he is known as the devil, or Satan. The name Lucifer meant "the shining one," but Satan means "enemy." Yes, Lucifer's sin had made him become God's enemy. Well, does God answer our questions? We asked at the beginning of our lesson, "Where did sin come from?" God's answer is that "The devil has sinned from the beginning" (1 John 3:8). Someday, when someone asks you, "Where did sin come from?" you will remember what you have just learned. Then you can say, "I know! Sin came from the devil, for 'the devil has sinned from the beginning'" (1 John 3:8).

What God Wants Me To Know

God looked into the super-angel's mind and saw that his volition had turned him away from God. God has also given you volition. Now, He looks into your minds and what does He see? I wonder. Does God see that you want His way or your own way? What did I tell you was the most important decision anyone could make? Yes, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Sin came from the devil, that is true, but God wants to save us from our sins. Won't you believe in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, right now? Next, I will tell you what happened the day Lucifer sinned and how sin came into the world.

Lesson Review

Where did sin come from? Did God make it? Did you or I? No, sin came from the devil. Can you remember the words of 1 John 3:8? What did God give the angels to help them decide whether or not they wanted to love and serve God? Volition! Who else has volition? All human beings. When we want to have our own way instead of God's way and our volition turns away from God, it is the same as saying no to God. Disobedience to God is called what? Sin.

Memory Verse

"For the devil has sinned from the beginning." (1 John 3:8)

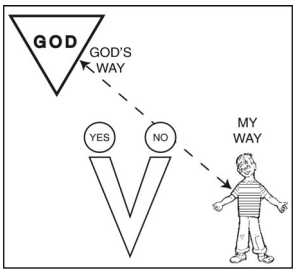
LESSON TWO
THE FUNCTION OF VOLITION—CHOICES

I have a sign here which says on one side "My Way" and on the other "God's Way." In between is volition. Tell me which way your volition would point if you listened quietly to your teacher who teaches you the Word of God? God's way. If you listened only to the boy or girl sitting next to you? My way. If your mother said, "Play with your baby sister so I can fix supper," and you obeyed her? God's way. Right, God's way is for children to obey their parents. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right" (Eph. 6:1). If you were told to wash your hands before supper and you said, "No, I don't have to; they're not dirty"? My way. You would have your own way; you would have disobeyed and disobedience is sin.

If you learn your memory verses, will God be having His way in your life? Indeed He will. Which way did Lucifer's volition point when he became proud of himself and jealous of God? My way. Lucifer went against the will of God, did he not? He sinned from the beginning. Now, I promised you that we would find out what happened when Lucifer sinned.

Lucifer's Fall

Lucifer should have been happy and content to serve God. Instead, he had some terrible thoughts. He wanted to be in God's place and rule the earth. He wanted to be higher than all the other angels and sit on God's throne. He



wanted to be like God—not good as God is good. Lucifer just wanted all of heaven and earth for himself to do with as he pleased. He was not going to obey God's will a moment longer. Right then, while he was thinking these things, Lucifer sinned. Sin had come into God's beautiful heavenly home.

God had to punish Lucifer, the shining angel. Lucifer could no longer guard God's throne. Some day, God promised, Lucifer would be thrown into the lake of fire which God had prepared for the disobedient angels (Matt. 25:41).

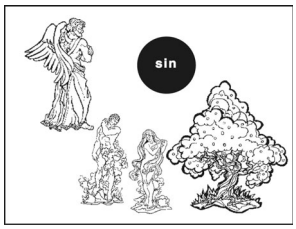
Lucifer Becomes Satan, the Enemy of God

What has happened to this great angel now that he no longer serves God? Well, he is still a mighty angel. He will always be an angel. He is nothing at all like what people picture him to be—a red devil with a tail and horns and a pitchfork. No, Satan is still a bright, shining angel, but he is a bad angel who tries hard to make us think that wrong is right. He has become God's enemy, Satan, the devil. Quickly he went and told the other angels in heaven that God had been mean and unfair to him. As the angels listened to Lucifer, many decided to believe what he had told them. How many of them? God's Word tells us that one-third of all the angels said no to God and followed Lucifer and left God's side forever (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 12:4*a*). But many, many more angels, the holy angels, believed God and stayed in heaven (Matt. 25:31; Heb. 1:14).

Satan, who was once called Lucifer, must have been pleased when he saw so many angels sin and follow him. No doubt, he was the inventor of the game "Follow the Leader." Yet he was not satisfied. He waited and watched.

Satan Tempts Man

Then, one day Satan saw God make Adam and Eve and place them into the Garden on earth. He knew that God had told Adam and Eve not to eat of one tree in the Garden or they would surely die (Gen. 2:17). Along came Satan and said that they would not die at all if they ate from that tree (Gen. 3:4). Now it was Adam and Eve's turn to choose. Satan made a wrong thing seem right, but he could not make Adam and Eve sin. They had their own volition and they had to decide whether to obey God or disobey God.



Man Becomes a Sinner

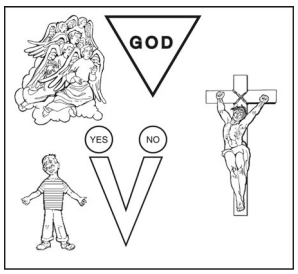
You know what they decided to do, don't you? They listened to Satan and disobeyed God. Adam and Eve became sinners; it was their choice. Now Satan was happy because the first man and woman had sin in their lives. What a sad day that must have been, for right then and there the "sin wall" came between God and man.

Is there anyone who can take away sin? Anyone who can break down the sin wall? Only God can do that. Do you remember how God took sin out of the way so that the sinner can come to Him?

We have just found out that sin came from Satan. He sinned from the beginning and through him, sin came into God's heavenly home. God had to punish this bad angel who had turned away from Him to become His enemy. Then Adam and Eve also sinned and so sin came into the world (Rom. 5:12). I am sure the angels were all watching; the bad angels must have been happy, but oh, how sad the good angels must have been to see Adam and Eve use their volition to choose to disobey God.

What God Wants Me To Know

Do you know what the angels are doing right now while we think about our lesson? They are watching us (1 Pet. 1:2*b*). On God's side are the holy angels; on Satan's side



are the fallen angels who disobeyed God and followed Satan. Why do you think the angels are watching us? They want to see if there is someone here who will want God's way for his life, who will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior.

The Lord wants us to come to Him; believe on Him; for He can forgive your sins and can take you to heaven (Matt. 9:6; John 14:6). But the devil doesn't want you to listen to God's Word (Matt. 13:19); he does not want you to believe. What will you do? Only you can decide. If you choose God's way and decide yes, you will choose the Lord Jesus and all the good angels in heaven will clap their hands and shout for joy (Luke 15:10).

When you choose not to obey God, the fallen angels are glad. How will you use your volition? Which way will you choose? Now don't show or tell me; let God know it by thinking your choice quietly.

Lesson Review

Do you know where sin came from? It was Satan who sinned first. Through him and then through Adam, sin came into the world. Who came to take sin out of the way? Christ. Can you tell me the name and the story of God's super-angel who later became known as Satan, the devil? What place in heaven was he to guard? The throne of God. Who made all the angels? God. Inside of all angels and people is something we call what? Volition. We can choose either one of two ways; what do we call the two ways? "God's Way" and "My Way." Which way did Lucifer choose? My way. Which way does God want us to choose? God's way. Which way did Adam and Eve decide in the Garden? My way. Which way do you decide when you obey your mother and father? God's way. Which way do you decide when you learn your memory verse? God's way. What does our memory verse say?

Memory Verse

"For the devil has sinned from the beginning." (1 John 3:8)

Chapter Three

How God Made and Restored the Earth

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: How God Made and Restored the Earth—Genesis 1—2:1; Isaiah 14:12–17

B. Lesson Titles:
1. Lesson One: Creation and Restoration
2. Lesson Two: Air, Land, and Sea
3. Lesson Three: Plant Life and Lights in the Sky
4. Lesson Four: Days Five and Six

C. Story Objective:

The angelic rebellion, led by Satan (Isa. 14:12–17), had brought divine judgment upon the original earth. Once it had been a perfect place; now it lay waste in chaotic darkness (Gen. 1:1–2). But God had not created the earth to be a heap of ruin and emptiness; He intended it to be inhabited (Isa. 45:18).

Patiently God began to restore the earth (Gen. 1:3ff.) and create life upon it (animal life, Gen. 1:21; human life, Gen. 1:26–27). Six days later, God's handiwork was completed and lacked nothing. God set His seal of approval on His work when He saw that all was very good (Gen. 1:31).

Equally perfect is God's plan and work of salvation. All that man needs to restore him to relationship and fellowship with God for time and eternity has been planned and carried out by God. There is nothing man can do to enter into God's plan and rest but believe in Jesus Christ.

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:
1. Vocabulary: create, darkness, disciples, God's will, restore, restoration
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. Creation and restoration (Gen. 1—2:1).
   b. The Holy Spirit, Restorer of creation (Gen. 1:2).
   c. Doctrine in God's plan and work of creation (Prov. 8:22–26).
   d. Satan's sin (Isa. 14:12–17).
   e. The fallen angels (Matt. 25:41).
   f. God the Father, the Planner (John 5:17; 1 Cor. 8:6*a*).
   g. God the Son, Executor of the Father's plan (John 1:3; 1 Cor. 8:6*b*; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:10).
   h. God the Holy Spirit, Agent of regeneration (John 3:5; Titus 3:5).
   i. Lessons Three and Four: God controls the universe (Col. 1:17).
      1) Provided gravity to hold the earth in space (Job 26:7).
      2) Knows the weight of air and water (Job 28:25).
      3) Controls the movements of stars (Job 38:31–32; read Job 38—39).
      4) Places mountains by His strength (Ps. 65:6).
      5) Calms waves and nations (Ps. 65:7).
      6) Regulates the circuits of the wind (Eccl. 1:6).
      7) Designed evaporation and precipitation (Eccl. 1:7).
      8) Causes condensation and vapor (Jer. 10:13).

E. *Source Book* Keywords: creation/restoration, deliverance from sin, miracles, soul

F. Activities:
1. Suggested Visuals: Bible, boy and girl praying, brother, chaotic earth, Christ on cross, creation/restoration circles, elect angels, human soul, mother with children, sin circle, sister, Trinity, universe, volition
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets

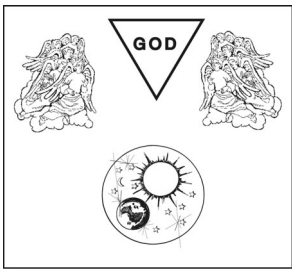
3. Memory Verses:
   a. "All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being." (John 1:3)
   b. "Whatever the LORD pleases, He does, In heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps" (Ps. 135:6).
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON ONE
CREATION AND RESTORATION

Do you remember that I told you how happy God's good angels are whenever someone on earth believes on the Lord Jesus Christ? Well, the Bible tells us about another time when all the angels shouted and sang for joy (Job 38:7). Can you guess when that might have been? If you will listen quietly, I will tell you all about it.

Creation of Original Heaven and Earth

The angels all gathered around God to see what He was doing. Suddenly they shouted out loud for joy. They were so happy that they sang, for God had just made the heavens and the earth.



I wonder what the angels shouted and sang, don't you? Maybe they sang, "All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being" (John 1:3). Can you shout? Can you sing? Can you clap your hands for joy? Pretend you have wings and are standing around God's throne.

Now, I will tell you how God made the heavens and earth. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). How did God make the heavens and the earth? He spoke and it was done. He just said a few words and the heavens and the earth were created (Ps. 33:6; Heb. 1:3). To "create" means to make out of nothing. God took nothing and made the heavens and the earth out of it. Just think of that, God took nothing and, just like that, He made something out of it (Ps. 8:3). Can you do that? Can I? Of course not. Only God can do the impossible (Luke 1:37). We do not know what the earth was like at first, but it must have been beautiful. There were no storms, no rain; it was never too hot or too cold. There were no floods and no earthquakes. Everything was just right. Who had made this perfect place? God did. "All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being" (John 1:3).

I will tell you of all that God created and made new again in the heavens and in the earth. First we'll learn about our earth and the heavens as they once had been.

The Chaotic Earth

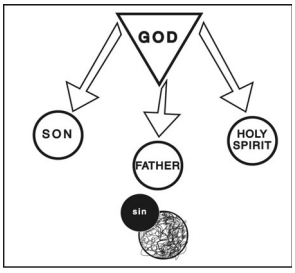
Earth was perfect; then, something terrible happened. Lucifer (Satan) and the fallen angels who followed him decided they would no longer obey God. They sinned against God, and sin spoiled everything. Since God does not allow sin in His heavenly home, Satan was thrown out of heaven. Where do you think Satan and his fallen angels went next? Right down into God's beautiful new earth, and they took their sin with them (Job 2:1–5)! Once more, sin spoiled everything. Satan and his fallen angels ruined the earth.

God must punish sin wherever it is found. God's judgment of Satan and the fallen angels included flooding the earth with water (2 Pet. 3:5*b*) and covering it with darkness (Gen. 1:2*a*). Do you know what it was like? Without light there is no heat. Without heat, water turns into ice. So the whole earth was now dark and covered in ice. Now, close your eyes and what do you see? You see nothing. Well, that was just what the angels saw—nothing but darkness.

Restoration Plan

Was God so angry that He was finished with the earth? No! When God had made the earth, He had planned for someone to live on it (Isa. 45:18). Now God the Father looked down on the ruined earth which had once been so beautiful, just like a mother bird broods over her young. So God the Holy Spirit moved upon the face of the waters which covered the earth (Gen. 1:2*b*), warming and melting the ice to prepare the earth for restoration. God the Father saw that we needed a new beginning and He had to make

all things over again (Job 38:1–9). God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, said that He would make out of nothing new things upon the earth (Col. 1:16), and God the Holy Spirit promised to restore the earth again (Gen. 1:2ff.). Patiently, God began to clean up the whole earth.

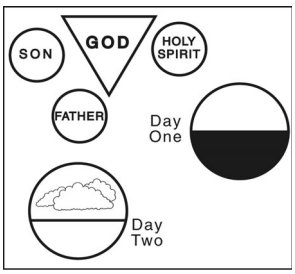


Do you know how long it took God to do that? Only six days. How many days are there in a week? Yes, seven. Count them off: Sunday—one, Monday—two, Tuesday—three, Wednesday—four, Thursday—five, Friday—six, Saturday—seven. If it took God six days to do His work, what do you think He did on the seventh day? He rested from all His works which He had done (Gen. 2:2).

Let's make believe that we can watch God at His work.

Day One: Restoration of Light

This is the first day of God's work of making things new again upon the ruined earth. Remember what the angels saw? Nothing but darkness. Cover your eyes tightly; there is nothing but nothing around you, only darkness. Suddenly, you hear the voice of God the Father as He says, "Let there be light" (Gen. 1:3). So God the Holy Spirit made the light to shine again. God saw that the light was perfect and good and He separated the light from the darkness. Do you know what God called the light? Yes, day, and what did He call the darkness? That is right, night. Now you know where nighttime and daytime came from—they were God's work on the first day of making things new again on the earth which Satan and sin had ruined. They show us that God always does what He has planned.



What God Wants Me To Know

I know some boys and girls your age who are afraid at night. They don't seem to understand why God made the night. He did not make darkness to scare you, but so you can rest better. We sleep better when all is dark and quiet around us. The birds hush their singing when it becomes dark. They fly up into the branches of the trees and tuck their heads under their wings; they're not afraid. God is taking care of them, just as certainly as God takes care of us. We are far more important to Him than are little birds, and yet, He cares for them too.

The next time you are alone in the dark, will you try to remember that? God is always with you, day and night (Heb. 13:5*b*). He made the night and the day; He made you and He can take care of you. Besides, did you know that God has given you one of His good angels to watch over you always (Heb. 1:14)? So you see, you need never be afraid at night or day.

Yes, in only one day, God made the light shine again on earth and divided day and night, but God's work had only just begun. Of all of God's work, the greatest by far is His work of saving us, of making a way for us to go to heaven. God only had to snap His fingers and heaven and earth were made out of nothing. But to make a way for sinful people to go to heaven, God the Son, the Lord Jesus, had to leave heaven and come down to earth and become a man. Jesus Christ is unique; He is the God-man. Jesus Christ was the perfect man; He never once sinned in His whole life! Because Jesus was perfect and sinless, He was qualified to be our substitute, to die on the cross to cleanse us from our sins (Heb. 9:12; 1 John 1:7). In order to save us, He let Himself be punished for our sins (1 Pet. 2:24; cf., Ps. 8:3; Isa. 52:10).

You and I did nothing to help God make the heavens and the earth, and we can do nothing to help Him save us. He has already done everything. We only need come and be saved by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no other way to get to heaven and God (John 14:6). You can use your volition for God right now, and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Lesson Review

What happened to the beautiful earth God made in the beginning? Did God want the earth to be a heap of ruin? No. He wanted people to live on it. What did He do? He decided to restore the earth. What did God do on the first day of making things new again on the earth? He caused the light to shine once more, dividing night and day. Did you and I help God do these things? No. Did we help the Lord Jesus go to the cross to make a way to heaven for us? Of course not. God does not need our help. We can only come to Him by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Memory Verse

"All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being." (John 1:3)

LESSON TWO
AIR, LAND, AND SEA

On the first day God said, "Let there be light," and there was light (Gen. 1:3). Then He divided daytime and nighttime and the first day was over. That left five more working days for God, didn't it? What would God do next? There was so much to be done!

Day Two: Restoration of Atmospheric Heavens

On the second day, God the Father decided that there must be air around the earth (Gen. 1:6–7), for all living things need air to breathe, but there was water covering the whole earth. How would God do it? Well, nothing is too hard for God to do (Jer. 32:27). God the Holy Spirit made a space for the air right in the middle of the water!

What did the earth look like now? It was still an empty, ruined place, but God had already made some big changes. There was light and there was darkness. There was day and there was night. There was water on the surface of the earth, then a band of air, and then on top of that another layer of water. I wonder, what do we call this air?

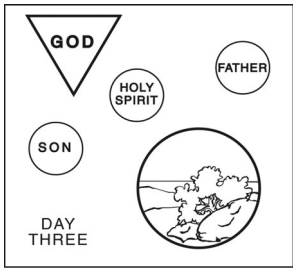
When we go outdoors on a sunny day and look up, it is pretty and clear blue with a few fluffy clouds sailing across the blue. On a cloudy day, it looks all grey, and at nighttime, it is dark. Can you guess? Of course, this air we are talking about is the sky.

Our earth is round like a ball (Prov. 8:27; Isa. 40:22). Do you know that our earth is floating in space? The Bible says that God hung the earth upon nothing (Job 26:7). Can you hang your coat upon nothing? No, you cannot, but God can do everything (Job 42:2*a*). The very word of His own great power holds up the earth and all which is upon it, including you and me (Heb. 1:3). Oh, what a wonderful God we have.

Day Three: Land and Sea Appointed

What day comes after the second day? Yes, the third day. What was God's plan for the third day? On the third day God said: "Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear" (Gen. 1:9).

Do you remember what our world is like? Is it flat? Is it square? No, it is round like a ball. If I take a cup of water and pour it over a ball, will it stay on the ball without spilling over? I should say not. It will run down the sides of the ball and mess up the room. I know what I shall do. I will tell the water not to spill! Will the water mind me? No, it will not! You know, that is exactly what God did to keep the water from running off the earth. God spoke to the water and said, "Thus far you shall come, but no farther; And here shall your proud waves stop" (Job 38:11). The waves obeyed God and gathered into oceans and seas, and the dry land on which we live appeared.



What God Wants Me To Know

Now, I want to tell you about another time when the waves obeyed God. One time when the Lord Jesus walked on the earth, He took His disciples, those who loved and followed Him wherever He went, on a ship to cross the sea. A terrible storm blew that night! It tossed the little ship so badly that almost everyone thought it would surely sink. The disciples were afraid. Where was the Lord Jesus? Was He afraid too? Of course not. Remember, Jesus is also God; He made the storm and the sea! No, Jesus was not afraid. He was sleeping.

The disciples went to wake up Jesus crying, "Save us, for we will surely drown" (Matt. 8:24–27). The Lord Jesus told them that they did not need to be afraid. No one who belongs to the Lord Jesus need ever be afraid. Will you remember that? Then the Lord Jesus walked over to the side of the ship, stretched out His hands, and told the sea to be still.

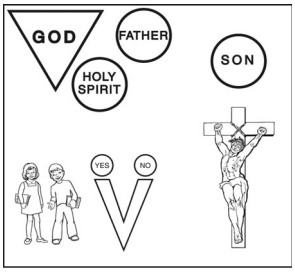
Now what do you think happened? Did the sea obey Jesus? It surely did. Jesus is God who made all things. Can you still say John 1:3? "All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being." The sea knows that God made it and the sea obeyed God right away. It became calm (Ps. 107:29; Matt. 8:23–27). That day the waters obeyed God just like they did on the third day when God commanded them to gather together to make the dry land appear.

Can you obey God? You certainly can, but do you? Right away? How can you obey God? First of all, by believing on the Lord Jesus Christ (1 John 3:23). If you have already done that, you will find out from God's Word what

God wants you to know. You will find out what pleases God and what does not. God wants you to obey your parents (Eph. 6:1). Do you obey them all the time? Do you obey your teachers?

The Bible tells you to be kind to each other (Eph. 4:32). Does that mean you are to hit Little Brother or Sister? Does that mean you are to be ugly to your friends? Goodness, no! That would never, ever please God. Listen closely to your Bible lessons, then you will soon learn how you can obey and please God.

Now, just suppose you have not yet obeyed God and believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. What should you believe about Him? That He is God's Son who loved us and died for us. After He died on the cross for our sins, He rose again. He now lives in heaven and is getting ready a place for all who will let Him save them. Right now, will you be like the sea and obey God? Then let the heavenly Father know silently, for He can hear every thought. Tell Him that you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 16:31). The Lord can help us learn to do His will and become His obedient children (John 14:15; 2 Tim. 3:16–17) so that we might be like the sea and obey the Word of God.



Lesson Review

Out of what did God make the earth? Out of nothing. What happened to the beautiful earth God had made? It became ruined after Satan and judgment. Where did God put the earth? He hung it in space.

Which One planned all things, God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Spirit? God the Father. Which One made all things? God the Son. Which One restored all things? God the Holy Spirit.

What did God have to do about the ruined earth before man could live on it? He had to restore it, to make it new once more. How many days did it take God to get the earth ready for the first man and woman? Six days. Could we have lived on the earth when it was all dark, empty, and ruined? No. Why not? All living things need two things, light and air.

On what day did God the Holy Spirit make the light to shine again? On the first day. What two things did God divide on the first day? Darkness and light. What did God call the darkness? Night. What did He call the light? Day.

With what was the earth covered in those long-ago days? Water. God put a band of air right in the middle of the water. What do we call the air He made? Sky. On what day did God make the sky? On the second day. What do we sometimes see in the blue sky, sailing across the blue? Clouds. On a clear night? Moon and stars.

On the third day, God gave an order to the waters. What did He tell the waters? Come together to make oceans and seas. Did the waters obey the Lord? Yes. What happened when the waters came together? The dry land appeared. You have done well; you have learned your lessons so well.

Memory Verse

"All things came into being by Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being." (John 1:3)

LESSON THREE
PLANT LIFE AND LIGHTS IN THE SKY

Have you ever seen an apple seed? Each one of those little seeds will grow into a tall tree some day, but first they must be planted in the earth. If you plant them today, you will have to be patient and wait many days, perhaps even weeks before the first green shoot comes up out of the ground. Why can we not hurry up the little seeds and expect them to grow tall right away? Only God can make things grow. God wanted green things to grow. When God saw the dry land come up out of the waters on the third day, He knew that the earth was ready to grow all kinds of plants. God did not have to watch and wait. He had sown all the seeds a long time ago when He first made the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:1). Now God need only tell the plants to grow and what do you think happens? Why, of course, all the plants would come up out of the ground.

Restoration of Plant Life

That is what happened right after the seas and the oceans were finished coming together. Would you like to hear the words God the Father spoke to the earth? He said, "'Let the earth sprout vegetation, plants yielding seed, *and* fruit trees bearing fruit after their kind, with seed in them, on the earth'; and it was so" (Gen. 1:11). Soon the grass spread like a soft, green carpet; vegetables came up, and lovely fruit trees grew out of the earth. Best of all, just as God had said, there were plenty of seeds in the grass and in the vegetables and right inside of each fruit to grow even more plants after the first ones were used up.

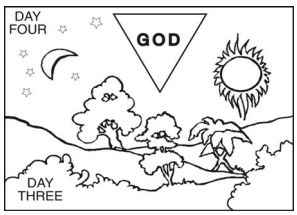
The next time you see someone cutting up an apple, be sure to look at all the little seeds God put inside each apple. Each one of them is God's plan and promise of many more apple trees to come. Perhaps you might even try to plant one and see if it will grow for you. Be on the lookout for other places God put seeds, flowers, and vegetables.

Day Four: Lights Appointed

What did God the Father plan to do on the fourth day? Let's hear what He said: "Let there be lights in the expanse of the heavens to separate the day from the night, and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days and years" (Gen. 1:14). Yes, on the fourth day, God planned for the Holy Spirit to decorate the heavens (Job 26:13).

We all like to decorate things, don't we? It makes everything look so much prettier. Don't you like to help put up a Christmas tree and decorate it with ornaments and lights? I am sure you do. Do you know how God the Holy Spirit decorated the heavens? He put lights, or lamps, up in the sky—a great big bright light for daytime and a smaller one for nighttime. Can you tell me what those heavenly lights are called? Why, yes, the big one is the sun and the smaller one is the moon. God also decorated the sky with so many stars that no one can count them all (Gen. 1:15–19). The sun is always out in the daytime and the moon and stars always shine at night, even if we cannot see them sometimes because the clouds cover them.

God said the sun, moon, and stars were to be for seasons and days and years. What did He mean? Did you ever notice that the sun shines less warmly in the winter than in summer, that the moon seems to change its shape? Sometimes it's big and round like a ball, and other times it is a skinny little sliver. We count our months by the moon and our years by the sun. That's the way God planned it all.



Summarizing Days One through Four

Everything which God had made was very good and God was well-pleased. Shall we count off on our fingers what God has done since the first day of making new things on the earth? On the first day, He made light and darkness. On the second day, He made the sky so we would have air to breathe. On the third day, God made the waters gather so that the dry land could be seen, and on the fourth day, God decorated the sky with the sun, the moon, and the stars.

Let's learn a new verse today about all the things God did. It is found in Psalm 135:6 and says, "Whatever the LORD pleases, He does, In heaven, and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps."

"Whatever" means anything and everything. Whatever *we* did? No, whatever God wanted, He did. We did not help Him one bit. Anything and everything God wanted to do, He did. Where did He do these things? One, in heaven; two, on the earth; three, in the seas; four, in the depths, under the earth.

We have already seen some of the things God did and we will find out some of the other things He did, especially those things He made on earth, and in the seas, and in the air. Meantime, you can be thinking what some of these things might be. Just before you go to bed tonight don't forget to look up in the sky and watch the heavenly lights.

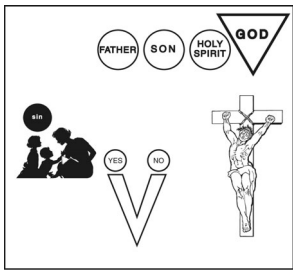
What God Wants Me To Know

Now I just wonder if all the things God made those first four days did what God wanted them to do? Let's see. God told the light to shine out of the darkness. Did it? Indeed it did. In fact, the lights God put in the sky still shine; they still obey God's Word, don't they? God told the earth to produce plants of all kinds. Did it? Yes! What's more, the plants still keep growing, just like God had planned for them to do. God made apple trees to have apples for their fruit, and banana trees to have bananas, and coconut palms to bear coconuts. Now I ask you, do we ever find strawberries on an apple tree? Of course not! Does the sun ever decide to shine by night and the stars by day? Never! By doing what God wants them to do, all of God's works praise His name. They show us what a wonderful and wise God we have.

Do boys and girls, men and women always do what God wants them to do and what will please Him? I am afraid not. When we disobey God's will, we are like apple trees which grow strawberries or potatoes. We are just not doing what we should. When we love our parents, we want to obey them and please them. If you have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, God the Father is your heavenly Father. Do you love Him? Do you want to show Him that you do? Listen to what the Lord Jesus said, "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments [Word]" (John 14:15).

Yes, God has a special plan for you, just like He has a plan for the sun, the moon, the stars, and everything else He has made. He wants you to know His plan and then, He wants you to do it.

Perhaps you have never yet believed on the Lord Jesus as your Savior. Just like sin once made an ugly ruin out of God's perfect earth, so sin has made each one of us ugly inside. Our sin on the inside makes us say and do bad things and makes us unfit to come to God's heaven.



Just as God the Father had a special plan for God the Holy Spirit to make the earth new again, so He has planned for the Holy Spirit to make new and clean all who trust in God's Son (2 Cor. 5:17). Jesus died to take away your sins and make you clean inside and brand new (1 John 1:7). Will you let Him do it right now? Listen to the words of God's plan. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:16). If you say yes to the Father, He will give you new life and the Holy Spirit will come inside you to stay with you to help you please and obey God.

Lesson Review

How many days had God worked by the time the sun, moon, and stars shone in the sky? Yes, four days. Can you say the words of Psalm 135:6?

Memory Verse

"Whatever the LORD pleases, He does, In heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps." (Ps. 135:6)

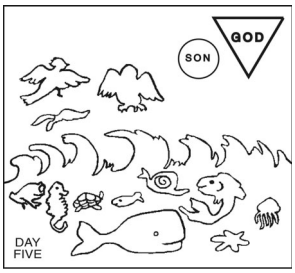
LESSON FOUR
DAYS FIVE AND SIX

We are now going to find out what God did first in the seas. Imagine how a fish is shaped. Press your fingertips together, with the palms of your hands slightly cupped. Do you see the streamlined shape of a fish? I wonder why God formed fish like this and not in the shape of a box? Fish are made to glide smoothly through the water and not splatter and splash like a clumsy bulldozer. That's why they are streamlined.

Fish do not walk, so they do not need legs. Instead, God gave them fins and a tail to help them swim and steer themselves through the water. Fish cannot live in the air like the birds do. That is why God gave them a home in the water. Can you think of some other living things that make their home in the water?

Day Five: The Seas Inhabited

There are many living creatures in the seas. Who put them there? God did. That was on the fifth day. The Bible says that on the fifth day, God put all the living, moving creatures we have talked about into the sea (Gen. 1:20*a*) including the great big whales. Have you ever seen a whale?



The largest whales that ever lived measured almost one hundred feet long. That's as long as three school buses! The Lord Jesus Christ, who made all things, made these whales out of nothing at all, in an instant (Gen. 1:21).

Whales live mostly in the water, but they can stay out of water for up to fifteen minutes; some can even stay out for one whole hour and some of them can learn to do tricks.

The Air Inhabited

Now there were many creatures in the waters, but there was nothing yet in the air. So God made living creatures to fly above the earth in the open sky (Gen. 1:20*b*). Soon there was a whirling and a fluttering about and the flapping of wings as the birds took to the air. The happy, chirping sounds of big and little birds filled the air, while the sea was just swarming with thousands of busy fish. "And God saw that it was good" (Gen. 1:21*b*).

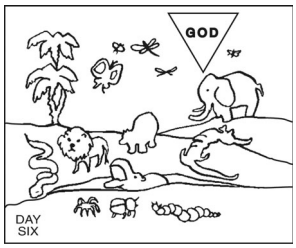
Perpetuation of Species within the Species

There were mother fish and father fish, mother whales and father whales, mother birds and father birds. And because God had told them to, it was not long at all until the birds built their nests. A few days later, what do you think lay in the birds' nests? Yes, perfect little eggs. The parent birds hatched out their eggs and soon raised their baby birds.

The fish and the whales also found their special places in the water and proudly swam about showing off their new families. God was pleased, for this is what He had planned for the creatures He had just finished making (Gen. 1:22). What a busy day the fifth day had been, but now it was finished.

Day Six: Restoration of Animal Life

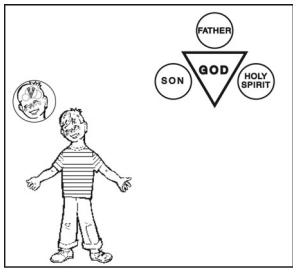
What day comes after the fifth day? Right, the sixth day. That was God's last working day. Is there anything missing on the earth? Let's see what we have now in the way of living things. There are plants. Yes, plants have life. They grow, don't they? There were the creatures and fish that lived in the water, and there were the birds which made their home in the air.



What animals have we not talked about yet? The animals which live on the earth and under the earth. Those were the animals God put on the earth on the sixth day. God made all the animals: tame animals like cats and dogs, wild animals like tigers and bears, farm animals like cattle and sheep, and creeping, crawling things, like snakes and lizards. He made big animals, like elephants, but He also made the tiniest insects which we can barely see with our eyes. Everything that came from God's hand was perfect (Gen. 1:24–25). The Bible says, "He has done all things well" (Mark 7:37). He provided the right sort of food that they might live and nighttime for them to rest or to feed.

Day Six Completed: Creation of Mankind

Finally, before the sixth day was over, God planned to make a human being. What is a human being? You and I are human beings. We are living creatures also, but we are very different from all the animals. We can talk and think; we can decide for ourselves. We can write and read, and we can love one another. We can understand God's love and love Him also. Why are we that way? Because God put a soul in us which He did not put in any other creature. It is our soul that makes us very special.



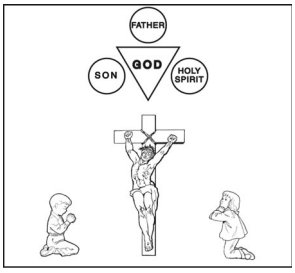
God the Father said on the sixth day, "Let Us make man [a human being] in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth" (Gen. 1:26).

God the Father spoke to God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. God knew all along that we would all be sinners and miss God's mark. God the Son and God the Holy Spirit did not say they would not make man because it would be no use. God made man just the same, and because God made the first man and the first woman, you and I are here today to learn about God and about His Word, the Bible.

What God Wants Me To Know

God knew all about you long, long before you were born. He knew that you would hear how the Lord Jesus made all things. Those six days were very important, but even more important is the day on which you believe in the Son of God. He made us even though He knew we would all sin (Rom. 3:23). He came to save us from our sins. What must you do to be saved? "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved" (Acts 16:31).

We have talked about obeying God's will. Have you ever tried hard to do what your mother and father wanted? Did you try to please God? Or did you complain and fuss and whine? Did you ever hear a fish complain, "I don't want to swim in the water; I would rather have legs and walk like a boy or girl, or wings and feathers and fly like a bird"? I should say not! Do you think God is pleased and says that it is very good when believing boys and girls stamp their feet and say no when they should be saying yes?



God wants you to talk to Him in prayer. From now on, first thing when you wake up in the morning, ask your heavenly Father to help you to do what He wants you to do every day.

Lesson Review

God made the world we live in. First, He created the heavens and the earth, but the earth became dark and empty and ruined when Satan and his angels sinned against the Lord. God had great plans for the earth; He did not want it to stay this way. So God said, "Let there be light." God divided the light from the darkness and called the light "day" and the darkness "night."

On the second day, God made the sky. On the third day, God told the water to come together to let the dry land appear. God called the dry land "earth" and the waters He called "seas" (Gen. 1:1–10).

Was God's work all finished then? Oh no, there was much more to be done. Will you help me tell what God did after the dry land appeared? Before the third day was over the dry land was ready and all kinds of plants began to grow. The seeds which had been buried in the earth suddenly peeked through the ground. There were trees and grassy meadows, flowers, vegetables, and lovely, juicy fruits. There were seeds in every plant to grow more plants and fruits for thousands of years to come.

On the fourth day, God decorated the sky. What sort of ornaments did He use? Yes, the sun, the moon, and the stars. What were they to do? They were to give light by day and by night. On the fifth day, God placed many living creatures in the seas. What kinds of creatures am I talking about? Fish, crabs, and all those little animals which live inside those pretty sea shells we find along the seashore, and many, many more. God also created the great big whales and on that same day He put what living things into the air? Tiny little hummingbirds and the great big soaring eagles—all types of birds.

Then came the sixth day, God's last day of creation. What did God do on the sixth day? He made the animals and all the creepy, crawling creatures like snakes and insects on the earth. At last God made man. God did as He pleased and all that He did was very good. What memory verse tells us that God did as He pleased? "Whatever the LORD pleases, He does, In heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps" (Ps. 135:6).

Memory Verse

"Whatever the LORD pleases, He does, In heaven and in earth, in the seas and in all deeps." (Ps. 135:6)

Chapter Four

How God Made Man

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: How God Made Man—Genesis 1:26—2:25

B. Lesson Titles:
1. Lesson One: The Creation of the First Man
2. Lesson Two: The Garden of Eden

C. Story Objective:

Man is a created being (Gen. 1:26–27). His body was unique in its origin, specially formed and prepared for him out of the dust, the elements and chemicals of the ground (Gen. 2:7). The first man was created a trichotomous being, possessing a body, soul, and spirit. God, the Lord Jesus Christ, breathed into him the breath of lives, literally soul-life and spirit-life, the human spirit.

Three Hebrew words are translated "create" in the Old Testament: *asah*, to make out of existing materials; *yatsar*, to fashion as a potter; *barah*, to make something out of nothing. The first two are used in connection with Adam's body, while the third is used with the creation of the soul and the spirit.

The body of the second Adam, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ, was also specially prepared for Him for His first advent (Heb. 10:5*b*). Adam was made after the likeness of God in his soul-life, capable of moral reasoning power—"I ought," self-consciousness—"I am," and self-determination—"I will." The Lord Jesus Christ was also made as a man, yet without sin (Rom. 8:3; Phil. 2:7; Heb. 4:15).

Woman, in contrast, was taken out of Adam's side to live by his side as his lifetime companion (Gen. 2:18, 24). Before man ever came upon the scene, God had already provided for his every need and furnished his new surroundings. Marriage and family were divinely ordained that the human race might be perpetuated on earth. God's work of creation and restoration was now completed. On the seventh day, God rested from all His works and declared a memorial to His grace (Gen. 2:1–3).

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:
1. Vocabulary: Adam, create, family, gift, human spirit, marriage, responsibility, soul
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. Creation of inner man and provision of his needs (Gen. 1:26–31).
   b. Man's body formed of existing materials (Gen. 2:7).
   c. A wife for Adam (Gen. 2:18–25).
   d. "In Him we live and move and exist" (Acts 17:28).
   e. Body, soul, spirit (1 Thess. 5:23).
   f. Adam formed first, then Eve (1 Tim. 2:13).
   g. "Christ made lower than angels, to taste death for everyone" (Heb. 2:9).
   h. "Every good thing bestowed and every perfect gift comes from above" (James 1:17).

E. *Source Book* Keywords: Adam and Eve, Christ (birth), human spirit, soul, Trinity

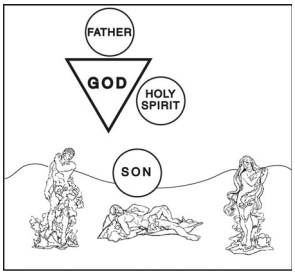
F. Activities:
1. Suggested Visuals: Adam, Adam asleep, brother, Christ on cross, Christ in manger, Eve, heaven, human soul, human spirit, little boy, sister, tomb, Trinity, volition
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
3. Memory Verse: "And God created man in His own image." (Gen. 1:27*a*)
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON ONE
THE CREATION OF THE FIRST MAN

Did you ever wonder where you came from? God made you, but how did He do it? Well, your mommy and daddy wanted a family all their own. They asked the Lord to give them a baby. So the Lord gave them a tiny little baby seed to grow in your mommy's body, just like the apple seed grows inside of an apple. There the Lord formed you and kept you until you were ready to be born (Ps. 139:13–16). Where did your mommy and daddy come from? From their mothers and fathers. Long, long before that, there lived a man who had no mother and no father at all. Do you know why he had no parents? Because he was the first man to live on earth. His name was Adam. Where did Adam come from? Who made him, and how was he made?

The Creation of Man

After God had finished the heavens and the earth and all that was in them, God the Father said, "Let Us make man" (Gen. 1:26*a*). To whom was God the Father speaking? He had just finished making the animals. Was He speaking to them? Or perhaps to the fish? Or to the birds? Or maybe He was speaking to the angels? No, God the Father was speaking to God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. God is



Three in One: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Many things you see every day are "three in one"; did you know that? An egg is "three in one." It has three parts: a shell, a yellow part which we call the yolk, and a clear or white part. Yet do these three parts mean that we have three eggs? No, we still have just one egg.

A tootsie roll pop is also "three in one." It has three parts: the hard candy outside that may be red or orange or purple, the soft chocolate tootsie roll inside the lollipop, and the white stick to hold while you eat it. But these three parts don't mean we have three tootsie roll pops; we still have just one, don't we?

How do we tell time? We count the seconds, minutes, and the hours, but it is one time. "Three in one" again. These things help us understand that God is one God, but in three Persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We are going to see pretty soon that Adam was made up of three parts. God gave him a body, a soul, and a human spirit, but Adam was only one man.

God had said, "Let Us make man," but how was He going to do it? First of all, God would make man a body. You and I have a body; we were born with it. Adam was not born. He was the first man who ever lived and God had to make his body in a different and special way. Remember God can make something out of nothing. God the Son made the heavens and the earth out of nothing, remember? What else did He make out of nothing? Yes, plants and animals. God can also make something out of things that were already there. Well, God made Adam out of something and out of nothing. Does that surprise you? Then listen carefully.

Adam's Body Formed

God tells us in His Word, the Bible, how He made Adam's body. God the Son, whom we know is the Lord Jesus Christ, took the dust of the ground to form a body for the first man (Gen. 2:7; John 1:3). Now I don't mean that God shaped a man like you would shape a great big mud pie. There are many things in the earth or dust of the ground which we cannot see. God took those things to make a body for Adam.

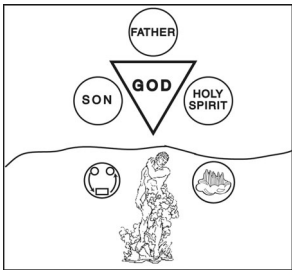
God the Son formed all the inside parts of man: the bones, the heart, the lungs, the veins, the stomach. He formed the feet and legs, the body, the arms and hands, a neck, and a perfectly shaped head. The form was now finished, but it was still just a body made of earth: feet and hands that could not move; eyes that could not see; ears that could not hear; a mouth that could not speak. There was no life in that body, for you know Adam's body and our bodies are only shells in which the real *you* lives.

Lives for Adam

Have you ever seen a snail? What you see of the snail is only a shell in which the real snail lives. There is no life in the shell, is there? Of course not. Well, Adam's body, which was only his "shell," was all ready, but there was still no life in it. So God the Son "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life" (Gen. 2:7), literally 'lives'—soul life and spiritual life. What happened then? Suddenly Adam moved. He was alive and knew it. He blinked his eyes—he could see! He could speak, walk, run; he could think! You see

what God had done? He had made Adam's body out of something—earth, and the real Adam, inside that body, He had made out of nothing!

When God breathed into Adam, He gave him two kinds of life—a soul-life and a spirit-life or a human spirit. With his soul, Adam could know and understand the things in



the world around him. With his soul, Adam could make decisions, for that was where God had put Adam's volition to say yes and no as he wished. Now with his human spirit, Adam could know, understand, and love God.

The Bible tells us that God is a Spirit (John 4:24), and that no one can see Him (Ex. 33:20; John 1:18), but God can be known and understood. To know Him we must have a human spirit. Just like God, our own souls and spirits cannot be seen. Yet they are very real. They are inside of us as they were inside of Adam.

In the Image and Likeness of God

There was another thing that God had said He would do. He was going to make Adam "in Our image, according to Our likeness" (Gen. 1:26*a*). What does that mean? Let's find out. Are we made like angels? No! Nor are we made to be like the birds or the fish. We are different; we were made in the likeness of God. That does not mean we are like God. Remember, I told you that we don't know what God looks like; He cannot be seen; He does not have a body. We are like God in our soul-life. Is that hard to understand?

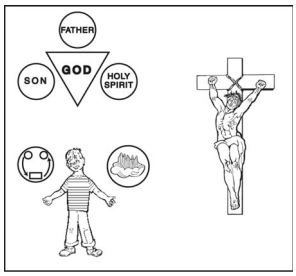
Let's think of it this way: Do you know you are alive today? Who told you that you are? Your soul-life does. It also tells you the difference between right and wrong, and helps you use your volition to say yes or no. Animals cannot do these things; they do not have our kind of life—soul-life. You and I, and everyone since Adam is very, very special to God because He made us like Himself in our inside, in our real selves.

A Home for Adam

God called the man whom He made "Adam" and put him into the most beautiful Garden you have ever seen. The name of the Garden was Eden (Gen. 2:8). Adam looked about him. What do you think he saw? We'll find out in our next lesson.

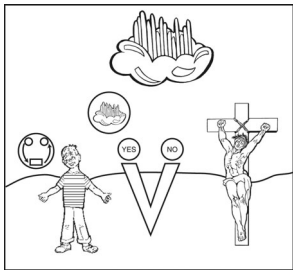
What God Wants Me To Know

Who gave your life to you? God did, for only God can give life. He gave you life in your body and in your soul when you were born, and eternal life in your human spirit when you took the Lord Jesus to be your Savior. What is eternal life? Eternal life is God's life. Eternal life is forever. God gives eternal life to all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, life that they might live with Him in His heavenly home forever and ever and ever.



Why do you think God made you? He made you to bring happiness to your mother and father. He made you that you might love God and obey His Word. All that you have—your parents, your home, your food, your clothing, your bodies and voices—God gave to you. Are you thanking the Lord for everything each day? Or do you complain and whine? Do you thank the Lord for the Bible which teaches about Him? This pleases our heavenly Father.

All who live on earth have earthly or soulish lives. That means they can live here, but they cannot live in heaven. God had put Adam into a beautiful Garden. Do you know that He wants to put you into a far more beautiful place than the Garden of Eden? Where might that be? Yes, into His heavenly home. The trouble is that those who have only earthly or soulish lives cannot live with God in heaven. Why not? Because they do not have human spirits and eternal life. They have a soul and a body, earthly lives. They can understand and know the things around them, but because they do not have a human spirit they cannot understand and love God. Maybe I am talking about you now.



God wants to give you a human spirit and eternal life. He wants to take away your sins. Do you know how you can be made spiritually alive to God? Can you do it yourself? Can I do it for you? No, the Bible says, "God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son, has the life" (1 John 5:11–12). Won't you tell God the Father right now that you will believe in Jesus Christ, His Son? Then, right away, you will receive a human spirit and eternal life.

Lesson Review

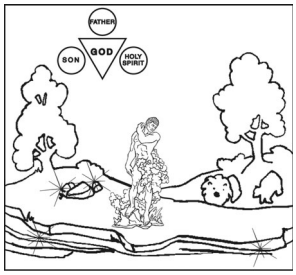
Did Adam begin his life as a tiny, newborn baby? No. Who made a special body for the first man who ever lived? God the Son. Out of what was his body made? Dust of the ground. What was missing in his body after the shape was all finished? Life. Adam had two kinds of life. Can you remember what we called his lives? Soul-life and spirit-life or a human spirit. He was made to be like God in his soul-life, and he could know, understand, and love God from his human spirit. What happened when God breathed into the shape of Adam's body? He became a living person. Where did God put Adam? Into a beautiful Garden.

Memory Verse

"And God created man in His own image." (Gen. 1:27*a*)

LESSON TWO
THE GARDEN OF EDEN

I told you last time that I would tell you what Adam saw when he looked up in the Garden of Eden. At first, he noticed the many, many kinds of trees. Every tree



which was pretty to see, good to smell, and good to eat was there. Then Adam saw a great river which watered the Garden of Eden. What were all those shiny yellow rocks in the ground? Why, they were real gold, and there were oh, so many precious stones (Gen. 2:11–12). What a beautiful, beautiful place God had fixed up for him!

Adam's Responsibility

God told Adam to take good care of the Garden and look after it (Gen. 2:15). Then the Lord brought every animal and every bird which He had made to Adam to see what Adam would call them. How would Adam ever know an elephant or a bird? He had never gone to school. He had no mother or father to teach him. But Adam had God. God had given Adam knowledge so that Adam could say right away, "This is an elephant, this is a bear, this is a lion, and this is a bird." Adam gave names to all the birds and to every animal, but Adam was lonesome (Gen. 2:19–20). He loved God in his human spirit, but he needed a friend to love in his soul.

Tame animals, like dogs and cats, are nice to have for pets, but they do not make very good friends. Why? They cannot talk to you because God made them different from us. Animals have no human soul and no human spirit. They cannot think like we do. Adam needed a companion who would be like him, but there was no other human being.

A Wife for Adam

Then God said, "I will make him a helper suitable for him" (Gen. 2:18). How was God going to make Adam's helper? Was He going to take more dust of the earth like He had done for Adam? No, while God had made Adam in His own image and after His own likeness, He was going to make Adam's helper in Adam's likeness. Let's learn our memory verse first, then I will tell you what happened while Adam slept that day in the Garden. "And God created man in His own image" (Gen. 1:27*a*).

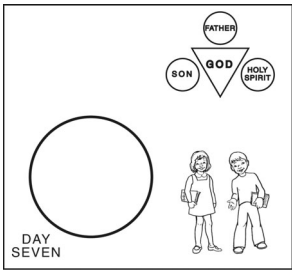
In the Garden, the Lord made a deep sleep to fall on Adam. All at once, Adam got very sleepy; he yawned and yawned. He could not keep his eyes open any longer, so he stretched out on the ground and slept. While Adam slept, the Lord took one of Adam's ribs. Do you know where your ribs are? After God took out the rib, He made the skin to heal without leaving a scar. "And the LORD God fashioned into a woman the rib which He had taken from the man" (Gen. 2:22*a*). Adam had slept so soundly that he had not felt anything.

Now he woke up and stretched. Adam blinked his eyes. Who was that coming toward him? The Son of God and a

woman. She was the loveliest lady you can imagine and the Son of God brought her to Adam. How happy Adam was! "This is now bone of my bones, And flesh of my flesh," He called out. "She shall be called Woman, Because she was taken out of Man" (Gen. 2:23). God told Adam that this beautiful, lovely lady was to be his wife (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4–5). God blessed Adam and Eve and said, "Be fruitful and multiply" (Gen. 1:28). Adam and Eve were to have their own children. God would not form people from the dust of the ground nor out of the ribs of men any longer. From now on, He would give mothers and fathers their own little seeds that they might have their own babies in their own likenesses.

God's Work of Creation and Restoration

Was there anything else God must still do? Let's see! He had finished the heavens and the earth and all that is in them. He had prepared growing things, such as greens and grasses for the animals to eat. He had made fruit trees with ripe, juicy fruits for Adam and Eve. "And God saw all that He had made, and it was very good" (Gen. 1:31). No, there was nothing else to be done. The six working days were over. God had finished His work, and "He rested on the seventh day from all His work" (Gen. 2:2). Was God tired



after working so hard? Is that why He rested? No! His work of making things new was all done; there was nothing else to be done. That was why God rested on the seventh day.

The Sabbath, a Memorial to God's Grace

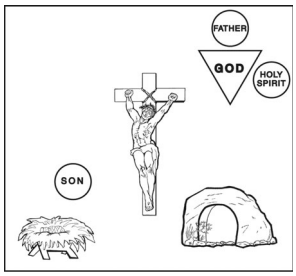
God wants us to know that everything we have was given to us and made for us by Him (Gen. 2:3; 1 Cor. 4:7; Col. 1:16; James 1:17). There is nothing left that you and I can do to make things better than God has made them already. That's why God wants us to remember the seventh day as a special day on which He rested from all His works which He had done.

What God Wants Me To Know

We've talked about Adam and the lovely lady God made to be his helper. Yes, God made Adam and Eve and He made you and me. Where does the real *you* live? Inside your body! God wants to use every boy and girl who has believed in His Son. He uses the real *you* and also the body He has given you. Do you have a mouth? I wonder what God wants us to do with the mouth: Telling the truth instead of lies; thanking Him instead of complaining; saying kind words instead of ugly ones. What would you tell some boy or girl who does not know how he can get to heaven?

Did God give you ears? For which reasons do you think He wants you to use your ears? To listen to the Word of God? To listen to parents and teachers? Do you have hands? How could you use them to please the Lord? To help and work, not to fight or take things which do not belong to you. How do you think the Lord wants us to use our volition? To have His way in our lives or to have our own way? To have His way, of course. Let us be sure and tell the Lord that we want to do as He wants us to, not as we want to do.

Did God prepare our bodies in the same special way He made Adam's body? No, He did not; He did not need to.



Let me tell you about another time God the Father had to get ready another special body. That was over two thousand years ago.

One day, God the Holy Spirit placed a tiny baby seed into a young woman named Mary. That seed would become the body of God's own Son. Yes, Jesus, God's Son, was going to come down to earth and become a man (Rom. 8:3). Remember, Jesus Christ is unique; He is the God-man. As a man Jesus was perfect; He had no sin nature. Never once did He sin in His whole life. He came to earth to die for your sins and for mine. The punishment for sin is spiritual death. If we are dead in our human spirits, we are lost from God forever. That is a terrible, terrible punishment.

That's why Jesus left heaven and came to die to save our souls. He took our punishment in His own body on the cross. He died spiritually as our substitute. Then, He died physically and His body was buried in a grave, but He did not stay in the grave. He rose again and went back up to heaven in a new body which can never die.

Right now the Lord Jesus is waiting for you to use your volition God's way. Will you trust Him to give you eternal life? Would you really like to be alive, not just in your body and soul, but also in your spirit? You can; do you know that? How? It's easy, very easy for you. God the Son has already done all the work. All you need to do is to believe in Him. Then you can rest easily, knowing that you will go to heaven to live with God forever.

Lesson Review

Can you tell me the name of the first man? His name was Adam. Did Adam have a father and a mother? No, he did not. Where did Adam come from? God created him. Out of what did God make Adam? He made him from the dust of the ground. Let's see if you can remember what Adam was like. He had a body, a soul, and a human spirit. In his soul he could understand the things in the world around him. In his human spirit he loved and understood God. Out of what did God make his soul and human spirit? Nothing!

What else was the real Adam like inside? Adam was created in the image or likeness of God. Does this mean that Adam looked like God? No, Adam's soul-life was like God's. He could think and use his volition and understand himself. Animals cannot do these things.

Then, God brought all the animals to Adam. Why did He do that? To allow Adam to name them. But Adam was lonesome. He could find no friends among the animals, so God made a lovely lady to be Adam's wife. Did God make her from the dust of the ground as He had made Adam? No. You tell me how God made Eve.

Memory Verse

"And God created man in His own image." (Gen. 1:27*a*)

Chapter Five

How Man Became a Sinner

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: How Man Became a Sinner—Genesis 3

B. Lesson Titles:
1. Lesson One: Temptation in the Garden
2. Lesson Two: The Fall of Man

C. Story Objective:

Adam was created in the image of God possessing self-consciousness, self-determination, and moral reasoning power. Thus he was given volition or free will to exercise as he pleased. God placed the first man and his wife in the Garden of Eden. The setting of man's first home was ideal. His food and shelter were provided, ready for the taking. His only responsibilities were to prune and guard the Garden (Gen. 1:28–29; 2:8–9).

Adam's fellowship with God was perfect, as was his fellowship with Eve, for man was as yet innocent (free from sin—ignorant of evil). Then by means of one forbidden tree, God put man's volition to the test. Man was warned of the terrible consequences of disobedience to the expressed will of God (Gen. 2:17). Adam and Eve became sinners by their own choice (Gen. 3:6). They brought sin and death, both spiritual and physical deaths, upon the entire human race (Rom. 5:12). Man no longer becomes a sinner: He is born in sin.

God saved Adam and Eve. He offers the same salvation to all humanity. The cross on which the Savior died spiritually and physically (1 Pet. 2:24) has taken the place of the tree which brought sin and death. It has become the tree of salvation and now poses the most important test to the volition of man.

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:
1. Vocabulary: forbidden, innocent, serpent, test
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. Man's original environment (Gen. 2:8–14).
   b. Man's responsibility (Gen. 2:15).
   c. The prohibition and warning (Gen. 2:16–17).
   d. The temptation and fall of man (Gen. 3:1–7).
   e. Consequences of the Fall (Gen. 3:7–8; 5:5; Eph. 2:1).
   f. God seeks to save man (Gen. 3:9; Luke 19:10).
   g. Man attempts to conceal his guilt (Gen. 3:10–14).
   h. Promise of salvation (Gen. 3:15; Rom. 6:23*b*).
   i. Judgment of the human race (Gen. 3:16–19; Rom. 6:23*a*).
   j. A covering for sin (Gen. 3:21; John 1:29).
   k. Expulsion from the Garden (Gen. 3:23–24).
   l. Man now in the sinful likeness of Adam (Gen. 5:3).
   m. "Through one man sin entered into the world" (Rom. 5:12).
   n. "Through the obedience of the One many will be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19).
   o. Adam sinned willfully; Eve was deceived (1 Tim. 2:14).
   p. The tree of salvation (1 Pet. 2:24).

E. *Source Book* Keywords: barrier, Christ (impeccability of), Satan, tree of the knowledge of good and evil

F. Activities:
   1. Suggested Visuals: Adam, Bible, brother, Christ on cross, Eve, father, human soul, human spirit, lake of fire, Satan, sin circle, sin wall, sister, tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Trinity, volition
   2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
   3. Memory Verse: "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin." (Rom. 5:12*a*)
   4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON ONE
TEMPTATION IN THE GARDEN

Adam and Eve did not live in a house as you and I do. Did they live in a tent or in a trailer? No, they lived in a beautiful Garden. How would you like to live in a garden full of lovely fruit trees where it is never too hot or too cold and where it never rains? Would that not be fun?

Most people who live in the city do not have great big gardens, but Johnny's parents lived in the country. They had an orchard. Do you know what that is? An orchard is a garden full of fruit trees. You see, Johnny's father grew and sold grapefruit, oranges, peaches, and pears. Best of all, Johnny loved pears.

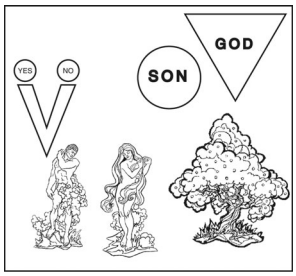
Now he knew that he must not climb up any of those trees nor eat any fruit before it was ripe. But one day, Johnny looked at the pear trees. Oh boy, they were almost ripe! Johnny knew that his father had told him not to eat unripe fruit. He knew that he would not only get very sick, but he would also get a spanking if he disobeyed. But just then Johnny did not care. First he ate one pear. It was green and sour, and Johnny made a face. Then he reached for another pear and ate it, too.

That night Johnny was not at the supper table. Where was Johnny? His father went out to look for him and found him hiding behind the tool shed. Johnny had a terrible stomachache; but worse than that, can you imagine how ashamed he was to have disobeyed his father? Do you think Johnny deserved a spanking? He certainly did! He had to be punished. Now, that does not mean that Johnny's father did not love his son any more. His father loved him very much and wanted only what was best for Johnny.

Listen now as I tell you our Bible story. It is all about trees and two people very much like Johnny.

The Garden of Eden

Adam and Eve, as you remember, lived in the Garden of Eden. In that beautiful Garden was a great river. There were rocks of gold and precious stones and all kinds of animals. The animals, unafraid and tame, walked up and down among the many trees. There were trees everywhere. The Bible says that God planted every kind of tree that was pretty to look at and every kind of tree that was good for food (Gen. 2:8–14) and right in the middle of the Garden stood two special trees. One was the tree of life; the other was the tree of knowledge of good and evil.



"Then the LORD God took the man and put him into the garden of Eden to cultivate it and keep it" (Gen. 2:15). Adam was to look after God's lovely Garden. I wonder why he should guard it and from whom? I think he was to be on the lookout for Satan, the devil, and guard the Garden against him.

The Command of God

Now God spoke to Adam: "From any tree of the garden you may eat freely; but from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat" (Gen. 2:16*b*–17*a*). What did God mean? Look at all these trees, Adam. Eat as much as you want. But of this tree, you must not eat at all. This is an order! God said, "For in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die" (Gen. 2:17*b*).

Maybe Adam and Eve nodded their heads and said, "Yes, Lord, we understand." For a while, they were careful to obey the Lord's command. What a wonderful time they had in the Garden! They loved each other and they loved God. They had all the food they could possibly want. They had many pets, but best of all, they could walk and talk with the Lord every day, for in the cool of the day the Lord came to visit them in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:8).

How thankful Adam and Eve should be. God had given them a body, a soul, and a human spirit. He had put them

in a beautiful Garden and given them volition just like the angels had. With their volition they could decide for themselves what kind of fruit they would eat and what kind of animal they would pet. Most important of all, they could use their volition to obey or disobey God. Let's remind Adam and Eve what God had said about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil: "For in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die." Yes, God had given Adam and Eve a test to see whether they would do what He told them or not.

The Test of Obedience

One day when Eve was all by herself, she heard a voice. Who was that speaking to her? It was not God's voice she heard, nor was it the voice of Adam. It was the voice of Satan coming out of the mouth of a serpent, but Eve did not know that the voice belonged to Satan. You know what a serpent is, don't you? We usually call serpents snakes. Most of us think of snakes as ugly, wiggling, and dangerous creatures. But long ago when Eve lived, the serpent was the most beautiful and the smartest of all the animals that God had made. He was very bright and shiny (Gen. 3:1*a*) and Eve was not afraid of him. You see, there was nothing to be afraid of in the Garden. All animals were tame then, and I am sure Eve must have known the serpent well.

Just what was it the serpent had said? She listened, and these were the words she heard: "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" (Gen. 3:1*b*). Eve said, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, lest you die.'" (Gen. 3:2–3). God had not said that Adam and Eve must not touch the tree. What had God commanded the first man and his wife? "But from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat from it you shall surely die" (Gen. 2:17). Would touching the tree hurt them? No, but disobeying God's Word certainly would!

Now listen to what the serpent said next: "You surely shall not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:4*b*–5). Do you understand what Satan had done? He had come inside of the serpent to trick Eve into disobeying God. Satan was telling Eve to go ahead and eat the fruit. He said it would make her smart. I wonder, will Eve listen to God's Word and obey God, or will she listen to Satan's word and disobey God? What do you think?

What God Wants Me To Know

Did you know that Satan is still trying to get people to listen to him instead of to God? Does he talk out loud to you? No, he just puts wrong thoughts into your mind. When you think, "I don't need to believe in the Lord Jesus," those are Satan's words. What are God's words? "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved" (Acts 16:31). Will you listen to God when He tells you to believe in Jesus?

Lesson Review

Who is Satan, or the devil? Does he love God? Not at all. Did God let Satan choose whether he would love God or not? What did God give Satan with which to choose for or against Him? Volition. Who else was given volition to choose for or against God? Adam and Eve. Can you tell me about the test God gave to Adam and Eve to see whether they would choose to obey or disobey Him? What did God command them about this tree? Do not eat of it, or you will die. How did Satan try to get Eve to choose against God and disobey Him? He told her she would not die if she ate of the tree. Did Eve believe God or Satan? We haven't found out yet, have we?

Memory Verse

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin." (Rom. 5:12*a*)

LESSON TWO
THE FALL OF MAN

Last time I told you about Johnny who disobeyed his father and ate the pears before they were ripe. Johnny's disobedience gets him into a lot of trouble. Just today his mother called to him and told him to get his brother and sister and come into the house. But Johnny said to his brother and sister, "Let's stay out and play; let's not go in the house."

Pretty soon his mother came out to find them. "Why didn't you children come in when I called you?" she asked. "Well, Johnny told us to stay out and play," they answered. Was Johnny the only one who was punished? No, all three were punished because they listened to Johnny. Many times when you decide to disobey, not only do you sin, but you cause others to sin too and get them in trouble. Then you will all be in for it! That is just what happened in our story. Listen while I tell you about it.

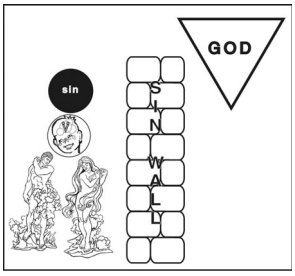
The Decision To Disobey

Eve thought about what Satan had said. Should she do what he said? She looked at the tree. It was such a pretty tree! "I'll bet it tastes good," she may have thought. She then reached out and broke off a fruit. Surely all the angels of God must have wanted to shout, "Don't eat it, don't eat it!" But Eve had made up her mind. With her volition, she turned against God. She ate the fruit which God had said not to eat.

Pretty soon, Adam came back to where Eve was. Do you think he knew what she had done? I am sure he did! Eve offered some of the fruit to Adam. What did Adam do? Did he decide to obey God? If he obeyed God, he would still be spiritually alive. If he disobeyed God, he would become like Eve, spiritually dead. Adam loved Eve more than he loved God! So Adam also ate of the fruit of which God had said, "You shall not eat" (Gen. 2:17*a*).

Oh, what a terrible thing they had done! Adam and Eve had become sinners. Immediately, they knew that they had done wrong, but it was too late. The most awful thing about it was that it was all their own fault. No one had made them sin. Satan did not break off the fruit; he did not force it down their throats. They had decided for themselves to disobey God. Would God make them die right then and there? Yes, the moment Adam and Eve disobeyed God they were spiritually dead, although their bodies were still alive. What were Adam and Eve like before they sinned? They had a body, soul, and human spirit. With their bodies they could move about; with their souls they could think and make decisions and understand the world they lived in, and with their human spirits they could understand and love God.

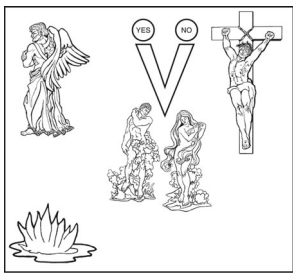
But now Adam and Eve could no longer walk and talk with God. They were spiritually dead, without a human spirit. They could not understand or love God. Sin, like a great big wall, had come between them and God (Isa. 59:2).



The Punishment and Promise of God

When God came to walk and talk in the Garden that evening, Adam and Eve were nowhere to be seen. They were ashamed of themselves and afraid of God. Sin always makes us feel ashamed and afraid, but God had not stopped loving them. In fact, He had come to look for them and to save them from their sins (Gen. 3:9; Luke 19:10). God told Adam and Eve that His own Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, would come into the world to die for man's sin. Adam and Eve believed God's promise. They believed that Jesus would come to take away their sins (Gen. 3:15). Right away something very wonderful happened to Adam and Eve: God made their human spirits come alive once more (Eph. 2:5). Now they could understand God and love Him again.

Still, God must punish the man and his wife just as He said He would. God said that from now on, Adam must work hard as long as he lived on earth. He must grow his own food, and that would not be easy. Out of the ground would come sticker-burrs and thistles and thorns—all because Adam had sinned. Sin brought sorrow, and sickness,



and pain, and finally death into their lives (Gen. 3:16–19, 23–24*a*). God would also punish the serpent and make it become the ugly crawling snake we see today (Gen. 3:14).

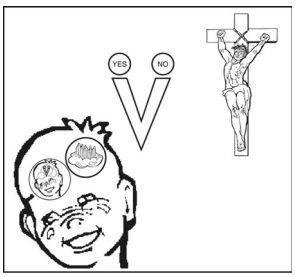
To show Adam and Eve that He had forgiven their sin, to show that He would surely keep His promise to send the Savior, God killed perfect animals (little lambs, most likely) and made coats of skins for the first man and his wife (Gen. 3:21). The little lambs had not sinned, but they died so that Adam and Eve might be covered. The Lord Jesus would not have any sin either, but He would die so that their sins and ours could be taken away.

The Results of Sin

After Adam and Eve left the Garden of Eden, God gave them children (Gen. 4:1–2; 5:3–4). But there was something wrong with Adam's children. They looked alive and well in their bodies. Their souls were alive also; but they had no human spirits and were spiritually dead. What had happened? Adam's children were born with Adam's sin nature. How sad Adam must have been to see that his disobedience had brought sin and death into the world! What does the Bible say in Romans 5:12? "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin." Now, what can Adam do for his children? Look after them, yes; care for them, love them; but most importantly, he must be sure to tell his children that God will save them and make them spiritually alive if only they will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

What God Wants Me To Know

You certainly look very much alive to me. At least, I can see that you are alive in your bodies and in your souls. Who can tell if you are spiritually alive? God can! He sees right inside of us. What does Romans 3:23 say? "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Yes, we all

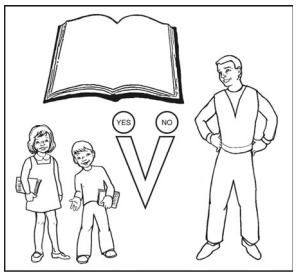


sin; we all think and do the wrong things. We all disobey. Do you know why? Because we all have Adam's sin nature inside of us. Both believers and unbelievers have Adam's sinful ways. Spiritual death keeps us away from God so that we cannot walk and talk with Him (1 Cor. 2:14). We cannot even understand God until we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior. When we believe, at that very moment, God creates in us a human spirit and gives us eternal life. Now, we are spiritually alive forever.

Jesus came into the world just as God had promised. He came as God's own perfect Lamb to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29). Jesus died on a tree (1 Pet. 2:24). It was not a pretty tree; it was a rough, wooden cross. The pretty tree was in the Garden, the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God had said of this tree, "do *not* eat of it," but of the cross, God says that if you do take of this tree and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ who died for you, "I will make you spiritually alive forever."

Did you ever tell God the Father that you are believing in Jesus to save you from your sins? God loves you. He wants to take away your sins, but He cannot make you love Him. Do you know why not? Because He gave you volition, a decider, to say yes or no, just the same as Adam and Eve had. Only you can decide if you want the Lord to be your Savior. I cannot decide for you. Your mother and father cannot decide for you. This is your test which God gives you. It is the biggest test you will ever have in all your life. What will you decide? Why not believe in the Lord Jesus Christ right now?

Your parents want you to obey them and to do what they tell you to do because they know what will be best for you. However, many times you use your volition to disobey them. You want to have your own way, just like Johnny. When you use your volition to say no to your mother and father, they must punish you so that you will learn that they know best. They must train you to use your volition to say yes and no at the right times.



God has told us in His Word how His children can please and obey Him. If you choose to disobey Him and say no to what He tells you to do in His Word, He must punish you to teach you that it is best for you to obey Him. Your heavenly Father always knows what is best for you. This is why He wants you to decide always to obey Him.

Lesson Review

Boys and girls often disobey their parents. When they are in trouble, their parents will spank them or punish them in some way. Adam and Eve disobeyed also, but they did not have any human parents. Whom did they disobey? Yes, God. Can you tell me what they did wrong? They ate of the tree of which God said not to eat and became sinners. What happened that evening when God came to see them in the Garden? Yes, the first man and his wife had hidden among

the trees. Were they trying to play hide and seek with God? Of course not! They hid because they were afraid of God and ashamed of what they had done. But it was too late and now, God must punish them. What was God's punishment for sin? Yes, spiritual death. Although Adam and Eve were still alive in their bodies, they had died spiritually. Sin, like a great big wall, had come between them and God.

What must God do now? Send them away from the beautiful Garden. God cut Adam and Eve off from the tree of life because it was useless to them in spiritual death. Can you remember what God promised Adam and Eve before He sent them away? He promised to send His own Son to take away the sins of the world. Adam and Eve believed God. So God covered them with coats of skins to show that He had forgiven their disobedience. Some day, if you have taken the Lord Jesus to be your Savior, you will meet Adam and Eve in heaven, but you will not meet Satan, the devil, there. Do you know where he must go? Right into the lake of fire! God prepared the lake of fire specially for the devil and his fallen angels, but He also is preparing heaven for all who will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Have you told God that you will take Jesus to be your Savior?

Memory Verse

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin." (Rom. 5:12*a*)

Chapter Six

How God Saves Sinners

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: How God Saves Sinners—Matthew 27

B. Lesson Title: Christ and the Removal of Sin

C. Story Objective:

One man's disobedience had brought sin and death to the entire human race (Rom. 5:12). Man would have been hopelessly lost and condemned forever, for "the wages of sin is death" (Rom. 6:23*a*), were it not for God's matchless grace. God decided to deal with fallen humanity in grace by working out a plan of salvation (Eph. 2:8–9).

In God's perfect time (Gal. 4:4), God the Son took upon Himself the form of a servant. He came into the world, conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of a virgin (Isa. 7:14; Luke 1:35). Both God and man in One—the Man Christ Jesus (1 Tim. 2:5) alone would be able to free mankind from the curse of sin and death. Jesus Christ alone could lift the world's sin burden "in His body on the cross" (1 Pet. 2:24). He became obedient unto death and our sin was nailed to His cross (Rom. 6:6). His substitutionary spiritual death canceled out sin; His obedience provided forgiveness and cleansing (1 John 1:7*b*); God's own righteousness was credited to our account (Rom. 5:19*b*); and access by faith into His grace (Rom. 5:2) is given to anyone who will believe in Him. Where once stood the wall of sin which barred sinful man from holy God, now stands the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, an open door for all who will enter in by faith (John 10:9*a*).

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:

1. Vocabulary: burden, crucifixion, grace, shepherds, sin nature, spiritual life
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. Sin is too much for us (Ps. 38:4).
   b. He removed our transgressions (Ps. 103:12; Isa. 58:6).
   c. "Clothed me with garments of salvation" (Isa. 61:10).
   d. "Our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment" (Isa. 64:6).
   e. "Their sin I will remember no more" (Jer. 31:34*b*).
   f. "The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).
   g. God sent His Son "that the world should be saved through Him" (John 3:17*b*).
   h. "There is salvation in no one else" (Acts 4:12).
   i. Christ died for us; we shall be saved through Him (Rom. 5:8–9).
   j. "The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men" (Titus 2:11).
   k. "Your sins are forgiven for His name's sake" (1 John 2:12).

E. *Source Book* Keywords: Christ (birth, lamb without spot), cross, salvation, saved, sin nature

F. Activities:

1. Suggested Visuals: Bible, brother, Christ on cross, Christ in manger, cross with open door, heaven, little boy, sin circle, sin wall, Trinity
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
3. Memory Verse: "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. 1:15*b*)
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

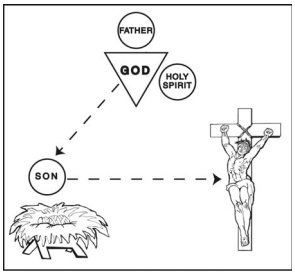
LESSON
CHRIST AND THE REMOVAL OF SIN

Do you remember the happy day when your new little brother or sister was born and then came to live in your house? A baby is much more fun than a doll or toy because it is real and alive. Did you know that all babies, though they look alive, are not alive to God? The Bible tells us that we are all born sinners—dead in sin. Just like some of us have our father's color of eyes or hair, so we all have Adam's sin and sin nature. You cannot help being born a sinner any more than you can help being born a boy or girl.

Every tiny little baby brings into the world a great big burden. Can you guess what that burden might be? It is *sin*. He will carry his sin burden around with him until he takes the Lord Jesus to be his Savior. The strange thing about this burden is that we cannot see it; but God can. We cannot even feel it until we find out that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). If you will be very still, I will tell you how God saves sinners and what Jesus did to take away our heavy sin burdens.

The Birth of Jesus

One day, when the time was just right and God had made ready everything for His Son to be born into the world, the Lord Jesus Christ left His beautiful heavenly home. I am sure that God's angels were happy to know that



God's Son was going down to earth to take away our sin burdens. They traveled quickly to tell the good news to the shepherds. What did the angels say? "For today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). The shepherds went quickly to see the sweet Baby. Was this really God's own Son? Why, He looked no different from all the other babies. How could they be sure? They had heard and believed God's message from the angels. God's Word is true. So when the shepherds looked at Baby Jesus, they knew that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.

The shepherds were happy and prayed and thanked God for sending Jesus to save them from being lost in sin forever. The shepherds knew something about what it meant to be lost and to be saved, for often they would have to go look for a lost sheep which had wandered away from the flock. The lost animal would never find its way back unless the shepherd went to find it and save it from hunger and wild animals. This was what Jesus had come to do for the shepherds. He knows that we are all lost in sin, far, far away from God. He came to find us and bring us back to God by taking away from us our heavy burden of sin. Is that not wonderful?

Jesus without Sin

Yes, Baby Jesus may have looked just like all other little babies, but He was very different. Since Jesus had God for His Father and not a man, the baby Jesus came into the world without sin and without a sin nature. Jesus was born spiritually alive. Little by little, the baby Jesus grew older and bigger; He became a boy and then a grown man. Throughout His whole life, Jesus was never naughty; He never did anything wrong. He never disobeyed, nor told a lie. He never took anything that did not belong to Him. He never sinned. The Bible tells us that there was no sin in Him (1 Pet. 2:22; 1 John 3:5). Since Jesus had no sin of His own, He was the only One who could take away your sins and mine. Jesus knew that the only way you and I could be made free from sin was for Him to take our sins on Himself (2 Cor. 5:21). Jesus knew that God hates sin and must punish sin. What was it that God had told Adam? If he sinned He would surely what? Yes, die. The Lord Jesus loved us so much that He was glad to die in our place.

The Crucifixion Scene

Finally, one day, long before we were born, Jesus let the wicked men take Him and tie His hands behind His back. They beat Him and led Him to a hill outside the city. There they took away His clothes and nailed Him to a cross. Did you ever prick your finger? That hurt, didn't it? It hurts much more to have a nail driven through your hands and feet. The Lord never cried. He did not even whimper. Do you know why He did not? He was thinking of us. I'm doing this for Mary, for John, for Judy, for Tom, so they need not be punished by God for their sinfulness.

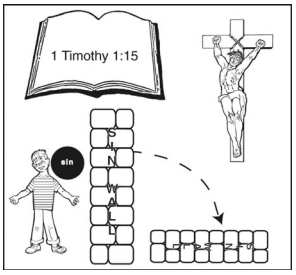
Many people stood around and watched. Some cried because they were sad. Others made fun of the Lord Jesus. They did not believe that this was God's Son dying for

their sins. They did not believe that Jesus could take away their sins and save them. They were very ugly to the Lord Jesus yelling, "If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross" they called, "He saved others; He cannot save Himself . . . come down from the cross, and we shall believe in Him" (Matt. 27:40–42). They began to spit at Jesus. Our precious Lord Jesus never said a bad word. He was always kind and loving and forgiving. What do you think He did then? The Bible says that "He Himself bore [took upon Himself] our sins in His body on the cross" (1 Pet. 2:24). He took your sins and mine. Oh, how those sin burdens hurt God's sinless Son! They gave Him such great pain that His heavenly Father sent black darkness to cover His Son's suffering so that no one could see Him. From twelve noon to three o'clock in the afternoon, the whole land was darker than nighttime (Matt. 27:45). Even God the Father and God the Holy Spirit could not bear to look at Jesus suffering for our sins. They turned away from God the Son. Now Jesus was all alone in His suffering and pain. God punished Him for our sin. On the cross, Jesus died first in His spirit and then in His body.

When it became daylight again, a wonderful thing happened. All who had looked on the Lord Jesus Christ and believed had lost their sin burdens, but those who did not believe on Him were still carrying their sin burdens. A Roman soldier was still looking at the Lord Jesus Christ. He was thinking hard. He thought, "If Jesus had not stayed on the cross and died for my sins, I would have to die for them. Why, He died for me! It is a true saying, 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners'" (1 Tim. 1:15*b*). The Roman soldier called loudly and clearly, "Truly this was the Son of God" (Matt. 27:54).

What God Wants Me To Know

Was this the first time you ever heard that you are carrying a sin burden? You will never have to bear it again if

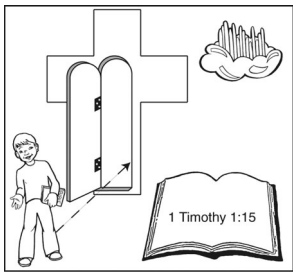


you take Jesus to be your Savior (Ps. 103:12). He took away your sins and was punished in your place. Many years ago, when kings ruled over countries, no one would dare punish the king's son. Instead, a poor boy just about the age of the young prince was chosen. He was to live in the palace and grow up with the prince, but he must agree to take any punishment which the prince might have coming to him. This boy was called "the whipping boy." Indeed every time the prince was naughty, the whipping boy was scolded; every time the prince needed a spanking, the boy was spanked instead, even though he had done nothing wrong.

How would you like to have such a boy come to live in your house? You think that you would like it very much, don't you? Well, the Lord Jesus was punished for *all* our wrongdoings. He was punished for all our sins, big and little. He was not a poor boy who came to live in a palace, but the Son of God, the heavenly King. He left His beautiful heavenly home to come and be a man to live with us on earth and to die in our place.

If you have never told God the Father that you believe that Jesus died for your sins, won't you do it right now? You must tell Him yourself for He can hear you, and you must really mean it. How can you know that Jesus really took away your sins and made you all clean inside? You know it because God says so in His Word (2 Cor. 5:21). You will be saved and belong to God forever. There is no sin wall to stop you from coming to God. The sin wall went tumbling down when Jesus died on the cross for our sins.

Anyone may now come to God. The Lord Jesus says, "I am the door; if anyone enters through Me, he shall be saved" (John 10:9*a*). He invites you, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden [those who have sin burdens], and I



will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). He is waiting to take your heavy sin burden right now. How can you come to Him? Just tell God, "Thank you for sending your Son to save me from sin. I now believe on Him." If you did that, you have walked through the open door.

Is it not sad that some people don't know they are carrying a sin burden? That they are forever lost unless they let the Lord Jesus find them? You and I, who believe in our Savior, can do something for them. I wonder what it might be? Can we take away their sin burden? No, only Jesus can do that. What is it then that we can do? We can tell others about the Lord Jesus and how He can save them from sin. All they need do is believe that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners.

Memory Verse

"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." (1 Tim. 1:15*b*)

Chapter Seven

The Giving of the Law to Moses

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: The Giving of the Law to Moses—Exodus 19

B. Lesson Title: God Speaks to Me through the Bible

C. Story Objective:

In the past, God revealed Himself in various ways: in creation (Ps. 19:1; Rom. 1:20), by direct conversation (Heb. 1:1), and through His Son, the living Word (John 1:18; Heb. 1:2). Today, however, we have a more sure word of prophecy, to which we are exhorted to take heed (2 Pet. 1:19). This more sure word is the Bible. There God's message to mankind is contained in completed form—"the mind of Christ" for all to read (1 Cor. 2:16). At this point, teach only the two major divisions of the Bible: God's message prior to the cross—the Old Testament, and God's message after the cross—the New Testament, with the Savior as the heart and center of both divisions of God's Word.

It is never too early to impress indelibly upon the minds of children that the inerrant, divinely inspired Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21) are to be respected and obeyed (Prov. 22:6). Instill in their minds a deep love and trust for the Word of God.

This lesson, along with those to follow, is designed to show the beginner child on a personal basis that God has a special message for him, and that this message is found in the pages of the Bible. It is our prayer that each child through the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures will continue in the things which they have learned and of which they have been assured (2 Tim. 3:14–15) so that they, too, will hold "fast the word of life" (Phil. 2:16) "to the praise of the glory of His grace" (Eph. 1:6).

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:

1. Vocabulary: Bible, New Testament, Old Testament, truth
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. The immutable God (Ps. 102:25–27).
   b. "Thy word is settled" forever (Ps. 119:89).
   c. "Establish my footsteps in Thy word" (Ps. 119:133).
   d. His word is true (Ps. 119:160).
   e. "Every word of God is tested" (Prov. 30:5–6).
   f. "My words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35).
   g. "Blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it (Luke 11:28).
   h. Profitable for doctrine, for reproof (2 Tim. 3:16–17).
   i. Alive and powerful (Heb. 4:12).
   j. Be "doers of the word, and not merely hearers" (James 1:22).

E. *Source Book* Keywords: Bible, verbal plenary inspiration

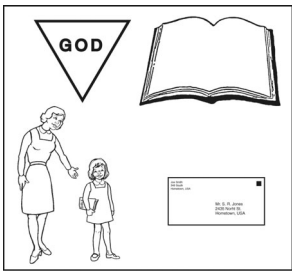
F. Activities:

1. Suggested Visuals: Bible, Christ on cross, Moses, mother, sister, Trinity
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
3. Memory Verse: "But these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." (John 20:31)
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON
GOD SPEAKS TO ME THROUGH THE BIBLE

Janie looked out the window. "Here is the mailman now, Mommy. I hope he brings a letter from Daddy," she called. You see, Janie's daddy often had to travel far away from home on business. Then, when he could not talk to his wife and little daughter, like your daddy talks to you every day, he wrote them many, many letters. When those letters came, Mommy would tear them open quickly and read to Janie what Daddy had to say. Janie loved Daddy's letters. He always wrote such wonderful, loving words. It was almost as good as having him right there in the room.

One day, Mommy looked up after reading a letter and said, "Janie, have you ever thought how awful it would be if there were no words?" Let's just pretend that when God made all things, He forgot to make words. What would life be like? Well, we could not speak to each other at all, for all the things we say are said in words. We would be going around opening and closing our mouths like fish, and yet, no words would come out. We could not write letters because they are made up of words. There would be no books to read and there would be no Bible. We could not think or pray, for even our thoughts are unspoken words. But thank God, He did not forget to make words. He made us in such a way that we can make use of words. He gave us a mind to think with and to understand words. He gave us ears to hear words, eyes to see words, and a mouth to speak words. Do you know why He did? So that He can speak to us.



God is way up in heaven, and we are down here on the earth. There are many things God wants us to know, and it takes many words to tell them. God has allowed us to have all of His words that He wants us to know in the Bible. The words of God are the most important words in the whole world. That is why we call the Bible the Word of God. When we open the Bible and read what God writes to us, we find out wonderful things and we will love God's Word as much as Janie loved hearing from her daddy. In fact, God is the Father of all who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:26). He loves us so much, He wants to speak to us through the Bible. He teaches us about Himself every day, but we must be ready to look and listen for what He has to say.

God Spoke to His People, Israel

God knows that even if we would like to, we cannot see Him all the way up in heaven. We can see no farther than the sky with all the pretty clouds sailing across the blue. We cannot even look straight into the sun. The sun is far too bright and it would blind us. No one can see God's face and live (Ex. 33:20). God is too wonderful for us to see. We can see the things He has made: the twinkling stars, the moon, the sea, the tall mountains. We see the pretty creatures God has made, but we cannot see Him (Ps. 19:1; Rom. 1:20). How, then, can we know Him? Maybe He could speak to us. There was a time when God spoke to His people, Israel.

Exodus 19:9–14

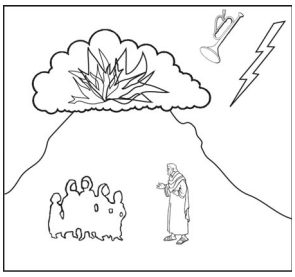
God had told Moses to gather all the people where they could see Mount Sinai. The people had made themselves clean and had washed their clothes. They knew that they must not come near God's mountain nor touch it or else they would surely die. God had promised to speak to them with His own voice on the third day. They could hardly wait. What would God's voice sound like? What word would He say to them?

Exodus 19:16–20

Finally, the third day came. This was the special day. All voices were hushed as the people waited. "So it came about on the third day, when it was morning, that there were thunder and lightning flashes" (Ex. 19:16*a*). Are you afraid of thunder and lightning? Many boys and girls are. God made the thunder and lightning. He is much more powerful than the things He made so you need not be afraid of anything. Just trust God to take care of you. As the people watched the thunderstorm and heard the crackling thunder, they became frightened. They had never seen such strange things happen as happened that day.

Right during the thunder and lightning, a thick cloud came down and settled on the mountain top. Suddenly a trumpet began to blow louder and louder. The Bible says that the trumpet blew exceedingly loud (Ex. 19:16*b*). There was no use putting your hands over your ears. The shrill

trumpet sound came piercing through and it would not stop blowing. The people trembled with fear.



Just then the Lord came down from heaven. The people did not see God. Remember, no one can see God and live, but they did see the great fire in which the Lord had come. The whole mountain seemed to be smoke and fire as they watched the thick clouds of smoke go up in big puffs. Then the mountain shook with an earthquake, and still the trumpet blew. Yes, it even sounded above all the noise, the hissing, the crackling, louder and louder; until at last, above all that great noise came the voice of the Lord.

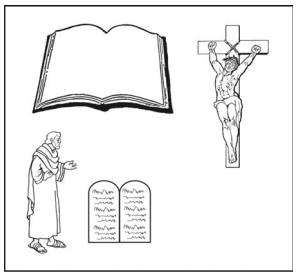
Do you wish that you could have been there that day? Maybe you think you would like to have been there, but believe me, you probably would have done the same thing all the other children did—hide behind your mommy and daddy and cry with fright. Yes, even the grown people were terrified. Sure, they had wanted to hear God's own words from God's own lips, but they just did not think that God's voice would scare them. Did you ever get really close to a little bird outdoors and speak to it? Even if you spoke in a whisper, just seeing great big you and hearing your words would scare the little birdie and it would fly away to a safer place. The only way you could talk to that bird would be if you became a bird yourself. Only you cannot do that, can you?

God had much to tell His people. Yet the people could not stand hearing the voice of God. Our Bible tells us that God's voice is mightier than the roar of the seas (Ps. 93:4). God's voice roars like thunder (Job 37:5; 40:9). His voice roared that day from the mountain top as He spoke to His people. The Israelites came running to Moses. They still trembled from fear. They begged Moses, "Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but let not God speak to us, lest we die" (Ex. 20:19). Then they ran far away from God's mountain to what they thought would be a safer place. Moses told the Israelites that they must not fear God's voice, but must trust His voice (Ex. 20:20). Still they stood far off and watched from a distance as Moses went up the mountain to talk with God.

To make sure that His people would know what He wanted to tell them, God gave Moses two pieces of stone on which He wrote His words with His own finger (Ex. 31:18; 32:16). After that, God gave Moses many more words to write down. God spoke to others also. They, too, wrote down God's message. All these words were written on scrolls and were carefully kept.

What do you think God's message was? God spoke about that ugly thing called "sin." He told us what to do about sin. He promised to send His own Son to come to take away our sin burdens. He told us what His Son would be like and how He would come into the world and die on the cross in our place. God told all these things long, long before they actually happened. Today, we call God's promises and sayings about how His Son would come the "Old Testament." The Old Testament is the first part of our Bible and was written before the Lord Jesus came into the world.

Then God did the very thing that you and I could never do for the birdies we talked about. God the Son became a human being, just like you and me. He would be one of us and speak to the people in the people's own voice, not with the roar of thunder and lightning, nor with the loud blowing of a trumpet. There would be nothing frightening about Him at all. Then maybe the people would listen to what God was really like and trust Him. Do you think they listened? Do you think they believed? Some did, but many more turned away from the Lord and would have nothing to do with Him.



What God Wants Me To Know

You have learned how one day they nailed the Lord Jesus Christ to the cross; how He died and was buried and came out of the grave alive after three days. Then He went back to His Father in heaven. Still God had not told all of His words. There was much, much more He wanted us to know. So He chose some faithful believers and taught them what words to write down. They wrote them first on scrolls; then many years later they were printed in Bibles. All those things that were written down after the Lord went back up to His heavenly Father are found in the New Testament.

Don't you wish that you could read all He wants you to know? He tells us about our new life in His Son. He tells us how we may please Him. He tells us wonderful, true stories about great believers. He tells us about a brand new body He will give us some day; about how He will send the Lord Jesus to take us up to heaven; how wonderful our new home in heaven will be; about His angels; and yes, even about Satan and the fallen angels.

His Word is just as real to us as it was to the Israelites of long ago. When we read or hear God's Word, we should listen carefully to see what God is saying to us. We should tell Him, "Dear Father, teach me to listen for your special

message to me today." If God tells us what He wants us to do, He also expects us to obey His Word. He never speaks to us in any other way. As long as we live, God speaks to us through the Bible. I love my Bible because the Lord gave it to me. Do you?

Can you guess what the most important thing is in all the Word of God? The most important words God has for us in the Bible are about His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ—how He came to save sinners. In fact, God tells us the reason why He had His words written in the Bible. He says, "But these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God" (John 20:31*a*). What will we have if we believe? Forever or eternal life!

You are here now to hear what God would say to you. You heard God's voice, but did you see lightning and hear thunder and a trumpet that blew so loud that you thought your ears would pop? Did you see a thick cloud above us? Of course not. You heard only my voice as I read to you out of God's Word, the Bible. There was nothing for you to be afraid of, was there? However, God tells us that when we hear His Word, there *is* one thing we must all be afraid of—not believing it! Will you believe God's Word right now? Will you take His Son to be your Savior? You may tell the Father right now that you trust His Word and believe on His Son.

Lesson Review

How far up can you see? As far as the sky. Is there anything beyond the sky? Yes, God's beautiful heaven. Can we see God with our eyes? No, not now. Can we speak to God? Yes, we speak to Him when we pray. Does God speak to us? How? That is right; God speaks to us through His Word, the Bible. But there was a time, long ago, when God spoke with His voice to His people, Israel.

Now, I want you to listen very closely because I will leave out some words in the story, and you will have to say them for me. Do you think you can do that? Let's try.

One day God told Moses to call all the Israelites to a meeting place close to a great, tall (mountain). The people had washed themselves clean and stood waiting to hear God's (voice). On the first day nothing happened. On the second day nothing happened. But on the (third day), in the morning, the sky became dark. Then they heard loud (thunder) and saw bright and flashing (lightning). All the people were very much (afraid). They trembled with fear and begged, "You go, (Moses)." God gave Moses two pieces of (stone), on which He wrote His words with His own finger. God spoke about that ugly thing called (sin). He promised to send His own (Son) to come to take away our sin burdens.

Memory Verse

"But these have been written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name." (John 20:31)

Chapter Eight

Be More Ready To Hear

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: Be More Ready To Hear—Matthew 11:15

B. Lesson Titles:
1. Lesson One: It Is Worth Your While To Listen
2. Lesson Two: Jesus Called Us To Follow Him

C. Story Objective:

When the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to pen these words, "Faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17), He did not add a conditional clause, limiting the age of the hearer. The beginner child is just as capable of receiving the Word and believing it as is the adult person. However, the beginner's attention span is very short and his mind is more apt to wander. In order that the ears of all will be more attentive to future lessons, we must teach beginners that the Lord has given them ears to hear His Word (Neh. 8:3).

This lesson is designed to help the beginner child to be more ready to hear by showing him that it is worth his while to listen. He must be taught to recognize the things which often keep him from hearing; he must be shown that he alone can determine whether his "ear-gate" remains open or slams shut. He must learn that only one key will unlock the shut ear-gate (1 John 1:9).

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:
1. Vocabulary: disciples, gates, listening, paying attention
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. Gather the people that they may hear (Deut. 31:12–13).
   b. "All the people were attentive" (Neh. 8:3).
   c. The Lord opens the ears of men (Job 33:16).
   d. Hear the instruction of your father; incline your ear to wisdom (Prov. 2:2; 4:1; 15:31).
   e. The hearing ear, "The LORD has made" (Prov. 20:12).
   f. Be ready to listen (Eccl. 5:1*a*).
   g. Your ears shall hear, this is the way (Isa. 30:21; 50:4–5).
   h. "Ears, but hear not"; "hear the word of the LORD" (Jer. 5:21; 9:20).
   i. "What you hear . . . proclaim" (Matt. 10:27).
   j. Blessed are "your ears, because they hear" (Matt. 13:16).
   k. "Let these words sink into your ears" (Luke 9:44).
   l. "Ear has not heard" (1 Cor. 2:9).
   m. The call of the disciples:
      1) Peter and Andrew, James and John (Matt. 4:18–22; Mark 1:16–20; Luke 5:1–11).
      2) Matthew (Matt. 9:9; Mark 2:14; Luke 5:27–29).
      3) Nathanael (same as Bartholomew). Note: It is commonly accepted that Bartholomew (so-called by Matthew, Mark, and Luke) is the surname of the disciple named Nathanael (John). "Bar-Tholomai" is the son of Tholomai, as "Bar-Jona" was Simon Peter's surname (Simon, son of Jona). For further information consult *Unger's Bible Dictionary* or see any analytical concordance (John 1:45–49).
      4) The Twelve (Luke 6:13–16).

E. *Source Book* Keywords: Christ (calls disciples)

F. Activities:
   1. Suggested Visuals: Bible, brother, Christ on cross, heaven, mother, sister, Trinity, volition
   2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
   3. Memory Verse: "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." (Matt. 11:15)
   4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON ONE
IT IS WORTH YOUR WHILE TO LISTEN

Our next two lessons will be all about ears. What are ears for? To hear with, of course. Many living creatures have ears. The elephant has great, big, floppy ears; the donkey and the horse and some dogs have pointed ears. Did you ever notice how your doggie's ears perk up when he hears you call him?

Birds have very sharp ears, even though we cannot see their ears. In the forest or in the jungle when there is danger, the birds are usually the first to chirp a warning to the other animals. When animals hear this warning signal, they run for safety. Their ears are always ready to hear. Are your ears always ready to hear? I am afraid not.

One day Jody and Mike were having a lot of fun. They were playing ball with their many friends. You could hear their happy voices all over the neighborhood. Suddenly they heard a voice calling: "Jo-dy, Mi-ke!" Jody and Mike knew that this was their mommy's voice. "Oh, no," said Jody, "she would call just when we are having such a good time."

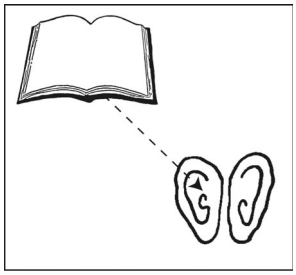
"Jo-dy, Mi-ke, come here quickly," came the voice again. Mike wondered just what Mommy might want. "I'm going, Jody," he said, but Jody was paying no attention. Mike ran home quickly. "Where's Jody?" asked Mommy. "She did not want to come," answered Mike. "Well, then," said Mommy, "in that case you may have her treat as well as yours." She gave Mike two yummy ice cream treats. Don't you think Mike was glad he had listened and answered his mother's call? And I am sure Jody really learned a lesson that day too—that it pays to hear and obey your mother's voice.

The Lord Jesus tells us, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." Did you ever wonder about your ears; who gave them to you, and how wonderfully your ears were made? Listen carefully.

The Ear-Gate

Did you know that our ears are like very important doors, or gates? Why do I say that? Well, what are doors for? To go through on your way in or out. The ear-gate is an "in" door. Can you think of what goes in that door? Yes, sounds—all kinds of sounds, like voices and noises, words and music, laughter and crying, the sounds of trucks and cars, sirens and bells. Did you ever count all the noises you hear in a day's time? We never think of that, do we? Think how different your life would be if you could not hear.

What happens to the sounds that come in your ear-gate, do you know? Sound travels quickly, just like a message, to

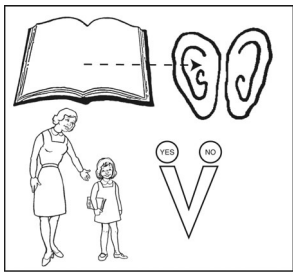


your soul. That is why you can tell what it is you hear even before you see the thing or the person that made the sound.

When you are listening for a sound, your ear-gates are wide open, and that is how they should be. When you are not paying attention, your ear-gates slam shut and you may miss out on a lot of fun.

Is Your Ear-Gate Open to the Word of God?

God gave you your ears before you were even born. The Bible says that God "planted" your ears, one on each side of



the head, that you might be able to hear (Ps. 94:9). When you came into the world your ears were soft, and cute and ready, but your ear-gate was still closed. God knew that it was more important for you to get stronger. First of all, you learned to drink your milk and sleep. Then, when you were ready, God opened your ear-gate (Job 33:16). You were still too little to understand words, but soon you came to know more and

more sounds: the sound of your mommy's voice, the sound of your rattle, the squeak of your toys. When you heard sounds that you knew, you turned your head and cooed happily. Often sounds that you did not know frightened you and made you cry.

As you grew bigger, you began to listen and understand. Then something new began to happen—your volition began to work. You found out that you could shut out sounds which you did not like by not paying attention. Maybe you did not want to finish your food, even though Mommy told you to eat all your cereal. Instead of listening, you pushed away the bowl, threw down your spoon, and began to kick and scream. The more your mommy begged, the louder you hollered. Your mouth was wide open, but your ear-gate was shut tightly. Most mommies are clever. They know how to remind baby to open the ear-gate and stop screaming. Do you know how? I think a spanking would open that ear-gate to minding Mommy, don't you?

Now you are big girls and boys, old enough to learn about the Lord Jesus. The Bible tells us, "The hearing ear and the seeing eye, The LORD has made both of them" (Prov. 20:12). God wants us to listen, not only to the things around us but also to our parents. God says, "Children, obey your parents" (Eph. 6:1). Listen to what they say, and then do what they tell you. Most of all, God wants us to listen to His Word. He speaks to us in the words of the Bible and by the words of the pastor in church. What God tells us is really important. That is why He says, "He that has ears to hear, let him hear" (Matt. 11:15). Sometimes we obey and listen; other times we listen to the wrong things. Let us look at some ear-gates and see if they are open or shut, shall we?

Look at Jill sitting in church and appearing to be listening to God's Word. She looks like she is listening, does she not? But is she really listening? No, not Jill! She is listening instead to a dog barking outside and thinking about a new toy she can't wait to play with later. Is her ear-gate open to the Word of God? No, her ear-gate is shut tightly.

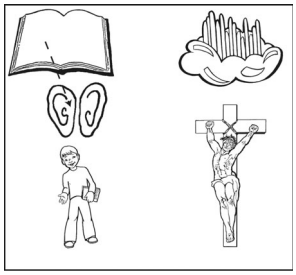
Can we open her ear-gate? Should she get a spanking? No, Jill is a big girl now and Jill belongs to the Lord Jesus because she has trusted in Him. Sin has slammed Jill's ear-gate shut and only Jill can open it. She has a little key, 1 John 1:9. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Jill must tell the Lord, "I disobeyed, I did not listen."

What God Wants Me To Know

Sometimes in Bible class, boys and girls will talk and listen to each other instead of listening to the Word of God. On days like that, the devil and his fallen angels do not have to make trouble. The boys and girls who disturb others and keep them from hearing God's Word are pleasing Satan and his fallen angels. Boys and girls who do that have their ear-gates closed to God's voice. The Bible tells them to be more ready to hear than to speak (Eccl. 5:1*a*). You know why God gave you two ears but only one mouth, don't you? So you can listen twice as much as you speak!

When your ear-gate is wide open as God wants it to be, this is what happens: the things teachers or parents say "sink into your ears" (Luke 9:44). Have you ever thrown a stone into a pool of water? Did you watch the ripples it made after the stone sank? That is the way it is when we let God's Word sink down into our ears. Here are the ripples: first we hear; then we learn; then as we know God better, we begin to love Him more and more and last of all, because we have learned to love God, we want to do what He says. Wonderful things happen to all who listen to what God says.

God says that people, big and little, who do not listen are foolish, "Foolish and senseless people, Who have eyes, but see not; Who have ears, but hear not" (Jer. 5:21). If you



don't listen to God's Word, you can never find out how to go to heaven; you can never learn how much God loves you and cares for you; you can never find out how you may please Him. How may you be saved and go to God's beautiful heaven-home some day? Do you remember why Jesus came into the world? To save sinners. If you believe that He died on the cross to save you, He will take away your sins and make you His child and care for you always. You would not want to be foolish, would you? Then be sure you have believed on the Lord Jesus as your Savior.

Lesson Review

What does God tell us in Matthew 11:15? "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." Ears are made for hearing. Ears are the gates that lead to our minds. Some things are good for us to hear; some are bad. What should we listen to in church? God's Word. Who should we listen to at home? Our parents. What two things will shut your ear-gates? Sin and not paying attention. Sin keeps God's Word from sinking down into our souls and so we must be quick to tell God when we have sinned so that our ears may be open. God says that people who will not listen to God's Word are foolish. They will never find out how they might get to heaven until they pay attention to God.

Memory Verse

"He who has ears to hear, let him hear." (Matt. 11:15)

LESSON TWO
JESUS CALLED US TO FOLLOW HIM

When we listen to God, all sorts of wonderful things begin to happen to us. We are going to find out what happened to some men who heard the Lord Jesus calling them. How do you think Jesus called them? On the telephone? Well, let's see.

The Call of the Disciples

While the Lord Jesus was on the earth, He had something very important to tell His best friends: Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, James, Simon, Judas (the son of James), and Judas Iscariot (Luke 6:12–16*a*). These were the twelve disciples whom the Lord Jesus had called to be His learners and helpers. Every day the Lord would talk to them and teach them. The disciples would listen carefully so they might learn what Jesus wanted them to do. Jesus wanted the disciples to go tell the whole world about Him. When we listen to God's Word, we, too, learn what God would have us do and then we can become His helpers also. The men heard the Lord Jesus say, "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8–12). Yes, that is what they must do. They had heard His voice, they had learned His ways, they knew what the Lord wanted them to do, and do it they would.

Now imagine the disciples talking about how they had first met the Lord Jesus. Maybe Andrew turned to his brother Peter and said, "I remember the first time I heard about the Lord Jesus. I had gone to listen to the great teacher, John the Baptist. He told us that Jesus had come to take away the sins of the whole world. The Lord Jesus had been there that day. I followed Him home to see where He lived and He invited me in for a visit with Him." Peter nodded his head, "Yes, and then you came to tell me that you had found the Lord Jesus Christ. Both of us went to see Him and to talk to Him" (John 1:35–39).

"Tell us all about how the Lord called you," begged the other disciples. Peter began, "Andrew and myself, and James and John here, were fishermen. We were partners. The day Jesus called us to follow Him, Andrew and I were washing our nets. James and John were mending the torn places in their nets. The Lord Jesus went fishing with us that morning and gave us the biggest catch of fish we had ever brought home." Andrew, James, and John laughed. "The funny thing about it was that we never even sold one fish out of that catch."

The other disciples listened with attention to Peter's story. Now they asked, "What did you do with the load of fish?" "We just left them lying there because of what the Lord Jesus said." "Tell us what He said," asked the men. "He called us and said, 'Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men.' So we followed Him and now we are to go and catch people for the Lord Jesus by telling them that He died for their sins" (Matt. 4:19).

Now Philip stepped forward. "Do you want to hear how the Lord called Nathanael (Bartholomew) and me? My call came the day after Andrew and Peter heard the voice of the Lord Jesus," Philip said. "All I heard Him say was, 'Follow me'—nothing else. When I heard His voice, I listened and obeyed. First, I ran quickly to call Nathanael. Nathanael was sitting under a fig tree. I told him that we had found the Lord Jesus. I said, 'Come and see Jesus.'" Nathanael quickly interrupted, "Do you know what the Lord Jesus told me? He said He had seen me when I sat under the tree and He knew me. Is not our Lord wonderful? Truly, He is the Son of God!" (John 1:44–49).

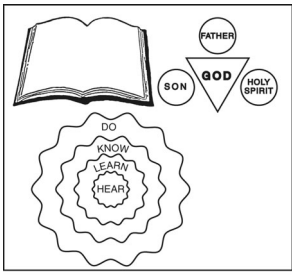
Now it was Matthew's turn to tell his story. "I, too, heard Jesus call me," he said. "One day as I sat at my desk and collected taxes, I had a great, big pile of money all stacked up. Then I heard a voice saying, 'Follow me.' I looked up and there stood the Lord Jesus. When He spoke, I knew this was the voice of God. I heard His words and went with Him." The others asked, "What happened to the money?" Matthew shrugged his shoulders. "I don't know; I just left it like you left your fish and followed God's voice which is much more important than all the money in the world" (Matt. 9:9).

Thomas, James the younger, Simon, and Judas (not Iscariot, John 14:22) had listened eagerly to the others. "That's how we became the Lord's disciples. He called us, we heard His voice and listened to what He had to say." The twelve men looked at each other happily. "Are we ever glad our ears were open when He called us! If we had not listened, we would have never known the way to heaven-home. Now we must do what He said; we must tell others so they, too, can hear the good news and be saved."

What God Wants Me To Know

Are you not glad that these men listened to God's voice? Not only did they tell the good news to all whom they met, but when God told them to, they wrote down God's message in the Bible. That is how we got part of our Bible. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John gave us the words which the Lord

Jesus spoke when He was on earth. John tells us that the things he has written down are the things he heard (1 John 1:1–3). He says that if we will listen to God's Word, we will be happy. We will *hear* that Jesus came to save us. We will *learn* that we can be saved and go to heaven if we will believe in Him. We can *know* that we please Him if we *obey* His Word and *do* what He asks.



Have you done that? Listen to what God says: "This is His commandment, that we believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 3:23*a*). You can do it right now. Only those who come to God through His Son Jesus can go to heaven. Right now, God is listening to you. Will you tell Him that you will take Jesus to be your Savior from sin?

If you have already believed, you, too, can tell God the Father that you want Him to help you to listen carefully when you hear His Word so that you can follow Him just like His disciples did. Following Him is the same as obeying Him. When you hear His voice, don't drag your feet and say, "Must I listen to God's Word again?" Say, "Yes, Lord, open my ears wide that I might *hear, learn, know, and do and obey* Your will."

Remember, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." Sin always shuts the ear-gate. So be sure to use the only key that will open the lock. Tell God if you have done wrong, and become His follower and helper.

Lesson Review

Remember what happened to the men who heard the Lord Jesus talking to them and calling them? They followed Him and became His disciples and helpers. After they had learned well, the disciples went out into all the world to tell about God's wonderful Son. The disciples also wrote down what they had heard from God so that you and I might know God's words from our Bibles. Today, God speaks to us through the words of the Bible. He wants us to understand what He says and that means that we must listen to His Word carefully. Are you ready to hear what He wants to tell us now?

Memory Verse

"He who has ears to hear, let him hear." (Matt. 11:15)

Chapter Nine

How To See with the Eyes of Understanding

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: How To See with the Eyes of Understanding—John 9

B. Lesson Titles:
1. Lesson One: Seeing Is Not Always Believing
2. Lesson Two: The Healing of the Blind Beggar

C. Story Objective:

Human perception comes by means of the five senses: hearing, seeing, touching, smelling, and tasting; spiritual perception comes by faith alone. Seeing, contrary to popular belief, is not always believing. Many possessing perfectly good eyesight had seen, yes even "handled" the Lord Jesus Christ during His earthly ministry, yet had gone away unbelieving (1 John 1:1). Spiritual blindness can exist among those with perfect vision. Others without the benefit of their sight believed in Him, and yet others "who did not see, and *yet* believed" have known the blessedness of believing in Him (John 20:29; 1 Pet. 1:8). Seeing is not the means of understanding. A beginner child can see the print in a book, but cannot understand it until he has first been properly taught to read. For the same reason, the Word of God cannot be understood until it is rightly divided—salvation first, then the truths of the Bible. "So faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Rom. 10:17).

Once the faith factor has been established, "the eyes of your heart may be enlightened" (Eph. 1:18) to see the marvelous things, "ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM" (1 Cor. 2:9*b*). Only then can they know how God speaks to them through His Word. This is the ministry of God the Holy Spirit. It is my prayer that by His might and power, you may open up the treasures hidden thus far from the child's view.

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:
1. Vocabulary: hearing, seeing, tasting, touching, understanding
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. Spiritual eye-openers:
      1) "That our God may enlighten our eyes" (Ezra 9:8).
      2) God's commandments (Ps. 19:8; 119:18).
      3) "Lift up your eyes on high And see" (Isa. 40:26).
      4) "Blessed are your eyes, because they see" (Matt. 13:16).
      5) Revealed by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:10–12).
      6) "We look not at things which are seen" (2 Cor. 4:18).
      7) "The eyes of your heart may be enlightened" (Eph. 1:18).
   b. Spiritual understanding:
      1) "From Thy precepts I get understanding" (Ps. 119:104).
      2) "Those who seek the LORD understand" (Prov. 28:5).
      3) Spiritual discernment (1 Cor. 2:14).
      4) Spiritual understanding (Col. 1:9).
      5) "The Lord will give you understanding" (2 Tim. 2:7).
      6) "By faith we understand" (Heb. 11:3).
   c. The seeing sightless:
      1) "Where there is no vision, the people are restrained" (Prov. 29:18).

2) Their eyes did not know Him (Luke 24:16).
3) "Their foolish heart was darkened" (Rom. 1:21).
4) "Darkness has blinded his eyes" (1 John 2:11).
5) "Anoint your eyes, that you may see" (Rev. 3:18).

d. The sightless seeing:
1) "The eyes of the blind will be opened" (Isa. 35:5).
2) "To open blind eyes" (Isa. 42:7).
3) "Lord, *we want* our eyes to be opened" (Matt. 20:33).

E. *Source Book* Keywords: human spirit, miracles

F. Activities:
1. Suggested Visuals: Bible, brother, sister, Trinity
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
3. Memory Verse: "Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Thy law." (Ps. 119:18)
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON ONE
SEEING IS NOT ALWAYS BELIEVING

I am so glad that God speaks to us through the Bible. Are you? When He speaks to us, He wants us to do what? Look out the window? Talk to others? Laugh and giggle and disturb others? No, I should say not! God wants us to listen. And most of all, He wants us to understand. You are big enough by now to understand many things around you. How do we learn to understand? We learn by seeing, by hearing, by tasting, by touching, and by smelling.

Did you ever notice how good the whole house smells when your mommy has a cake in the oven? Your nose helps you to understand that there is something good being prepared for the whole family. When you get to eat some of that cake, your sense of taste helps you to understand that the cake tastes good. Did you ever burn yourself? Well, that did not feel good at all, did it? You learned through feeling that you must not touch hot things. Your sense of touch also helps you to understand whether a thing is soft or hard, smooth or rough. When you hear a song or a Bible verse, your ears help you to understand the tune and the words, don't they?

How about your eyes? Your eyes help you to understand many more things. Can you tell colors yet? Do you understand what I mean when I say, "Red, blue, gold, silver?" You know what a tree looks like because you have seen one. Some boys and girls have never seen any snow. They cannot even imagine what snow might be like. They may not even believe that there really is something like snow, but we know that snow is real, don't we? There are some people who can learn to understand with their ears, their touch, their smell, their taste, but not with their eyes. I wonder why? Because they were born blind, and they cannot see anything.

But, do you know there is a blindness far worse than the blindness of the eyes? That blindness is spiritual blindness to the Word of God. People who do not believe on the Lord Jesus Christ can read the Bible with their eyes, but they have no understanding of it. They have no human spirit. Satan, that old devil, has blinded them to the truth (2 Cor. 4:4).

Are you surprised to hear that our understanding has "eyes"? Sometimes when you explain something to a person, he will say, "Oh, I *see* what you mean." Yes, he sees with the eyes of his understanding. More than anything, God wants us to understand Him. But no one, no one at all, can "see" God with spiritual blindness. First, we must have the eyes of our understanding opened. That wonderful thing happens as soon as we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as our own personal Savior. Before we get ready to understand our story, let us make sure that we have open eyes, listening ears, and most important of all—the eyes of our understanding open so that we may know what God is saying to us.

How can you be sure your eyes of understanding are opened? Remember, the Lord Jesus, God's Son, came down from heaven to this earth to help us understand God and to show us how we may belong to Him. Since we cannot see God, His Son put on a body like ours so that we could see and know Him. Jesus died on the cross to take away our sins so that we could have God's life. It is so easy to have God's life. Just believe that Jesus died for your sins, and you will have His life forever.

The Boy Born Blind

When the Lord Jesus Christ was still a boy living in Nazareth with Mary and Joseph, another baby boy was born, probably in faraway Jerusalem where stood the great temple-church. At first, the mother and father of that new baby were very happy. God had given them a baby boy, just as they had hoped He would. He seemed such a lovely, healthy, and happy baby as he played.

But after the boy began to grow a little, his parents knew there was something terribly wrong with their boy. When they called him, the boy would turn his head in the direction where the sound came from, but in coming toward them, he would often walk right past them. He would run into things and often stumble and fall. His mother and father soon found out what was wrong with their boy. Can you guess? Yes, he was born blind. Try as they might, they could not do anything for him. Even the doctors could not help him. No, the little fellow would be blind as long as he lived unless, unless . . . and that is just exactly what we will find out in our Bible story.

Many years had gone by, and both the Lord Jesus and the blind boy had become grown men. While the Lord Jesus Christ went about teaching and helping others, the blind man had become a helpless beggar. Every day the blind man was taken to the great temple where he sat outside the gate so that he could beg for money as the people hurried past him on their way to and from the temple. Sometimes they would drop a coin or two into his lap. Then the beggar would look up with unseeing eyes and say, "Thank you, God bless you."

You see, this beggar, although he could not see with his real eyes, wanted to know God with the eyes of his understanding. He was sure that God was real, even though no one, not even people who could see, could ever see God until they went to heaven. The beggar was always ready to listen to what people said when they came out of the temple. He had heard them tell how beautiful the great temple was with its shiny golden candlestick and the beautiful curtains. Maybe he wondered what gold looked like. Surely he would love to have seen all that just one time. Then he, too, could understand what the temple of God was like.

But lately, the men and women—yes, even the children, were talking about something else. They talked about Someone wonderful whose name was Jesus—Jesus, the Son of God. They told of the mighty works of wonder He had done; how He made sick people well; how He had even made dead people come back to life. Best of all, the beggar loved to hear how the Lord Jesus had made some blind men to see again.

Perhaps the blind beggar hoped that someone might lead him to the Lord Jesus Christ, or better yet, that some day the Lord Jesus might walk past him on His way to the temple. If He did, would the Lord Jesus open his eyes also? Then again, maybe the Lord would be too busy to bother with a poor, blind beggar. But we know, don't we, that the Lord is never too busy to help those who need His help and want His help. If only the Lord would pass by! Do you think He will? We'll find out.

What God Wants Me To Know

God has promised that anyone who really wants to may "see" Him with the eyes of understanding. If you want to know how to be saved and go to heaven, God will send someone to tell you, or He will help you to find out some other way. If you want to learn more about the Lord Jesus, He will help you to do that, too. He is always ready to help those who need Him.

Some people do not want to know how to be saved. Some saved boys and girls do not want to learn God's Word. If you are this kind of boy or girl, God says you are *blind*, blind of understanding. God is very sad for those who are blind of understanding because they will never know about all the wonderful things God has for them. Be sure you *want* to learn about Him every day and then, He can open your "eyes" to see many wonderful things.

Lesson Review

Do you remember five ways by which you may understand the things around you? Can you point to the five places in your body by which you can understand things in the world? Your eyes, ears, tongue, fingers, and nose—seeing, hearing, tasting, touching, and smelling.

Is this all that God wants us to understand? No, God wants us to understand Him. He wants us to see Him with our eyes of understanding. Where are our eyes of understanding? In our souls. How may you have your eyes of understanding opened to "see" God? By taking the Lord Jesus as your Savior. Do you have "open eyes"? Do you know that Jesus is your Savior? If you have believed that Christ died for your sins you can understand what He wants you to know because you now have a human spirit.

Who did we just hear about in God's Word? The blind beggar. Was he blind of understanding or blind in his eyes? Yes, both. He wanted to see the things around him, but even more, he wanted to see and know God.

Memory Verse

"Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Thy law." (Ps. 119:18)

LESSON TWO
THE HEALING OF THE BLIND BEGGAR

The blind beggar heard many voices nearby because his ears were very sharp. What were they saying? They were talking about him. "Why is this man blind?" the voices asked. Then, he heard a strong, clear voice answer saying that this man was born blind, "that the works of God might be displayed in him. We must work the works of Him who sent Me, as long as it is day; night is coming, when no man can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world" (John 9:3–5). Whose voice was that? Could it be the very One whom he wished would come by him? Yes, the Lord Jesus had come by the very place where the beggar sat, and not only did He come by, He stopped right before the beggar.

Could it be possible that the Lord Jesus Christ would do something special for him? Was the Lord going to give light to his poor blind eyes that he, too, might see? His heart surely began to beat loud and fast. Oh, this was almost too good to be true! Just then he felt the touch of the Lord's gentle hands on his face. Oh, how good that felt! The beggar closed his eyes happily and waited. What was going to happen? Just then something cool and wet, like mud, was put on his eyes (John 9:6).

Now the Lord spoke again, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (John 9:7*a*). The pool of Siloam was not a swimming or wading pool, but a great long, hollow place cut out of the rocks which was filled with the clear water of a pure and sparkling spring. The pool was quite a ways from the temple. I am sure that many people helped the blind man find his way. They, too, were curious to see what would happen.

"Go, wash in the pool," the Lord had said. The blind man bent down and scooped up the water in his hands. Splash, splash went the water, washing away the mud *and the blindness*. Who was that looking at the blind man out of the water? Why, of course, this was his own face! He was no longer blind. The Lord had made him see! Quickly, he ran home to tell all that the Lord had done for him (John 9:11). Can you imagine how glad and surprised everyone was? Why, just that morning he had been blind, and now he could see as well as they did! They decided to hurry to the temple and tell the good news (John 9:13).

The Blind of Understanding

Now maybe the beggar would get to see the beautiful temple he had heard about all his life. But now, there was no time for that. What he saw was a group of people who questioned him about what happened. At first, they did not even want to believe that this man was really the blind beggar whom the wonderful Lord Jesus had made to see. Then they shouted angrily and pointed to Jesus, "Give glory to God; we know that this man is a sinner" (John 9:24).

Oh, how wrong were those people! They could see with their eyes, but their understanding was blind. They would not believe that Jesus is God (John 1:1). They wanted nothing to do with the Lord Jesus Christ or those who trusted Him, and they threw the beggar out of the temple (John 9:34).

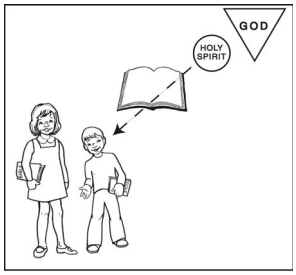
The Beggar's Eyes of Understanding Opened

As he walked sadly along and thought about all the things that had happened that day, the beggar suddenly saw Jesus again. The Lord Jesus had come to find him (John 9:35). The beggar's eyes opened wide with wonder when he heard the Lord ask him a question, "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" (John 9:35*b*). "And who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" the beggar wanted to know. And "Jesus said to him, 'You have both seen Him, and He is the one who is talking with you.'" (John 9:36–37).

Now the beggar really understood: Jesus was also God; He was the God-man. The beggar truly believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. He knelt before the Lord Jesus. "Lord," he said, "I believe" (John 9:38). Jesus had not only opened his eyes, but also the eyes of his understanding so that now he could both see and know God.

What God Wants Me To Know

Most of us were born with eyes that can see, but did you know that all of us were born with a blind understanding—that is, blind to understanding the things God wants to tell us in His Word? What do you think made us blind in that way? It was the same thing which also put a wall between God and man—spiritual death and sin. The Lord Jesus took the sin wall away, and He also wants to open the eyes of your understanding.



Just as He helped the blind man to see with his eyes and with his understanding, He wants to help you, too. How will He do it? Will He put mud on your eyelids and send you to wash up? No, when He opens the eyes of your understanding, you will not feel anything at all, but you will understand. When you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you immediately receive a human spirit so you can understand and learn about God. Then, you will learn to love God and want to please Him. You will love God's Word, the Bible. You will "see" what God means.

Now there is one thing that must happen before the Lord can give you understanding. Do you remember what the Lord asked the beggar at the end of the story? "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" That is what He asks you right now—do *you* believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? Remember, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Tim. 1:15).

If you have never done so before, you can believe right now. Will you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ right now? Next, I will tell you of the work God did for you when you took Jesus to be your Savior.

While we learned our lesson today from God's Word, the Word entered into your soul through the "eye-gate" and the "ear-gate." God promises in Psalm 119:130 that when the Word of God comes into our souls, it is just like someone turning on the light in a dark room. When God turns on His wonderful light, we see our lovely Lord Jesus before us, that is, before the eyes of our souls.

When we decide to believe in Him, He opens the eyes of our understanding. God the Holy Spirit comes to make His home inside of us; the Lord Jesus also comes into our lives, and we begin to walk in God's light. The Holy Spirit shows us how we can understand God's Word. Shall we thank the Lord for giving light to the eyes of our understanding? Then let us do the same thing that the beggar did—tell others what great things the Lord Jesus Christ has done for us.

Lesson Review

We have two kinds of eyes, the eyes with which we see things and people, and the eyes of our understanding. When we understand what someone is trying to tell us, we often say, "I see what you mean." That means we can see it or imagine it with our eyes of understanding, our souls. Some people cannot see with their real eyes because they are blind. Often even doctors cannot help the blind to see.

Now you have learned there is a blindness even worse than the blindness of the eyes. That is being blind to the Word of God. How may we have our eyes of understanding opened? By believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Those who do not believe in the Lord Jesus can never, ever understand what He wants them to know. There is only One who can help us to see with the eyes of our understanding. Who is that? Yes, God.

Do you know that it is God the Holy Spirit who shows us how to believe and then shows us how to understand God's Word? What does the Holy Spirit do when we believe in Jesus? He comes to live inside us. Do you remember how the Lord helped a man see with his eyes and with his understanding? Who was that poor, blind man?

Memory Verse

"Open my eyes, that I may behold Wonderful things from Thy law." (Ps. 119:18)

Chapter Ten

Believe God and His Word

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: Believe God and His Word—Numbers 13—14

B. Lesson Titles:
1. Lesson One: Trust in God and His Word
2. Lesson Two: Joshua and Caleb, the Believing Spies

C. Story Objective:

After hearing the Word, the soul must act upon the information received. How we respond is a matter of individual choice. God's desire is for everyone to receive the Word with readiness of soul, believe in His Son (2 Pet. 3:9), and thereafter have complete faith in His Word (John 17:8). To believe God is to rely on Him alone for every phase of life. Faith is the sole basis of salvation (Eph. 2:8–10). Faith claims the promises of God to provide through His Son eternal life, forgiveness, and cleansing from sin (John 3:16; Rom. 6:23*b*; 1 John 1:7). After salvation, faith becomes the means of the believer's walk (2 Cor. 5:7).

Using Joshua and Caleb as examples, aim to instill in the beginner child an absolute trust in God and His Word. Teach him that God is pleased when he believes, and that "without faith it is impossible to please *Him*" (Heb. 11:6*a*).

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:
1. Vocabulary: afraid, believe, giants, promise, trust
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. All came to pass as the Lord promised (Joshua 21:45; 23:14; 1 Kings 8:56).
   b. Believe in the Lord and His prophets (Word). (2 Chron. 20:20*b*).
   c. Great is His faithfulness (Lam. 3:22–26).
   d. Be not afraid, only believe (Mark 5:36*b*).
   e. "Lord, I do believe, help my unbelief" (Mark 9:24*b*).
   f. "They believed the Scripture" (John 2:22).
   g. Salvation promise and warning against unbelief (John 3:15–18).
   h. We "believe and know that You are the Holy One of God" (John 6:69).
   i. "Do you believe in the Son of Man?" (John 9:35).
   j. "What He had promised, He was able also to perform" (Rom. 4:21).
   k. All the promises of God in Him (2 Cor. 1:20).
   l. Promise of life now and to come (1 Tim. 4:8).
   m. Take care lest there be an "evil, unbelieving heart" (Heb. 3:12).
   n. "Were not able to enter because of unbelief" (Heb. 3:19).
   o. By faith obtained promises (Heb. 11:33).
   p. "The prophetic *word* made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention" (2 Pet. 1:19).
   q. "This is the promise . . . eternal life" (1 John 2:25).

E. *Source Book* Keywords: eternal life, faith, Joshua

F. Activities:
1. Suggested Visuals: Bible, brother, Christ on cross, sister, Trinity, volition
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
3. Memory Verse: "Without faith it is impossible to please *Him*." (Heb. 11:6*a*)
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON ONE
TRUST IN GOD AND HIS WORD

Do you think the Lord Jesus was glad the blind man had believed on Him? Oh, yes! God says that the only way we can surely please Him is by believing. What should we believe? First of all, we should believe that Jesus is God's Son who came to take away our sins; that He died on the cross in our place to take away the punishment for our sin. God made a promise. This is what He said: "Whoever believes in Him [Jesus] should not perish [die] but have eternal life" (John 3:16).

Life that never ends is a wonderful gift. All we must do to receive this gift is to believe what God said. That means we must believe Jesus is our Savior, that He died on the cross for our sins. We must believe in God's Son. Have you done this? Next, God says that we must believe all the many promises He gave us in the Lord Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 1:20). God's promises are found in the Bible. If we will just believe what God says, we will never, ever be afraid again.

Now I want to tell you a story about a boy named Steve who learned that it really was a good thing that he believed his grandfather. Steve had gone to visit his grandparents for the summer. On the day he arrived, his grandfather said, "Steve, I will give you a present—something you will like very much, but only if you will go and take the present by yourself."

"May I have it now?" begged Steve. "No, wait until tomorrow," answered his grandfather. "May I just see it, please?" Steve wanted to know. He was really curious, was he not? His grandfather smiled, "Well, all right, look through the keyhole." He took Steve to the last room down the hall, and what do you think Steve saw? A brand new, shiny, red bike, just there for him to take! He could hardly sleep that night.

Early next morning, his grandfather was up already and called to Steve, "Go on in and take the bike; it's all yours." Steve ran and quickly pushed the door open. He stopped suddenly. There between him and the bicycle stood a great big, strange dog. His grandfather asked, "What is the matter, Steve, don't you like your present? Don't you want to go and take it?" "Oh, I do," said Steve, "but there's a big dog in the way. I am afraid of him. Could you get the bike for me?" His grandfather shook his head. This would never do. Steve must learn that his grandfather would not let him get hurt. "No, Steve; remember that I said the bike is yours, but you must get it for yourself. Believe me, the dog will not hurt you." Steve was not so sure of that. "He might bite me," he said. His grandfather's face looked anything but pleased. He said, "Believe me and take your present, or you must do without."

Now what do you think Steve did? That is right; he walked bravely by the big dog, who never even barked, and got his bike. Don't you know Steve was happy he had believed his grandfather's words? Our next Bible story is about a promise God gave His people, of a wonderful present and of two men who believed God enough to receive the present for themselves. What does our memory verse say? "And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is" (Heb. 11:6).

God's Promise

For many months, God's people, the children of Israel, the Israelites, had traveled across the desert and mountain country. At last something great was about to happen. God was going to give a present to His people, a present which He had promised them for a long time. The promise was first made in Genesis 12:7 and often repeated. What do you think the present was? A whole country all of their own. God told them that the country was beautiful and rich, with all kinds of good fruits growing in it. Now the country lay just ahead. All they needed to do was to march in and take it for themselves (Deut. 1:8).

Moses was the leader of the Israelites. He told them of God's promised gift and said, "Go up, take possession, as the LORD, the God of your fathers, has spoken to you. Do not fear or be dismayed" (Deut. 1:21). But the children of Israel were like Steve. They wanted to be allowed to take a peek at the present first. They wanted to make sure the land was really as good as the Lord had said it would be. You see, they did not quite believe God, did they?

God let them have their wish. Twelve men, each one of them a chief, were to go and search out or spy on all the Land (Num. 13:1–2; Deut. 1:22–23). Let us meet some of the spies, shall we? God tells us what all the men's names were, but we only need to know the names of two. One was Joshua; the other was Caleb. Joshua and Caleb turned out to be the only ones to take God's promised gift. Do you know why? They believed God's Word.

Before Moses sent the spies out, he told them to go this way southward, and go up into the mountain: And see the Land what it is, and the people who live there; whether they are strong or weak, few or many; And how is the land in which they live, is it good or bad? And how are the cities in which they live, are they like open tents or forts; And how is the land in which they live, is it good or bad; Are there trees in it or not? And trust the Lord and don't be afraid, and bring back the fruit of the land—which God

will give to the children of Israel (Num. 13:2, 17*b*–20; Deut. 1:21). The twelve men listened again to God's promise. They obeyed Moses and set out to go to the Land. The people watched until they could see them no longer.

The Journey To See the Land

Tramp, tramp, tramp went the spies, as they marched toward the promised Land. Once they had entered into the Land, they divided into small groups and quietly and carefully went through the countryside. They saw everything, but took care to stay in hiding so that their enemy could not see them. Forty days later, they had seen all there was to see. At last, they came to a small river. By the side of the river grew lovely clusters of grapes. They remembered Moses had said to be sure to bring back some fruit of the land.

Quickly they cut down one bunch of grapes. Do you know how big it was? It was so big and heavy that it took two men to carry it between them on a wooden pole. As they cut down the grapes, they saw ripe figs and pomegranates. Ask to see the pomegranates the next time you go to the grocery store. They took some back to show the people. Yes, this country was really a wonderful place, just as God had said. Now God wanted them to go into the Land He had promised and take it for themselves. They would surely like to have the Land, *but* something stood in the way. What do you think was in the way—a great big dog? No, this was much larger than a dog. In our next story we will find out from the spies themselves what they saw that made them afraid.

What God Wants Me To Know

Even though we won't find out right away what was in the way of the spies, we can find out right now that there is someone who always wants to get in the way of our obeying the Lord. We cannot see this enemy, but do you know who it is? It is Satan, the devil. He is the ruler of this world, and he does not want God's people to learn His Word. He tries to make you think that it is more fun not to obey the Lord.

What should you do so that Satan will not get in the way? You should listen more and more to God's Word and believe it. God and His Word are stronger than Satan and can drive him away. When you believe God's Word, Satan cannot stop you from obeying it.

Lesson Review

What is the only way to please God? Yes, faith—to believe Him. Can you tell me what we should believe about Jesus? We should believe He is God's Son. What should we believe about the cross? That Jesus died for our sins. What should we believe about sin? Jesus took away our sins when He died on the cross. What should we believe about God's gift? We should believe that God will give us eternal life if we believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. What should we believe about the Bible? We should believe the promises.

What did God promise the Israelites? A country of their own. How might they have this country? By going in and taking the Land for themselves. Why didn't they walk in and take it right away? They didn't know what it was like or whether there would be strong enemies in the Land; they didn't trust the Lord.

Memory Verse

"Without faith it is impossible to please *Him*." (Heb. 11:6*a*)

LESSON TWO
JOSHUA AND CALEB, THE BELIEVING SPIES

Do you know what a giant is? Yes, a great big, tall person—as tall as the ceiling, or even taller. Have you ever seen a giant? No, there are really no giants today as there once were. The Bible tells us that many, many years ago there were some giants who were bigger than any people had ever been. They were very strong and few people dared to fight them. What do you think you might do if you suddenly saw one of these great, fierce giants? Turn around and run as fast as you could go? Let's see what some people in our story did, shall we?

The Spies' Report

Remember the twelve men Moses sent out to see what the new land was like? Did they find that it was a good land? Why, yes! It was just as God had said—rich and

green, with rivers, pretty trees, and delicious fruit. The twelve spies found a bunch of grapes so large they had to carry it—how? Between two men on a pole.

After forty days, the twelve men returned to the camp of the children of Israel. That was a happy time for all. They saw the huge cluster of grapes, the figs and the pomegranates, and maybe they even got to taste some of them. "Tell us all about the Land," they said.

The twelve men told what they had seen: that the country to which you sent us is a wonderful place. It is just as God said it would be. The people live in cities with thick walls around them. There is just one thing, though . . . there are *giants* in the Land (Num. 13:27–29). Giants in the Land! What a dreadful thing to stand between the people and the gift God had for them! All the people of Israel were afraid—all, that is, but Joshua and Caleb. Had they not seen the giants? Yes, they had, but they remembered what God had promised.

Can you remember what God had said to them? He had told them that He would *give* them the Land if they would go in and take it. He had told them not to be afraid, but to *trust* and *believe* Him. That meant the people must know that God would not let the giants hurt them. All they needed to do was to believe God and take the Land. Did they? No, they were frightened so badly that they did not even want to hear what Caleb said, "We should by all means go up and take possession of it, for we shall surely overcome it." Caleb reminded the people of God's words (Num. 13:30). Joshua also told the children of Israel to take the Land and not be afraid, but trust the Lord (Num. 14:6–9).

The Reaction of the People

Now it was time for the other ten spies to speak up: "No, we cannot go. We are not as strong as they are. Also, the Land is really not good at all, and the giants were so tall that we looked as tiny as grasshoppers compared to them" (Num. 13:3–33). You know, I think those men were telling a big 'whopper,' don't you? Did you ever say something you saw was *so* big, even though you knew it wasn't nearly so big? Well, that is what the ten spies did. They were so afraid of the giants, that they said they were twice as big as they really were!

What do you think the children of Israel will do now? Will they believe what God said, or will they believe the ten spies? What a sad ending for a day that had begun so happily! Since the people did not believe God's Word, they were afraid and cried and wept all night (Num. 14:1). Only Joshua and Caleb believed God. They were ready to go "at once"—right away—to take the present God had promised them. Was God pleased with them? Yes, He was pleased with Joshua and Caleb, but He was not at all pleased with those who did not believe His Word. "Without faith, it is impossible to please *Him* [God]" (Heb. 11:6*a*).

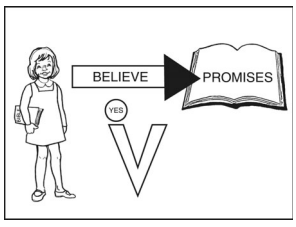
The Punishment for Unbelief

God told Moses that because the people had not believed even after hearing His voice, they would not see the Land for themselves. Instead, they must stay in the desert forty more years—one year for each day the spies were in the Land (Num. 14:23–34). They would grow old and die and never enjoy the gift God had wanted them to take. But what about Joshua and Caleb? Must they do without God's present because the others did not believe God? Of course not! Joshua and Caleb went into the Land after the forty years were up.

Joshua became the leader who led the children of those people who had not believed into the Land which God had promised. They took the Land and divided it up among all of them, just as God had said for them to do. Caleb took for himself the mountain on which the giants lived. Do you think God let the giants hurt Caleb? No, He did not. Caleb believed God's promise, God made him strong and unafraid, and Caleb chased out every giant (Joshua 14:12; 15:14). God was pleased that Caleb and Joshua had trusted Him. Don't you think that it pays to believe God's Word? I am sure Joshua and Caleb thought so, for they enjoyed God's present and promises all the days of their lives.

What God Wants Me To Know

God wants boys and girls to trust Him and believe His Word. God has given us many wonderful promises. If we believe His promises, we can knock down any 'giant' who tries to come into our lives. But didn't I say there were no giants today? Well, I do not mean tall people who may look like giants to you. I am talking about other giants. Can you guess what they might be? The giants I am talking about are all the things that scare us.



FEAR OF THE DARK GIANT

"Fear of the dark" is a giant to some boys and girls. Have you ever met him? You have if you are afraid of the dark. Now if you have trusted the Lord Jesus to save you, then you should also trust Him to keep you. God can do both. Let me tell you what God says to all who fear the dark: "I am the light of the world, he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life" (John 8:12). The darkness does not mean anything to God. He can see just as clearly at night as He can in the day (Ps. 139:12). God gave us His Word so that you and I, God's

children, can see plainly in the dark and not be afraid. "Thy word is a lamp to my feet, And a light to my path" (Ps. 119:105).

God has given all His children a strong and mighty 'giant' killer to live inside of us. That giant killer is called *faith*. Our faith in God and His Word will knock down all the giants we fear in our lives. If we know and believe what God's Word says, the dark will never scare us again.

FEAR OF BEING ALONE GIANT

Do you ever meet this giant, the fear of being alone? How do we knock him down? We believe another one of God's promises. This one says, "Do not fear, for I [God] am with you" (Isa. 41:10*a*). "I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you" (Heb. 13:5*b*). If God is with us, who needs to be afraid? Certainly not those who belong to Him. He will take care of us just like He took care of Joshua and Caleb.

FEAR OF THUNDER GIANT

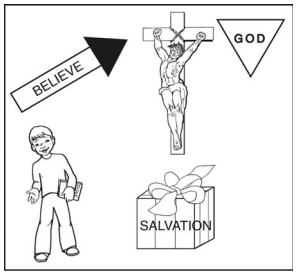
Some children are so frightened of thunder that they scream and hang on to their mother's dress, or climb into their parents' beds when they hear thunder at night. Do you know who made thunder and lightning? Why, God did! (1 Sam. 12:17). Mother and Dad cannot help you in a thunderstorm. They are nice to be near when you are afraid, but only God can keep you safe.

FEAR GIANT

Last of all, I know of still another giant. We will call him just plain "fear." What kind of fear? Oh, any and all kinds of fear, like fear of getting a shot at the doctor's office, or fear of going to see the dentist—fear of things you do not know and do not understand. I'll tell you what to do when you are just plain scared—remember that God is much bigger and stronger than any giant that can come into your life. Say to yourself, "I will trust God and not be afraid," and really mean it (Ps. 56:3; Isa. 12:2). When you really believe God's Word, all the fear will be gone and God will be very pleased with you—as pleased as He was with Joshua and Caleb who were not afraid. Why were they not afraid? They believed God.

"Without faith it is impossible to please *Him*" (Heb. 11:6*a*). There are some boys and girls, maybe you are one of them, who cannot begin to please God. Do you know why not? They have never believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. Listen very carefully now to what God says to you. God says that He wants you to have a very wonderful gift. We call this gift "salvation," being saved. What is inside of the salvation gift? There are many lovely things in salvation including forever or eternal life, home in heaven with God, your sins taken away, all of God's promises, and God's own Son and the Holy Spirit come to live inside you. That is why you never need to be alone or afraid again.

Now you know that a present does not really belong to you until you take it. How can you take this present from God? You must believe what God says: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved" (Acts 16:31). Remember who would like to keep you from believing God's promise? Yes, Satan, the devil. He would love nothing better than to scare you away, but don't let him. Right now tell God that you will take His present, the Lord Jesus Christ and eternal life. Can you see and feel this gift? No, right now you must believe that God will surely keep His promise. It may make you all happy inside to know that you belong to God from now on, and that is as it should be, for you know that you have pleased God by trusting in His Son.



Lesson Review

There are many, many things God wants us to know. Let us count off on our fingers the last four things we have learned from God's Word. One, how does God tell us what He wants us to know? Yes, He speaks to us through the Bible. Two, when God speaks, what does He want us to do? Of course, He wants us to hear what He says. So we must carefully listen and pay attention. Three, God wants us to understand what He says; and four, "YOU must believe God and His Word." Shall we count off all four again so we can be sure we will not forget? One, God speaks to us through His Word; two, He wants us to listen; three, He wants us to understand; four, He wants us to believe Him. That was very good!

Memory Verse

"Without faith it is impossible to please *Him*." (Heb. 11:6*a*)

Chapter Eleven

"Be Ye Doers of the Word"

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: "Be Ye Doers of the Word" (James 1:22*a* KJV)—Book of Jonah

B. Lesson Titles:
   1. Lesson One: Jonah, the Disobedient Prophet
   2. Lesson Two: It Does Not Pay To Disobey

C. Story Objective:

God evaluates every believer's life on the basis of productivity (1 Cor. 3:13; Eph. 2:10). Just as He expects us to act upon *hearing* the Word (Rom. 10:17), He expects us to put to use *knowledge* of the Word. Knowledge alone is not an end in itself. The Word warns that "knowledge makes arrogant" (1 Cor. 8:1) unless it is properly applied. Rather, knowledge is a means toward the desired end—spiritual maturity. The mature believer, regardless of age, acts upon and in accordance with God's declared will in His Word. In the very simplest terms, he is said to be a "*doer* of the word" (James 1:22*a*).

God does not limit spiritual maturity to physical adulthood. "It is by his deeds that a lad distinguishes himself" (Prov. 20:11*a*). In fact, Scripture demonstrates that often a believing youngster becomes a victorious "doer," while the adult remains a "hearer." Children who are taught obedience in the home will readily see the importance of obedience in God's greater family. Your aim in this lesson should be to impress indelibly upon the beginner child's mind that real happiness comes only from *doing* what God says (John 13:17), thus helping to establish a pattern of God-honoring conduct early in life (Prov. 22:6). Show also that unhappiness and divine discipline invariably follow disobedience on the believer's part (Heb. 12:6) and that we might be taught to be doers of the Word.

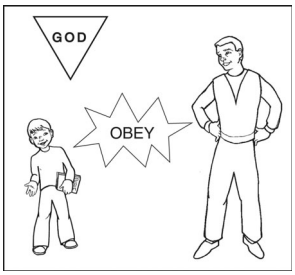
D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:
   1. Vocabulary: doing, happiness, knowledge, maturity, warning
   2. Doctrinal Concepts:
      a. A blessing if you obey His commandments (Deut. 11:27).
      b. Apply our hearts to wisdom (Ps. 90:12).
      c. Delight in obeying the Lord (1 Sam. 15:22).
      d. "Listen to My voice, and do according to all which I command you" (Jer. 11:4).
      e. "You are blessed if you do them" (John 13:17).
      f. "Children, obey your parents" (Eph. 6:1).
      g. "Doing the will of God from the heart" (Eph. 6:6).
      h. "Do all things without grumbling or disputing" (Phil. 2:14).
      i. The things you have learned, practice (Phil. 4:9).
      j. Not a forgetful hearer, but an effectual doer (James 1:25).
      k. Obeying the truth (1 Pet. 1:22).

E. *Source Book* Keywords: happiness, Jonah

F. Activities:
   1. Suggested Visuals: brother, father, Jonah, Trinity, volition
   2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
   3. Memory Verse: "But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers. (James 1:22*a*)
   4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON ONE
JONAH, THE DISOBEDIENT PROPHET

Did you ever notice how important our thumbs are to us? They are only small parts of our bodies, but oh, how we need them to do many things quickly and easily! Did your thumbs ever tell you, "I'm not going to do anything for you today"? Never! They always obey you and do as you wish, don't they? Do you know who often does not obey and does not want to do as told? You, and yes, even I.



Now God wants all of us to do what His Word tells us to do, to be "doers of the word, and not merely hearers" (James 1:22*a*). He says, "If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them" (John 13:17).

The lesson we are going to have now is about a grown man who heard God's words very plainly, but did he do them? Well, that is what we will find out in our Bible story.

We Should Listen to God

When God speaks, we should listen. Who can say Matthew 11:15? "He who has ears to hear, let him hear." It is only when we listen that we find out what God says. Sometimes, God tells us wonderful promises. Can you think of some nice promises God gives us? Yes, He promises to give us eternal life if we will believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. He promises to take care of us and help us. He promises us that He will never leave us because He loves us, and because God keeps all His promises, we must be sure to believe them.

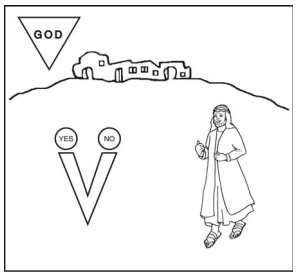
God tells us other things, too, like the many true stories of people who lived long ago. Sometimes these stories warn us to watch out for something, but always they teach us some big lesson God wants us to know (Rom. 15:4*a*). Most important of all are the rules God wants us to obey. That's what our memory verse says. Can you say it with me? "But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers" (James 1:22*a*).

Just hearing or listening to God's Word is not enough. We must also obey what God's Word says. I want you to be very, very good hearers now so that you can be good doers today, tomorrow, and the next day, and the next. God tells us of a man who was a hearer, but did not obey; he was not a doer, and something happened to him.

God Calls Jonah

The Bible tells us that long, long ago—in fact, so long ago that if God had not written down the story in the Bible, people might never have believed it or heard of it—there lived a servant of God. His name was Jonah.

Jonah loved God. He always did what God told him to do—always, that is, until the day our story begins. That day, Jonah could hear God's words just as clearly as you can hear mine now. Before the Bible was all written and finished, God spoke to His people with a voice. Now He speaks to us through the words that are written down on the pages of the Bible.



This is what Jonah heard the Lord say: "Arise, go to Nineveh the great city, and cry against it, for their wickedness has come up before Me" (Jonah 1:2). Did you hear what God said to Jonah? Was it hard to understand? No, it was all very simple. God wanted Jonah to go to a large city by the name of Nineveh. In that city lived a bad and cruel people. Jonah was to take them a message from God. Now let's find out what that message was to be. "Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4*b*). That means that God would punish the people in that city and tear down all that was in it.

Jonah did not like the people of Nineveh, for he knew just how mean they were. He knew also that they did not love God. So we might think that Jonah would be happy to go and tell them God would surely punish them for being so bad. But no, Jonah did not want to do what God said. He

understood that God's message was really a warning. Do you know what a warning is? It is a promise of punishment. It's like your dad or mom promising to spank you if you disobey. If you listen to the warning and obey, there will be no spanking; if you don't—look out!

Jonah Runs Away

Jonah did not want to warn the people of Nineveh. He would much rather see them spanked than saved (Jonah 4:2). What do you think Jonah might do now? He got up, all right, but he went the opposite way. He tried to run away from having to do what God told him to do. Quickly he ran down to the harbor where all the sailing ships were anchored. Jonah looked at all the ships. There was one big ship that would go all the way to Spain—as far away from Nineveh as possible. Jonah bought his ticket and climbed aboard the ship. He yawned. My, was he tired! He went down below deck, stretched out, and soon fell fast asleep.

Now, you tell me, was Jonah doing what God wanted? No, indeed! He was a hearer, but not a doer of the Word, wasn't he? I wonder who is going to get spanked—the people of Nineveh or Jonah? And who is going to do the spanking?

What God Wants Me To Know

There are many "do's" and "don'ts" for girls and boys to learn. There are many rules to be obeyed—at home, at school, in church, and even at play, but God's rules are the most important. God's rules are found in His Word. In Ephesians 6:1, we read, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." When you obey your parents, you are a doer of the Word.

In Ephesians 4:32 it says, "Be kind to one another . . . forgiving each other." When you push Little Brother, hit him, or talk ugly to him, are you a doer of the Word? No, you are not! If you say, "I hate you; I will never talk to you again because you were mean to me," are you a doer of the Word? No, again. You are to be forgiving, not hateful. God tells us not to be selfish (Phil. 2:4). When you want the biggest piece of cake for yourself, that will not make you a doer of the Word. God wants you to be a doer for Him. He says that if you will do what pleases Him, He will give you rewards, presents in heaven. We can only please Him when we know and do what He says in His Bible.

Can you please God if you do not belong to Him? No! How can you become one of God's own children? Yes, by believing in His Son. What must you believe about God's Son? That He died to save you from your sins. Have you believed in the Lord Jesus?

Lesson Review

What was the name of the man God told to go to the big city of Nineveh and warn the people He would punish them and ruin their city? Jonah. Why would God want to do that? Because they were a very bad and sinful people and did not love God. Did Jonah want to do what God told him to do? No. Why not? He did not want these sinful people to listen to God's message and be saved. Did Jonah obey God and go to Nineveh? No, he did not. He was a hearer but not a . . . what? A "doer," that's right. What did Jonah do instead? He found a ship going in the opposite direction and got on it, didn't he?

Memory Verse

"But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers." (James 1:22*a*)

LESSON TWO
IT DOES NOT PAY TO DISOBEY

What happens to you when you do not obey your mom or dad? Why, yes, something bad happens to you. Maybe you cannot go out to play for awhile, or maybe you will even get a spanking. Do you think you should not be punished? Do you ever think your parents punish you just because they are mean? Well, you might think that, but we are going to see differently. God Himself tells your mom and dad in His Word that they must punish you when you do not obey. If they do not obey God, He will have to punish them.

Do you know that a spanking might save your life? You will remember not to do a bad or dangerous thing much more quickly if you know you will get a spanking! I told you last time that we would find out who was going to get a "spanking" in our story of Jonah.

The Storm

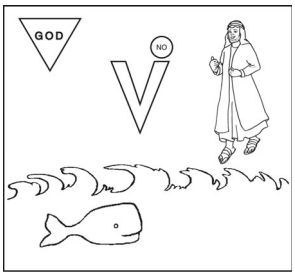
Where did we leave Jonah? He was sound asleep in the bottom of the ship. Farther and farther the ship sailed out to sea. Suddenly, without any warning at all, the ship was in a bad storm. God had thrown the storm at them and now the little waves had become great, wild mountains of water. The ship was tossing about in the sea like a helpless toy boat. What a lot of noise that storm must have made! Can you make a sound like a storm? Can you move your arms and hands to show the rolling waves and the tossing boat? The poor ship almost broke in pieces. The captain of the ship and all the sailors were very afraid. Whatever had happened? Why were they in this awful storm? They looked around. Where was Jonah? Jonah was still sleeping in the lower part of the ship.

"Get up," called the captain. "Call on your god. Perhaps *your* god will be concerned about us so that we will not perish" (Jonah 1:6). Oh, oh! Jonah cannot pray. Why not? Jonah has sinned and did not confess his sin. Now he remembers and admits, "I disobeyed God. I heard His words but did not do what He said; so now God is punishing me. Throw me into the sea and the storm will stop" (Jonah 1:7–12).

Throw Jonah into the sea? Why, poor man, he would surely drown. Oh, no, the sailors did not want to do that. But at last, when they saw that they would all drown, they picked up Jonah and tossed him into the sea (Jonah 1:14–15). At that very second, the storm stopped blowing and the sea was still. And Jonah? Do you know what happened to Jonah? Tell me. Yes, a great big fish came and swallowed him up.

Jonah's Discipline

Did you know that the big fish was both a hearer and a doer of the Word? God has written in His Bible that He told the fish to be in that special place at a special time. He told the fish to swallow, not eat, disobedient Jonah. Why, even the storm and the sea were hearers and doers of God's Word! When God said, "Blow winds!" the storm began to blow (Ps. 148:8*b*); when God wanted them to stop, they obeyed and the sea became still, but not Jonah. God must lock him up in a dark place for three days and three nights before Jonah would learn to become a doer (Jonah 1:17).



Our parents spank us because they love us and want us to grow up to be happy people. God spanks us because He loves us (Heb. 12:6–11). He wants us to obey, for only then can we be really happy. Can you remember "it does not pay to disobey"?

Jonah Obeys

After Jonah had made up his mind to do God's Word obediently, God spoke to the fish and it vomited Jonah up on the dry land (Jonah 2:10). Do you see again how the fish obeyed God? Now Jonah was ready. When God told him once more to go to Nineveh, he went and took God's message. Now Jonah, too, was a hearer and a doer of God's Word, was he not? He got up and went to Nineveh.

Nineveh was a great city. If we tried to walk around the city, it would take us three days. Jonah came in by the city gate. Loudly he called out God's warning message for all to hear: "Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4*b*). All the people heard God's words. What were they now? Yes, they were hearers.

Now listen to what the Bible says about the people of Nineveh: "Then the people of Nineveh believed in God" (Jonah 3:5*a*). They turned away from doing mean and cruel things and wanted to please God by being doers of the Word and not hearers only. All the people of Nineveh, from the youngest to the oldest, from the poorest to the richest, yes, even the king, believed God. So God did not spank the people of Nineveh because they had heard and obeyed His warning. Is that not a happy ending to our true story from God's Word?

What God Wants Me To Know

What lesson do you think God wants us to learn from this Bible story? He wants us to be "doers of the word." Do you know what He wants you to do? He wants you to talk to Him in prayer often (1 Thess. 5:17). Do you? Remember, if you are disobedient like Jonah was at first, you cannot pray, for God will not listen. You must first tell God about your sins (1 John 1:9). Maybe, if Jonah had asked God that morning to help him be a doer of the Word and not just a hearer, he might not have been thrown overboard into the stormy sea and swallowed by the fish. Will you do this: Ask God, as soon as you open your eyes in the morning, to help you obey His Word?

God sent Jonah with an important message. Jonah learned his lesson and because he took God's Word to them, all of the people of Nineveh were saved and they will live in heaven always.

We should obey God's Word because we love Him (John 14:15). Then some day in heaven we will hear the Lord say, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant" (Matt. 25:21, KJV). How glad you will be then that you did what He said now!

We can be doers of the Word only when we have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ and have taken Him to be our Savior. One time a man asked, "What must I *do* to be saved?" (Acts 16:30). How surprised he must have been when he heard the answer, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved" (Acts 16:31). He must have wondered, "Do nothing, just believe?" That's right. You see, there is nothing we can *do* to be allowed to go to be with God in heaven.

We cannot do anything because the Lord Jesus has already done everything. When He hung on the cross He took our sins on Himself and was punished in our place (1 Pet. 2:24). That is why He said, "It is finished!" (John 19:30). Yes, the Lord Jesus was the Doer of His Father's Word (John 4:34). It may be that you have never yet obeyed God's greatest command. Do you know what that is? God says that each one must believe for himself that Jesus died for his sins (1 John 3:23). That's all; just believe it.

Maybe you do not understand what it means to believe on the Lord. Let me explain it as simply as I can. You know what it means to call someone, don't you? When you call, "Mom" or "Dad" or your friends, they will hear and answer. Well, the Lord Jesus is the very best Friend anyone can ever have. The Bible says that, "Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom. 10:13). He is always listening for a sinner to call His name. Why can sinners call to the Lord Jesus? Listen carefully.

When the Lord Jesus was nailed to the cross, two wicked men were also nailed to crosses, one on either side of Him. These men were called "thieves." They stole and killed and were very bad men. Everyone knew it, and now they were being punished for all the bad things they had done. But why was the Lord Jesus on the cross? Jesus had never done anything bad. He is always good. Jesus was on that cross to take the punishment for all the sins in the whole world. You see, God had made a warning promise. He said that all who had sinned must die (Rom. 6:23*a*). He said that if they did not believe on the Lord Jesus, they would be punished forever in the lake of fire (Matt. 25:46; John 3:36*b*). But God also said that whoever will believe in the Lord Jesus will be saved from going to the lake of fire. That was why one of the thieves believed on the Lord Jesus right then. He listened to God's warning and called, "Jesus, remember me!" (Luke 23:42). The Lord heard him and promised, "Today you shall be with Me" (Luke 23:43). Jesus is also God, and God always keeps His promise. At that moment the thief was forgiven and is with the Lord forever.

Do you know what? We are all sinners. We need to listen to God's warning promise. We all need the Lord Jesus as our Savior. Some listen and obey. You, too, can become a doer of the Word right now by believing on the Lord Jesus as your Savior. Just think of the many doers we have learned about: the fish obeyed God; the winds obeyed God; the sea obeyed God; Jonah obeyed God; the thief obeyed God.

Close your eyes and say quietly in your soul for the Lord can hear you even if you do not call to Him out loud, for He can hear you think—"Father in heaven, I have never before obeyed You in believing in the Lord Jesus. But I do now. I thank You that Christ died to save me forever."

Lesson Review

God says that we must be more than hearers of the Word. What else must we be? Yes, that's right—doers. What does that mean? If we obey God's Word, we will be doers, for obeying is the same as doing the right thing. Lately have you been a doer as God wanted you to be, always obeying your mom and dad, always being kind to your sister, brother, and friends? Or did you try for a little while and then forget what you have learned? Or maybe you were like the man in our story who simply did not want to be a doer of the Word! Who can remember his name? Jonah, that's right. Something bad happened when he did not obey God, didn't it? And something good happened when he did obey!

Memory Verse

"But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers." (James 1:22*a*)

Chapter Twelve

Why Do I Sin?

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: Why Do I Sin?—Genesis 3:1–7

B. Lesson Title: The Source of Sin

C. Story Objective:

Sin is universal, but it was not always so. When God created Adam, he was innocent, or free from sin. When by his own choice Adam rebelled against God's expressed will, he became a sinner. Adam represents the entire human race as its head. Through him, sin entered into the world and was imputed to humanity (Rom. 5:12). Now, every person born into this world has inherited Adam's sinful nature (Gen. 5:3; Rom. 3:23). All temptation to sin is a direct result of the sin nature within man, but volition is the source of sin.

While it is natural for mankind to sin, it is never God's will for the believer to live in sin. The Lord Jesus Christ has not only paid the penalty for sin, but has also provided victory over the power of sin (Rom. 6).

Understanding the source of sin, the sin nature, and volition (subject of this lesson) and recognizing the importance of confession of personal sin (to be taught in sequence) will lead the child of God to utilize 1 John 1:9 and to live his life in the filling of the Spirit. The unbelieving child must be shown that the Lord Jesus Christ has removed the barrier of sin and that He alone can offer salvation.

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:

1. Vocabulary: nature, origin, wrong things
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. The sin nature ("sin" in the singular):
      1) Sin nature passed down through conception (Ps. 51:5).
      2) Sin is universal (Rom. 3:23).
      3) Passed down through father and imputed (Rom. 5:12–19).
      4) Believer continues to have a sin nature (1 John 1:8).
   b. Personal sin ("sins" in the plural):
      1) All sin is directed against God (Ps. 51:4; Luke 15:18).
      2) A transgression of the Law (Ps. 51:1, 3).
      3) Personal acts of sin universal also (Rom. 3:23).
      4) Believer with unconfessed sin in life cannot please God (Rom. 8:8).
      5) A trespass is sin against a known commandment or standard of God (Eph. 2:1).
      6) Unbelief is sin (John 16:9; Heb. 3:12).

E. *Source Book* Keyword: sin nature

F. Activities:

1. Suggested Visuals: sin nature, Trinity, volition
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
3. Memory Verse: "For I know that nothing good dwells in me." (Rom. 7:18*a*)
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON
THE SOURCE OF SIN

This lesson is going to be an answer to the question, "Why do I sin?" Have you ever wondered why you do wrong things like disobeying, telling a lie, taking something which does not belong to you? Just why is it that you and I sin at all? Let me see if I can explain it to you this way. Do you have a dog? Well, did you have to teach your dog how to bark? Did you have to teach him how to wag his tail, or how to growl? Or maybe you have a cat. Did you have to teach your cat how to scratch or catch a mouse; how to climb a tree or sharpen his claws? Why not? It is just their way of doing these things. They do them on their own without having to be taught. It is their nature to do what they are doing.

Different things have different natures. What do I mean? Take the little lamb. Lambs have a gentle, sweet nature. They are neat and clean. But now, let's look at a pig. Pigs are not neat and clean as are little lambs. Pigs like to roll about in mud and eat garbage. They have different natures from lambs, haven't they?

Let's pretend that we can take a dirty pig in our house. We'll give it a bath and scrub it clean. Next, we will dry it and powder it and splash sweet-smelling perfume on it. Now for a pretty bow around the pig's neck—and my, doesn't our pig look lovely? I wonder if changing the outside of the pig has changed its inside nature? Let's see. What do you suppose will happen if we leave the door open for a while? You're right. Our clean little pig will slip out of the house and make for the first big puddle it can find. It still is the same pig with the same pig nature, isn't it?

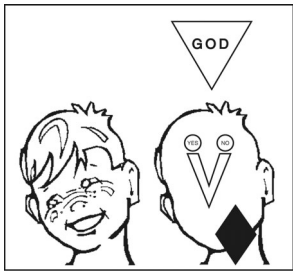
Some things can be tamed in their natures. Lions and tigers can be trained to do tricks, like jumping through a hoop and sitting on chairs and showing off in a circus. However, is what they have been taught to do their own nature? No, they simply have learned to obey their trainers. But if they are left alone, they will soon go back to doing things their own way.

What about you and me? Did you have to be taught to stamp your foot and pout if you could not have your own way? Did you have to be taught how to quarrel with your brother or sister? How to disobey your parents? How to lie, steal, cheat, play dirty? *No!* Instead you had to be taught *not* to do these bad things, but to do right and good. Why should that be? Well, I will tell you—we do bad and wrong things because it is our sinful nature. No matter how hard we try, we will have trouble all of our lives with our sin natures. The things we should do, we just don't do, but the bad things which we should never do, we do so easily (Rom. 7:15–19).

God tells us in His Bible that inside every one of us is a sin nature. Sinful ways are not pleasing to God, but they are inside you and inside me also. "For I know that nothing good dwells [lives] in me" (Rom. 7:18*a*). What is that "nothing good" which lives in us? Yes, our sinful way, our sin nature. God wants us to know about our own sinful natures. Let's learn those words from the Bible, shall we? "For I know that nothing good dwells in me." Do your parents want you to be bad and disobey them? Of course not! Neither does God want His children to disobey Him. He wants us to obey Him instead of listening to that sin nature.

The Origin of the Sin Nature

Let's do something only God can really do. Let's pretend we can see people as God can see them to find out how that sin nature works. When I look at you, I can only see you as you are on the outside. But when God looks at you, He looks right inside your heart or soul (1 Sam. 16:7*b*). What happens on the inside in our souls? Well, this



is where we do all our thinking and planning. We make all our decisions in our souls, the good decisions and the bad decisions. Often, sadly enough, we decide to do "nothing good," what our sin nature wants us to do. Now, let's say our memory verse to make sure you know it. "For I know that nothing good dwells in me." I wonder why we call it "the sin nature"? We call it the "sin nature" because it goes all the way back to the days when Adam and Eve lived in the beautiful Garden of Eden.

Do you remember where Adam and Eve came from? Were they born as little babies like we were? No, God created Adam and later on while Adam slept, God made him a wife, Eve. Adam and Eve were once perfect and good and free from sin, for that was how God had made them. God

had given them volition. Adam and Eve could choose what they wanted to do. They could love God and obey Him and live happily forever. Now they could also choose to disobey God and have their own way. God had told the first man and his wife that they must not eat of the tree in the middle of the Garden or else terrible things would happen (Gen. 2:9, 15–17). Did Adam and Eve decide to go God's way or to have their own way?

How We Got the Sin Nature

One day, when Eve was by herself in that part of the Garden where the tree stood, the serpent tricked her into thinking it would be all right to disobey God. But inside that shiny serpent was the old devil himself. He made it sound like it would be great to know bad things as well as good, for then Adam and Eve would be as clever as God (Gen. 3:4–5; 1 Tim. 2:14). Eve listened to the serpent, and for awhile she thought about what God had said (Gen. 3:2–3). But oh, that fruit looked so good! She wanted a taste of it so badly. She reached out to touch the fruit. Watch out, Eve, the devil is trying to trick you! Oh, but it was too late! Eve bit into the juicy fruit, and do you know what happened to her? Her human spirit died. Her perfect goodness was all gone and a sinful nature had taken its place.

What do you think Adam will do now when he comes along and finds out Eve had disobeyed God's Word? Yes, sad to say, Adam also decided to disobey God. He wanted Eve and her sinful ways more than he wanted God and His perfect and good ways. Adam also took of the fruit which God had said they should not eat and took a bite of it. Both had used their volition to do wrong. They disobeyed God and became sinners (Gen. 3:6).

Up until this time, Adam and Eve had only known how to do good and right things, but now their ways, their natures had been changed. Sin came to live inside them. They could no longer enjoy God's happy ways in the Garden.

The Results of the Sin Nature

The bad things which God had warned Adam and Eve about really happened. Adam and Eve died, first in their human spirits and later in their bodies. Adam trusted that God would save him from his sins. So did Eve. God took away the punishment for their sins, but it was too late to take away Adam's sinful way. His sin nature had come to stay with him for as long as he lived. Not only that, when Adam and Eve had children, they were born with Adam's sinful nature inside them.

Adam gave all of us a terrible gift, a gift that no one wants, but that all of us get—a sin nature (Rom. 5:12). Adam's children had that sin nature when they were born (Gen. 5:3), and so did we. They could not help it, nor can we. You see, we are not sinners because we sin. No, we are sinners because of the sin natures inside us. We cannot do anything about our sinful natures or our sins, *but God can*. And God did!

What God Did about Our Sin Natures

What did God do to help us? He sent His Son, the Lord Jesus, to take away our sins, to be punished in our place. Did the Lord Jesus have a sin nature when He came into the world? No, He did not. Jesus never, ever did anything wrong (1 Pet. 2:22). He was good and perfect just as Adam was before Adam disobeyed God. Jesus always obeyed. He always used His volition to obey God the Father (John 8:29).

Jesus obeyed God when He went to die on the cross for my sin and for your sin. Now God wants to give us a wonderful gift, not an awful gift like sin and death that Adam gave us, but life forever and a way to keep from sin (Rom. 6:23*a*). Will you let Him? Then listen carefully!

What God Wants Me To Know

Maybe if Adam and Eve had listened better to God's Word, they would not have listened to the devil and obeyed God when He gave them their test. Your test is different. God says that the Lord Jesus has taken away your sins. Will you believe that? "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved" (Acts 16:31). Saved from what? From the punishment of sin and the power of sin. Inside you lives that no good thing, that sin nature. Like a dirty little pig, it wants to do wrong and roll about in the mud of sin. Sometimes it even wants to put on a big bow and pretend to be good, which it is not! Your sin nature can fool you; it can even fool others; but it can never fool God. It is just "nothing good" at all.

When the Lord Jesus comes into your life at the moment you believe in Him, He brings with Him both His own sweet nature, which is like the lamb's nature, and the Holy Spirit. He and God the Holy Spirit will then help you keep that dirty pig nature in its corner, where it belongs, and help you obey God's voice. Would you like that? Just tell God the Father that you will use your volition to believe on the Lord Jesus right now.

Once you belong to the Lord Jesus, you should use your volition to obey God. Your sin nature will try to get you to disobey your parents. This is called temptation. Are you going to listen to your sin nature or to God's Word (Eph. 6:1)? Your sin nature will tempt you to quarrel with your brothers and sisters and friends. But God's Word tells you to be kind to each other (Eph. 4:32). To whom will you listen?

Remember, you cannot do it alone. You must ask God's help. Your sin nature is stronger than you, but God is stronger than all. Let's pray that God our heavenly Father will make us want His ways for our lives, not our own sinful ways. Then we can be sure that the pig nature will begin to make way for the lamb nature, and God will be pleased with us.

Lesson Review

Have you ever seen a playful kitten, or a dirty pig, or a puppy dog with his tail wagging ever so happily? Why do they do the things they do? Did anyone have to teach the kitten to chase after a ball of yarn or after a mouse? Did anyone have to teach the dog how to wag his tail and bark? No! Why do they do these things all by themselves? Because it is their nature, their own way of acting. Their natures inside them make them do the things they do all by themselves.

What did we call the thing inside of us that makes us want to do bad and wrong things without having to be taught? Yes, the sin nature. Did we have to go out and find it somewhere? Or did we have to go to the store to buy it? No, we were born with it, weren't we? But where did that sin nature come from? Adam got it when he disobeyed God in the Garden, and through Adam, the sin nature came to all of us.

Do you have a sin nature? Yes, you do. Do I? Does everyone have it? Yes, we all have sin natures and only God can do something about our sin. What did He do? Yes, He sent the Lord Jesus to take the punishment for our sins and to help us fight against the sin nature when it tempts us to disobey God's way for our lives. How long will the sin nature stay inside us? Until we go to heaven to be with the Lord. The sin nature can get us to roll around in the mud puddles of sin if we say yes to it, but when we believe in the Lord Jesus and He comes into our lives, He gives us the power to say no to sin and yes to God's Word.

Memory Verse

"For I know that nothing good dwells in me." (Rom. 7:18*a*)

Chapter Thirteen

What If I Sin?

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: What If I Sin?—Luke 15:11–32

B. Lesson Title: The Prodigal Son

C. Story Objective:

Once a person has believed in the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior, he is eternally saved. However, he can lose fellowship with God in time as a result of unconfessed sin in the life. While there are many kinds of sins, all sin is in direct opposition to God's holy character and hinders communion with God. In fact, the believer out of fellowship is most miserable (Ps. 38).

There can be no service which is acceptable to the Lord, no joy, no inner peace, no power, no prayer, no filling of the Spirit, as long as any unconfessed sin is harbored in the life. God must discipline His erring child in order to make him realize his need of confession and restoration to fellowship (Heb. 12:5–13).

Since God has already judged sin in Christ on the cross, He is now free to fully restore to fellowship any believer who will confess his sins. We must be careful in teaching the principle of 1 John 1:9 to make clear that God's provision of cleansing is not a license to sin, but rather a means toward victory over sin and provision for Christian service. Confession of sin is the only means of being restored to fellowship with God and the filling of the Spirit.

The child, as a believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, must be taught early to see and admit his sins to God. He should be shown, in a simple manner, that his "sins have withheld good" things from him (Jer. 5:25*b*) and that good things come his way when he maintains fellowship with God. Assurance of salvation must be well stressed here, as well as the need of salvation and security.

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:

1. Vocabulary: Christian service, confession, fellowship, restoration
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. Eternal security (eight approaches):
      1) Positional truth (Rom. 8:1)
      2) Logical approach (Rom. 5:9–10, 15, 17, 20)
      3) Anthropomorphism (Ps. 37:24; John 10:28)
      4) Experiential approach (2 Tim. 2:12–13)
      5) Family (Gal. 3:26)
      6) Body (1 Cor. 12:21)
      7) Greek tense (Acts 16:31; Eph. 2:8–9)
      8) Title deed (Jude 24–25)
   b. Result of sin in believer's life:
      1) Discipline, suffering, believer miserable (Ps. 38; Heb. 12:6–11)
      2) Loss of fellowship (Ps. 66:18; Isa. 59:2)
      3) No substitute for fellowship with God (Book of Ecclesiastes)
      4) Good things withheld (Jer. 5:25*b*)
      5) Spiritual growth prevented (1 Cor. 3:1–3)
      6) Extreme discipline of sin unto death (1 John 5:16*b*)
   c. Exhortation to confession of sins (rebound):
      1) Confess (Lev. 5:5).
      2) Examine self (1 Cor. 11:28).
      3) Self-judgment turns away God's judgment (1 Cor. 11:31).
      4) Make straight paths (Heb. 12:13–14).
      5) Basis of forgiveness upon confession (1 John 1:7).
      6) God's part and believer's part in confession (1 John 1:9).

7) Exhortation of confession of sins (Ps. 32:5; 38:18; 51:3; Prov. 28:13).

d. Grace attitude (Matt. 18:27; 2 Cor. 2:5–11; Col. 3:13).

E. *Source Book* Keyword: parables (prodigal son)

F. Activities:
1. Suggested Visuals: brother, cross with open door, little boy, prodigal son, prodigal son with pigs
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
3. Memory Verse: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9) (Note: Explanation of memory verse, 1 John 1:9: "If we confess our sins [tell God what we have done], He [God] is faithful [will always do it] and righteous [right, because Jesus died for our sins] to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us [make us clean inside] from all unrighteousness [every sin].")
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON
THE PRODIGAL SON

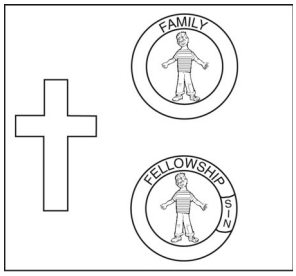
What happens when we sin? We all sin many times, don't we? When we sin against the Lord, it's just like going away from Him for a little while. God does not want us to sin, for sin breaks the friendship or fellowship between God and us so that we cannot talk to Him and He cannot talk to us. He wants us to come back quickly when we have sinned and He will do almost anything to get us to come back to Him.

Did you ever want to run away from home because you could not have your way? Sometimes boys and girls think they know what is better for them than do their mothers and fathers. If they can't have their way, they run away, but always, they will come home crying and wishing they had never done it. Their parents will be sad to know their children have been bad, but they still love them and will always forgive them, just like the father and his son in the story I am going to tell you now.

Younger Brother Leaves Home

Once there was a father who had two sons. What a nice family they were! For a while they lived happily together, but one day something went wrong with the younger brother. He began to pout. He was thinking to himself, "I wish I did not have to obey Father always. Why can't I do what I want? I want to have fun. I want my own way." So he asked his father for some money because he wanted to leave home.

How sad the father was to think that his boy was no longer happy and content to be at home! But he went and counted out two bags full of money. He gave one to Older Brother and the other, to Younger Brother. What do you think the two boys will do with all that money? Well, Older Brother put away his money and went right back to work. Younger Brother waited for a few days, then packed his things, took his money, and said good-bye to his father. Away he went to a faraway country.



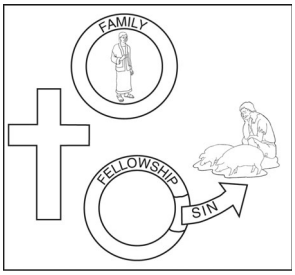
Is Younger Brother still his father's son? Of course he is. He is not home right now, but he is still in the family. When you have been bad, does Mom or Dad say to you, "You are no longer my child"? No, for you will always be their child no matter how bad you have been.

Younger Brother Becomes Miserable

For a little while, Younger Brother was having a good time. He had lots of money, lots of new friends, and lots of fun. But before he knew it, all the money was gone. Would Younger Brother's new friends help him? Where were his friends? All had left him. They had not been true friends at all. They had liked him only for his money and wanted to help him spend it in a hurry.

Younger Brother's pretty new clothes soon began to wear out and become ragged. He was getting hungry, but had no money left for food. He must look for work, but work and food were hard to find in that far country, for there was a great famine in the land. What should he do? At last a man let him feed his pigs. Younger Brother watched the pigs slurp down their food and he was so very

hungry that he wished he could have some of it for himself. Do you know what pigs eat? Garbage! You have to be awfully hungry before you would want to eat garbage, wouldn't you? But no one gave him even that. Poor, foolish fellow! What a sight he was now—hungry, dirty, ragged, and miserable inside! Was this the fun he had set out to have?



Younger Brother's Decision

When we have done wrong, we can feel sick and awful inside. Then we wish we had not done it. That's how Younger Brother felt. He thought about his beautiful home and how kind his father had always been. He thought about all the good food they ate at home. Why, even the servants had more than enough to eat. Now he knew what he should do. Can you guess? Yes, he would go back home.

But maybe, just maybe, his father would not take him back! This is what Younger Brother said to himself: "I will get up and go to my father and say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired men.'" (Luke 15:18–19). It was true that Younger Brother had been bad. He did not deserve kindness from his father, but once a son, always a son. He would not be his father's servant. Leaving home did not make him a servant, just as living with the pigs did not make him a pig, did it? So home he went.

Day after day, his father looked down the long road to see if his son would come back home. Then one day he saw a dirty ragged fellow. Could this be his boy? Yes, it was! But how different he looked, how sad and thin! Quickly the father ran to meet his son. He hugged and kissed him, so happy was he to have his son back. Now there was something the son must say to the father, and he did. He told his father that what he had done was sinful and wrong (Luke 15:21). Right away his father forgave him. His father pulled him into the house.

He called to his servants, "Quickly bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet; and bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this son of mine was dead, and has come to life again; he was lost, and has been found" (Luke 15:22*b*–24). So Younger Brother was made clean. Then what a great time they had together! Did Younger Brother deserve his father's kindness? No, he did not, but his father loved him. That's why he was ready to take his runaway son back again.

Older Brother Gets Out of Fellowship

Now Older Brother came in from the field where he had been working hard all day. What was all the music and singing and laughing? Was someone having a party? "Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fattened calf, because he has received him back safe and sound" (Luke 15:27). Older Brother became so angry that he would not go into the house. Do you know why he was angry? He was jealous. Jealousy and anger are sins. Now Older Brother was out of fellowship, just the same as Younger Brother a while ago.

The kind father went to look for him, too, but Older Brother pouted. "How come you have done so much for him, but not for me?" Sadly the father shook his head. "Son," he said, "there is enough for all of you. You know that all I have is yours. I love you just as much as I love Younger Brother. Won't you come back in?" (Luke 15:28–32). I do hope that Older Brother quit being jealous, don't you?

What God Wants Me To Know

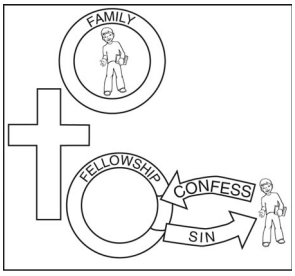
Are you ever jealous of your brother or sister? Do you ever say, "How come he always gets the biggest piece of cake?" Or, "You don't love me as much as you love Sister or Brother"? Oh, yes, we all do it, and it's very, very wrong. We should love each other and be kind and forgiving to each other because God is kind and forgiving to us (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13).

God wants us to know that He loves with the same love all who have taken the Lord Jesus to be their Savior. God promises us that once you are in His family, you can never get out of it. In God's family, the top circle, we are safe forever. The door never opens outward.

In God's friendship or fellowship, the bottom circle, the door opens two ways—in and out. God wants us to come in and stay to enjoy His friendship and care. But all too often we are like Younger Brother, we want our own way, not God's way. We know God's Word, but we don't want to do it. That is sin, isn't it? Every time we sin, we walk right out of that friendship circle so that we can have no fellowship with God.

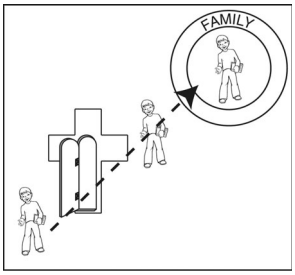
Was Younger Brother happy outside the bottom circle? No! Nor will we be, but the Lord Jesus Christ says we may come back in if we will just confess our sins. What does it mean to confess our sins? We must tell Him what it was we did that was wrong; then right away, the door will swing wide open and God will forgive our sins. Can you say 1 John 1:9 with me? "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Yes, if we will name our sin, God will forgive it and make us clean inside.

Let's pretend a little boy has done something wrong. What shall we say he did? Told a lie? All right: Where will he be when he said that lie—inside the bottom friendship circle, or outside? Outside. How about in God's family, the top circle? Is he still in God's family, or is he out because



he lied? In. How can he get back into this fellowship circle? By confessing his sin, by telling God that he lied. Can we see this circle around us? No, we cannot see it, but God can. God's Word says that His love and care are all around us (Ps. 139). Is it not foolish to let sin stay between God and us when we can so easily come back to God? Will you be sure to tell God as soon as you know you have done something wrong?

Did you know that not all people belong to God's family? Some people do not want the Lord Jesus to be their Savior and Friend. They don't want to go to heaven God's way; they want to make it their own way. But we are not good enough to become God's children, even if we try really hard. Do you want to be in God's family and be His child forever? Do you want all your sins forgiven and washed away?



There is only one door to heaven, His way. What is that door? It is the cross where Jesus died for your sins. You may go through that door by telling God, "Father, I believe that Jesus died to save me. I want to belong to Him. Thank You for taking me into Your family forever, and Father, help me please to not sin and wander away from You."

Lesson Review

Let's say 1 John 1:9 together. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Did you know that there are two parts to that Bible verse? There is one part that we must do and one part that God will do. God tells us that if we will do our part, then He will do His part. What must we do? Confess our sins to God. What will He do then? Forgive us and make us clean inside; God forgives the sins we have told Him about and washes away those we have done unknowingly.

What did we call the top circle? God's family circle. The circle at the bottom is God's fellowship or friendship circle. How did we get into the family circle of God? By believing on the Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:26). How do we get out of the fellowship circle? Through sinning. How do we get back into the fellowship circle? By confessing our sins. In our lesson, we learned about a runaway son who left his father's house, but could never leave his father's family. He was always his father's son, no matter how bad he had been.

Now tell me, did Younger Brother have to leave home? No, he left home because he wanted to have his own way. He no longer wanted to do what his father told him. He certainly did not need to leave. What about Older Brother, did he have to go out in a huff? Did he have to be angry that Younger Brother had come home and everyone else was glad? No! He could have stayed and enjoyed the party. Do you and I have to do wrong and sin? Of course not. We do sin, but we should do what God wants us to do and learn what God wants us to know.

Memory Verse

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

Chapter Fourteen

I Need Not Sin

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: I Need Not Sin—Daniel 1, 2, 6

B. Lesson Titles:
1. Lesson One: The Power of the Word To Keep from Sin
2. Lesson Two: Daniel in the Lion's Den

C. Story Objective:

The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is freed both from the penalty and power of sin. "For sin shall not be master over you" (Rom. 6:14*a*). In order that victory over sin might be realized, the Word of God must have free course in the life (Col. 3:17). Thus, stored up in the soul and recalled as needed, the Word edifies the believer and enables him to be steadfast and to resist temptations from within and without (Ps. 119:11; Lam. 3:21).

You can neither emphasize too much nor too soon the importance of committing to memory portions of the Bible. Children learn quickly and easily. While it is true that they forget as readily, they will retain more than they will forget. Perhaps the full significance of the verses they are taught will not dawn on the children for many years, for in spite of the teacher's sincere attempt to explain the meaning of new words, much will be learned by rote. Nevertheless, the Word is "alive and powerful," and we must trust the Holy Spirit to teach them as they are able and bring to their remembrance past lessons at future times of need.

To illustrate the power of the Word to keep from sin, an incident in the life of Daniel is used here. Our Lord Himself stressed the use of the Word against temptation to sin (Matt. 4:1–11). Plant the Word, water it faithfully, and leave the increase to the One who always honors it—God (Ps. 138:2*b*; Isa. 55:11).

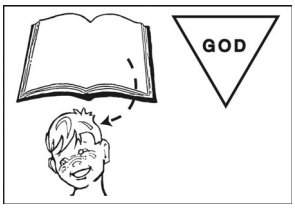
D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:
1. Vocabulary: idols, land of Judah, store, treasured
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. The importance of the Word in the life (Job 23:11–12).
   b. The effect of the Word if applied to believer's life (Ps. 19:7–14; 119).
   c. Principle—I need not sin (Ps. 119:11).
   d. "This I recall to mind" (Lam. 3:21).
   e. The overcoming power of the Word (Matt. 4:1–11).
   f. "Blessed are those who hear the word of God, and observe it" (Luke 11:28).
   g. That the Word may spread rapidly (2 Thess. 3:1).
   h. The Word, profitable (2 Tim. 3:16–17).

E. *Source Book* Keyword: Daniel

F. Activities:
1. Suggested Visuals: Bible, little boy, Trinity
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
3. Memory Verse: "Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee." (Ps. 119:11)
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON ONE
THE POWER OF THE WORD TO KEEP FROM SIN

What else does God want us to know? Have you ever watched a squirrel at work? Did you ever see him gather nuts and acorns? What does he do with them? He will eat only some and keep the others safely stored away for a later time. He digs a hole in the ground and there hides away his goodies for the winter when he really needs them. Who taught Mr. Squirrel to be so clever? God did, for He takes care of all His creatures.



Sometimes Mr. Squirrel has so much fun running from one place to another that he becomes forgetful. He just cannot seem to remember where he buried all his goodies, and because he forgot where the rest of the nuts and acorns are hidden, he sometimes gets hungry before the winter is over. What happens to all those nuts and acorns he seems to have lost? Well, they are still where he put them, but they do him no good. Before long, they will begin to grow into new trees, but Mr. Squirrel must wait many, many years before they will grow new nuts for him. Too bad for Mr. Squirrel, but at least he has some nuts hidden away that he remembers, and some nuts are better than no nuts, aren't they?

Did you know that there is something God wants us to gather and store up for a time when we will really need it? What might that be? And where shall we store it? Could God mean for us to pick up and put away our things and toys where they belong? Of course, we should do that anyway, but that is not what I am talking about right now. Does He want us to put away money in the piggy-bank to save for a rainy day? That is a good idea too, but even that is not what God is thinking of here. He wants us to hide His Word. What is God's Word? Yes, our Bible is the Word of God. Where does God want us to hide it? On the top shelf where it is safe, but where it will get all dusty? No! In the closet? In the desk or bookshelf? No, that will never do. God has a very special place for us to hide away His Word where no one can ever take it away from us. Can you guess where? God tells us in Psalm 119:11 that this place is in our hearts.

Goodness me, how can we put the Bible into our hearts? We cannot open up our hearts and stuff a whole book inside! Of course not. That is not what God meant at all. What God wants us to do is to learn what His Word says so well that we will never forget it. Do you know what we call the verses we learn together? We call them "memory verses," not "forget verses." First learn them; then we say them over and over until we know them "by heart." When we know them this well, they are tucked away and safely hidden in our SOULS. How does God's Word get into our souls? One, by the eye-gate; two, by the ear-gate—that's how!

Why does God want us to store up His Word in our souls—for the winter? No, not just for the winter, but for any time when we might need it. God knows that when we think about His Word, it will keep us from doing wrong. When we know what God wants us to do, and what He does not want us to do, we need not sin. Let us say all of Psalm 119:11 together: "Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee."

Who can remember what it was that got Mr. Squirrel into trouble? Yes, when he forgot where his nuts were hidden. He had just been too busy having fun to find some of the old hiding places, so he had to dig more and more. Sometimes we are like Mr. Squirrel. We are having so much fun that we become too busy to learn our memory verses well. So soon we forget them altogether. Then, when we need God's Word, we somehow just cannot remember it. But there once was a man who had hidden God's Word in his soul so well when he was a little boy that he always knew what God wanted him to do. His name was Daniel.

Daniel Stores Up God's Word

Daniel had once lived in the land of Judah, where he was a little prince. There, good King Josiah ruled over the people of God (2 Chron. 34). He made all the people of Judah listen to God's Word and hide it in their hearts. And because the people listened well and learned what God said in His Word, they were doers of the Word for as long as King Josiah lived (2 Chron. 34:33*b*). Daniel also listened to his mother and father, and to his teachers, and was careful to learn what God wanted him to know.

Let's pretend we can watch little Daniel right now, shall we? Many times his parents and teachers said, "Now listen and learn well, Daniel, what God says in His Word: 'You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not worship them or serve them' (Ex. 20:3, 5*a*). 'You will pray to Him [God], and He will hear you' (Job 22:27*a*). Pray every day in the 'evening and morning and at noon' (Ps. 55:17)." Daniel would nod. He carefully stored up God's Word in

his soul so that he might not sin against God (Ps. 119:11). He understood that he must love and serve only the true God in heaven. Never, ever must he pray to any other. He would trust God, no matter what might happen.

And something terrible did happen. When Daniel was still very young, good King Josiah died. Now there was no one to keep reminding the people to learn God's Word and obey God. Most of the people in the land turned away from serving God and made idols of gold and silver and wood instead. They even began to pray to these idols. They would not listen to God's warning messages at all. God was very angry with His people. To punish them, He sent a mighty enemy into their land who burned the cities and took God's people as prisoners. When the enemy soldiers went back to their own country, they carried with them prisoners and many beautiful treasures of silver and gold which they had stolen from the temple—the house of God. Can you guess who one of their prisoners was? Yes, Daniel (Dan. 1:1–2, 6). Daniel never saw his father and mother again. All the rest of his life, he lived far, far away from his home country.

Daniel Does Not Sin

Daniel was not sad and lonely. He remembered God's Word. He knew that His heavenly Father, God, would look after him, and that is just what God did. He took care of the boy Daniel. God made the enemy king (Prov. 21:1) to be kind to Daniel so that the king chose Daniel and three of his best friends to live in the king's palace and go to the king's special school, and every day the king sent them food from his own table.

Daniel learned many new things: reading, writing, and speaking the language of his new country. He was clever and could do his lessons so well that the king was pleased with him, as were his new teachers. When the king gave Daniel a test to do, he was surprised to find out that Daniel was ten times better than the wisest men in the land of the king (Dan. 1:4–5, 17–20). Who had made Daniel so wise? God had. He had given Daniel learning and knowledge and wisdom (Dan. 1:17). Now the king made Daniel to be a great and important man and let him help rule over the whole land (Dan. 2:48–49*b*). All that time, Daniel thought about God's Word. He did not forget God's Word—ever (Ps. 119:11; Dan. 1:8).

What God Wants Me To Know

Why will knowing God's Word keep you from sinning? Because in His Word, God tells you what He wants you to do and not to do. When you do not obey God, it is sin, isn't it? How can you obey Him if you do not know what He wants you to do?

One day, Mother told Susie and Jimmy, "I am going to be gone for a while, and I want you both to stay in the house and play with your toys until I get back." Susie quickly told her mother she would do it. Jimmy was so busy building a fort, he only nodded. Pretty soon, Jimmy got tired of his fort and decided to go outside to play.

After a while, their mother came back. "Where's Jimmy?" she asked Susie. "He went outside," she had to tell her mother. Her mother went out to find Jimmy. "Why did you not obey me?" she asked. "Oh, I guess I forgot," Jimmy said. "Well, I'm afraid you will have to be punished, Jimmy," his mother told him. And punished he was! He got a hard spanking.

What kept Susie from disobeying? Yes, she listened to her mother's words and kept remembering them. Jimmy did not listen very well, and soon forgot. If you do not listen to God's Word, you will get in trouble, too. I know a little girl who did not learn her memory verses and one day, on a picnic, she got lost. Instead of remembering that God would take care of her, she became terribly frightened and began to scream and run farther away.

Was that sin? Yes, it was because God's Word tells us to trust the Lord when we are afraid. When you are in trouble, there is no time to learn your verses. You must store them up now, like Mr. Squirrel.

It is sin not to believe in the Lord Jesus (John 16:9). Do you know that God promises you in His Word that you will have eternal life if you believe on His Son as your Savior? Then be sure you have done it.

Lesson Review

I wonder whether Daniel knew Psalm 119:11? I am sure he did! Do you? Let's say it together. "Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee." Did Daniel wait to learn God's Word until he was in trouble? *No*, he did not. When did he learn it? When he was a little boy your age. What happened to Daniel? He was taken from his home to a faraway land. Did Daniel cry and scream? No, he remembered that God was always with him and would take care of him, didn't he?

Memory Verse

"Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee." (Ps. 119:11)

LESSON TWO
DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN

More than twenty years had passed and Daniel was now a grown man. A new king sat on the throne whose name was Darius. He ruled over many people, for the land was large and strong. He had 120 princes and three presidents to help him look after all his people. What has Daniel been doing all these years? Was he still faithful to the Lord? Was he still hiding God's Word in his heart? Or did he sin and forget God's Word? Well, let's go on with our story and find out.

The Plan To Trap Daniel

Daniel was one of three presidents. The king knew he could trust Daniel always to be fair and right and just; that was why he made him the chief president over all others. Next to the king, Daniel was the greatest man in the land (Dan. 6:1–3). All the people, even the princes and presidents, must obey Daniel and the king. That made the princes and presidents angry, for they were jealous of Daniel and wanted his high place. They did not want their king to like Daniel so well. If only they could catch Daniel doing wrong, they would "tattle-tale" on him to the king.

Day after day they watched Daniel, for they did not want him to be their chief. But try as they might, they could not find any blame in him, for Daniel always behaved honestly (Dan. 6:4). Then they met together and planned how they might get rid of him. "This Daniel," they said, "why, he is always faithful to the king and always faithful to his God. We know what we will do. We will trick him into disobeying either his God or the king" (Dan. 6:5). Quickly these bad men went to the king's palace and asked to speak to him. "O great King Darius," they said, "we *all* want you to make a new law. This new rule must say that no one may pray to anyone, neither to men nor to any gods, for the next thirty days. If they want something, then they must pray only to you, O king. And should anyone be caught praying to another, he must be thrown into the den of lions" (Dan. 6:6–8). The king listened and thought to himself, "If they *all* want me to make this law, then even Daniel must think it a good law; surely no harm can come from it." And he signed his name to the new law (Dan. 6:9). Was that not a terrible thing for them to do? These men had made a trap for Daniel and had lied about him. Poor Daniel did not even know what they had done until the new law of the king was told throughout the land (Dan. 6:4–9).

What will he do now? The Bible tells us that when Daniel heard about the king's law, "he entered his house" and did what he had always done three times every day, ever since he was a little boy. He prayed in the morning, at noon, and at night—right in front of his open window. He did not even close the curtains, for he was not afraid to be seen (Dan. 6:10). You see, Daniel had hidden God's Word in his heart that he might not sin against God. When he knew of the law and of what would happen if he disobeyed the king, he also remembered what he had learned as a little boy from his parents and teachers. "You shall have no other gods before Me!" "You will pray to Him, and He will hear you" (Ex. 20:3; Job 22:27*a*). Now he must decide what to do—disobey the king, or disobey God! "I *can* sin against God, but I *need* not sin, for God's Word is stronger than the law of the king," thought Daniel. God would take care of him as He had always done; Daniel was sure of that.

Maybe Daniel prayed to God about those wicked men who had made the king sign the law only to get rid of him, and as Daniel prayed, the princes and presidents watched by the open window. They ran to report to the king as fast as they could go, "That Daniel, who came here as a prisoner, disobeyed the king's command. Now he must be thrown to the lions. Not even you, O king, can change the law you have signed" (Dan. 6:11–13). Then King Darius knew that he had also been tricked along with Daniel. All day long he wondered what he could possibly do to keep Daniel from having to be thrown to the lions (Dan. 6:14). But even the king could do nothing for his friend Daniel; only God could help Daniel now.

God's Care of Daniel

Daniel was taken and thrown to the lions. "Your God whom you constantly serve will Himself deliver you," cried the sad king (Dan. 6:16*b*). A great stone was laid upon the opening of the big hole where the lions were kept, and the king sealed it. Then the king went back to his palace. How unhappy he was and how sad for his faithful friend Daniel. All night long he could not sleep. Early next morning, the king dressed in a hurry and ran to the lion's den. He cried out with a troubled voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you constantly serve, been able to deliver you from the lions?" (Dan. 6:20*b*). Then the king waited, wondering whether he would ever hear Daniel's voice again.

How happy he must have been when Daniel answered him, "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, and they have not harmed me, inasmuch as I was found innocent before Him; and also toward you, O king, I have committed no crime" (Dan. 6:22). Now Daniel was taken

up out of the lions' den, and the wicked men were thrown to the lions instead (Dan. 6:24). Daniel became the best helper and friend the king ever had. God let Daniel live many long years to help and strengthen many kings in that faraway land (Dan. 1:21; 6:28). Even one book in God's Word is named after him.

What God Wants Me To Know

Why did Daniel do no wrong before the king and before God? Because he had hidden God's Word in his heart. Every time he must choose what to do, he would think about what God's Word said he should do. That is how he kept from sinning against God. You can be like Daniel and learn God's Word as well as he did. When you think about God's Word, you think about good things instead of thinking sin (Ps. 12; Phil. 4:8). But you can only think about God's Word when you know what it says. If you forget God's Word, you cannot please God. What happens when you forget to eat? You become hungry and weak, don't you? When you forget to take in God's Word, you will become weak and you will sin.

God says that it is just as important for us to live on His Word as it is for us to live on food (Matt. 4:4). Every word of God makes God's children strong. We should love God's Word even more than we love good food. We should be hungry for it. Next time you sit in church and a friend next to you wants you to listen to him rather than to the Word of God, will you remember God's Word about listening ears (Matt. 11:15)? You can do one of two things: either listen to God's Word or listen to your friend. What does God's Word tell you to do? Listen to His Word.

You need not sin; just remember to do what you know God wants you to do. Next time your mother calls, will you remember what you have learned that God wants you to do (Eph. 6:1)? What does God say to you? "Obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right." Make up your mind like Daniel, and say, "Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee . . . I shall not forget Thy word" (Ps. 119:11, 16*b*).

Would you like to be one of God's children who hides God's Word in his heart? God's children are all those who have believed what God says in His Word about Jesus Christ. God's Word was written that we "may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you might have life in His name" (John 20:31). The Lord Jesus died for all our sins so that we can have our sins forgiven and become God's children.

But there is one sin God can never forgive. That sin is in *never* believing on His Son (John 3:18). You need not sin this terrible sin a minute longer. Listen to what God's Word tells you: "He who believes in the Son has eternal life" (John 3:36*a*), "and their sin I [God] will remember no more" (Jer. 31:34*b*). Have you ever believed on the Lord Jesus Christ for yourself? Today you can become a child of God (Gal. 3:26). How? Tell God, "Father in heaven, I believe Jesus is my Savior. I thank You that He died for my sins. I, too, want to hide Your Word in my heart so I will not sin so often against You. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Lesson Review

"Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee" (Ps. 119:11). What does this verse mean? It means that when we know what God wants us to know, we will be more likely to do what God wants us to do.

Daniel knew this. Ever since he was a boy, he had hidden God's Word in his soul, and God's Word reminded him of what he should not do. Remember, Daniel had enemies who were jealous of him and hated him. His enemies tried to get Daniel to do wrong and sin against God. Do you know what they did? They made a new rule that said that no one may pray to anyone, neither to men nor to any gods, for the next thirty days. If they wanted something, then they must pray only to the king, and should anyone be caught praying to another, he must be thrown into the den of lions. But even though Daniel knew he might end up in the lions' den, he would not sin against God. What did God do that night to keep the lions from hurting Daniel? God shut their mouths.

You and I have a terrible enemy inside us. Sometimes he is called "nothing good"; other times he is called "the sin nature." He, too, tries hard to get us to sin and do wrong, but we know from God's Word that we need not sin. God's Word in our souls will help keep us from sin so that we, too, can please God.

Memory Verse

"Thy word I have treasured in my heart, That I may not sin against Thee." (Ps. 119:11)

Chapter Fifteen

I Need To Pray

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: I Need To Pray—Daniel 6; Book of Jonah

B. Lesson Title: The Importance of Prayer

C. Story Objective:

The two main points of this lesson will be (1) to stress the importance of prayer, and (2) to teach the young child to pray.

Prayer should be taught by example in the home where the child follows the pattern set for him by his parents. As he learns that all he has comes to him from his heavenly Father (James 1:17) and as he observes that even his parents turn to God in prayer, he, too, will resort to prayer easily and naturally.

Remind children of truths from the Word which they have already mastered—that God speaks to them through His Word, and that they, in turn, speak to God in their own words, in prayer. Assure them that God is vitally interested in all that concerns them. Show them the steps of prayer as they relate to their own lives.

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:

1. Vocabulary: cleansing, confession, intercession, petition, thanksgiving
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. The need to pray:
      1) In obedience to God's command (1 Thess. 5:17; Heb. 4:16)
      2) In response to His promises (Isa. 45:11*b*; Jer. 33:3)
      3) In recognition of our dependence on Him (Phil. 4:19; James 4:2*b*)
   b. The conditions of prayer:
      1) Fellowship (Ps. 66:18)
      2) Faith (Matt. 21:22; John 14:13–14)
   c. The steps of prayer:
      1) Confession (1 John 1:9)
      2) Thanksgiving (Phil. 4:6; 1 Thess. 5:18)
      3) Intercession (Eph. 6:18; 1 Tim. 2:1–3)
      4) Petition (John 15:7; Rom. 8:32)
   d. The assurance:
      1) He cares (1 Pet. 5:7).
      2) He knows (Matt. 6:32).
      3) He hears (1 Pet. 3:12).
      4) He answers (Ps. 143:1*b*; John 14:13–14; 1 John 5:14–15).

E. *Source Book* Keyword: prayer

F. Activities:

1. Suggested Visuals: mother, sister
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
3. Memory Verse: "Call to Me, and I will answer you." (Jer. 33:3*a*)
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON
THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER

There is another important thing that will help to keep us from sin. Certainly it helped Daniel to do right always. Do you know what it is? It is *prayer!* Oh, how we all need to pray! God speaks to us through His Word, but He wants us to speak to Him also. When we pray, we speak to God. To pray means to talk things over with God, to share all our thoughts with Him, to ask Him what we might do. In prayer we ask God to help us, or to give us something we want very much. In prayer, we remember the needs of others and we talk to God about them also. Do you ever talk to God, either silently or out loud? Do you even know how to pray? We need to know how. That's why we want to have this lesson on *prayer* today and Betsy and her mother will help us learn it.

Confession and Thanksgiving in Prayer

Betsy was snuggling down in her bed. Her mother, holding a big black Bible in her lap, sat beside Betsy. "What will you read me tonight?" asked Betsy. "Will it be another story about prayer?" You see, her mother was teaching Betsy to pray and she had chosen stories from God's true Word which showed how very important prayer was.

Betsy already knew that before she could talk to her heavenly Father, all her sins must be confessed and she must be back in the fellowship circle. She remembered only too well how Jonah could not pray during the storm at sea because he was out of fellowship with God, and oh, how desperately he needed to pray! She also remembered hearing her mother read about the lost son who came back and admitted to his father all the bad things he had done. Do you remember these things also?

Betsy was counting off on her fingers, "First confess, and then give thanks." Her mother had told her that right after confessing our sins, we should thank the Father in heaven for all that He is and all that He has done for us. Her mother had sadly shaken her head as she read Betsy the story of how the Lord healed ten men and only one came back to praise and thank Him for it. "Never forget to thank your Father in heaven," her mother had said. "What if He forgot about us even for one minute?"

You see, we are so quick to come to God and say, "Give me this and give me that; do this and do that," but when it comes to remembering to give thanks, we are slow about it—if we do it at all!

"What must we always do first so our prayers can be heard, Betsy?" asked her mother. We must confess our sins to God. God promises that when we tell Him the bad things we thought or did, He will most certainly forgive them and will cleanse us from all unrighteousness (every sin). When God forgives us, we are made pure and clean in His sight. Then we can come to Him in prayer and can know that He will hear and answer us.

Second, we must thank our wonderful God for loving us and caring for us so very much, day in and day out. "Betsy," said her mother, "what all will you thank our heavenly Father for today?" Can you think of anything else we might have forgotten? We can thank God for His love and goodness, His care, salvation, the Word, confession, cleansing, and for other ways God cares for us.

Intercession

The third thing is to remember to pray for the many, many people who need and want your prayers. We should not ever be selfish and say, "Me first," not even in prayer, Betsy's mother told her. "We should think of others and pray for them."

Do you ever run to your mother and tell her, "Mother, give me," and then don't tell her what you want? Of course not! So, when you pray, don't just tell God, "Father, I pray for Mother and Dad, for Aunt Sue, for the church and the soldiers." Tell God what it is you want Him to do for these people (Matt. 7:11*b*).

Your dad needs safety as he drives to and from work in his car. He needs strength and knowledge to do his work (Deut. 8:18*a*). Your mother needs God's help as she takes care of her children and answers their many questions. Your sister or brother needs God's help in school so they can bring home good grades.

Do you know someone who is sick? Have you asked the Lord to make him well, if it is His will for him to be made healthy? What might we ask God to do for the soldiers? What could we ask for our missionaries? Yes, that God would give them the right words to tell others about the Lord Jesus Christ. Also, that He might keep them well and give them all their needs, food, shelter, clothing, time to study, people who will come and listen to them and who will believe and be saved.

Do you have a friend who does not know the Lord Jesus as his own Savior? Pray for him and be ready to tell him the good news that the Lord died to save him. Do you pray for your church and pastor? You should! Do you pray for our country and its leaders? God wants you to! We should pray that they might believe in Christ and that God would help them to be good leaders.

Petition

Betsy nodded, "Oh, Mother," she said, "I never knew how very much I need to pray. I'll have to stay up all night, I guess," she sighed. Her mother laughed, "No, honey, you don't have to pray for all of the people at one time. But now, let's talk about your prayers for yourself." The fourth thing you should remember to pray for is for yourself.

"Betsy, just suppose you asked God to turn your baby doll into a real baby. Do you think He would do it? He would not, for He knows you are not ready to take care of a baby yet. Should you be angry at God for not doing what you ask Him to do in your prayers? No, Betsy, God knows what is best for you; He will answer your prayers according to His will (1 John 5:14). But whatever you ask your Father in heaven to do for you, you must believe that He can and will answer your prayers, and always end your prayers 'in Jesus' name.' The Father loves His Son and will do what we ask in His name (John 16:23–24)."

Betsy had a question. "Mother, what does 'amen' mean?" "Amen means 'I believe it,'" her mother answered. "That's why I told you that you must believe God can do what you ask of Him, if He thinks it is best. Saying 'amen' is our way of telling God we believe that He will answer us." Betsy was beginning to yawn. "Can I talk to my Father in heaven now? I am so sleepy!" Her mother nodded and listened as Betsy prayed: "Father in heaven, I thank You that You love me and that You sent the Lord Jesus to die for my sins. I thank You for my home on earth, for Mommy and Daddy, for Baby Sister. Please, dear Father, help Daddy at work tomorrow, and keep him safe while he drives to work and home again. Help Mommy to know how to look after us, and help Baby Sister to grow big and strong so we can play together soon. Take good care of all the soldiers who trust you. Help them not to be afraid. Help me to obey my parents and do what you would have me to do; and please help me not to be afraid of the dark any more. In Jesus' name. Amen."

Betsy reached out to hug her mother. "Good night, Mommy," she yawned, "you can turn the light off now; I'll be all right." She smiled, and before her mother left the room, Betsy was fast asleep.

What God Wants Me To Know

Do you pray at night? Do you pray, "Now I lay me down to sleep"? Or do you talk to your Father in heaven as Betsy did? Do you thank Him for your food? Do you talk to Him the moment you wake up and thank Him for keeping you safe all night and for giving you a good night's rest? Why not try it, and ask Him to help you please Him and your parents all day long. Why not ask Him to help you to be kind to your sisters and brothers and to your playmates? See if things don't go a lot better with prayer, and be sure, sure, sure that all your sins are forgiven by telling God about them.

Can anyone pray to the heavenly Father? Only those who already have believed in Jesus Christ, His Son, can come to Him and ask Him to help them. You cannot call God "Father" if He is not your Father. How can He be your Father in heaven? That's easy: just believe that the Lord Jesus died for your sins, and God becomes your Father and you will be His child (John 1:12; Gal. 3:26). Do it right now, and then, you also can pray. You, too, can know that God means it when He says, "Call to Me, and I will answer you" (Jer. 33:3*a*).

Memory Verse

"Call to Me, and I will answer you." (Jer. 33:3*a*)

Chapter Sixteen

Promotion

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: Promotion—Acts 16:1; 2 Tim. 1:5; 3:14–15

B. Lesson Title: Spiritual Growth

C. Story Objective:

The spiritual life of every Christian, regardless of physical age or temporal achievements, should show the marks of steady growth toward maturity. There should ever be a "reaching forward to what *lies* ahead . . . of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:13*b*–14*b*); there should be a continued advance "to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ" (Eph. 4:13*b*). Where there is no further intake of doctrine and no growth, the spiritual life declines and becomes stunted, unproductive. This should be avoided at all cost.

Spiritual promotion should be meaningful to youngsters. Show them that God's evaluation of their growth in the Christian life is so important (2 Cor. 10:18) that a special lesson has been prepared to emphasize this point. It is designed to show that growth necessitates changes.

The Bible story used is that of Timothy. Since no detailed account of his childhood years is given, we must of necessity assume and attempt to reconstruct the kind of life he might have lived from those verses we have and from stated principles of God's Word.

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:
1. Vocabulary: growth, maturity
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. Knowledge and growth:
      1) Steps toward growth: hear, learn, fear, do (Deut. 31:12).
      2) The beginning of knowledge—faith in Christ (Prov. 1:7*a*; 1 Cor. 2:9).
      3) Heed instruction; do not neglect it (Prov. 8:33).
      4) "Teach a righteous man, and he will increase *his* learning" (Prov. 9:9).
      5) Apply knowledge (Prov. 22:17; 23:12; James 1:22).
      6) Knowledge increases power (Prov. 24:5; Col. 1:10; 1 Thess. 4:10).
      7) "Grow up in all *aspects* into Him" (Eph. 4:15).
      8) "Your faith is greatly enlarged" (2 Thess. 1:3).
      9) The "meat" of the Word—for mature believers (Heb. 5:14).
      10) The "milk" of the Word—for beginner believers (1 Pet. 2:2).
   b. Promotion:
      1) Promotion comes from the Lord (Ps. 75:6).
      2) The means of promotion—Bible doctrine (Prov. 4:8).
      3) "That I may finish my course" (Acts 20:24).
      4) "My reward *is* with me" (Rev. 22:12; also 2 Chron. 15:7).

E. *Source Book* Keyword: spiritual life of the Church Age

F. Activities:
1. Suggested Visuals: None
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
3. Memory Verse: "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 3:18*a*)
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON
SPIRITUAL GROWTH

On special days, we do special things, don't we? On special holidays we do things we never do at other times. Only at Christmastime do we decorate a tree with gay ornaments and bright lights as we remember the coming of God's Son into the world to be our Savior and the Light of the World. Then, we all exchange gifts because of God's greatest gift to us.

At Easter we often put on new clothes as we think of the Lord Jesus Christ's coming out of the tomb with a new body in eternal life. On the Fourth of July we fly our country's flag and shoot off fire crackers to celebrate our country's birthday. And what makes your birthday different from all the other days in the year? Only the gifts you are given? Oh, no! What special thing does your mother make for you to show you have grown another year older? Yes, a birthday cake with candles on top.

Some families use one large birthday candle instead of the many little ones. They light it year by year, and as their child gets bigger and bigger, the candle gets smaller and smaller. Have you ever seen one of those birthday candles?

Do you know that you grow in more ways than one? You grow in body, in soul, and if you are a child of God, in spirit. Every year you outgrow the things you wear, such as your shoes and clothes and then you need new ones. Every year you will move up one class in school, and you will learn new things. God wants us to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18). As we get to know what God wants us to know, and as we begin to do what God wants us to do, we will become kind and thoughtful to others and both God and those around us will be pleased. Then God can really use us.

Right now let's hear about someone who grew in body, soul, and spirit, and about how God promoted him.

Timothy Is Born

"It's a boy!" said Lois, as she laid the tiny baby in his mother's arms. "Just think, I'm a grandmother now," the kind old lady smiled. Eunice looked down lovingly at the little bundle in her arms. "I think I shall call him Timothy," she said, "and I pray that he will grow up to be just like the meaning of his name—pleasing to God." "Mother," Eunice turned back to the old lady, "hurry now and tell his father about our little Timothy. Oh, how glad and proud he will be."

That was a happy day when Timothy was born. What a lot of gladness came to the neat little house where his father, his mother Eunice, his grandmother Lois, and baby Timothy lived! As far as we know, Timothy had no brothers and sisters (Acts 16:1), but don't you think it was fun to have his grandmother living at his home all the time? His mother and grandmother spent much time taking care of Timothy, and much time praying for him.

Baby Timothy grew stronger and bigger, but many things had to be done for him that he could not do for himself. He had to be carried about, for he could not walk; he had to be fed, for he was still too little to feed himself. He had to be bathed and washed and diapered, but the day came when Timothy no longer needed to have people wait on him hand and foot. His first birthday came and went, his second birthday, his third and fourth. Yes, Timothy was coming along fine.

Timothy Grows

In many ways, things were different in those long ago days when Timothy was a boy. He did not wear the kind of clothes you wear today. Nor did he eat the kinds of food you like to eat, like fried chicken and hot dogs and hamburgers and ice cream. His toys were different from yours. Why, he did not even have a whole Bible! I am sure he had no bedroom of his own, but shared a bedroom with his grandmother. He did not sleep in a bed, but on a bed roll spread out on the floor. Just the same, Timothy was a happy boy and had a lot of fun.

He liked to eat the flat little corn or barley bread patties his mother baked for him. He ate cheese and meat and olives. And no doubt, he must have loved sweets, such as figs, raisins, and dates. He drank fresh goat's milk and cool water, freshly drawn from the well.

Just like you, Timothy must have had many friends. Maybe they played hide and seek, or tag; maybe they tried to see who could run the fastest and jump the highest. But best of all, Timothy loved to sit and listen to the many true stories from God's Word. Every day his mother and grandmother taught Timothy God's Word. As I already told you, when Timothy was about your age there were no Bibles. Parts of God's Word had been written down on long sheets of paper (papyrus) and carefully rolled up into scrolls. Some families had many of these Bible scrolls and kept them in a round container. Timothy's family had some of these precious Bible scrolls.

Timothy Grows in the Knowledge of the Lord

After Timothy's father had left for work in the morning and all the housework was done, his mother and grand-

mother sat down with Timothy between them. His mother would reach for one of the Bible scrolls and unroll it carefully. She would run her finger along the lines of ink letters and say, "Listen, my son, this is where God promised to send a Savior to take away all our sins. Some day this Savior will come, but in the meantime we must trust in God's promise, that He will keep His Word" (Isa. 53).

Here is where God made a very important rule for all children: Children are to obey their parents (Deut. 5:16)! If you always obey your father and mother and grandmother, then you really obey God. God will be pleased, and you will be happy. Soon Timothy knew many stories from God's Word; he could even say a lot of verses by heart. But better than that, Timothy did what God's Word told him.

Many years had gone by, and many birthdays. Timothy was a big boy now. He could read and write. What a happy day it was when he could unroll the scrolls and read them for himself. He read them many times over, and he loved and believed every word of God. Perhaps he hoped that some day God would let him do some big thing to please Him.

Timothy's Promotion

Then came the most important day in Timothy's life. The great teacher, Paul, had come to town and Timothy went to hear him preach. "Jesus is God's promised Savior," Paul had said. God had kept His promise; Timothy need not wait for Him any longer—only believe! "Oh, I do believe; I do believe in Jesus!" Timothy called out gladly. God promoted Timothy into His own family, and Timothy became a child of God.

He was a grown man now. He must soon leave home. Perhaps his father wondered what work Timothy might choose to do. Timothy wanted to be a great teacher like Paul and teach God's Word all the time, and that was exactly what God wanted Timothy to do, too. One day there was a knock at the door. Who might that be? Why, it was Paul himself! He had come to ask Timothy and his parents whether Timothy might be his helper. "I need a good helper," Paul said, "and I think Timothy would be that. He has learned what God has wanted him to know ever since he was a small boy" (Acts 16:1–5; 2 Tim. 3:15).

Timothy was only too glad to go with Paul to share God's Word with others. And although Timothy's parents and grandmother were sad to see him leave, they were happy to know that Timothy was now ready to serve the Lord God in a big way.

What God Wants Me To Know

God was pleased with Timothy. Therefore, He promoted Timothy, first, to be Paul's helper and then, to be the pastor of the churches in Ephesus. Two books in the Bible are named after him—First and Second Timothy! Last of all, God promoted Timothy to His heavenly home.

What Paul said to young Timothy he could also say to you: "And that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:15). As you learn more about God and His Word, who knows, perhaps when you have grown in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the Lord will have something very special for you to do for Him. Certainly He will promote you to heaven to live with Him and with all the others who have believed in Jesus Christ.

No one can grow and have birthdays unless he is first born. No one can please God unless he is born into God's family. Do you remember how Timothy became a child of God? He heard from God's Word that he must believe in the Savior. Next he found out that Jesus is God's Son and our Savior from sin. Then Timothy believed in the Lord Jesus Christ. You can do what Timothy did, right now. You can come into God's family. Then you can grow up in the Lord Jesus Christ and do what He would have you to do.

Memory Verse

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. 3:18*a*)

Chapter Seventeen

Thanksgiving Holiday Lesson

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: Thanksgiving Holiday Lesson—Luke 17:11–19

B. Lesson Title: One Out of Ten

C. Story Objective:

Thankfulness toward God should be a constant mental attitude in every believer. If this attitude is present, it will express itself in praise and thanksgiving. Unhappily, this is not always the case. We need to be reminded, and we are even commanded by the Word, both to be thankful and to give thanks (Eph. 5:20; 1 Thess. 5:18; Heb. 13:15). Just as from childhood on we must be taught to say thank you to those around us, so we must be taught to thank God for all things He has done and continues to do for us (Ps. 68:19). How necessary such teaching is can be seen from the biblical account of the healing of the ten lepers. God's grace was extended to every one of them, yet only one out of ten remembered to thank and praise God for His mercy.

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:

1. Vocabulary: thankful
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. "Say continually, 'The LORD be magnified'" (Ps. 40:16).
   b. "He who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving honors Me" (Ps. 50:23*a*).
   c. Enter with thanksgiving (Ps. 100:4).
   d. "Forget none of His benefits" (Ps. 103:2).
   e. Praise for His goodness and wonderful works (Ps. 107:8).
   f. Give thanks—"let all the redeemed of the Lord say so" (Ps. 107:2).
   g. "Tell of His works with joyful singing" (Ps. 107:22).
   h. "What shall I render to the LORD For all His benefits?" (Ps. 116:12).
   i. "Always giving thanks for all things" (Eph. 5:20).
   j. "With thanksgiving let your requests be made known" (Phil. 4:6).
   k. "In everything give thanks" (1 Thess. 5:18).
   l. Offer the sacrifice of praise, giving thanks to His name (Heb. 13:15).

E. *Source Book* Keywords: miracles (heals ten lepers), thanksgiving

F. Activities:

1. Suggested Visuals: none
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
3. Memory Verse: "Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting." (Ps. 107:1)
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON
ONE OUT OF TEN

Thanksgiving is a very special day. It is marked on our calendars in red letters so we will be sure to remember it. We need to understand how important it is to give thanks, not just one day in the year, but many times every day, especially to the One who does more for us than anyone else—God.

Did you know that the words we forget to say most often are the words "thank you"? How often does your mother have to remind you, "Did you say thank you?" and most of the time you had forgotten. Is it not sad to think that we must be reminded to be polite and thankful? But you know what? Not only girls and boys, but grown people, too, forget to say thank you, and the One who should hear the most thanks, hears the fewest.

I wonder if any of you remembered to thank God this morning for a good night's sleep, for food and home, for loving parents, and most of all for our loving Lord Jesus? The Bible tells us to come into God's presence with thanksgiving. Did you thank God for letting us have this time to learn from His Word?

God's Word tells us a true story of ten people for whom the Lord Jesus did a very wonderful thing. Do you think they remembered to say thank you to God? If you will just listen closely, you can find out how many of them did, and how many of them did not.

The Plight of the Lepers

It all happened long before we ever had a Thanksgiving holiday, at a time when the Lord Jesus lived on earth as a man. In those days, things were very different from things today. There were no hospitals, very few doctors, and not many medicines to make sick people well. There were many bad sicknesses for which there were no cures.

The worst sickness of all was leprosy, and it was "catching." That means one person might get it from another by touching him or being near him, something like a cold or the mumps or the measles, only far worse.

People were so afraid of catching leprosy that those who were sick with it had to leave their homes. Even small children who had it had to live outside the city wall. No one would go near the lepers. Wherever the lepers walked, they had to hold up their hands and call out, "Unclean, unclean!" to warn others to stay at a safe distance and not come closer.

The Ten Lepers Introduced

One day ten men who were sick with leprosy walked along a country road. Oh, how sad they were! No one wanted anything to do with them. How lonesome they must have been for their loved ones at home whom they had not seen for some time now, and whom they would never see again. If there only were some help; if they only could get well again.

They had heard of the Lord Jesus who had done so many wonderful things. Surely He would help them, but how could they ever hope to see Him?

The Lepers Meet the Lord Jesus

Just then they saw a man coming down the road. Quickly the ten lepers called out their warning, "Unclean, unclean!" Now think how surprised they must have been to see that this man did not turn away. Instead, He came closer and closer to them. Was He not afraid to catch the leprosy? Now He was close enough for them to see His face. They knew Him—yes, they even knew His name. Do you? Of course, it is the Lord Jesus. Who is Jesus? Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus is the God-man. Can Jesus help them? Can He help us? Yes, He can; God can do everything.

All ten men "raised their voices, saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us.'" What do you think they wanted Jesus to do for them? They wanted Him to make them well so they could go home to live again with their families.

The Lepers Healed

The Lord Jesus looked at the lepers and said, "Go and show yourselves to the priest." He did not give them medicine; He did not touch them. He only said those words and the power of His Word made them well.

When the lepers heard what the Lord Jesus said, they knew He had promised to heal them. How did they know? He had not really said, "I will heal you," had He? He had only said they were to go and show themselves to the priest. You see, long before that time, God had made a rule for lepers (Lev. 14). All of God's rules are written down in God's Word and must be obeyed. God's rule said that all lepers must first be clean before they could return to their homes in the city.

The uncleanness of leprosy was not being unclean in the way you might get dirty after playing in the dirt. This uncleanness did not come off by scrubbing hard with water and soap. It was an "unclean" sickness which turned the leper's skin ugly and white all over. As long as they were unclean with the leprosy, they could not come near anyone, but must call out their warning, "Unclean, unclean." But if

their sickness was all gone, and the priest said it was safe for them to go home, then surely they must be well already, otherwise the Lord Jesus would never have sent them into the city temple to the priest!

One Out of Ten

As fast as they could go, the ten men made their way toward the city. As they went, something wonderful happened to them. Their skin was made whole, and pink, and well. I wonder how they first found out. Maybe their skin felt different, or maybe one of them pointed his hand toward the temple and saw that his hand was no longer white. He suddenly stopped walking and he looked at himself. It was really true! He was well, and so were all the others.

Then the man remembered that he had forgotten something. What had he forgotten? Quickly he turned back and ran to where the Lord Jesus was standing. All the time he ran, he kept praising God with a loud voice. He fairly shouted for joy, he was so glad. He threw himself down before the Lord Jesus. He came to do now what he had forgotten to do before—to say "thank you."

I am sure the Lord Jesus was glad to see this thankful man. What a day of thanksgiving he must have had. Now listen, because the Lord Jesus is going to ask this man a question: "Where are the others?" How many lepers did the Lord make well? Yes, ten of them. How many had come back to thank the Lord for what He had done? Only one of them—one out of ten! The other nine had forgotten all about thanking and praising the Lord for His goodness. What do you think the Lord would have us learn from this story in His Word?

What God Wants Me To Know

God wants us to come and ask Him to help us any time we need His help, day or night. He is always ready to hear us and take care of us, but He wants us to be thankful. To be thankful means to think in our minds about how good God is to us. When we think thanks, we will also say "thank you" to God. Our memory verse tells us, "Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good" (Ps. 107:1*a*). What good thing did the Lord do for the ten lepers? Yes, He made them well. How many remembered to come back and say "thank you"? Only one! The other nine were thankLESS, not thankFUL, were they not?

What good things has the Lord done for you today, yesterday, and the day before that? Did you thank Him for all these good things? Did you remember to say, "Thank you, Lord" for that drink of cold water? Oh, how quickly do we run to God when we need something, and how fast we forget to thank Him. We never seem to remember to thank Him for the air we breathe, do we? And yet, where would we be without air? Why, we could not live without air at all.

From now on, we should all try to be like the one thankful man, never like the other nine. Let's be sure to praise God and tell others what wonderful things the Lord has done for us (Joel 2:26). We should also tell others that Jesus has saved us from sin and can save them, too. He has promised to save all who trust in Him (Acts 16:31). Thankful boys and girls are happy children, and God is well-pleased with them (Col. 3:15*b*).

Of all the wonderful things God has ever done for us, the best is that He gave His Son, the Lord Jesus, to die for our sins. Did you know that the punishment for sin, spiritual death, is a sickness far worse than leprosy? Those who have it must surely die. No medicine, no doctor, no hospital can heal spiritual death (Rom. 6:23*a*). It can never be scrubbed away with soap and water (Jer. 2). The terrible thing about this sickness is that every person in the world is born with it (Rom. 3:23; 5:12). Our spiritual death makes us unclean to God so that we cannot come near God or ever hope to go to His spotless, beautiful heaven (Isa. 64:6).

But one day something great happened. The Lord Jesus came to take the punishment for our sins and to make us well by giving us eternal life. He was hurt for our sins. He died for us; He took our place. His hurt made us well and opened up a way for us to come to God (Isa. 53:6). But before we can come to God, we must first be made clean. Only Jesus can help us. We must tell God that we need Him to make us well. That was what the ten lepers did, and you can do it, too.

Do you remember what these men did? They came and called to the Lord and believed His words. That is all you need to do. The Lord is right here with us, even though you and I cannot see Him. We know He is here because He tells us so in His Word (Matt. 18:20). You do not need say it out loud. Just say it silently if you have never done so before and wish to do it now: "Dear Father, I believe in Jesus as my Savior. I believe that He took the punishment for all my sins and that by believing in Him, He makes me clean and well inside. I thank you for all this, in Jesus' name." How can you be sure that God really did all these things for you? You can be sure because God always keeps His Word. Now, every day is Thanksgiving Day for you when you belong to the Lord Jesus Christ. Will you remember that?

Memory Verse

"Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting." (Ps. 107:1)

Chapter Eighteen

Christmas Holiday Lesson

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: Christmas Holiday Lesson—Luke 1:26–38; 2:1–20

B. Lesson Title: God Visits Man

C. Story Objective:

That God would condescend to visit man (Heb. 2:6) in the face of man's sin and enmity, is the greatest manifestation of His grace and love to the human race. The "visitation" of God in relation to the Incarnation places the emphasis upon His humanity. Many times in Scripture, the visitation of God is in judgment, but when God the Son came to earth "revealed in the flesh" (1 Tim. 3:16), it was to take the judgment of man's sin upon Himself. Many of the exact details of His promised visit in the flesh were revealed in the Old Testament. Among these, the Holy Spirit is careful to make it clear that the One visiting the earth would be both God and man in one Person. He was to be called "Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14), meaning "God with us," and He would be true humanity, "a child will be born to us" (Isa. 9:6).

The purpose of His coming is revealed throughout the Old Testament beginning with Genesis 3:15, where the Savior is first promised, and continuing with the animal sacrifices which portrayed the death of the innocent, sinless Substitute for the guilty sinner. Although the visit of the God-man was prophesied down to the minutest detail, and even though the purpose of His coming was pictured daily in the sacrifice, feasts, and worship in the Tabernacle and Temple, "His own did not receive Him." They neither recognized Him as the Son of God nor received Him as their Redeemer. But for those who would receive Him, "to them He gave the right to become children of God, *even* to those who believe in His name" (John 1:11–12).

The cradle must always be linked with the cross, for the purpose of Jesus Christ's visit into the world was His death, not His life (1 Tim. 1:15*a*). It is never too soon to teach children that there can only be true appreciation and enjoyment in Christmas when the main issue is clearly understood.

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:

1. Vocabulary: chosen, manger, messenger, promise, stable, swaddling clothes, visit
2. Doctrinal Concepts:
   a. The visit promised:
      1) "Shall bruise him on the heel" (Gen. 3:15).
      2) "A star shall come forth from Jacob" (Num. 24:17).
      3) "What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him?" (Ps. 8:4).
      4) "A child will be born, a son will be given [God-man]" (Isa. 9:6).
      5) "A virgin will be with child and bear a son" (Isa. 7:14).
      6) Out of Bethlehem shall come forth "one from the days of eternity" (Micah 5:2).
   b. The promise fulfilled (narrative in order of events):
      1) The annunciation to Mary (Luke 1:26–38).
      2) Instructions to Joseph (Matt. 1:19–25).
      3) The birth of Jesus (Luke 2:1–7).
      4) The announcement to the shepherds (Luke 2:8–20).
      5) Wise men seek Jesus (Matt. 2:1–12).
      6) "Became flesh, and dwelt among us" (John 1:14).

7) "For a little while longer the light is among you" (John 12:35).
8) "The Sunrise from on high shall visit us" (Luke 1:78).

c. The purpose of His visit:
1) "For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people" (Luke 1:68).
2) Made lower than angels for the suffering of death (Heb. 2:6–9).
3) To save from sin (Matt. 1:21; 1 Tim. 1:15*a*).

E. *Source Book* Keywords: Christ (birth), Christ (promise of the Messiah), First Advent of Christ, the Incarnation

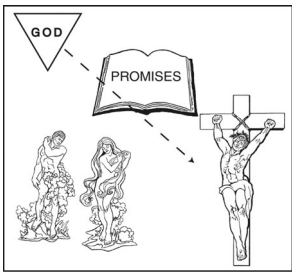
F. Activities:
1. Suggested Visuals: Adam, angel Gabriel, Bible, Christ on cross, Christ in manger, Eve, Mary, Trinity
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
3. Memory Verse: "God has visited His people!" (Luke 7:16*b*)
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON
GOD VISITS MAN

Do you like to go visiting? Will you visit your grandmother and grandfather this Christmas? Where does your grandmother live? Do you visit her often? How long do you stay? What do you do to get ready for your visit? Oh my, yes! You must get your clothes all washed and put neatly in a suitcase, if you are going very far. You must have something nice and clean to wear when you go visiting. Then, you get in the car or maybe in an airplane and away you go! And when you get there, everyone is so happy to see you.

Did you know that many, many years ago, God promised to visit us (2 Sam. 7:12*b*, 13*b*; Acts 2:29–32)? Why did God promise to visit down here on earth?

God wanted to visit us because we could not go to heaven and visit Him. Why not? We are sinners. God cannot let sin in His heaven-home. There is no sin up in heaven. God loved us so much that He wanted us—not only to visit Him—but to live with Him forever. So He found a way for us to go to heaven. God the Father would send His Son, the Lord Jesus, to take the punishment for our sins.



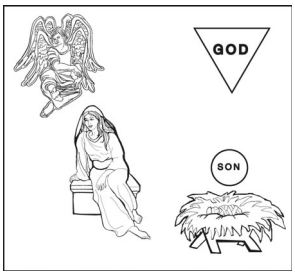
God first promised to send His Son into the world hundreds and hundreds of years ago. Do you remember to whom He first made that promise? Yes, to Adam and Eve, because they were the first people who had sinned. They waited and waited, and many other people waited and looked for His coming, but oh, so many years passed, and still He had not come! Could it be that God had forgotten His promise? Of course not! We sometimes forget what we promise, but God never forgets. No, God was waiting for the right time to send His Son, the Lord Jesus. At last, the right time had indeed come (Gal. 4:4).

But how could He visit on this earth? God is a spirit, and we cannot see Him. How would we know He was here? Nothing is too hard for God, and He knew what He would do. God the Father began to make very special preparations for His Son to come to earth to visit. He made ready, not clean clothes, or even new clothes—but something much more wonderful. He prepared a human body for His Son (Heb. 10:5). God the Son would be loved and cared for while He visited here on earth. When all was ready, God called a mighty angel, the angel Gabriel, to be His messenger to tell someone that He was coming. Who would be the first one to know?

Luke 1:26–38

God told the angel to go quickly to Mary in the town of Nazareth and tell her that she will be the mother of Jesus. Quick as lightning, the angel traveled all the way from God's heaven-home to the little house where Mary lived. Suddenly, Gabriel was standing in Mary's room. I wonder what Mary was doing on the day God sent the angel to tell her the good news about Jesus? Maybe she was just thinking about how God had promised a Savior and wondering how He would come and how they would know Him. Whatever she may have been doing, think how surprised she was to see this great and shining angel standing before her! She was even a little afraid, for she had never seen an angel. Then Gabriel spoke: "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God" (Luke 1:30). What did the angel mean by these words, Mary wondered? Gabriel went on,

"And behold, you will conceive in your womb, and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus" (Luke 1:31).



Mary knew that every baby born into the world must have a father as well as a mother. She knew that she was not yet married to Joseph and that he could not be the father of this wonderful child. "How can this be?" Mary asked the angel, "for I am not married yet." "For nothing will be impossible with God," Gabriel promised her. Then Mary was glad, for she wanted to obey God and do as He wished. After the angel left, she thanked God that He was going to let her be the mother of this special Baby who would be the Savior promised to the world so many years ago.

Matthew 1:19–25

Then, Mary thought about Joseph, the kind man who was soon to be her husband. What would he say when he heard about the special Baby? Joseph loved Mary and was thinking about her one night when God sent an angel to him after he had gone to bed. He, too, must know that God was going to visit this earth as a little Baby. "But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, 'Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for it is He who will save His people from their sins.'" Joseph knew now that he must take very good care of Mary. When Jesus was born, He grew up in Joseph's home. Many people thought He was Joseph's son, but the Bible is careful to tell us that Jesus' real Father is God.

Luke 2:1–7

Just before the Baby was to be born, Mary and Joseph had to make a long trip to the little town of Bethlehem. Do you know how Mary rode—on the back of a little donkey! Up and down she rocked on its back. Joseph helped her as he walked by the donkey's side. How tired Mary was when they finally arrived in Bethlehem! "Hurry and find a place to rest," she must have said to Joseph, but the town was filled with people and the streets were crowded. Everywhere they went, it was always the same—no room here. Sorry, all filled up! At last a kind man told Joseph they could spend the night in his stable where the cows and sheep stayed. They would only have soft hay for a bed, but Mary did not care. She was glad for even that.

Did God forget to find a place for His Son to be born? Oh, no. God wanted Baby Jesus to be born right in the stable in the very town of Bethlehem (Micah 5:2), for His Son was to be the Lamb of God who would die for the sins of all the world (John 1:29). That same night, when all was quiet and still, God's own Son was born in the little stable with only the cows and lambs to welcome Him. God's promise to visit the earth had come true! The little human body God had prepared for His Son was now ready, and God, the Lord Jesus, came to visit His people. Because He was also God, this little Baby knew that He had come to die for all of our sins (Heb. 10:5–7).

Mary held the precious Baby close, wrapping Him carefully in soft strips of white linen cloth, called "swaddling clothes." These were the same linen cloths or bandages that were used to prepare dead bodies for burial. Then, she laid Him in a manger to sleep. Do you know what a manger is? It is a feeding box filled with hay for the animals to eat. Mary and Joseph must have said "thank you" to God for sending His Son. They knew they must take good care of Him, for He would save His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21).

Luke 2:8–20

All around the town of Bethlehem were rolling hills. Shepherds kept their sheep out in these hills for there was good, green grass for them to eat. Even at night, the shepherds kept watch over their sheep to keep them from being harmed by wild animals. This night was beautiful and clear. Perhaps the shepherds were sitting by a fire. I am sure they loved to talk about the Savior whom God had promised. They loved God and looked for the Savior to come and take away their sins. They did not know yet that God had already kept His promise that very night.

Suddenly, the dark sky was all alight! An angel of God stood in the light. The shepherds were very afraid. Was the angel going to hurt them? No! The angel spoke to them. "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy which shall be for all the people." You already know the good news, don't you? But the shepherds wondered what could have happened that was so wonderful God would send an angel all the way down from heaven to tell them about it. They didn't have to wait long, for the angel said, "For today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." The Savior? Yes, the One that God had promised would take away their sins. But where in Bethlehem?

Could you tell the shepherds where to find Jesus? Yes, in the stable with the animals and lying in a manger. This is just what the angel told the shepherds: "And this *will be* a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths, and lying in a manger." Then, while the shepherds listened to the angel's good news, God sent many bright angels to welcome the new Baby. They filled the heavens and they sang a beautiful song of thanks to God for sending His Son to visit man.

Then just as quickly as the angels had come, they went away. The night sky was dark again and the shepherds were all alone. Could it really be true? "Let us go straight to Bethlehem," they said to each other. Was there only one stable in all of Bethlehem? No, there must have been many of them. The shepherds ran quickly to Bethlehem. They looked in this stable and that one. At last they found the one in which the tiny, newborn Son of God lay wrapped in swaddling clothes in the little manger. Mary and Joseph were there, too. They must have been surprised to see the shepherds, but they told Mary and Joseph about the angel's words and their song of thanks. Mary remembered all the things the shepherds said, and thought about them over and over again.

But it wasn't Mary and Joseph whom the shepherds had come to see. They looked down at the little Lord Jesus who had come to visit them. The shepherds must have thought as they knelt down by the rough wooden cradle, filled with hay, "God sent His Son—for *me;* a Savior is born—for *me!*" The angel had said that the Savior was not only for the shepherds, but He is for you and for me, and for all people in the world, too.

The shepherds did not forget that. They wanted to tell everyone they met what they had seen that happy night. Can you not see them stopping to talk to everyone? "We saw and heard the angels. The angel said the Savior was born! We have seen Him. It is true! He was born for you and for us. Oh, won't you go and see for yourselves?" The Bible does not say that anyone else went to see; they only wondered if it was true. Today, God is saying to you, "The Savior is born for you. I gave Him a body so that He could grow up and go to the cross to die for all your sins." Have you hurried up, like the shepherds, to believe Him to be your own Savior?

Matthew 2:1–12

There were some wise men in a faraway land who were looking for God's promised visit, too. God wanted them to know He had come. One night they were out watching the stars when they saw the biggest, brightest star they had ever seen! "Never has there been a star like this one," they said to each other. "This must be the star to welcome God's Savior" (Num. 24:17). And indeed, it just seemed to say, "Follow me, follow me. I will show you God's promised Son."

"Let us go and find the Savior," they said to each other. The wise men made ready their camels and took with them presents to give the Baby Jesus. As the camels started off, what do you think happened? Why, the star began to move in front of them, showing them the way to go. Surely this was God leading the way to His Son! They could hardly wait to find Him. And find Him they did. They had traveled over mountains and fields, night after night when one night the shining star stopped right over the house where Mary and Joseph and little Jesus lived. Was Jesus still in the manger? Oh no, for Jesus was almost two years old by now. It had taken the wisemen a long time to make the trip. One by one, they knelt down by Jesus and gave Him the gifts they had brought. Jesus knew that they loved Him and were glad that He had come down from heaven to visit so He could take away their sins.

What God Wants Me To Know

How long did God, the Lord Jesus, visit down here? About thirty-three years. He grew up, just as you are growing up. However, there was one way He was different from you. You have a sin nature in you that tempts you to sin and do wrong. Jesus had no sin nature in Him. All the time He stayed down here with us, He never did one thing that displeased God His Father. Jesus always obeyed. When you go visiting, you try to behave as nicely as possible, don't you? But no matter how hard you try, sometimes you do something wrong and you have to say "excuse me," or "I'm sorry." Jesus *never* did anything sinful or wrong. He was qualified to take our place and receive the punishment for our sins. A sinful person could never take our place, for he would need someone to take away his own sin.

At last, when Jesus was thirty-three years old, He went to the cross to die as our substitute. As He hung upon the cross, God the Father put all of our sins on Him and judged them. Jesus Christ took the punishment for our sins on the cross. This was the reason He had come down here to visit, so that we might believe and live forever with Him. Are you glad that Jesus came to visit? Have you, like the shepherds, told God the Father, "I believe that Jesus came to earth for *me,* to die for my sins? Thank you for letting Him come to be my Savior."

Memory Verse

"God has visited His people!" (Luke 7:16*b*)

Chapter Nineteen

Easter Holiday Lesson

OVERVIEW

A. Subject: Easter Holiday Lesson—Matthew 28:1–10

B. Lesson Title: The Forgotten Words

C. Story Objective:

The emphasis of the familiar resurrection story in this lesson is the importance of knowing and applying the Word of God. Many times Jesus had told His disciples that He must be crucified, and that He would rise again. Had they remembered and believed His words, they would have been saved from the grief and hopeless despair which gripped them during this eventful time.

The remembrance and application of God's Word sustains the believer in times of distress and removes all fear, even in the face of death. No truth is more precious than the assurance of life after death, that we will forever be face-to-face with the Lord Jesus Christ.

D. Vocabulary and Doctrinal Concepts:

1. Vocabulary: forgotten, remember, risen from the dead, tomb
2. Doctrinal Concepts: The resurrection and appearances of Jesus (Matt. 28:1–10; Mark 16:1–11; Luke 24:1–12; John 20:1–18)

E. *Source Book* Keywords: Christ (appearances, garden and trials), cross (burial, resurrection, ascension, and session), resurrection

F. Activities:

1. Suggested Visuals: angel Gabriel, tomb
2. Games, Songs, Worksheets
3. Memory Verse: "He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said." (Matt. 28:6*a*)
4. Opening and Closing Prayer

LESSON
THE FORGOTTEN WORDS

Now I am going to tell you about some friends of Jesus who were so unhappy that they cried and cried, all because they forgot what He had told them. Many times we are unhappy because we forget something important, but to forget what Jesus tells us can make us more unhappy than anything else. Let's listen carefully and find out what His friends forgot.

It was a very special Sunday. It was early—very early in the morning. The sun hardly had time to peek over the mountain and paint the sky the least bit pink when three ladies, Mary Magdalene, Salome, and Mary, the mother of James, were up early to look for something. Do you know on what Sunday it was that these ladies got up so early? It was the first Easter Sunday morning.

I wonder what the three ladies wanted to find. They were carrying something in their hands, too. Perhaps they were Easter baskets. Do you suppose they were out to look for Easter eggs? Not these ladies! No, they were sad. Their dearest Friend had died three days ago, and now they were going to the place where He was buried to prepare His body with perfume and spices. Do you know who their Friend was? Yes, it was the Lord Jesus.

As the ladies walked along the road, they talked about the Lord Jesus. They were so sure He had come to be their Savior and King. But now He was dead. How could anyone help them if He was dead? They shuddered as they remembered the events of the past few days: how Jesus was arrested and falsely tried; how the cruel men laughed and made fun of Jesus and spit on Him. Tears came to their eyes as they remembered how the Roman soldiers pushed a terrible crown made of thorns upon His head until the blood ran down and blinded His eyes. Others still had slapped Him with their fists and scourged Him with a whip. Finally, the cruel, wicked men took Him up the hill called Golgotha and nailed Him to a wooden cross and left Him to die. They had tried to make everyone believe that Jesus was bad and sinful like the two thieves who hung on crosses beside Him.

As they came closer to the tomb where Jesus had been buried, perhaps it was Mary Magdalene who asked, "Who will roll away the stone for us from the entrance of the tomb?" (Mark 16:3*b*). It was too heavy for them to move. The two Marys and Salome had stood by as Joseph and Nicodemus took Jesus' body off the cross, wrapped it in linen, and carefully placed it into the tomb. The women could look right inside the tomb, for it was a little room cut out of the side of a mountain. Then they watched as the Roman soldiers found a great, huge rock and rolled it in front of the door of the tomb so that no one would bother His body. The three ladies planned to go back to the tomb later and take spices and perfumes for Jesus' body. They would have to wait three days, as it was during the time of the holy days and they could not go to the tomb on those days. In the meantime, Roman soldiers stood guard in front of the tomb to prevent anyone from taking Jesus' body.

The Women at the Tomb

As the ladies were walking to the tomb that Easter morning, they did not know that earlier that morning, God had caused an earthquake to shake the ground by the tomb where Jesus had been buried. Nor did they know that a great and shining angel had come down from heaven, swift as lightning, and rolled away the stone from the door of the tomb. How frightened the soldiers had been when they saw these great and terrible happenings! Why, they were so afraid, they fainted! They had been put there to guard the tomb, but they could do nothing against God's great power (Matt. 28:1–4).

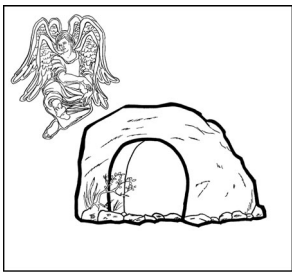
Now the three ladies were almost to the tomb when, what was this? "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb," cried Mary Magdalene, "and we do not know where they have laid Him." She quickly ran ahead of her friends to be sure. Yes, the stone was rolled back. "I must go and tell Peter and John that someone has taken away His body," Mary thought. "Where, oh where could they have taken Him?" And without even looking inside or waiting for her two friends, she ran to find Peter and John (John 20:1–2).

The other Mary and Salome came closer to the tomb. They, too, saw that the stone was rolled away (Matt. 28:5–10; Mark 16:4–8). Do you remember that they had come to the tomb to put perfume on the body of Jesus? Would you be afraid to walk into the tomb? It wasn't even fully light yet. Perhaps Mary and Salome were afraid, but they went in anyway to take care of Jesus' body. What do you think they saw? Why, there was no body there; Jesus was gone! Mary and Salome didn't know what to do. Suddenly, all around them it was as bright as the sunshine. Mary and Salome hid their faces, for an angel with a face bright as lightning stood before them. It was very frightening, for they had never before seen a dazzling angel from heaven (Luke 24:1–5).

The Reminder of Jesus' Words

Then, the angel spoke. "Do not be afraid; for I know that you are looking for Jesus who has been crucified. He

is not here, for He has risen, just as He said. Come, see the place where He was lying" (Matt. 28:5–6). Do you know why He was no longer in the tomb? Do you think the ladies knew? They should have known. Many times, Jesus had told them and His other disciples that He was going to have to die, but that *he would rise again* (Matt. 28:6). And now the angel was telling them that Jesus had done just this. Listen to what the angel said; "He is risen, *as He said."*



I don't think Jesus' friends had their ear-gates open very wide when He told them what was going to happen to Him, do you? Are you ever afraid? Do you ever cry? Of course you do. Like Mary and Salome, you have forgotten what Jesus told you in His Word; or maybe you had your ear-gates shut and didn't hear. Jesus has said you must never be afraid because He will never leave you (Heb. 13:5). He will always take care of you. When you are afraid, you have forgotten His words, and you are not trusting Him.

Jesus' friends had not remembered or believed what He said, either. The angel had to remind them again of Jesus' words (Luke 24:6–8). Every word that Jesus says to us through the Bible is important. We must listen and remember. "Go and remind Jesus' other friends," the angel continued, "that He is risen, as He said. You will all see Him again." How happy the ladies were when they heard these wonderful words (Matt. 28:5–8)!

Mary Magdalene, Peter, and John at the Tomb

Now I wonder what happened to Mary Magdalene? Mary had not waited to see the angel and hear him speak. Instead, she ran and found Peter and John. "They have taken away the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid Him," she cried (John 20:2). Oh, weren't Peter and John surprised. They had not remembered what Jesus had told them about rising from the dead either. They ran as fast as they could go to find out what had happened. John was younger than Peter and ran faster. He came to the tomb and stooped down to look through the door. Then came Peter, huffing and puffing up to the door of the tomb. But Peter didn't stop there—he went right on inside. At last John followed him. There were the linen cloths in which Jesus had been wrapped.

Now John understood. Jesus' body had not been stolen as Mary thought; the Lord Jesus had risen from the dead. (John 20:3–10). He was alive and His body of flesh and blood was changed into a new body that would live forever in heaven-home.

Finally, Mary Magdalene came back to the tomb. She stood outside with tears running down her face. What could have happened to the body of her Lord? She decided to look inside the tomb. Two shining angels were sitting in the tomb where Jesus had lain. "Why are you weeping?" they asked her. "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him," she answered. Just then a man appeared by the tomb. Through her tears, Mary did not see Him very clearly and thought He was the man who took care of the garden. Can you guess who He was? Oh, yes, it was Jesus! He is always there when we need Him. When you are sad and afraid, He is there. When you are alone, He is there. No one can take Him away from you.

Jesus said to Mary, "Why are you crying? Whom are you seeking?" "Sir," cried Mary, "if you have carried Him away, tell me where you have laid Him." Now Jesus spoke her name, "Mary!" Oh, it was the voice she knew and loved! It was the Lord Jesus in His new body! "Master!" she cried, and knelt down before Him. This was the happiest day of her life—Jesus had risen from the dead (John 20:11–18)! But if Jesus' friends had remembered His words that He would rise again, they would not have been so sad and cried (Luke 24:7). They would have been happily waiting for that great day.

What God Wants Me To Know

Jesus wants us to remember that He rose from the dead. He has told us to remember it in a special way every Sunday, for that is the day on which He arose. Jesus wants you to remember that Easter Sunday is not really a day for hunting Easter eggs and eating chocolate bunnies, but a day to think about Him coming out of the tomb alive and what it means to you.

Jesus is unique; He is the God-man. No grave can hold Him inside. Before Jesus ever came down to earth to live in a human body, He had always lived in heaven. He is eternal life. He came down to earth and lived in a human body so that He could die for our sins. God the Father put all of our sins on Him while He was hanging on the cross. When Jesus finished taking the punishment for our sins on the cross, He gave up His life and died. God the Father was well-pleased with His Son. Do you know how we know God was pleased? He raised Jesus back to life. He would not let Jesus stay dead.

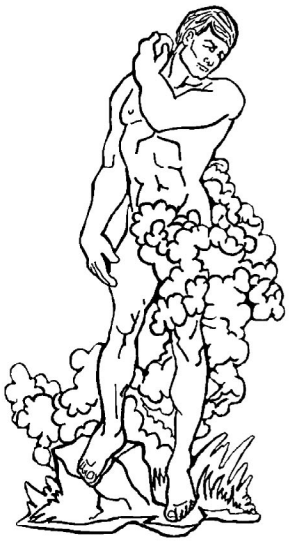
The Lord Jesus died to take away our sins; but unless you believe that He died for *you,* you do not have His eternal life. He wants you to have His eternal life so that you can live with Him in His beautiful heaven-home forever. He will give you eternal life when you believe in Him. He will never leave you; He will be with you always. Will you say to the Father right now, "I believe that Jesus died in my place; I am taking Him as my Savior"?

Now when you believe in Jesus as your Savior, the Bible says you are going to see Him in His wonderful, new body, just as His friends saw Him. Even if your body dies and is put into a grave, you will see Him. Jesus told His friends that He would rise again after He died. They didn't remember or believe His words, did they? Now Jesus tells us in the Bible that our bodies, too, will rise again after we die, and so we never need be afraid to die. We have eternal life, and no grave can keep us there. One day, we will come right out of the grave with a beautiful new body just like Jesus did. Will you always remember and believe Jesus' words, and never be afraid?

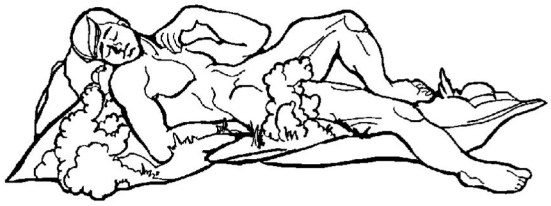
Memory Verse

"He is not here, for He has risen, just as He said." (Matt. 28:6*a*)

VISUAL AIDS



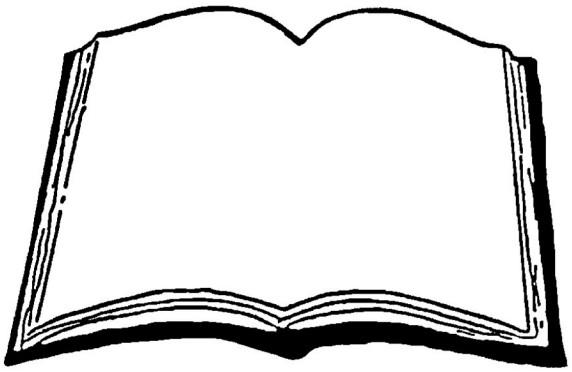
ADAM



ADAM ASLEEP

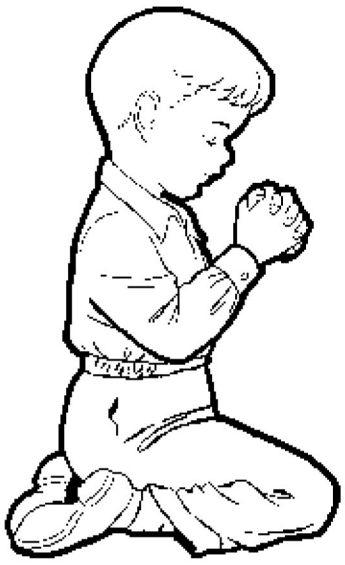
ANGELS, FALLEN

ANGELS, ELECT

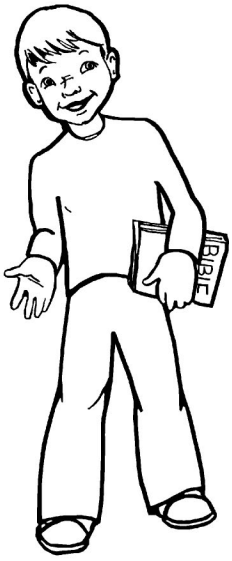


BIBLE

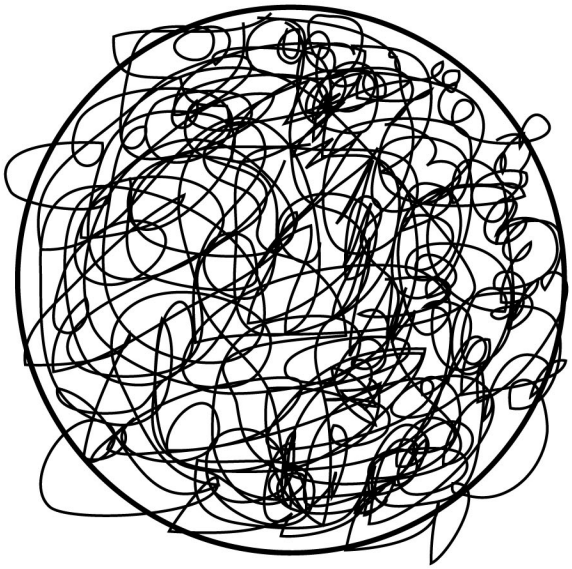
ANGEL GABRIEL



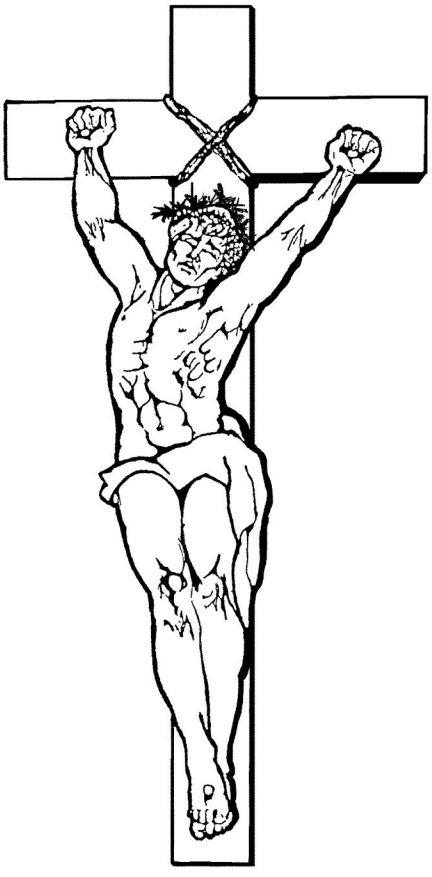
BOY PRAYING



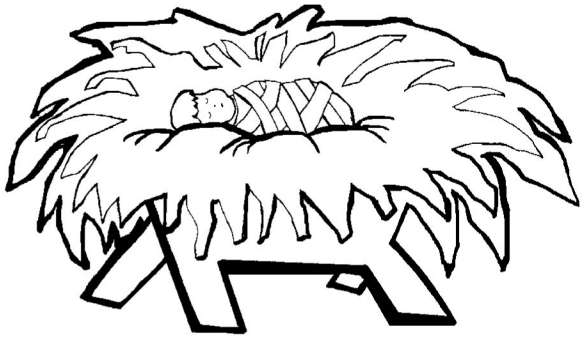
BROTHER



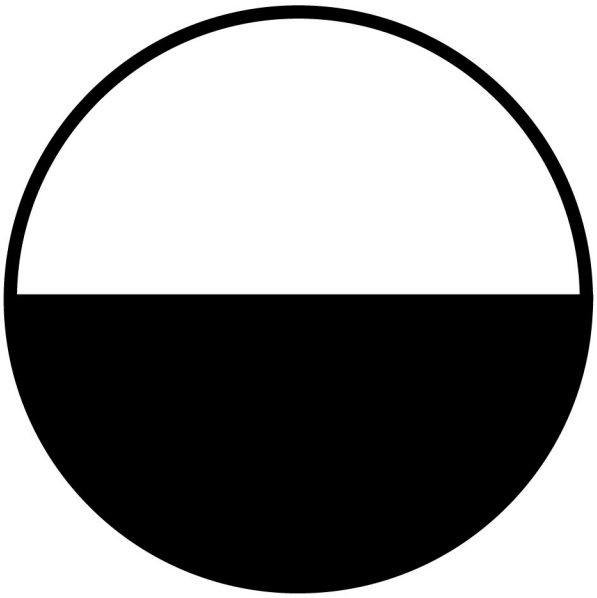
CHAOTIC EARTH



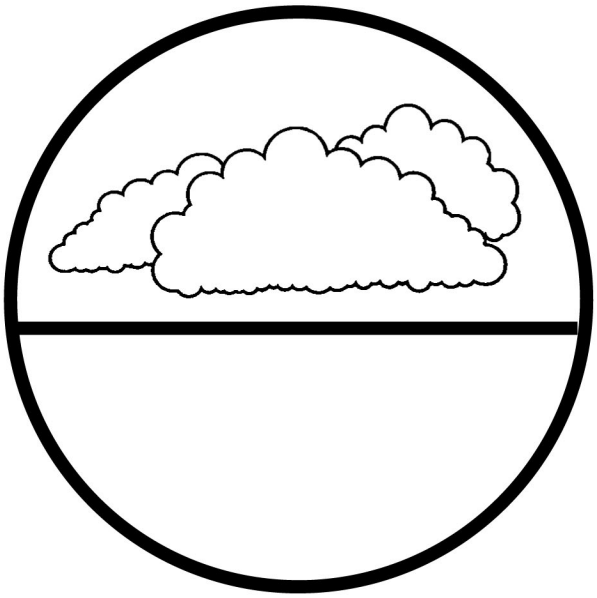
CHRIST ON THE CROSS



CHRIST IN THE MANGER

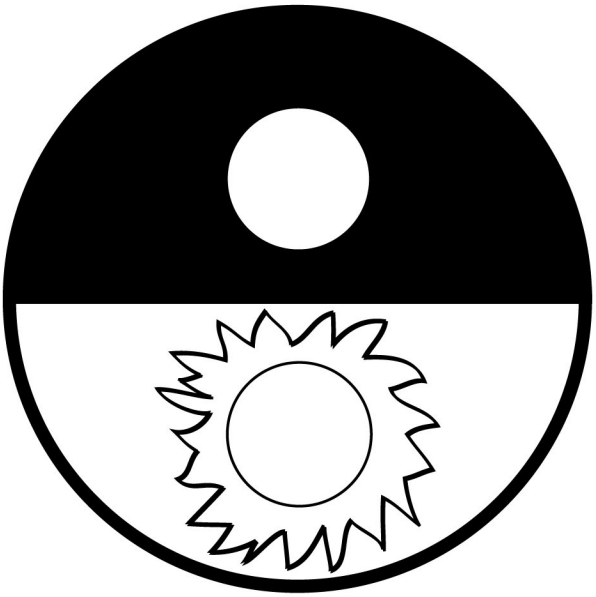


CREATION/RESTORATION CIRCLE
DAY ONE



CREATION/RESTORATION CIRCLE
DAY TWO

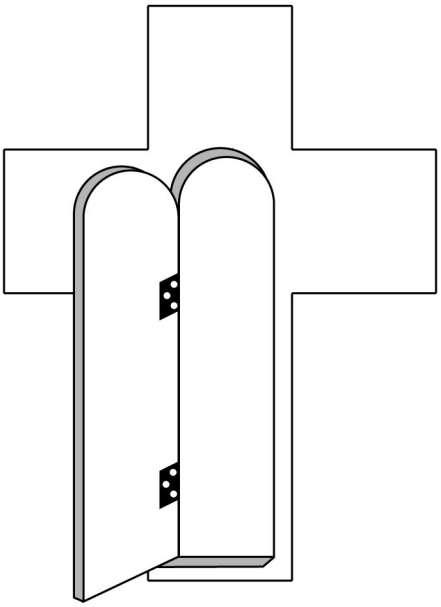
CREATION/RESTORATION CIRCLE
DAY THREE



CREATION/RESTORATION CIRCLE
DAY FOUR

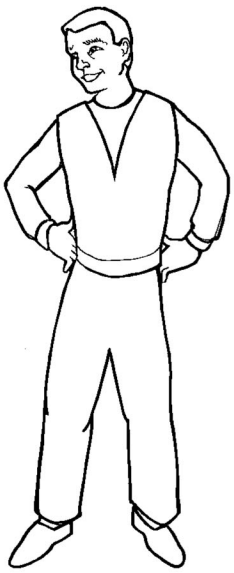
CREATION/RESTORATION CIRCLE
DAY FIVE

CREATION/RESTORATION CIRCLE
DAY SIX



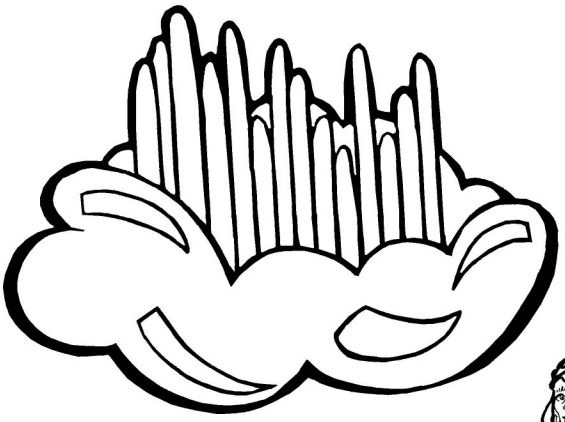
CROSS WITH OPEN DOOR

EVE



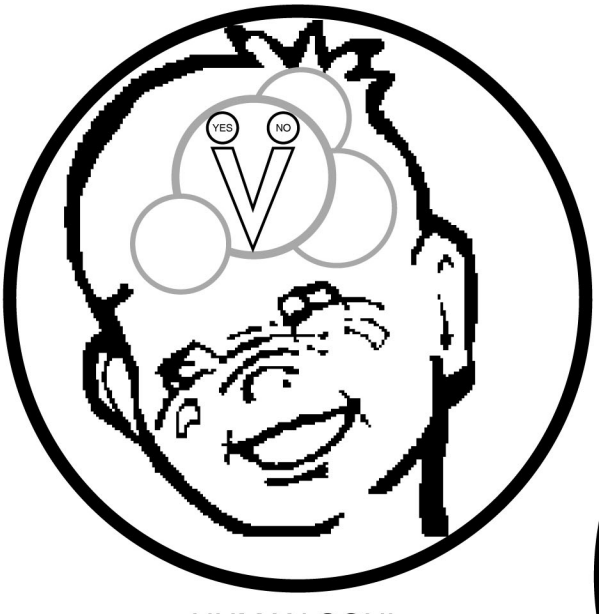
FATHER

GIRL PRAYING

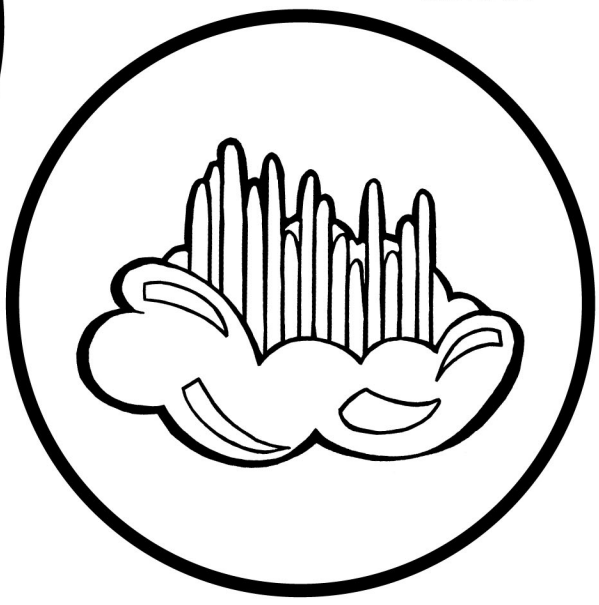


HEAVEN

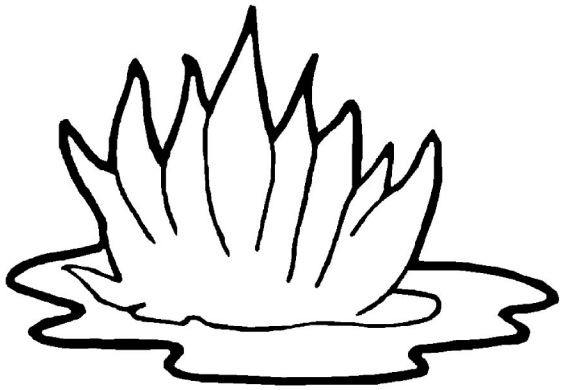
JONAH



HUMAN SOUL



HUMAN SPIRIT

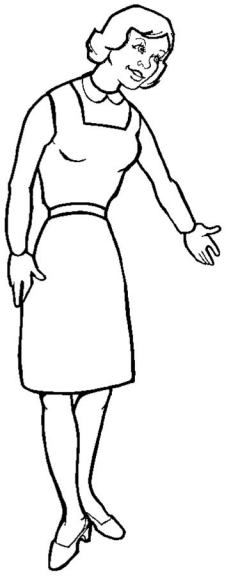


LAKE OF FIRE

LITTLE BOY

LUCIFER

MARY



MOTHER

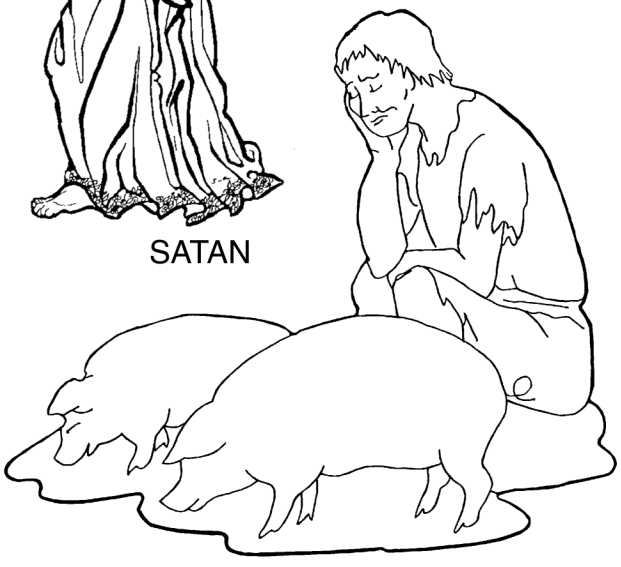
MOSES

MOTHER WITH CHILDREN

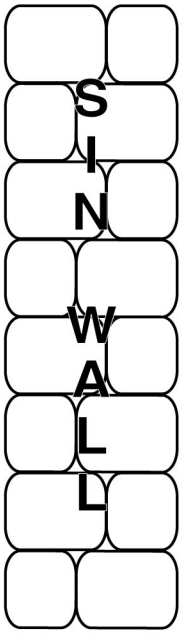
PRODIGAL SON

SIN CIRCLE

SATAN

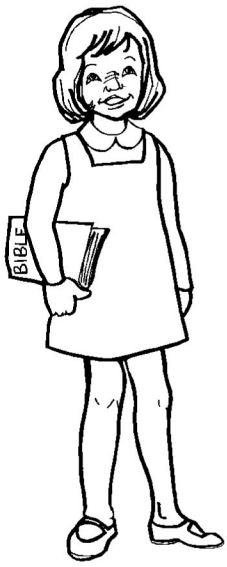


PRODIGAL SON WITH PIGS

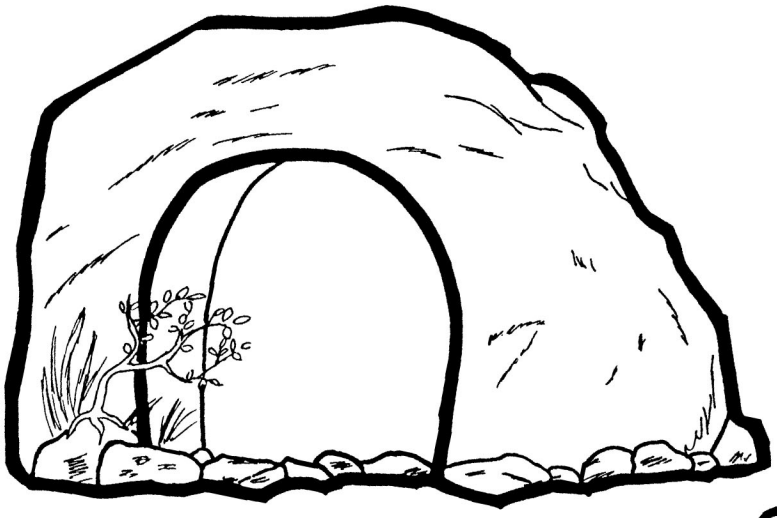


SIN WALL

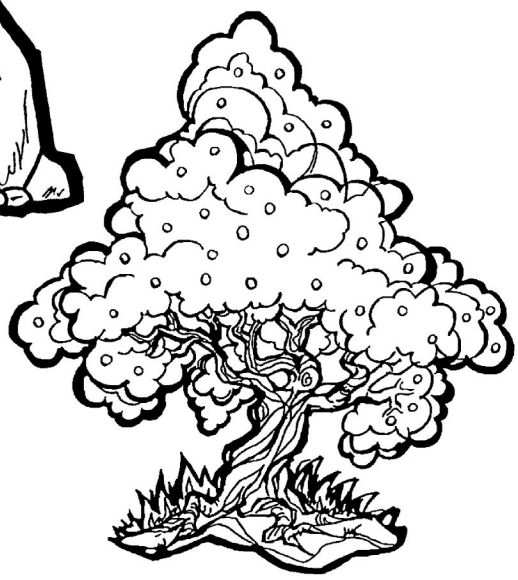
SIN NATURE



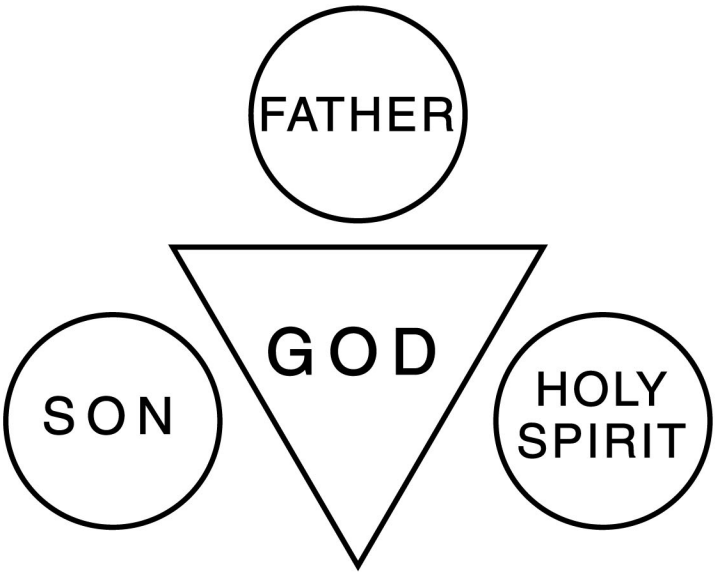
SISTER



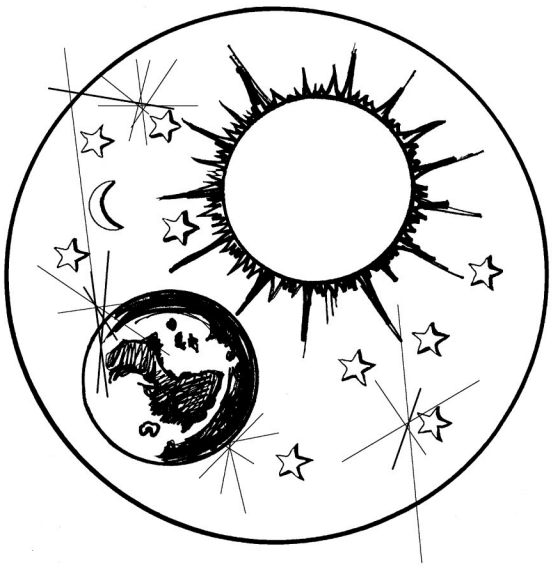
TOMB



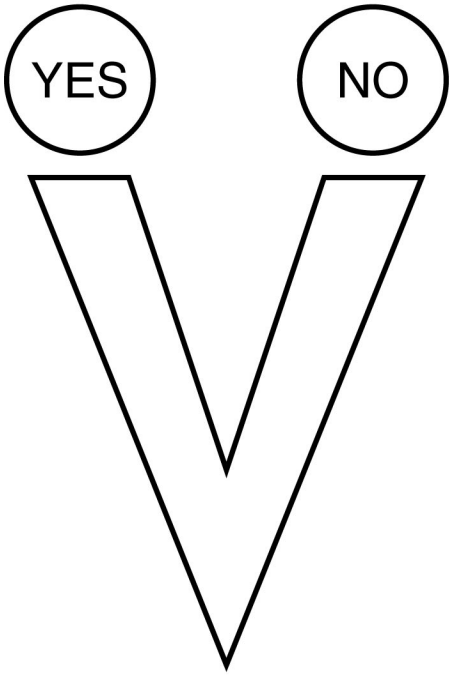
TREE OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL



TRINITY



UNIVERSE



VOLITION