



First Steps ก้าวแรก

A Discipleship Manual

คู่มือการเป็นสาวก

First Steps: A Discipleship Manual

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Table of Contents

Lesson	Page
Lesson 1: The Biblical View of God.....	2
A. God, Not A Man.....	2
B. Sovereign.....	6
C. Holy.....	10
Lesson 1 Questions.....	12
Lesson 2: The Biblical View of Man.....	20
A. God's Creation.....	20
B. The Fall.....	24
C. Dependent on God.....	29
Lesson 2 Questions.....	31
Lesson 3: The Bible.....	38
A. God-breathed.....	38
B. Infallible.....	39
C. Relevant.....	40
D. Revealed by the Holy Spirit.....	43
Lesson 3 Questions.....	45
Lesson 4: Jesus Christ.....	52
A. Jesus is God in the Flesh.....	55
B. Jesus is Without Sin.....	56

C. Jesus is the Perfect Sacrifice.....	57
Lesson 4 Questions.....	58

Lesson 1

The Biblical View of God

Lesson 1

The Biblical View of God

In order to properly approach anything else in scripture, one must first gain a general understanding of who God is according to what the Bible reveals.

A. God, Not a Man

Arguably the first and most important thing to understand about God is that He is NOT human. He is not limited as human beings are, whether it be physically, mentally, emotionally, or otherwise. Human beings *are* limited, and being such, we can be tempted to think of God in merely human terms, attributing human qualities, behaviors, and cultural values to an infinite, omnipotent and omnipresent Creator.

For example, Psalms 50 says this (key verses in bold):

¹ *A Psalm of Asaph.*

The Mighty One, God the LORD, speaks and summons the earth from the rising of the sun to its setting.

² *Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, God shines forth.*

³ *Our God comes; he does not keep silence; before him is a devouring fire, around him a mighty tempest.*

⁴ *He calls to the heavens above and to the earth, that he may judge his people:*

⁵ *"Gather to me my faithful ones, who made a covenant with me by sacrifice!"*

⁶ *The heavens declare his righteousness, for God himself is judge! Selah*

⁷ *"Hear, O my people, and I will speak; O Israel, I will testify against you. I am God, your God.*

⁸ *Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you; your burnt offerings are continually before me.*

⁹ *I will not accept a bull from your house or goats from your folds.*

¹⁰ ***For every beast of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills.***

¹¹ ***I know all the birds of the hills, and all that moves in the field is mine.***

¹² ***"If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and its fullness are mine.***

¹³ ***Do I eat the flesh of bulls or drink the blood of goats?***

¹⁴ *Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and perform your vows to the Most High,*

¹⁵ *and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me."*

¹⁶ *But to the wicked God says: "What right have you to recite my statutes or take my covenant on your lips?*

¹⁷ *For you hate discipline, and you cast my words behind you.*

¹⁸ *If you see a thief, you are pleased with him, and you keep company with adulterers.*

¹⁹ *"You give your mouth free rein for evil, and your tongue frames deceit.*

²⁰ *You sit and speak against your brother; you slander your own mother's son.*

²¹ **These things you have done, and I have been silent; you thought that I was one like yourself. But now I rebuke you and lay the charge before you.**

²² *"Mark this, then, you who forget God, lest I tear you apart, and there be none to deliver*

²³ *The one who offers thanksgiving as his sacrifice glorifies me; to one who orders his way rightly I will show the salvation of God!"*

In the book of Numbers, Balaam, when he was prophesying regarding Israel said this:

*God is not man, that he should lie,
or a son of man, that he should change his
mind.*

*Has he said, and will he not do it?
Or has he spoken, and will he not fulfill it?
(Numbers 23:1 ESV)*

And in 1 Samuel, the prophet Samuel said to King Saul:

*And also the Glory of Israel will not lie or
have regret, for he is not a man, that he should
have regret. (1 Samuel 15:29 ESV)*

Thus, while we may use certain human examples (eg. human relationships, as seen in the Bible: Father/children, husband/wife, slave/master, friend/friend, etc.) to help ourselves and others better understand God and His working in the world, we should be careful not to forget that He is God, and not a human with natural (worldly/ fleshly) desires or inclinations.

B. Sovereign

Another essential thing in understanding God and the scriptures is to understand that God is sovereign, meaning that He is completely in control of everything. This includes world events (both “good” and “bad”) and the lives of human beings (both Christians and unbelievers). He created it and He can control it according to His will.

In the day of prosperity be joyful, and in the day of adversity consider: God has made the one as well as the other, so that man may not find out anything that will be after him. (Ecc 7:14 ESV)

But [Job] said to [his wife], "You speak as one of the foolish women would speak. Shall we receive good from God, and shall we not receive evil?" In all this Job did not sin with his lips. (Job 2:10 ESV)

Let it be understood that these verses refer to God bringing times of difficulty and hardship, not that God is ever evil. Scripture

tells us that, “the LORD is upright. . .and there is no unrighteousness in him.” (Ps. 92:15 ESV)

That is not to say, however, that God is not in control when evil things do happen. In Isaiah, God tells of how Babylon will be used to punish Israel for her sins:

*You felt secure in your wickedness,
you said, “No one sees me”;
your wisdom and your knowledge led you astray,
and you said in your heart,
“I am, and there is no one besides me.”
But evil shall come upon you,
which you will not know how to charm away;
disaster shall fall upon you,
for which you will not be able to atone;
and ruin shall come upon you suddenly,
of which you know nothing. (Isaiah 47:10-11
ESV)*

So we can see that Israel was to receive “evil,” from God, as a result of their sins. This was not a situation outside of God’s control, and God had previously warned them what he would do if Israel turned away from him to follow other gods (see Deut. 28:15-68 and Lev. 26:13-39).

In the Bible, we can see that evil and death are the direct results of sin—“For the wages of sin is death. . .” (Rom. 6:23 ESV)—and in the first chapter of Romans, we see God’s response to those who sin:

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. ¹⁹ For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. ²⁰ For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. ²¹ For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. ²² Claiming to be wise, they became fools, ²³ and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

²⁴ **Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity**, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, ²⁵ because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen.

²⁶ **For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions.** For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; ²⁷ and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error.

²⁸ **And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind** to do what ought not to be done. ²⁹ They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, ³⁰ slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to

*parents,³¹ foolish, faithless, heartless,
ruthless.³² Though they know God's
righteous decree that those who practice such
things deserve to die, they not only do them
but give approval to those who practice them.
(Romans 1:18-32 ESV)*

Three times, we see the phrase repeated, “God gave them up.” When people insist on not acknowledging God as Lord, He allows them to pursue their own desires—one of the manifestations of the “wrath of God.”

God punishes sin both by personally bringing destruction, and by allowing to sin to run its full course.

C. Holy

Holiness is a concept human beings often have a difficult time understanding, but the holiness of God is one of the most important facets of God's character. Holiness is the main motivation behind many of God's actions, and it is the expectation He has for His people. Twice in Leviticus chapter 11 God says to His people, Israel, “be holy, for I Am holy,” (Lev. 11:44, 45 ESV). The word used for “holy,” in the Bible is the Hebrew word “qâdôsh,” (Strong's #6918) meaning ceremonially or morally sacred, or set apart, and

God illustrates the concept of holiness in many ways throughout scripture. One of the clearest illustrations of this can be found in the book of Leviticus, after God freed his people Israel from slavery in Egypt. He strictly instructed them concerning what was “clean,” and what was, “unclean,” giving them a physical, tangible example and framework from which to gain a better understanding of the spiritual concept of holiness made perfect through the life of Christ in a believer.

²² You shall therefore keep all my statutes and all my rules and do them, that the land where I am bringing you to live may not vomit you out. ²³ And you shall not walk in the customs of the nation that I am driving out before you, for they did all these things, and therefore I detested them. ²⁴ But I have said to you, ‘You shall inherit their land, and I will give it to you to possess, a land flowing with milk and honey.’ I am the Lord your God, who has separated you from the peoples. ²⁵ You shall therefore separate the clean beast from the unclean, and the unclean bird from the clean. You shall not make yourselves detestable by beast or by bird or by anything with which the ground crawls, which I have set apart for you to hold unclean. ²⁶ You shall be holy to me, for I the Lord am holy and have separated you from the peoples, that you should be mine. (Lev. 20:22-26 ESV)

Today of course, we don't need to observe the same dietary restrictions the Jews did in ancient times, but like them, we are to be separate from the "unclean," things (sin) of this world, and not behave like the unsaved people around us.

Anything short of this standard of absolute holiness, and then communion with God is impossible. This is why God is so strict in his directions to His people. As a holy God, only a holy people is acceptable to Him.

Lesson Questions

1. We used Psalm 50 to illustrate the divine nature of God, but this psalm is also a good example for the other two points covered in this lesson. Reread Psalm 50. How does this psalm illustrate both the sovereignty and holiness of God?

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Give another scripture in the Bible (not from this lesson) for each point talked about in this lesson: the divine nature of God, the sovereignty of God, and the holiness of God.

List at least 2 scriptures for each.

2. Divine nature of God:

1) _____

2) _____

3. Sovereignty of God:

1) _____

2) _____

4. Holiness of God:

1) _____

2) _____

5. Define sovereignty.

6. Define holiness.

7. What are some examples of “unclean” things or behaviors that Christians are to separate themselves from?

Choose *True* or *False*

8. God is limited in much the same way humans are. (T / F)

9. God is in control even when bad things happen. (T / F)

10. Christians are expected to follow all the same dietary laws as the ancient Jews, eating only “clean” foods, and avoiding “unclean” foods.
(T / F)

11. Evil and death are the direct results of sin. (T / F)

12. It is okay to use human relationship examples, such as father/children, husband/wife, slave/master, friend/friend, etc, to help ourselves and others better understand God, as long as we remember He is God, and not a human with merely human desires or inclinations. (T / F)

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Lesson 2

The Biblical View of Man



Lesson 2

The Biblical View of Man

Man (here meaning, “mankind,” human beings, both male and female) was created by God, *for* God, and the order of this is of paramount importance. As society progresses more and more toward a culture of self focus and exaltation, it is imperative that Christians remember our place relative to our Creator. We are made to worship, serve, and know God, and it is by His grace alone that this is made possible.

A. God’s Creation

The story of God’s creation of humankind is found within the very first chapter of the bible, when God made Adam, and a short while later, Eve.

²⁶ *Then God said, “**Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.** And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”*

²⁷ ***So God created man in his own image,** in the image of God he created him;*

male and female he created them.

²⁸ And God blessed them. And God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth.”

²⁹ And God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. (Gen. 1:26-29 ESV)

According to the creation account in Genesis, God created mankind on the sixth day, after He had already made everything they would need for survival (the light, plants, animals, etc.) and gave them dominion over all of this, telling them to multiply and fill the earth. It also says that God created mankind in His own image, something He did not do with any other of His creation. There is some debate as to the exact meaning of this, whether this is meant as a physical, spiritual or other form of likeness, but in Luke chapter 20, Jesus makes an interesting statement in response to a certain question posed to him by the scribes and chief priests:

²⁰ So they watched Him, and sent spies who pretended to be righteous, that they might seize on His words, in order to deliver Him to the power and the authority of the governor.

²¹ Then they asked Him, saying, “Teacher, we know that You say and teach rightly, and You do not show personal favoritism, but

teach the way of God in truth: ²² Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?"

*²³ But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, "Why do you test Me? ²⁴ Show Me a denarius. **Whose image and inscription does it have?**"*

They answered and said, "Caesar's."

*²⁵ And He said to them, "**Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.**"*

²⁶ But they could not catch Him in His words in the presence of the people. And they marveled at His answer and kept silent. (Luke 20:20-26 NKJV)

So Caesar (the king of the Roman empire, which at that time had political control over Israel) had a right to the tax money because it had his image on it; and we are made in the image of God. Being made in the image of God, we should therefore surrender our lives to Him.



*Illustration 1: Roman Denarius, 19-18 B.C.
(Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Augustus,_denarius,_19-18_BC,_RIC_I_37a.jpg)*

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. (Romans 12:1 NKJV)

This concept should affect not only our attitude and behavior towards God, but also towards each other. If we respect God, we should therefore treat the people around us, who have been made in His image, with kindness and respect.

“⁷ For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, ⁸ but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. ⁹ With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. ¹⁰ From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.”
(James 3:7-10 ESV)

There is an underlying theme of humility and respect that scripture teaches about mankind both toward God and each other, and this attitude is one which we as Christians should make an effort to maintain.

“⁵ Likewise, you who are younger, be subject to the elders. Clothe yourselves, all of you, with humility toward one another, for “God

opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”⁶ Humble yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God so that at the proper time he may exalt you,⁷ casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.” (1 Peter 5:5-7 ESV)

B. The Fall

The fall of man is recorded in chapter three of Genesis. Adam and Eve, even though God had already given them everything they needed and had placed them in the paradise of Eden, chose to believe the serpent (Satan) and disobey God, by eating the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This point marks the beginning of the sin nature within the hearts of all humankind, and the need for salvation from its bondage and consequences.

¹ Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, “Did God actually say, ‘You shall not eat of any tree in the garden’?”

² And the woman said to the serpent, “We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden,

³ but God said, ‘You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.’”

⁴ But the serpent said to the woman, “You will not surely die.

⁵ *For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.”*

⁶ *So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.*

⁷ *Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.*

⁸ *And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.*

⁹ *But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, “Where are you?”*

¹⁰ *And he said, “I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.”*

¹¹ *He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”*

¹² *The man said, “The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate.”*

¹³ *Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this that you have done?” The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.”*

¹⁴ *The Lord God said to the serpent,*

*“Because you have done this,
cursed are you above all livestock
and above all beasts of the field;
on your belly you shall go,
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.*

*¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and her offspring;
he shall bruise your head,
and you shall bruise his heel.”*

*¹⁶ To the woman he said,
“I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth children.
Your desire shall be for your husband,
and he shall rule over you.”*

*¹⁷ And to Adam he said,
“Because you have listened to the voice of your wife
and have eaten of the tree
of which I commanded you,
‘You shall not eat of it,’
cursed is the ground because of you;
in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life;
¹⁸ thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you;*

and you shall eat the plants of the field.

¹⁹ *By the sweat of your face
you shall eat bread,
till you return to the ground,
for out of it you were taken;
for you are dust,
and to dust you shall return.”*

²⁰ *The man called his wife’s name Eve, because she was the mother
of all living.*

²¹ *And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of
skins and clothed them.*

²² *Then the Lord God said, “Behold, the man has become like one
of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and
take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—”*

²³ *therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to
work the ground from which he was taken.*

²⁴ *He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he
placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to
guard the way to the tree of life. (Genesis 3 ESV)*

Since the fall, mankind is in a constant struggle against sin, and often behaves much like Adam and Eve did in the beginning. The moment they sinned, they became aware of their nakedness, and hid from God, knowing they could never be presentable to Him now. They

attempted to cover themselves, sewing fig leaves together to make inadequate clothing, and when God sought them out, they made excuses and passed on the blame to another. Today, man is *still* running and hiding from God, attempting to make their own solutions to the problem of sin, and are all too often unwilling to acknowledge or confess their own guilt. But now, just like then, the only solution comes from God. In the garden, God clothed Adam and Eve with animal skins, from then on requiring sacrifices of sheep, goats, and bulls to make atonement for sin (Heb. 9:22 ESV: "...without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins"); now, we are clothed with Christ, Who made the ultimate sacrifice for sins, once and for all.

"¹² Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—¹³ for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law.¹⁴ Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come.¹⁵ But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many.¹⁶ And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought

justification. ¹⁷ For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. ¹⁸ Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. ¹⁹ For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. ²⁰ Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, ²¹ so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 5:12-21 ESV)

C. Dependent on God

In Christ, just as in Eden, God provides his people with everything they need to live, and this isn't limited only to physiological needs, but to spiritual needs as well—grace, faith, forgiveness, strength, etc. God is the source, the well to which we must continually go for sustenance and refreshing.

*“³ His divine power has given us **everything we need for a godly life** through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. ⁴ Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the*

divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.” (2 Peter 1:3-4 NIV)

In the book of John, Jesus compares this to a vine and its branches:

¹ *“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser.”* ² *“Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit.”*
³ *“Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.”* ⁴ *“Abide in me, and I in you. **As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me.**”* ⁵ *“I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.”* ⁶ *“If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned.”* ⁷ ***“If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you.”*** ⁸ *“By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.”* ⁹ *“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love.”* ¹⁰ *“If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love.”* ¹¹ *“These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.” (John 15:1-11 ESV)*

And Paul compares Christians to parts of one body, with Jesus as the head, without which the body could not function:

*“¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, **we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,** ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, **makes the body grow** so that it builds itself up in love.” (Ephesians 4:15-16 ESV)*

Lesson Questions

1. Explain, in your own words, the significance of being made in the image of God.

2. After Adam and Eve had eaten from the forbidden tree, why did they hide from God?

3. Reread John 15:1-11. What are some ways that we can we abide in Christ?

4. What was the fall, and what were its effects?

5. Romans 5:12-21 compares the “free gift” of God to the “trespass” of Adam. Reread this passage, then write one paragraph in your own words comparing and contrasting these.

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6. The first chapter of 2 Peter says that God gives us everything we need for a godly life. Read 2 Peter 1:3-11. What qualities does Peter mention as keeping a Christian from being “ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ”?

(hint: see especially verses 5 – 7)

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

7) _____

8) _____

7. Explain the importance of maintaining a humble attitude toward God and others.

Choose *True* or *False*

8. Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins (T / F)

9. Only males are created in the image of God (T / F)

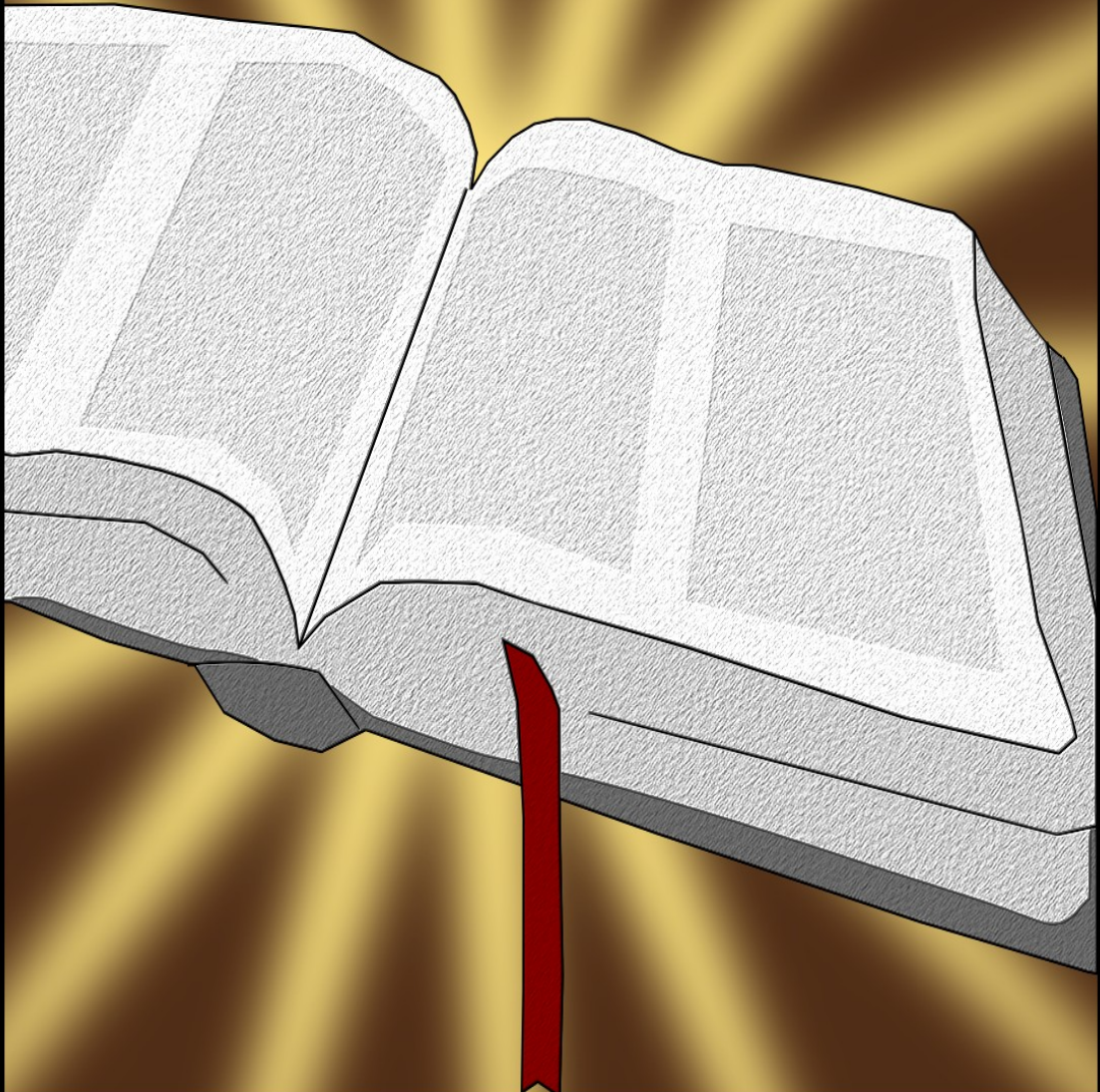
10. We can fix our sins by doing good things (T / F)

11. If we abide in Christ, He provides everything we need. (T / F)

12. We respect other people out of respect for God. (T / F)

Lesson 3

The Bible



Lesson 3

The Bible

There are those who have described the Bible as being like a guidebook for life, but perhaps a better description would be that the Bible is like a Christian's daily bread, the strengthening source of spiritual nutrition we need to continue and maintain a healthy walk with God. The Bible is more than just a book, it is the Word of God, and Deuteronomy 8 verse 3 and Matthew 4 verse 4 say, "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God." So it's important that Christians read and study the Bible daily, not necessarily the way one might study a textbook, but as "a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in [our] hearts. . ." (2 Peter 1:19 ESV)

A. God-breathed

Although the bible was written by people, it was inspired by God. What this means is that those people received the words to write directly from the Holy Spirit, not from their own wisdom or knowledge.

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in

righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work. (2 Timothy 3:16-17 ESV)

*And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first of all, that **no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.** (2 Peter 1:19-21 ESV)*

B. Infallible

Being inspired by God Himself, the Bible can be fully trusted to be absolutely true, without error and without fault.

*This God—his way is perfect;
the word of the Lord proves true;
he is a shield for all those who take refuge in him. (2 Samuel
22:31 ESV)*

*Every word of God proves true;
he is a shield to those who take refuge in him.
Do not add to his words,
lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar. (Proverbs 30:5-6
ESV)*

*A voice says, "Cry!"
And I said, "What shall I cry?"
All flesh is grass,
and all its beauty is like the flower of the field.
The grass withers, the flower fades
when the breath of the Lord blows on it;
surely the people are grass.
The grass withers, the flower fades,
but the word of our God will stand forever. (Isaiah 40:6-8
ESV)*

C. Relevant

Some people feel that since the books of the Bible were written thousands of years ago, some parts are no longer applicable to modern life. This is not true. The book of Hebrews describes scripture as "living and active." Having the foundation of an understanding that

scripture is God-breathed, and that God is sovereign, we can be assured that His Word is relevant to His people in any age or era.

For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account. (Heb. 4:12-13 ESV)

This said, scripture contains everything a Christian needs to live a godly life and to know God better. There are many books today written *about* God or scripture or Christian concepts, but these should be approached with an attitude of caution, with the understanding that the Bible alone is the Word of God, and that not all other books may be profitable or sound, especially as we near the last days. Extra-biblical study should be done with the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

*The Preacher sought to find words of delight, and uprightly he wrote words of truth. The words of the wise are like goads, and like nails firmly fixed are the collected sayings; they are given by one Shepherd. **My son, beware of anything beyond these.***

Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh. (Ecc. 12:10-12 ESV)

*But **test everything**; hold fast what is good. (1 Thess. 5:21
ESV)*

*And now I commend you to God and to the word of his grace,
which is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance
among all those who are sanctified. (Acts 20:32 EV)*

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and
admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and
hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to
God. (Col. 3:16 ESV)

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a
worker who has no need to be ashamed, **rightly handling the**
word of truth. (2 Tim. 2:15 ESV)*

*But as for you, **continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed**, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the **sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation** through faith in Christ Jesus. **All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.** (2 Tim. 3:14-17 ESV)*

D. Revealed by the Holy Spirit

When approaching scripture, it's important to always remember to pray that the Holy Spirit will reveal His word to us, not relying on our own minds and experience for the interpretation.

⁶ *Yet among the mature we do impart wisdom, although it is not a wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are doomed to pass away.*

⁷ *But we impart a secret and hidden wisdom of God, which God decreed before the ages for our glory.*

⁸ *None of the rulers of this age understood this, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*

⁹ *But, as it is written,*

*“What no eye has seen, nor ear heard,
nor the heart of man imagined,
what God has prepared for those who love him”—*

¹⁰ ***these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.***

¹¹ *For who knows a person’s thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.*

¹² *Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.*

¹³ ***And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.***

¹⁴ *The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.*

¹⁵ *The spiritual person judges all things, but is himself to be judged by no one.*

¹⁶ *“For who has understood the mind of the Lord so as to instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ. (1 Corinthians 2:6-16 ESV)*

(“Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” -1 Cor. 2:13 KJV)

Lesson Questions

1. What do we mean when we say that scripture is inspired by God?

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2. In your own words, explain how scripture can be relevant and applicable today, despite being written thousands of years ago.

3. Why should we use caution in studying books other than the Bible?

4. How can the Bible be compared to a Christian's daily food?

5. What makes the scriptures absolutely true and without error?

6. Reread Hebrews 4:12-14. In your own words, explain how the scriptures can be "living and active," and what it means when it says that the scripture is "sharper than any two-edged sword?"

First Steps: A Discipleship Manual

Choose *True* or *False*

8. People like the Apostle Paul and Moses were able to write scripture because of their great wisdom (T / F)

9. The Bible is 100% true (T / F)

10. We need the help of the Holy Spirit to understand and interpret scripture. (T / F)

11. We should read any books we can find about the Bible or Christian issues in order to learn more about God and how to live our lives. (T / F)

12. Everything in the Bible is relevant today. (T / F)

Lesson 4

Jesus Christ



Lesson 4

Jesus Christ

In Lesson 2, we talked about the fall of man, and the subsequent bondage to sin that humanity then found themselves in. The wages of sin is death, and we now know that the only way of deliverance and salvation from sin is through Jesus Christ.

*¹⁶ Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, **you are slaves of the one whom you obey**, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness? ¹⁷ But thanks be to God, that you who were once slaves of sin have become obedient from the heart to the standard of teaching to which you were committed, ¹⁸ and, having been set free from sin, have become slaves of righteousness. ¹⁹ I am speaking in human terms, because of your natural limitations. For just as you once presented your members as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness leading to sanctification. ²⁰ For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. ²¹ But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. ²² But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to*

sanctification and its end, eternal life. ²³ **For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.** (Rom. 6:16-23 ESV)

And in Lesson 3 we learned that the Bible was written by the Holy Spirit, so it should be no surprise that even from the very beginning, God had already set His plan for salvation into motion.

The Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” (Gen. 3:14-15 ESV)

The Old Testament was written before Jesus ever came to earth as a man, and yet all throughout these books there are countless references and prophecies regarding Jesus Christ—His birth, life, death, and resurrection.

Isaiah, a well-known Jewish prophet who lived around 700 B.C., wrote a prophecy detailing the coming of a redeemer, or *messiah*, who would save all those who believed in Him from the curse of sin and death.

Isaiah chapter 59 illustrates the hopelessness the Jews felt in regard to their sinful condition at the time, followed by God's response.

*“Behold, the Lord’s hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear; but **your iniquities have made a separation between you and your God**, and your sins have hidden his face from you so that he does not hear. . .Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands far away; for truth has stumbled in the public squares, and uprightness cannot enter. Truth is lacking, and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey.*

*The Lord saw it, and it displeased him that there was no justice. He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no one to intercede; then **his own arm brought him salvation**, and his righteousness upheld him. . . ‘ **A Redeemer will come to Zion**, to those in Jacob who turn from transgression,’ declares the Lord.” (Isaiah 59:1-2, 14-16, 20 ESV)*

The Redeemer Isaiah spoke of was Jesus Christ, and if we are going to understand God's amazing salvation plan, we first need to understand who Jesus is.

A. Jesus is God in the flesh

The first and most important thing we need to understand about Jesus, is that Jesus was not an ordinary human being. Another name for Jesus in the Bible is, “*Immanuel, (which means, God with us.)*” (*Matthew 1:23 ESV*)

The first chapter of John says this about Jesus:

*“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God**. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. . . And **the Word became flesh and dwelt among us**, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.”* (*John 1:1-5, 14 ESV*)

Moreover, Philippians says:

“. . . though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient

to the point of death, even death on a cross.” (Phillipians 2:6-8 ESV)

So Jesus was both 100% human and 100% God, in that He is the Son of God, and was with God before the world was created, “*But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.*” (Galatians 4:4-5 ESV)

B. Jesus is Without Sin

Another important thing we need to understand about Jesus is that though He was tempted like every human being is, He was completely without sin. Matthew chapter 4 tells the story of the temptation of Jesus in the wilderness, after He had been fasting 40 days, but He did not sin.

Hebrews chapter 2 says, “*Therefore he had to be made like his brothers in every respect, so that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. **For because he himself has suffered when tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.***” (Hebrews 2:17-18 ESV) And in chapter 4, “*Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let*

*us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who **in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.** (Hebrews 4:14-15 ESV)*

C. Jesus is the Perfect Sacrifice

Before Jesus came into the world, God commanded the Jews to sacrifice sheep or other kinds of animals as a means of covering their sins, but Hebrews chapter 10 says, “*For since the law has but a shadow of the good things to come instead of the true form of these realities, it can never, by the same sacrifices that are continually offered every year, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, since the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have any consciousness of sins? But in these sacrifices there is a reminder of sins every year. For it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.*” (Hebrews 10:1-4 ESV)

The fact that Jesus was completely without sin made Him the perfect sacrifice, for God describes an acceptable sacrifice in this way:

“You shall not offer anything that has a blemish, for it will not be acceptable for you. And when anyone offers a sacrifice of

*peace offerings to the Lord to fulfill a vow or as a freewill offering from the herd or from the flock, **to be accepted it must be perfect; there shall be no blemish in it.***” (Leviticus 22:20-21 ESV)

Therefore, Hebrews 10 goes on to say, “. . . we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God. . . **For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified.**” (Hebrews 10:10-12, 14 ESV)

Lesson Questions

1. Why did Jesus Christ come to the earth?

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2. How was Jesus both 100% God and 100% human?

3. Read Matthew 4:1-11. What was the outcome of this story? Why is this story important?

4. In your own words, explain how Jesus is the perfect sacrifice for sins.

5. The Old Testament is full of prophecies about Jesus. List three examples of Old Testament prophecy concerning Jesus that were not mentioned in this lesson. Remember to cite where these can be found in the Bible.

1) _____

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2) _____

3) _____

6. Read Hebrews chapter 2. What does it mean when it says that Jesus “had to be made like his brothers in every respect?”

7. Fill in the blanks.

Hebrews _____ : _____ - _____ (ESV)

Since then we have a great _____ who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our _____. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to _____ with our weaknesses, but one who in every _____ has been tempted as we are, yet _____ sin.

Choose *True* or *False*

8. Immanuel means “God loves us.” (T / F)

9. Jesus is both 100% God and 100% man. (T / F)

10. Jesus never sinned. (T / F)

11. Nothing in creation was made without Jesus. (T / F)

12. Jesus is only mentioned in the New Testament (T / F)

