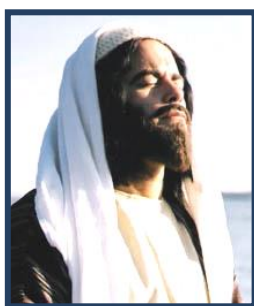
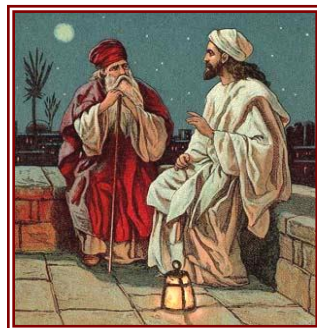
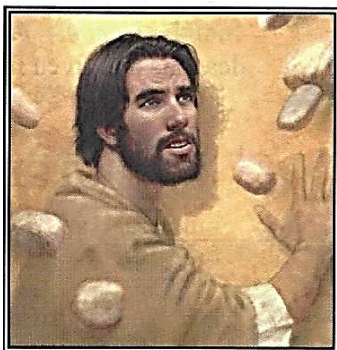


CHIEF PEOPLE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT



*“I have come
that they may have life,
and have it
to the full.”*

John 10:10



**CHIEF PEOPLE
of the
NEW TESTAMENT**

A T.R.I.B.E. Self-Study Course

Written by

**Ellis Kasten
&
Glenna Houston**

NAME: _____

Chief People of the New Testament A Self-Study T.R.I.B.E. Course

Copyright 2009
All rights reserved

Published by:

Native Bible Centre
6145 Mowatt Street
Wardner, BC V0B 2J0
Toll Free – 1-866-70TRIBE (708-7423)
FAX: 1-250-665-8022
Email: info@nativebiblecentre.org
Website: www.nativebiblecentre.org

Native Bible Centre is an extension of
InterAct Ministries of Canada
P. O. Box 559
Crossfield, AB T0M 0S0

All Scripture quotations are taken from the Holy Bible,
New International Version. Copyright 1973, 1978, 1984
International Bible Society
Used by permission of Zondervan Bible Publishers

CHIEF PEOPLE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Introduction

Welcome to the T.R.I.B.E. course on the chief people of the New Testament. This course looks at some of the men and women whom God used in a special way. Never forget that these were real people just like you and me. The men and women you will be studying are not the only important people of the New Testament. We will not be studying about the Lord Jesus Christ, the greatest Man who ever lived. To learn more about Jesus, order the course *Life of Christ* from the Native Bible Centre (hard copy) or download it from our website free of charge.

Chief People of the New Testament is a course written for the discipleship and leadership training program of the Native Bible Centre. There are sixteen lessons in the book. You should meet with your study leader (if you have one) to go over the material.

To get the most out of this course, prepare yourself in the following ways:

- A. **PRAY** that God will help you understand His Word.
Psalm 119:18 *“Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law.”*
- B. **READ** the verses thoughtfully and prayerfully.
Psalm 119:105 *“Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path.”*
- C. **REMEMBER** the words of Jesus.
John 8:31-32 *“If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”*
- D. **APPLY** to your personal life. Solomon was the wisest man who ever lived, but he did not apply his wisdom to his own personal life. At the end of his life he said that all of life was meaningless. Our prayer for you is that this will not happen. At the end of each lesson, please take time to fill out the WHAT ABOUT ME? part.

There are three assignments included in this course. If you are taking this course for credit, you will need to send in the assignments along with the two Exams.

There is a Mid-Term Exam and a Final Exam for this course. If you are taking this course for credit, the tests and assignment should be sent to Native Bible Centre by mail, or faxed, or scanned and emailed for correction. Please include \$5.00 for credit for the course. Feel free to contact the NBC office if you have any questions. We are here to help and encourage you.

NATIVE BIBLE CENTRE

6145 Mowatt Street

Wardner, BC V0B 2J0

1-866-70TRIBE (708-7423) FAX: 250-665-8022

info@nativebiblecentre.org

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LESSON	PAGE
1. Zechariah and Elizabeth: An old couple with a special promise.....	7
2. John the Baptist: A lonely man with a special task.....	13
3. Mary and Joseph: A young couple with a special child.....	23
4. Nicodemus: A Jewish leader with a special interest.....	35
5. Peter – The Apostle: A fisherman with a dynamic personality.....	41
Assignment #1	61
6. John – The Apostle: “ <i>The disciple whom Jesus loved</i> ”.....	63
Assignment #2	71
7. Andrew – The Apostle: A man with a quiet ministry.....	73
8. Martha and Mary: Two sisters with special abilities.....	77
Mid-Term Test	85
9. Mary Magdalene: A woman who was set free.....	89
10. Stephen: The first man to die for Christ.....	95
11. Cornelius: A man with a special vision.....	101
12. Barnabas: A “ <i>come alongside</i> ” kind of friend.....	117
13. Paul: A man of authority that chose to be a bond slave.....	127
14. Luke: A doctor on a special journey.....	123
Assignment #3	127
15. Timothy: A young trustworthy servant of God.....	129
16. Aquila & Priscilla: A special couple that God used.....	135

Final Test.....	141
Books Used.....	143
Price List Form	145

LESSON 1

ZECHARIAH AND ELIZABETH

An old couple with a special promise

It seems that most of our struggles in life have something to do with wanting something we don't have or having something we don't want. Maybe we want a new car but don't have the money to buy it. Or we may receive the news from our doctor that we have a serious disease. Our deepest longings and our biggest challenges can be in trying to see God's hand in these struggles. Can we still trust Him when He doesn't seem to hear our cries? In Luke 1 we read about a husband and wife who were faced with that dilemma.



God had not spoken to His people for 400 years. God had not forgotten His people. He was waiting for the right time. God is never late; He is always right on time. Galatians 4:4 says, *“But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman.”* But God had to prepare His people for this most important event. In the next three lessons we will learn how God prepared His people for this special event.

TRUSTING GOD

Read about Zechariah and Elizabeth in Luke 1:5-7

1. Zechariah and Elizabeth could both trace their family line back to whom? Luke 1:5

2. Among the Jewish race, family line was very important. What specific job was given to Zechariah and Elizabeth's family line?

a. _____ Exodus 27:21

b. _____ Exodus 28:1

c. _____ Numbers 25:10-13

3. In Luke 1:8-9 what is Zechariah doing in God's house?

4. What does the Bible say about both Zechariah and Elizabeth? Luke 1:6

Abraham Lincoln said, “All that I am I owe to my mother.”

Whenever God wanted to produce a man who would be great in His eyes, He always prepared a mother first.

That is why many great men have been children born to aged parents. The women had been prepared through years of waiting, prayer, and meditation until God gave them the desire of their heart.

5. What did this husband and wife want but didn't have? Luke 1:7

6. Children are a blessing from the Lord. Read Psalm 127:3-4. Fill in the blanks:

“_____ are a heritage from the _____, children a _____ from Him. Like _____ in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth.”

In Jewish culture, to be childless was seen as a judgment from God. When God pronounced blessings or judgment, child bearing or barrenness was part of the blessing or punishment.

7. Read Exodus 23:25-26. What blessing regarding childbirth do you find in verse 26?

8. What blessing do you see in Deuteronomy 7:14?

9. What punishment is in Leviticus 20:21?

For a Jewish woman to be barren brought sorrow and shame on her. She felt that she had failed in the main reason for her existence – that of bearing children. She was looked upon as one whom God had punished for a sin. Regardless of her position or other blessings she may experience in her life, she was in sorrow until a child was born.

Over time, Elizabeth and Zechariah accepted this heartache of being childless. Their disappointment did not change their love for God or their service for Him. Even in their emptiness, they remained faithful to God.



When we face disappointments, we have two choices. We can become bitter because God does not give us what we want. Or we can follow the example of Zechariah and Elizabeth and remain faithful to God. We must remember that God knows what is best for each one of us and He can be trusted.

SERVING GOD

Read Luke 1:8-23

1. What was the job of Zechariah at the temple during this time? Luke 1:9-10

Because there were so many descendants of Aaron at this time, the priests were organized into twenty-four groups. Each group served in the temple in rotation. Each of the groups ministered for one week, beginning on the Sabbath. They could only come to the temple to serve when it was their group's turn to serve. Each priest was appointed to perform a specific duty. The rest of the time the priest remained at home until his group was called upon to go to the temple to serve. For more information, 1 Chronicles 24:1-19 tells about the divisions of the priests.



2. Exodus 30:6-8 tells about the command to burn incense in the Old Testament temple. The incense was on the _____ when it was burned.

3. What happened to Zechariah while he was on duty? Luke 1:11-12 _____

4. Who brought this message to Zechariah? Luke 1:19 _____

5. What was the message Zechariah received? Luke 1:13 _____

We know Zachariah was praying for a son, because the angel said, “*Your prayer has been heard.*” (verse 13).



Today we feel excited to know whether our expected baby will be a boy or girl! How would it be if we knew even before the birth what the child's future job would be? No doctor can tell us that information, but God knows everything and He sent His messenger to tell Zechariah what his son was to do with his life.

6. What would be the responsibility of the son of Zechariah and Elizabeth? Luke 1:14-17

7. What question did Zechariah ask the messenger? Luke 1:18 _____

8. Read Mark 10:27. What **is** possible with God? _____

9. Because Zechariah doubted God, what happened? Luke 1:20 _____

Is this the way you pray, too?

Here Zechariah had been praying for a son. So God sends an angel to tell Zechariah that He has heard his prayer and that He is answering.

But then Zechariah seems to be saying, "But this is not possible!"

GOD ANSWERS PRAYER

Read Luke 1:24-25 and Luke 1:57-80

Think right now of the most exciting news you have heard. How frustrated you would feel if you could not share this special news with your friends and family!

1. When Elizabeth became pregnant, what did she say the Lord had taken away from her?

(Luke 1:25) _____

2. Who came to visit Elizabeth during this time? Luke 1:39-45 _____

The special visitor received an unexpected greeting from Elizabeth!

3. What happened to Elizabeth when the visitor arrived? Luke 1:42-45 _____

4. What was the feeling of the neighbors when the child was born? Luke 1:57-58

5. What name were they going to give the baby? Luke 1:59 _____

In those days a family name was usually given to a new baby. So when the question of naming the baby came up, the relatives just assumed he would be called Zechariah, after his father. When Elizabeth said, “No” to that name.

Since Zechariah was unable to talk, he wrote down the name the messenger had told him.

6. What happened when Zechariah wrote the baby’s name as *John*? Luke 1:62-64

7. When God opened this old priest’s mouth, he sang a hymn. This song is a prophecy giving us four beautiful pictures of what the coming of Jesus Christ to earth would mean:

a. Jesus would pay the price for His people. Luke 1:68

*“Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, because he has come and has _____
His people.”*

b. Jesus would win a battle: Luke 1:69-75

(Verse 74) “... to _____ us from the hand of our _____, ...”

c. Jesus would cancel our sin debt. Luke 1:76-77

(Verse 78) *..because of the tender _____ of our God, by which the
_____ will come to us from heaven...”*

Zechariah, had not said one word for nine months. But he certainly made up for his silence when he sang this song of praise to God! How thrilled Zechariah was that his son, John, had been chosen by God (before birth) to prepare the way for the Messiah – Jesus!



DID YOU KNOW??



Zechariah sang the second song recorded in the New Testament!

WHAT ABOUT ME?

James 1:22 says: *“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.”*

Take time to think over the lesson and consider what the Holy Spirit has spoken to you about.

1. List one time when you wanted something in your life that God did not give you.

2. Are you surprised sometimes when God **does** answer your prayer? If so, write about a time:

3. If you are a parent, are you teaching your children how important it is to serve God? How?

It would be very helpful to you if you would get together with someone else and share what you have learned from this lesson. Then take time to pray for one another.

LESSON 2

JOHN THE BAPTIST

A lonely man with a special task



Luke 1:13, “*But the angel said to him: ‘Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name **John**.’*”

John was once a common name among the Jews of Jesus’ time. Four men by the name John appear in the New Testament. There was John the father of Simon Peter, John the Baptist, John Mark, and John the brother of James, whose father was Zebedee. We will learn more about John, the brother of James in Lesson Six. The son of Zechariah and

Elizabeth was named *John*. Because this John was also a man who baptized those who repented of their sins, he was referred to as *John the Baptist*.

The normal experience for John would have been to serve in the temple as his father had. He should have been a leader in the temple, but that was not what John wanted to do. **AND** serving in the temple is not what the Lord had told his father, Zechariah, John should spend his life doing.

A DETAILED BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT!

Read Luke 1:8-20

Only the birth of Jesus is given in more detail than John’s birth. God interrupted the ordinary course of nature in John’s birth. Humanly speaking, Elizabeth was too old to have children. Gabriel announced his birth and told what his task would be.

1. Read Luke 1:13-15. What special gift would John receive from birth? _____

2. What special gift did his mother receive before he was born? Luke 1:41 _____

3. What special instructions was his father given in raising John? Luke 1:15 _____

5. These rules for John are explained more in the Old Testament book of Numbers 6:1-4. From these verses, what would John be called?

NOTE: There is a difference between a *Nazirite* and a *Nazarene*. A *Nazerene* was someone who was born in the town of Nazareth. Jesus was a *Nazarene*. John was a *Nazirite*.

JOHN'S JOB FORETOLD

1. In Zechariah's song of joy, what did John's father, filled with the Holy Spirit, prophesy about him? Luke 1:76-79

a. John would be called a _____ of the _____. (1:76)

b. John's job would be to go on _____ the _____ to _____ the way for Him. (1:76)

c. John would give his people the _____ of _____ through the _____ of their _____. (1:77)

d. God sent Jesus because of His _____. (1:78)

e. Jesus would _____ on those living in darkness. He would guide our feet into the path of _____. (1:79)

Read Matthew 3:1-12, Mark 1:3-8, and Luke 3:2-20

2. According to Mark 1:2-3, what would John do for the Lord?

3. In Luke 1:17, what did the angel say John's job would be? _____

4. Isaiah 40:3 speaks about John about 400 years before he was born. According to this verse what was John going to do in the future?

4. In Matthew 3:1-3 we read about what John actually did. What did John call out to people in verse one? _____

6. What scripture from the Old Testament was quoted again in Matthew 3:3? _____

God had a specific plan for John. It was a plan that would fit into God's plan of sending His Son to this earth to die for our sins. John was raised to know what God's plan was for his life. Zechariah and Elizabeth must have impressed on John every day how obeying God is the most important thing in life.

There are five books written in the New Testament by *John*.
However, **no books in the Bible were authored by *John the Baptist***.
The apostle John wrote: the *gospel of John*, 1, 2, 3 *John*,
and the book of *Revelation*.



JOHN'S JOB FULFILLED

Read Matthew 3:1-17

In Bible times when an important person was going to visit an area, another important person would announce his coming and make sure everything was ready for his arrival. In Mark 1:3 the Greek word for *prepare* is two different words. These two words show us the job of the *forerunner*. The first means, *to put in place things that were not there before, but are necessary*. The second meaning is *to put in order existing things that had fallen into disorder*.

1. **The forerunner was 'to clear the way'**. John's message was to remove from the hearts and lives of the people anything that stood in the way of them receiving the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

In Matthew 3:2,8 John tells his people that they must r_____

Repenting means to change our mind about how we have been living, confessing our sin, then turning around and going the right way in our life.

2. The second job of **the forerunner was 'to prepare the way'**. The road must be prepared and put in order. John was preparing the people of Israel for the Messiah

3. The third job of **the forerunner** was *'to get out of the way'*. In winter here in Canada, the snowplow will not only *clear the way* through the snow, but it *prepares the way* by spreading sand or salt so the surface will not be too slippery for the vehicles. The snowplow then *gets out of the way*, as its job is now complete.

GET READY!

What a message John had for all the people!

All of history was going to be different from this point on!

Jesus, the Messiah was finally here!

HE'S COMING!

“YOU LOOK FAMILIAR”

Read Mark 1:1-8

1. What was a resemblance between John and Elijah?

a. In Mark 1:6, what does it tell us that John wore? _____

b. According to 2 Kings 1:7-9, what did Elijah wear? _____

c. What did John eat? _____



2. How was the message of Elijah and John similar? See 1 Kings 18:21; 1 Kings 21:17-24;

Luke 3:7-14 _____

JOHN AND JESUS

Read John 1:19-37

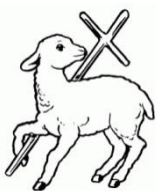
1. In John 1:15 what did John say about Jesus? _____

2. Who did John say he was? John 1:22-23 _____



3. How did John introduce Jesus? John 1:29 _____

4. Why would John introduce Jesus this way? See the prophecy about Jesus in Isaiah 53:6-7.



John was declaring to the people that Jesus was not only the Messiah they had been waiting for, He was also their Saviour. He is the Lamb of God. He is the complete Saviour because He takes away sin. He is the Almighty Saviour because He died for the sin of the whole world.

5. How was John's message similar to the message of Jesus? Matthew 3:3, 4:17; Mark 1:14-15.

6. How was John's message different to that of Jesus'? John 1:19, 23; John 14:6.

7. What special privilege did John have? Matthew 3:13-17 _____

An exciting NOTE about the baptism of Jesus:

At this event we have all the persons of the Godhead (*the Trinity*) present. As the Lord Jesus was coming out of the water, the Spirit of God comes on Him in the form of a dove and the Father speaks from heaven!



8. Who did John say Jesus was? John 1:34 _____

THE PRICE OF OBEDIENCE

Read Matthew 11:1-15

When we are doing God's will we may be persecuted for it. When John spoke the truth to King Herod, his message was not accepted.

1. When John was in prison, what doubts did he have? Matthew 11:2-3 _____

2. How did Jesus respond to John's doubts? Matthew 11:4-6 _____

When we go through really hard times, we may begin to wonder if God is really who He says He is. We can always go to God's Word and be assured again that God is all-powerful and that he loves us.

NOTE:

Jesus did not rebuke John for his doubts. He simply gave proof to satisfy John's doubts.

3. What happened to John when he told the king he should not be living with his brother's wife?

Luke 3:19-20 _____

We learn more of the outcome for John in Mark 6:17-29.

4. Why did Herod fear John? (Mark 6:20) _____

5. Who danced for Herod at his birthday party? (6:22) _____

6. When Herod offered a gift to the girl, what did she request? (6:25)

7. Because Herod cared more about how he appeared to his friends than he cared about doing right, what did he tell the executioner to do? _____

Most of us have questions from time to time. Perhaps you have questions as well like: *Is Jesus really the Saviour? Have all my sins been forgiven? Can I trust the Bible?* These questions are not *failures* of faith but a *test* of faith.

When we have questions, we can handle them the way John did: bring them to Jesus. It is alright to bring doubts to Jesus. During His time on earth Jesus never turned away anyone who had questions. He only turned away those who refused to believe.

Sometimes we need to talk to someone who will help us with our doubts. The staff at Native Bible Centre is available to help you. You can email us at info@nativebiblecentre.org or call us at 1-866-70TRIBE (708-7423).

JESUS CALLS JOHN THE BAPTIST “GREAT”

Read Matthew 11:1-15

1. Jesus Christ said of John the Baptist, “*I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone _____ than John the Baptist*”. (Matthew 11:11)
2. Even before John was born, the angel told Zechariah, “*...for he will be _____ in the sight of the Lord.*” (Luke 1:15)

The greatness Jesus was talking about is totally different from how our world thinks. Greatness in the eyes of God is not based on power, fame, or wealth. Greatness in God’s eyes is believing that He is who He says He is, and on our obedience to Him.

John was secure in who he was. He understood who he was not.

When the religious leaders asked John who he was, he replied, “*I am not the C_____*”. (John 1:20)

John was also secure in who he was. He said, “*I am the v_____ of one calling in the desert, ‘Make straight the way for the L_____.’*” (John 1:23) He knew what his job was.

We also can be secure in who we are as children of God. We can have peace as God’s chosen children. God has a special job for each of us. It is important for us to study the Bible and pray so we can know what he wants us to do and so we can have the power to obey God.

John the Baptist had a humble heart. He spent his life telling people that Jesus, the Lamb of God, the Messiah they had been waiting for HAD ARRIVED! All of John's life was pointing to how great Jesus is.

3. Match the qualities of John that made him GREAT in the eyes of Jesus with the scripture reference where it is found. Include #6, as well.

(The first one is done for you.)

WHAT MADE JOHN GREAT

SCRIPTURE

1. F Humility

A. Matthew 3:15

2. _____ Courage

B. Mark 6:20

3. _____ Obedience

C. Matthew 3:7

4. _____ Powerful Preacher

D. John 10:41

5. _____ Holiness

E. Mark 1:5

An interesting note:

F. Mark 1:7

6. _____ John did no miracles

WHAT ABOUT ME?

1. In the past six months, have you told anyone how great Jesus is? _____

If so, who? _____

2. Have you ever wondered if God is really Who He says He is? _____

3. If you answered *yes* to the last question, please write about this time: _____

4. In thinking over John the Baptist's birth and life, what do you remember most? _____

5. Are you introducing others to Jesus Christ? Don't ever be ashamed to tell others about Jesus. What does Jesus say about those who are ashamed of Him? Fill in the blanks.

Luke 9:26 (Jesus talking) "*If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will _____ when He comes in His glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.*"

It would be very helpful to you if you would get together with someone else and share what you have learned from this lesson. Then take time to pray for each other.

If you want more help in explaining the way of salvation to others, you can order (or download from the Native Bible Centre website) the course ***Which Way***.

In four short lessons you will gain a clear understanding of how to lead a person to Jesus Christ.

(For downloads, go to www.nativebiblecentre.org, Bookstore, Leader's Resources, *Which Way*.)

LESSON 3

MARY and JOSEPH

A young couple with a special child

Many times when God wants to do something extraordinary, He uses ordinary people. He is not looking for people with great talent. He is looking for people who are available and obedient. This lesson is about two ordinary people who were available and obedient.



God's Plans Always Happen!

*“Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign:
The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son,
and will call him Immanuel.” Isaiah 7:14*

MARY – GOD’S SERVANT

Read Luke 1:26-38

1. From what family line did Mary come? Matthew 1:1, 16 _____
2. What celebrated event had already taken place in Mary’s life? Matthew 1:18; Luke 1:27

The Bible does not give Mary’s age, but most young ladies in Bible times were pledged to be married at the age of thirteen. Usually they were married by the time they were fourteen.

3. It is interesting to note that when the Bible tells someone, “Do not be afraid,” they are told why they need not be afraid. Why did Gabriel tell Mary she did not need to be afraid?

Luke 1:30 *“But the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found _____
with _____.’”*

4. What special message was given to Mary? Read Luke 1:31-33 and list six things the angel told Mary:

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____
- d. _____
- e. _____
- f. _____

Being part of the plan for the Messiah to come would have been an honor for any Jewish person. This event had been hoped for and prayed for since the beginning of time. But did any unmarried girl think she would be the one chosen to actually give birth to the Messiah as a baby?

5. How is Mary's question different from Zechariah's question when the angel told him about his son's birth? Luke 1:18; Luke 1:34

Zechariah: _____

Mary: _____

Mary's question was actually a question of faith. She believed the promise but she did not understand how it would happen. How could a virgin give birth to a child?

6. What explanation did the angel give Mary? Luke 1:35 _____

After listening to the angel, Mary called herself "*the Lord's servant*", and she said, "*May it be to me as you have said.*" Mary was a humble, godly servant, with a willingness to do God's will.

7. What name was given to the baby Mary was to have? Luke 1:35 _____

This unassuming young lady was going to carry the *Son of God* inside her for nine months! It was **her** body that would nourish the *Son of God*!

8. To where did Mary travel? Whom did Mary visit? Luke 1:39,40 _____

9. Do you think there was a specific reason Mary went for this visit at this time? _____
If so, what do you think it may be? _____

10.. List three people that rejoiced in the Lord when Mary arrived for this visit: Luke 1:39-56



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

11. In *Mary's Song* (Luke 1:46-55), Mary rejoiced in ten things God had done. List five of these:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
- 4) _____
- 5) _____

When Mary rejoiced in “*God, my Savior,*” she made it clear that she also was a sinner and **she** needed a Savior. The fact that God had saved her shows that Mary was a sinner like all of us and she needed to trust the Lord for her eternal salvation. Not only had God saved her, but also He had chosen her to be the mother of the Messiah! Mary’s great desire was to magnify the Lord, not herself.

JOSEPH – GOD’S SERVANT

Read Matthew 1:16-25

When God chose Mary to carry His Son, He also chose a man named Joseph to care for her in the midst of this misunderstood situation. As we read earlier, Joseph and Mary were engaged (Matthew 1:18). Imagine how confused Joseph must have been when he discovered that Mary was expecting a baby!

In Jewish culture the family line into which a person was born was very important. In Matthew 1:1-16 we see “*a record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David*” given. Verses 2-16 list generations by saying “_____ was the father of _____.” However, when it comes to Joseph in verse 16 it does not say that Joseph was the father of Jesus. This verse names Joseph as “*the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.*” This is an important point.

1. According to Matthew 1:19, what kind of man was Joseph?

2. How did Joseph respond to Mary's news? Matthew 1:19 _____



Being willing to make this choice was a sure sign of Joseph's love for Mary. He was concerned for Mary's welfare.

To the Jewish people in that day, engagement was equal to marriage – except that the man and woman did not sleep together (At the end of their engagement period, they could sleep together). If an engaged woman became pregnant, it was considered adultery. The consequences were severe.

3. According to the Old Testament law, what should have happened to Mary when she became pregnant before she was married? Deuteronomy 22:23-24 _____

What confusion and disappointment for Joseph! But God had a message for him.

4. How did Joseph know what to do? Matthew 1:20 _____

5. What three messages did the angel give to Joseph in a dream? Matthew 1:20, 21

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

6. In Matthew 1:23 the child was given another name. What was this name?

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

There were really three names given to God's Son. The name *Jesus* means "Saviour" and comes from the Hebrew name, Joshua (meaning "Jehovah is salvation"). There were many Jewish boys with the name Joshua (or, in Greek, Jesus). But Mary's Boy was called *Jesus the Christ*. The word *Christ* means "anointed"; it is the same as the Greek *Messiah*. So he is "*Jesus the Messiah*." Jesus is His human name – Christ is His official title. And *Immanuel* describes who he is – "*God with us!*"

7. How was Joseph obedient to the angel's message? Matthew 1:24 _____

8. What did Joseph NOT do? Matthew 1:25 _____

Take time to think about some of the emotions that Mary and Joseph must have had because of Mary's pregnancy. They would not have been accepted in any place of worship if they did not obey the laws of the Old Testament. But the Bible makes it very clear that they both were true followers of God.

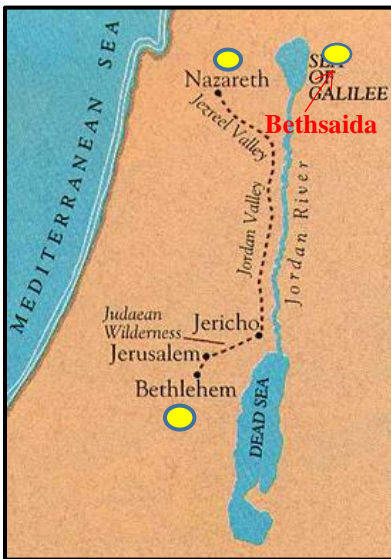
9. What are we to do when we have to choose between obeying God or giving in to what others say? Acts 4:10-20 - (Here Peter and John are on trial for preaching about the resurrection.)

May this encourage you to remain faithful to God and His Word regardless of what others may say or think. If you are struggling to remain obedient to God and you need someone to talk to, please contact us by email or call us toll free.

10. What was Joseph's occupation? Matthew 13:55 _____

SURPRISE PLAN or GOD'S PLAN?

Read Luke 2:1-5



1. What happened just before Mary's Baby was to be born? Luke 2:1-3

2. Where did Joseph take Mary? Luke 2:4-5

Luke 2:1-20 is _____
the scripture
used most
often in the
celebration of _____
Christmas.

The map on the left shows from a distance how far it is from Nazareth to Bethlehem. With the winding mountain trails that Joseph and Mary had to travel, it would be about 145 kilometers (90 miles). The climb over the mountains is about 400 meters (1,312 feet). Look in the back of your Bible to see if there is a map showing Nazareth (in Galilee) and Bethlehem (in Judea).

3. How long do you think it would take for Joseph and Mary to travel 145 km (90 miles) distance in her condition?

Caesar Augustus may have thought he was ruling the country at this time, but it was really God who was in charge. God used Caesar's announcement of the census to move Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem so God's Word would be fulfilled.

4. Look in the Old Testament part of your Bible in Micah 5:2. Who does this scripture say will come from Bethlehem? _____

(God speaking)
“...*I am watching to see that My word is fulfilled.*”
Jeremiah 1:12

Caesar Augustus was merely the tool in God's hand to bring to pass what was prophesied hundreds of years before.

IT'S TIME!

Read Luke 2:6-20

1. In what kind of place did Mary give birth to the King of the Universe? Luke 2:7

2. Why not a palace for this King, or at least a nice home or hotel? _____

When God entered the world as a baby He was willing to lay aside His glory for a time. Please take time to read Philippians 2:5-8. While He was as weak as any other baby humanly speaking, He was also the center of power as far as heaven was concerned.



3. Who were Baby Jesus' first visitors? Luke 2:8-15 _____

4. Why do you think shepherds were the first to hear of the birth of Jesus? _____

Hmmm – IT COULD BE

- 1) These shepherds may have been taking care of the sheep that would be used in Jerusalem for sacrifices in the temple.
- 2) Also, in Israel shepherds were looked on as outcasts. Their work not only made them ceremonially unclean, but it kept them away from the temple for weeks at a time so that they could not be made clean. So God showed His grace to *all* men by appearing to the shepherds first.
- 3) The Messiah came to be both the Good Shepherd (John 10) and the Lamb of God sacrificed for the sins of the world (John 1:29).



5. What was Mary's response after the shepherds left? Luke 2:19 _____
6. What do you suppose Mary was thinking about? _____
7. Why was Jesus taken to the Temple the first time? Exodus 13:1-2, 12-13; Leviticus 12:3; Luke 2:22-24 _____
8. What did Simeon prophesy about Mary? Luke 2:35 _____

9. When was this prophecy fulfilled? John 19:25-27 _____

WISE MEN FROM THE EAST

Read Matthew 2:1-18

1. Did the Magi find Jesus in the same place where shepherds found Jesus?

Luke 2:16; Matthew 2:11 _____

The gifts of the Magi were very costly gifts. They may have been the source of Joseph's income for the next several months. But the special gifts also had another significance:

- 1) The **gold** was a sign that this young Child was a King, the King of the Universe.
- 2) The **frankincense** was incense used in the Temple. It pictured prayers going up to God. So frankincense was a sign that this young Child was Deity (He was God.).
- 3) **Myrrh** was used in burying people. This pointed to the future death of this Child.

During this time in history the people did not have the entire Word of God in writing, so God often revealed His plans to people by dreams and visions. God gave Joseph three dreams.

FIRST DREAM:

3. What was Joseph's first dream? Matthew 2:13-14 _____

4. What do these verses say about Joseph's character? _____

5. How did this event fit into God's overall plan? Matthew 2:15 _____

Has God ever asked you to do something that went against your usual way of doing things? I remember when God called me to serve Him. It went against the way I was brought up. I had to decide if I was going to obey God or do what others thought I should do.

SECOND DREAM:

6. What was Joseph's second dream? Matthew 2:19-21 _____

THIRD DREAM:

7. What was Joseph's third dream? Matthew 2:22 _____

8. How did this event fit into God's plan? Matthew 2:23 _____

....AND JESUS GREW

Read Matthew 2:19-23 and Luke 2:41-51

1. Where did Joseph and Mary raise Jesus? Matthew 2:19-23 _____

2. How old was Jesus when He went to the temple the second time? Luke 2:42 _____

At this age, Jewish boys went through a ceremony called Bar Mitzvah. This was a time when young boys would be recognized as men. The boys would have become religiously responsible. They would have already been trained in the Old Testament law and been required to learn large portions of the Old Testament. There was also a special ceremony for girls.



3. What were Joseph and Mary's two reactions when they found the boy Jesus in the temple? Luke 2:48-50

A. _____

B. _____

The answer of Jesus showed that Mary and Joseph did not realize He should be about His Father's business. Now if Joseph were the father, he could have stepped up and said, "Well, what are you trying to do – get some carpenter work here in Jerusalem?" No, Jesus' Father was not Joseph. Jesus was speaking of the business of His heavenly Father. Mary, at this point, may not have exactly appreciated who He was and what His work entailed. Especially since Jesus was still a boy. But later the picture became clearer to Mary.

4. How do we know that Mary did have faith in what Jesus could do? John 2:1-5

MARY'S LIFE

1. Did Mary have other children after Jesus was born? Matthew 13:55-56; Luke 8:19-20

2. Who took care of Mary after Jesus was crucified? John 19:26-27 _____

This love action by Jesus shows that Joseph must have died before this time. The care of Mary had been the responsibility of Jesus, her oldest son.

Mary is now experiencing “*the sword*” that had been predicted years before by Simeon on Jesus’ first visit to the temple (See Luke 2:35). Mary’s silence at the cross is important to note – she knew this “man” on the cross of suffering was far more than her son. He was her Saviour! He was Immanuel – God with us!



3. Jesus arranged for the future care of His mother, even at the time of his greatest suffering. What does this say about Jesus?
-

Jesus assured Mary of his love, and he gave her to His disciple who was known to be the closest to Jesus. Whether that moment John took Mary away from the scene and took her home, we do not know. We do know that John cared for her. What an honor it was for John to take his Lord’s place in Mary’s life.

4. What was Mary doing the last time she is mentioned in Scripture? Acts 1:12-14
-

Mary was there as a member of the assembly, participating in worship and prayer along with the others. The center of their fellowship was the risen Christ, and all of them adored and magnified Him. No one was worshipping Mary!

5. Why do you think there is no record of Mary’s death and burial? _____
-

While Jesus was dying for the sins of the world,
He did not neglect His mother.
He was faithful in His duties as a son.

WHAT ABOUT ME?

1. If God asked you to obey Him in a way that might be misunderstood by your family and friends, would you still obey? _____

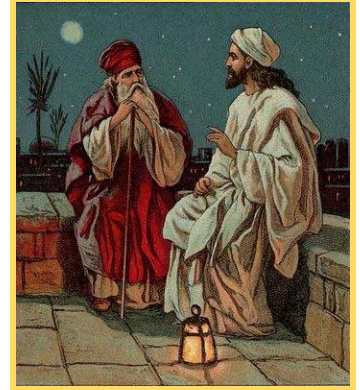
2. Has that happened to you already? If so, tell about it in five sentences or less:

LESSON 4

NICODEMUS

A Jewish leader with a special interest

During the life of Christ, many different people from different walks of life were attracted to Jesus. Some came on their own and others were called by Jesus to be with Him. Some were brought to Jesus by others. Even though Jesus' public ministry was limited to a little more than three years, He was never too busy to deal with one person at a time. Nicodemus was one of those people.



Read the story of Nicodemus meeting with Jesus in John 3:1-21.

1. What was the position of Nicodemus? John 3:1 _____

In the time of Nicodemus, there were two main groups in the Jewish religion: the *Pharisees* and the *Sadducees*. The Pharisees emphasized the importance of obeying the Old Testament Jewish law. Each rite and ceremony was to be observed in the exact correct way. They were arrogant men who separated themselves from the common people. They did believe in life after death and they did believe in angels and spirits. As elders, the *Pharisees* believed the only way to please God was to follow the traditions they set up.

The *Sadducees* did not believe in life after death nor did they believe in the existence of angels and spirits. They rejected the traditions of the elders.

2. In the Table below, in the right column write:

- 1) **names** the Pharisees were called by Jesus or His followers or
- 2) **descriptions** of the Pharisees given by Jesus or His followers.

These passages show what Jesus' attitude was toward those who were appearing religious, but still had a sin filled heart. The first one is completed for you.

Matthew 3:7	“Brood of vipers”
Matthew 15:1-9	
Matthew 23:1-4	
Matthew 23:5-7	
Matthew 23:13-14	
Matthew 23:16-17, 33	
Luke 7:30	
Luke 18:10-14	

A DARK ENCOUNTER

1. When did Nicodemus come to Jesus? (John 3:2) _____

Some think Nicodemus came to see Jesus under cover of darkness because he was embarrassed or ashamed that he, as one of the ruling class, was curious about Jesus. Or could it be that other Pharisees would take his position away if they knew he was asking Jesus questions? Or some have suggested that it was just cooler at night. Or maybe evening was just quieter and there were fewer interruptions.

2. There may be several reasons why he came at that time of day. Why do you think Nicodemus came at that time? _____

3. What did Nicodemus already know about Jesus? (John 3:2) _____

4. What does this say about Nicodemus' belief about Jesus? _____

Nicodemus was set apart from the crowd that was usually around Jesus. Our Lord didn't trust the mob because he knew their faith was not genuine. But He knew Nicodemus was a genuine seeker. Jesus knows the mind and heart of all people.

JESUS TURNS ON A LIGHT

1. How did Jesus reply to Nicodemus? John 3:3 _____

The Greek word for "*again*" is "*another*" which means "*from above*".
But Nicodemus could only think of a physical birth.

2. Why was Nicodemus confused? John 3:4 _____

Jesus was not speaking of a physical birth at all. He was speaking about a spiritual birth. But Nicodemus could not understand about a spiritual birth. He did not have the spiritual ability to understand it while his heart was still blinded by sin.

3. What two births are required in order to enter the kingdom of God? (John 3:5)

“born of _____ and the _____”.



When a baby is in the mother’s womb, it is surrounded and protected by a bag of water. Before the baby is born, that bag of water is broken. This is a physical birth.

In Spiritual birth it is the Holy Spirit that gives us life.

4. Jesus gives Nicodemus a picture of a physical birth and a spiritual birth. (John 3:6)

“flesh gives birth to _____ but the _____ gives birth to _____.”

5. Every person who is born as *flesh* (physical birth) is born a sinner. Read Romans 5:12

When sin entered the world because of Adam’s sin, what did sin bring? _____

6. According to 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, because of Jesus Christ, death is swallowed by _____.

THE LIGHT FROM AFAR

Many times during Jesus’ time on earth, He referred to events in the Old Testament that were actually pictures of His coming to earth to die for us.

1. Read Numbers 21:5-9. What did Moses put on a pole so the people could be healed?

2. In John 3:14 & 15, how did Jesus explain this event to Nicodemus? What was the picture?

The serpent in the story in Numbers represented the sin of the people. On the cross Christ was made to be sin for us by bearing our sin there. Just like Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, the Son of Man (*Jesus Himself*) would be lifted up on the cross.

3. How did Jesus say we can be *born again* (born from above)? John 3:14-16 _____

NIGHTTIME VISIT – DAYTIME DEFENSE

Read John 7:14-52

In John 7 we see a lot of controversy about who Jesus really is. By this time the Jewish leaders wanted to kill Jesus. They saw Him as a threat to their authority. The temple guards were sent out to arrest Jesus, but instead they went back to the chief priests and the Pharisees without Him.

1. How did Nicodemus try to defend Jesus? (John 7:50-51) _____

Even though Nicodemus is still one of the Pharisees, he defends Jesus.

2. In John 7:52 what questions did the Pharisees ask Nicodemus, trying to make fun of him?

This was like city people making fun of country people. The Pharisees looked down on anyone who was from Galilee.

AN ACT OF LOYALTY AT NIGHT

Read John 19:38-42

That nighttime visit between Jesus and Nicodemus changed the life of Nicodemus. We see that especially after Jesus was crucified. Most of the disciples of Jesus were in hiding, fearing for their lives.

1. What courageous action did Nicodemus do to show his love for Jesus? John 19:38-42.

The first time we read about Nicodemus, he is visiting Jesus at night. The last time we read about Nicodemus it again is at night. He is helping Joseph of Arimathea lovingly remove Jesus from the cross, wrapping Him in grave clothes and placing Him in Joseph's new tomb.

WHAT ABOUT ME?

1. Are there times when you want to hide the fact that you are a Christian? _____

2. When do you feel the most confident to say you are a Christian? _____

3. Was there a time when you needed to defend the name of Jesus? _____

4. If there was a time, write 3 sentences about it: _____

It would be very helpful to you if you would get together with someone else and share what spoke to you from this lesson. Then take time to pray for each other

LESSON 5

PETER – THE APOSTLE

A fisherman with a dynamic personality



Have you ever been friends with someone who “put their foot in their mouth” over and over again as they spoke without thinking? Do you know a person who is impulsive, acting before thinking? Have you seen a fearful person totally change into a bold, courageous individual? Peter was all of these! Can God use a person like this?

This lesson will reveal how God brings a person to maturity by using hard times in their lives. When times come that just don’t make sense, our Father gently teaches us how to walk by faith. While our life may consist of many ups and downs, God never forsakes His children. We are being held by His powerful hand.

WHAT’S IN A NAME?

Why do we choose to study this disciple first? Peter’s name stands first on each list of the twelve disciples of Jesus.

Read Matthew 10:2-4. Here Jesus’ twelve disciples are listed. What is the name just before Peter’s name? _____

That indicates the *chief*. This shows that Peter was their leader. We will see his leadership revealed as we study his life.

Many times a person is given a second name. Sometimes it is to poke fun at or to call attention to a certain characteristic. Sometimes these names are very cruel but sometimes they describe something special about that person. We will be studying such a person. We know him best by *Peter*, the name the Lord Jesus gave him.

By nature Peter was a very impulsive person. He could do nothing part way; it was all or nothing. Sometimes his heart ruled his head.

A CLOSER LOOK AT PETER



Read John 1:35-44

1. According to John 1:44, where was Peter’s hometown? _____

Peter’s hometown could be called *fishtown*. It was located northwest of the Sea of Galilee in a fertile plain of Gennesaret near Capernaum. Its name refers to the fishing quarters of that important town on the lake.

2. What miracle of Jesus happened at this same place? Luke 9:10-17 _____

3. Who first introduced Peter to Jesus? John 1:40 _____
4. What was Peter's name **before** he met Jesus? John 1:42 _____
5. What name did Jesus give Peter? John 1:42 _____

Cephas is Aramaic and Peter is the Greek translation of the same name.

There is no indication from Scripture that Peter became a follower of Jesus at that time. But he was aware of who Jesus was and of John the Baptist's teaching about Jesus. We will see later when he became a follower, or better known as a disciple of Jesus.

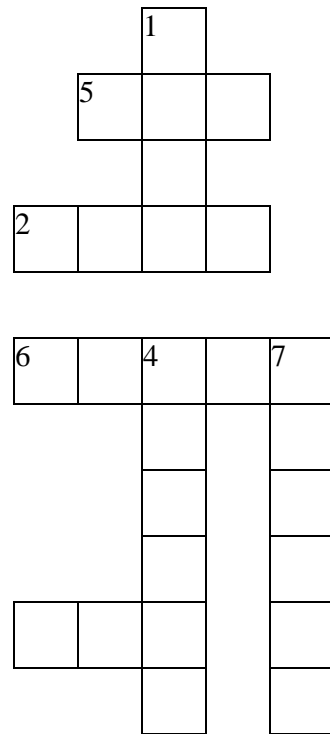
6. Read Luke 5:1-11. Fill in the crossword with correct answer:

ACROSS

2. In Luke 5:2 what was Peter washing?
3. Peter had a _____.
5. Jesus told the former fishermen that from now on they would catch _____.
6. Who was one of John's fishing partners? (not Peter)

DOWN

1. When Jesus called, they _____ everything and followed Him. Luke 5:11
4. In Mark 1:29-31 Peter's wife's _____ was healed by Jesus.
7. When John saw the miracle of Jesus, he saw himself as a _____ man.



“BUT MASTER,”

Read again Luke 5:1-11

When Jesus asked Simon (*Peter*) to go fishing again, Peter was faced with two problems.

1. Write the two problems below that Peter had to deal with.

a. Luke 5:2 _____

Nets needed to be washed to clean out the seaweeds and other things.

Then they needed to be stretched out to dry.

This would prevent them from rotting and breaking when they pulled in the fish.

b. Luke 5:5 _____

“BUT BECAUSE YOU SAY SO, I WILL...”

2. How did Jesus reward Peter for his obedience? Luke 5:6 _____

In order for Jesus to reward him, Peter had to first of all obey Jesus. **First**, Jesus asked Peter to move his boat into deeper water. Jesus would not have rewarded Peter if he had not been obedient. **Second**, he had to let down his net. Now Peter was an experienced fisherman who had learned his trade from his father. He knew when the best time was to catch fish and he had just washed his nets. He must have been surprised when Jesus took command of his boat and crew. After all, Jesus was a carpenter and what do carpenters know about fishing?



Have you ever had a time when obeying the Bible did not seem the logical thing to do? Peter had to exercise what little faith he had.

What is your response when the Bible asks you to do something that seems impossible? If we are obedient and if we trust Him, Jesus will reward us.

3. Peter’s response to Jesus in Luke 5:8-10 is much like a prophet in the Old Testament. Read

Isaiah 6:1-5. Peter said “*I am a sinful man!*” Isaiah said, “*I am _____* .”



The holiness of God could be called the “otherness” of God.
He stands apart from all others and far above what we can understand.
He stands in **total purity**. This purity reveals how sinful **we** are!

4. What is a sign that we are true followers of Jesus? Read John 14:15 and fill in the blanks.

Jesus is speaking: “If you _____ me, you will _____ what I _____.”

YOU WANT ME?

Every year high-school seniors apply to their favorite colleges or universities and then watch the mailbox for the letter announcing their acceptance.

It was different for teens in New Testament times. Jewish boys would often attend *rabbinical* schools until age 13. Then only the best and brightest would be chosen to “follow” the local *rabbi*. This small select group of disciples would go where he went and eat what he ate – modeling their lives after the rabbi. Those who didn’t “make the “cut” would pick up a trade like carpentry, sheep-herding or fishing.

When Jesus offered His invitation to a fisherman like Simon Peter, people around may have raised their eyebrows! But Jesus doesn’t look for the right education or the “proper” appearance. Jesus looks at a person’s heart. And only He can know a person from the inside out.

A “disciple” is a learner. He is one who follows a teacher and learns his wisdom. Jesus had many disciples when He first began to preach. But a lot of them quit following after a while.



Peter was very much in the centre of everything from the time Jesus called him until his death. Just like each of us, Peter had many good qualities and just as many bad qualities that needed to be corrected. There were many ups and downs in Peter’s life. We will point out some as we go through this lesson.

Peter had witnessed many of the miracles that Jesus had performed. After Jesus had fed more than 5,000 people with only five loaves and two fish, Jesus had His disciples get into a boat and go to Bethsaida.

1. After feeding the 5,000, why did Jesus leave the crowd of people? John 6:14-15

Jesus did not come to set up an earthly kingdom and free the Jews from Roman rule. He came to free us all from Satan’s rule. To resist the wishes of the crowd, He went up on a mountain to pray.

Even the ordinary and the outcast can
“make the cut” to follow Jesus.

Read Matthew 14:22-33

2. As the disciples were crossing the lake, what happened? Matthew 14:22-24

3. Match the reference with the correct part of the story: (Matthew 14:22-32; Mark 6:45-50)

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| _____ Mark 6:48 | A. "Tell me to come to you on the water." |
| _____ Matthew 14:25 | B. When he saw the wind he was afraid – began to sink. |
| _____ Matthew 14:27 | C. Jesus saw the disciples straining at the oars. |
| _____ Matthew 14:27-29 | D. Jesus went out to them walking on the lake. |
| _____ Matthew 14:30 | E. "Take courage, it is I – don't be afraid." |

4. We are all afraid sometimes. What do you do to calm your fears? _____

Does Jesus know about your situation? Can He be trusted?

A command that is often repeated in the Bible is "*Fear not.*" When God tells us not to be afraid, He also tells us why we are not to be afraid. If you are troubled by fear, why not take time now to look up some verses on "*Fear not*" and see why God tells us not to fear. Here is a start for you.: Psalm 27:1; Psalm 46:1-3.



- 1) Faith is putting into action what God commands.
- 2) It is safe to fail because Jesus will not fail. He is always there. Failure does not mean that God has failed. He will not reject us.

Once again we see the impulsiveness of Peter. When trouble comes, we can do one of two things. We can look at the trouble and be filled with fear and doubt. Or, we can look to Jesus, who never takes His eyes off us.

5. If you had been with the disciples that day, would you have been in the boat, or would you have asked Jesus to let you come to Him? _____

WHAT IS AN APOSTLE?

Peter was a disciple – a follower and a learner of Jesus. Peter was also an *apostle*. An *apostle* is one who is ‘*sent forth with a commission*’ by one with authority. So an apostle had a specific job to do. Jesus chose twelve apostles.

1. Read Acts 1:31-32 and circle one requirement of an apostle of Jesus Christ.

Must be religious

Must have witnessed Jesus’ resurrection

Must have a good education

Must be well-liked by others

2. There are people today who claim to be apostles. But according to the above requirement from Scripture, could there be apostles of Jesus alive today? _____

3. Read Matthew 10:5-20. Every job has a *job description*. What was the *job description* Jesus gave to Peter and the other apostles?

A. Do not go among the _____

B. Go rather to the _____

C. Preach this message: “The kingdom of _____ _____ _____

D. Heal the _____

E. Raise the _____

F. Drive out _____

G. Do not take _____ or _____ or _____ in your belts.

H. Take no _____ for the journey.

I. No extra _____ or _____ or _____.

J. In each town stay at a _____ person’s house.

K. I am sending you out like _____ among _____.

Would you be willing to serve the Lord Jesus if your job description was as tough as this one?



“WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?”

Read Matthew 16:13-23

Jesus was spending some time alone with His disciples. They were in an area where people that were not Jews lived. In this area there were many different religions. It was a place of idolatry and oppression. But it was here that Jesus asked his followers two important questions. There were many people with lots of different ideas about who Jesus was. He asked His disciples who the people thought He was. They gave several opinions. Then Jesus asked them who they thought He was.

1. Who had Peter come to realize Jesus was? Matthew 16:16 _____

2. What two things are required for us to be saved, according to Romans 10:9-10?

1) “Confess with your mouth Jesus is _____....”

2) “believe in your heart that _____ raised Him from the _____, you shall be saved.”

Jesus wasn’t interested in His popularity rating. He wanted His followers to be sure about the One they were following.

Today the world around us is just as hostile and against Jesus as when He first asked the question: “Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?” Just like it was in Jesus’s day, people offer a long list of incorrect ideas about Jesus, ranging from “just a good teacher” all the way to “a person who divides” and “a person who is intolerant of others.”

Jesus said that God Himself gave Peter the correct answer. Jesus also declared Peter blessed because of his insight in knowing who Jesus really was.

This was a high point in Peter’s life. Again we see his good character.

3. What promise did Jesus make? Matthew 16:18 _____

The disciples, who were Jews, knew the *rock* as a symbol for God.

4. Read Deuteronomy 32:3-4 and fill in the blanks.

“I will proclaim the name of the _____. Oh, praise the greatness of our _____!

He is the _____, his works are perfect, and all his ways are just. A faithful _____

who does no _____, upright and _____ is He.”

We, as humans, want to win! We want to look good in front of others. Why? Because we are thinking of ourselves. But Jesus Christ was not thinking of Himself but of us! He came to buy us back from Satan's hold on us because of sin. Our human mind doesn't think that way but God's mind does. We only understand the crucifixion of Jesus when we view it with *spiritual eyes*.

A GLIMPSE THROUGH HEAVEN'S EYES

Read Luke 9:28-36

It was getting close to the time for Jesus to fulfill the purpose for which He came to earth. The time of His death was near. He wanted to help His disciples better understand who He really was and why He came. So He took three disciples with Him to the top of a mountain. God the Father was going to show His seal of approval on Peter's confession that Jesus is the Son of God.

1. What three disciples did Jesus take with Him up onto the mountain? Luke 9:28

2. As Jesus was praying, what two things changed about Him? Luke 9:29

1) _____

2) _____

3. What two men appeared "*in glorious splendor*" and were talking with Jesus? Luke 9:30

1) _____ and 2) _____

4. What were these three talking about? Luke 9:31 _____

5. What "great idea" did Peter blurt out this time, "*not knowing what he was saying?*" Luke 9:33

6. What did Peter and the other two disciples hear in the cloud? Luke 9:35 _____



Have you ever spoken before you took time to think? I know I have and I have regretted it many times. A verse that has helped me and that is my prayer is

Psalm 19:14.

*“May the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight,
O LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.”*

If you are having trouble in this area, take time to memorize this verse and use it as a prayer daily.

Peter’s thoughtless suggestion would put Moses and Elijah on an equal plane with Jesus Christ. Today many “religious” people list Buddha, Mohammed, Moses and Christ as founders of a religion. Jesus founded no religion and is above any man. Jesus died on a cross for the sins of the world. He is the one and only Savior and that is why we are not saved by religion. We are saved by the blood of Jesus Christ!

ARE YOU COMMITTED OR WILL YOU WALK AWAY?

Read John 6:60-70

1. During the middle part of Jesus’ ministry, there were great crowds following Jesus. They were called disciples but were not part of the 12 apostles. After one of Jesus’ talks, what happened?

John 6:60 _____

2. When Jesus responded, one of the things He said was: (John 6:61-64) *“The Spirit gives _____; the _____ counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are _____ and they are _____.* Yet there are some of you who do not believe.”

3. Have you tried to tell someone about Jesus dying for their sins, but they just don’t “get it”?

Read 1 Corinthians 2:14 and fill in the blanks: *“The man without the _____ does not _____ the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are _____ To him, and he cannot _____ them, because they are _____ Discerned (recognized).”*

So how is it possible for an unbeliever to understand the way to be saved? In John 6:44 Jesus says, *“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, ...”* We can ask God to pull that unsaved person’s heart to Himself. As they respond to God’s tug on their heart, He will open the unsaved person’s spiritual eyes so they can understand this all important news.

4. What did many people do? John 6:66 _____

Just because people followed Jesus around did not mean they were truly a believer in Jesus. Many thought that if they stayed close to this “new king”, they would be on the winning team. But when Jesus began to talk about suffering and death, many went back to the old life. They returned to their old dead religion and their old hopeless situation. Jesus Christ is “*the way*” (John 14:6), but they would not walk with Him. This was no surprise to the Lord, because He knows the hearts of all people.

5. What question did Jesus ask His disciples in John 6:66-67? _____

6. What was Peter’s response? John 6:68-69 _____

NOTHING....OR....ALL!

Read John 13:1-17

Jesus was preparing His apostles for His death and resurrection. They were eating the Passover meal together. It was the night before Jesus was crucified. Peter and the other apostles still had so much to learn from Jesus. The lesson for this evening was all about *right attitudes*. Even though Peter made some great statements about who Jesus was, he needed an attitude adjustment. Let’s learn what wrong attitude he had, what the results were, and what he did about it.

In New Testament times, the main mode of transportation was by foot over the dusty roads. So it was customary that when a person would enter someone’s home, the lowest servant was to wash the feet of everyone who entered.



1. John 13:1 says Jesus “*loved his own who were in the world,*” and He now wanted to show them what? Fill in the blanks. “...*the _____ of His _____.*”

2. Jesus was confident in what three truths about Himself? John 13:3

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

3. From John 13:4-5, describe what shocking thing Jesus began to do. _____



Jesus was doing something that any one of the apostles should have done. Jesus took off His outer clothing – the clothing that showed He was a teacher. Then He wrapped a towel around His waist, which showed He was a humble servant.

4. What was Peter's reaction? John 13:6-8

5. Why do you think Peter reacted this way? What were the apostles talking about on the way to the Passover meal? Luke 22:24 _____

6. What attitude did all the apostles need to have adjusted? _____

7. Proverbs 11:2 and 16:18. List four results that follow this attitude: List these results below:

1) _____ 3) _____

2) _____ 4) _____

8. What did Jesus tell Peter in verse 8 of John 13? *Unless I wash you, you have no _____*
_____."

9. When Peter understood what the choice was, what did he say? John 13:9 "*...not just my feet*
But my _____ and my _____ as well!"

At first Peter pulls his feet up. But when the Lord says He won't have fellowship with him, then Peter sticks out his feet – big old fisherman's feet. And he holds out his hands – and they must have been calloused hands. He even held down his head for Jesus to wash! If it means fellowship with Jesus, Peter wants all he can get of that.

Jesus had another lesson for the apostles and us to learn. The Lord is teaching that when we came to Jesus at the cross, we were washed all over and made clean. Our sins were washed away! But as we walk through this sinful world, we get dirty with sin in our daily life. When we are disobedient to God's Word, sin gets into our lives and we get dirty. Jesus says that we

cannot have fellowship with Him if we are dirty. So the washing of the feet is the cleansing in order to make fellowship with God possible again. In order to “have our feet washed” we must tell God about our sin and ask for His forgiveness. 1 John 1:9 was written to Christians, those who have already had their complete washing

10. Read 1 John 1:9 and fill in the table below:

<u>What I need to do:</u>	<u>What God is and what He does:</u>
1) Confess my sin.	1) _____
	2) _____
	3) _____

“I DON’T KNOW WHAT YOU’RE TALKING ABOUT!”

Read Mark 14:43-72

Have you watched someone respond badly in a difficult situation? Have you commented, “Boy, I would never do that! Doesn’t he see what he’s doing?” Sometimes when we claim we can stand up to a test, we soon find ourselves in a big mess. That is where Peter found himself.

1. What had Peter’s bold statement been in Matthew 26:31-35? Fill in the blanks:

Peter replied, “*Even if _____ fall away on account of You, I _____.*”

2. What was Jesus’ reply? (26:34) Fill in the blanks: “*...this very night, _____ the rooster _____, you will _____ me _____ times.*”



When Jesus was arrested and put on trial for His life, His followers were in great danger. Remember how Peter was a man of many words? This time Peter’s talking too much got him into trouble again. His speech gave him away.

3. Did Jesus’ words come true? Mark 14:66-72 _____

4. Did Jesus know what Peter did? Luke 22:61 _____

5. How did Peter feel right then? Luke 22:62 _____

Peter loved Jesus and he was sincere when he promised to be loyal to Him. But Peter did not know his own weakness. Peter cried tears of real sorrow.

JESUS CHOOSES A WEAK MAN....AGAIN

Read Mark 16:1-7

Jesus did not reject Peter because of his sin.

1. The angel inside the tomb told the women to go tell _____ and _____ that Jesus was alive. Mark 16:7
2. Peter was just one of the twelve apostles. Why do you think the angel named *Peter* separately?

3. According to 1 Corinthians 15:3-5, to whom did Jesus appear first? _____

Read John 21:1-18

Jesus had already appeared to the eleven (remember Judas was no longer with them) apostles several times after His resurrection. In Matthew 28:7 Jesus had told the eleven men to meet Him in Galilee.

4. What was Peter doing? John 21:2-3 _____
5. What two miracles did Jesus perform? John 21:6, 12-13
 - A. _____
 - B. _____

When you have broken someone's trust, it is very hard to get their trust in you back again. Peter must have been wondering how he would ever again be trusted to work for Jesus.

6. What did Jesus ask Peter to do that showed He would trust Peter again? John 21:15-17

Jesus was again trusting Peter with a very important job. He knew Peter's heart. Jesus made it clear to Peter that the most important thing in serving Him is loving Him. When we love Jesus the way we should, we will be serving Him.

A PROMISE FULFILLED – A CHANGED MAN!

Read Acts 2:1-41

1. What did Jesus say His apostles would receive after He had returned to heaven? Acts 1:8

2. Who would bring this to them? _____

3. When did Jesus fulfill His promise? Acts 2:1-4 _____

It is very important to notice that the Holy Spirit was not seen. But He made His presence known in two ways. The people who had gathered, not only **heard the sound** but they also **saw the tongues of fire**. The same Holy Spirit is in us today (as God's children) to make us more effective witnesses for Christ. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Christ, not Himself and not us (John 15:26 and John 16:13-14).

4. Who was the first to explain what was happening? Acts 2:14 _____

5. How was God honored by Peter's boldness through the power of the Holy Spirit?

Acts 2:37-41. _____

Is this the same man who was afraid around the campfire when Jesus was on trial? Is this the same fearful guy that sank in the water because he saw the wind and the storm?

6. Who gave Peter the power that made all the difference? _____

7. Who gives us the power to tell others how to have all their sins forgiven?

TRUSTED TO SHOW GOD'S POWER

Read Acts 3:1-11

A name carries more weight than only identification. It can also carry with it authority, reputation and power. When somebody says, "You can use my name!" you sincerely hope that name is worth using. The name of the Lord Jesus has *all authority* behind it because He is the Son of God.

1. In Matthew 28:18, how much authority did Jesus tell His disciples was given to Him?

2. What name and whose authority did Peter use to heal the crippled beggar? Acts 3:4-7

3. From this scripture, do you think God had rejected Peter because of the times when Peter was a disappointment to Him? _____

Read Acts 4:1-21

The early church in the book of Acts had none of the “advantages” that some ministries in North America depend on today. They did not have money provided by wealthy donors. Their pastors did not have credentials from famous schools. But others could see that they “had been with Jesus!” They also did not have the approval of the political figures of the day. Most of their ministers had been put in jail at one time or another for preaching that Jesus was truly the Messiah.

So what was the secret to the success of the early church? The Christians spent time in prayer and God heard and answered their prayers.

4. How did the Jewish religious leaders feel about the events of the last few days? Acts 4:1-3

5. What two things did people recognize about Peter when he faced persecution? Acts 4:13

A. _____

B. _____

6. How is this different from the Peter we studied in Mark 14:66-68? _____

7. Name one *evidence* in your life that shows you spend time with Jesus? _____

8. How did Peter handle threats against their witnessing?

A. Acts 4:18-21 _____

B. Acts 5:28-29 _____

Peter refused to be intimidated by the threats of the authorities. All of us need to follow Peter's example and make our decisions on the basis of "Is it right before God?" and not "Is it popular?" or "Does it guarantee my safety?" This is another reason we need to know God's Word – to know what is right before Him.

9. When they were being threatened by officials, what did these early Christians ask God for?

Acts 4:29 _____

10. In this same situation, what would you have asked God for? _____

11. How did God show that He approved of what the apostles were doing? Acts 4:31

God's answer was to shake the place where they were meeting and to fill the people once again with the Spirit of God (Acts 4:31). This gave them the boldness that they needed to continue to serve God in spite of official opposition. This was a filling of the Holy Spirit to equip the believers to serve the Lord and minister to the people.

12. What is another way that shows that the Holy Spirit led Peter? Acts 5:1-11

Leading in a church can be very difficult at times. In this story of Ananias and Sapphira, God gave special insight to Peter so he would know that this couple was not being honest before God. Every church leader needs to seek God for insights on how to deal with people in specific situations.

ANGEL ALARM CLOCK

Read Acts 12:1-19

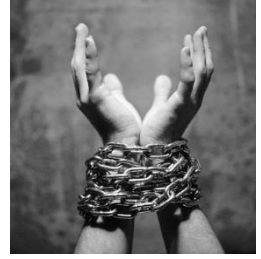
Imagine waking up to a miracle and having an angel for your alarm clock! That is what happened to Peter when he was in prison for the third time.

1. What disturbing news does verse 2 tell us? _____

Although this news is quietly stated in the story, we know that this must have been a great sorrow for Peter. So many times in the gospels (*Matthew – John*) Jesus is said to have taken with Him Peter, James and John. Obviously they were close friends and comrades as they followed Jesus.

2. Why was Peter put in prison? Acts 12:1-4 Complete the statements below:

- * King _____ was on a rampage against the church. Verse 1
- * The _____ were pleased when he beheaded James. Verse 3
- * Obviously the king saw arresting Peter as a popular political move.



3. What was happening outside of the prison while Peter was in prison?

Acts 12:5 _____



The phrase "*but the church was earnestly praying*" is a turning point in this story.

4. Never underestimate the power of prayer. Read James 5:16, the last part. Fill in the blanks:

"...*The prayer of a _____ man is _____ and _____.*"

5. In Acts 12:6 what do we find Peter doing? _____

This is certainly not the most restful, peaceful place for Peter! But Peter had been in the boat when Jesus calmed the winds and the waves (Matthew 8:23-27). He must have known that Jesus was in the midst of this storm, also. As Peter committed the entire situation to the Lord, God gave him peace and rest.

I wonder if God was bringing scriptures from the Old Testament to Peter as he slept, chained to two guards.

6. Read Psalm 4:8 and fill in the blanks:

"*I will lie down and sleep in peace, for _____, O Lord, make me dwell in _____.*"

7. Who woke up Peter? _____

8. Match the scriptures with other times angels helped Christians:

_____ Acts 5:19

_____ Acts 8:26

_____ Acts 10: 3&7

A. Told Cornelius to send for Peter.

B. Brought apostles out of jail.

C. Told Philip to go to the desert road for ministry.

9. When the angel led Peter right past the soldiers and out of prison, what was Peter thinking?

10. Where did Peter go after the angel left him? _____

11. Did Rhoda swing open the door and let Peter in? Acts 12:13-15 Explain: _____

12. What happened to the soldiers the next morning when it was discovered that Peter had disappeared? _____

According to church history, Peter eventually went to Rome. When he went to Rome and how long he worked there is not known. Peter was martyred during the reign of Nero. Tortellini, an ancient Christian writer says that Peter was crucified. Eusebius, an early Church historian, adds that he suffered on the cross with his head downwards, at his own request.

Peter, the “fragile stone”, reminds us that no amount of personal strength or talent can make us strong enough for this life and its challenges. Only as we rest in the strength of Jesus Christ will we experience Him putting His strength in us. Take time to read Philippians 4:13. This is a good verse to memorize. When we admit how weak we are and how dependent we are on Him, then Christ’s strength can give us the power we need for the troubles that life throws our way.

PETER’S LAST WORDS

Just days before his death, Gandhi wrote, “All about me is darkness; I am praying for light.” By contrast, evangelist D. L. Moody’s last recorded words were, “This is my triumph; this is my coronation day! It is glorious!” In both cases, their last words showed how they viewed their life, their death and everything in between.

The book of 2 Peter is the last book Peter wrote before his death. 2 Peter 1:3-4 sums up so much of what Peter learned and experienced in his life.

*“His divine _____ has given us everything we need for _____ and
godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and _____.*

*Through these He has given us His very great and precious _____, so that through them
you may participate in the divine nature and _____ the _____ in the world
caused by _____.”*

Peter received that “*divine power*” on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit was first given. We now receive this same Holy Spirit when we become Christians. The same power to be bold and courageous is ours today when we go through hard times or when we tell others the Good News about Jesus.

WHAT ABOUT ME

1. How quick are you in obeying the Word of God? Is there an issue in your life that God is speaking to you about, but you have not yet given it completely to God? If so, please take time to read Psalm 37:3-5 and Proverbs 3:5-7.

What do these verses tell you? _____

2. If there is something you are trying to hide from God, why not go to Him in prayer and confess it so you can have peace. Remember the promise in 1 John 1:9.
3. Are you as bold as Peter when it comes to witnessing for Jesus? If you are ashamed to tell others about Jesus, remember what Jesus said in Mark 8:38. If you are having trouble with fear, remember the promise Jesus made in Acts 1:8.

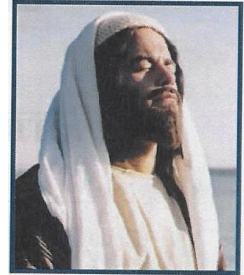
Jesus gives us _____.

LESSON 6

JOHN – THE APOSTLE

“The disciple whom Jesus loved.”

As we study a few of the disciples of Jesus, we see that each man was an unlikely candidate for Christian service. If he was running for board member of our church, he may not have gotten our vote! However, to see these common men be chosen to serve the Lord should be encouraging for us. If there is hope for them, then there is still hope for even us to serve our heavenly Father.



According to the New Testament, John was one of the leading figures in shaping the course of Christianity. He did this by leadership in the early Church, his writings and his missionary work and pastoring at least one church. Some of the books he wrote were: the Gospel of John, 1, 2, 3 John and Revelation.

WHAT’S IN A NAME?

John was once a common name among the Jews of Jesus’ time. Four men by the name John appear in the New Testament:

- John, the father of Simon Peter,
- John the Baptist,
- John Mark,
- ✓ John, the brother of James, whose father was Zebedee.
- ✓ This is the John we will be learning about.

1. What other name did Jesus give to John and his brother James? Mark 3:17 _____
2. Although we will find that John was referred to as the apostle of love, he did not begin with that kind of reputation. Neither did John’s brother, James.

Match the scriptures below with the event that showed the “*thunder*” part of John (and his brother James).

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| _____ Mark 9:38-41 | A. They wanted Jesus to allow them to have fire sent down from heaven to destroy people who would not welcome Jesus. |
| _____ Luke 9:51-55 | B. They boldly asked Jesus to let them sit on His right or left hand in glory. (<i>special places of honor</i>) |
| _____ Mark 10:35-39 | C. Told a man to stop driving out demons in the name of Jesus because he was not a part of their group. |



What's the Difference Between a Disciple and an Apostle?

Disciple: One who learns by doing (*an apprentice*) *Jesus had many.*

Apostle: One who is sent on official service with a commission.
(*An ambassador*) *Jesus chose only twelve.*

ANOTHER FOLLOWER FROM THE SEA

Read Matthew 4:18-22

1. What was John's occupation before he met Jesus? Matthew 4:21

2. What did Jesus want him to do? Mark 1:19-20

3. When John followed Jesus, he left more than his boat and occupation. What else was left behind? Matthew 4:20-22

4. Since John was willing to do this, how does this show he felt about Jesus? _____

5. Read Matthew: 8:18-22. How is this disciple's response different from the response of John?

NOTE: This was not a request to attend a funeral, as the father was still living. This man was saying, "I will serve Jesus when my parents have passed away and not before."



A CALLING TO JOIN A UNIQUE GROUP

1. What did Jesus do before calling the 12 apostles? Luke 6:12 _____

2. What does James 1:5-8 tell us to do when we need direction? _____

3. The apostles were given power and authority from Jesus to: See Luke 9:1-6

- A. Drive out all _____
- B. Cure _____
- C. Preach the _____ Word.
- D. Heal the _____

JOHN'S LOYALTY

1. What special request did Jesus ask of John and Peter? Luke 22:7-13 _____

-
- A. What instructions did Jesus give John and Peter to help them with His request? A. He told them they would meet a man carrying a _____ of _____ as they entered Jerusalem.
 - B. They were to follow him to the _____.
 - C. They were to speak to the _____.
 - D. They would ask the owner, "The Teacher asks: Where is the _____ where I may eat the _____ with my disciples?"
 - E. This man would show Peter and John a large _____ room.
 - F. This room would be all _____.

Peter and John would have no trouble finding the man with the water pitcher, because usually only women carried pitchers of water. Although we are not given the name of the "owner of the house," this man was a disciple of Jesus who made his house available to the Master for His last Passover. It may be that when Jesus was in Jerusalem at an earlier time, He made arrangements with this man to use his room sometime. Jesus was now sending Peter and John to let him know that this was the time Jesus needed to use his room.

The way the Lord made preparations for this Passover feast shows that He knew there was a plot to take His life. Jesus, being God, knows all things. So arranging for the place in this way meant that until the disciples arrived at the Upper Room, only Jesus, Peter and John know where the feast would be held. If Judas Iscariot had known, he might have been tempted to inform the authorities. But Jesus needed this special night with His twelve disciples .

2. As mentioned earlier, the apostle John wrote the Gospel of John, the fourth book in the New Testament. In this book, John had a unique way of referring to Himself. At times he would write, “*The disciple who Jesus loved.*” Match the following verses with the scripture passage where John referred to himself in this way.

Where does it say John was at this time? Match the passage with the place.

- | | |
|---------------------|---|
| _____ John 13:18-27 | A. Following Peter and Jesus as they talked. |
| _____ John 21:1-9 | B. Passover Supper – when Peter told John to ask Jesus who would betray Him. |
| _____ John 21:17-21 | C. In a fishing boat – when John told Peter it was the Lord who was on shore. |

3. What evidence is there showing John had some religious training?

A. John 18:15-16 _____

It is believed that “the other disciple” was probably John, since Peter and John were usually together. John apparently had an “in” with those in Jerusalem and this made it possible for him to get a pass for someone else to come in. It is evident that John must have been known in these circles.

B. John 19:24 & 36-37 _____

The quoting of the Old Testament scriptures shows that John was familiar with the Old Testament. Though *only* a fisherman, he studied the scriptures carefully.

4. What special responsibility did Jesus give to John? John 19:26-27 _____



Jesus assured Mary of His love and He gave His choicest disciple to be her adopted son. John took Mary home and cared for her. Even while Jesus was performing the great work of redemption, He was faithful, as the oldest son, to His responsibility of caring for His mother.

AFTER THE RESURRECTION

Read John 20:1-9

1. How did John respond when he saw the empty tomb? John 20:8 (Here John refers to himself as “*the other disciple.*” _____)

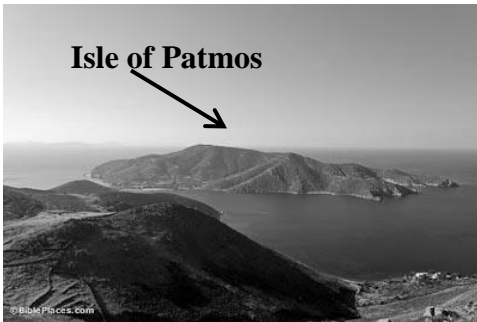
2. What misunderstanding did the other apostles have about John? John 21:20-23 _____

3. John recorded the life of Jesus. What does he want our response to be when we read this book?

John 19:35: “...and he testifies so that _____ also may _____.

John 20: 30-31 “But these are written that you may _____ that Jesus is the _____, the Son of _____, and that by _____ you may have life in His _____.”

EXILED BY MEN, ENLIGHTENED BY GOD



We have studied how James and Peter as well as others were martyred for preaching that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God. John also suffered for preaching the name of Jesus. He was exiled to the island of Patmos, an island in the Greek Dodecanese Islands. This island measures 30 miles around. This abandoned island was used as a place of exile for prisoners.

Here John wrote to people threatened with persecution for their faith. They probably weren't too eager to move into the future. These Christians needed to know that God controls whatever happens here on earth. God met John in an unusual way and gave him a glimpse of things that would happen in the world in the future. Because John wrote these things down, we now have the book of Revelation. To help the persecuted Christians of his day and to help us face what lies ahead, John painted a picture of our ultimate future as the children of God.

Read Revelation 1:1-20

1. How did God choose to tell John what would take place in the future? Rev. 1:1

2. Do we need to be in one specific place for God to speak to us? _____

3. According to verse 3, how are we supposed to respond to this book?

1) We are to _____ it.

2) We are to t_____ h_____ what is written in it.

4. Why does John say he was on the Island of Patmos? _____

5. When John first heard a sound behind him, how did it sound? _____

As the waves beat upon the quiet shore, this certainly got John's attention. He was not alone! His Master, whom he had followed for three years, was right there with him.

6. How did Jesus look when John saw Him? Finish the descriptions below from Revelation 1:

- Dressed in a _____. Verse 13
- The robe reached to His _____. Verse 13
- A _____ around his _____. Verse 13
- His head and hair were _____ like _____ and _____. Verse 14
- Eyes like _____. Verse 14
- Feet like _____ glowing in a _____. Verse 15
- Voice like the sound of _____. Verse 15
- Face like the _____ shining in all its _____. Verse 16

7. According to Revelation 7:16: In the presence of God, Christians will "*Never again*"...

1) h_____ 2) t_____

8. In Revelation 7:17, John says that God will wipe away what from our eyes? _____

As we face what lies ahead, we can count on these promises. Hope in the God of all our tomorrows gives us positive thoughts about the future and that hope gives us strength for today.

WHAT ABOUT ME?

1. Jesus prayed all night before choosing the twelve apostles who would carry out His commands.

What do you do before making important decisions? _____

2. Do you truly feel unconditionally loved by Jesus? _____

Whether we **feel** loved or not, God tells us He loves us.

3. 1 John 4:19 (Fill in the blanks).

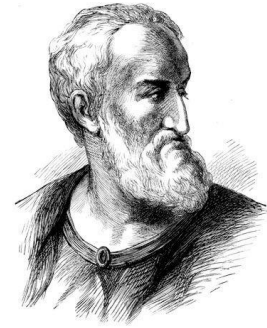
“We _____ because He _____ us.”

4. According to these verses, did God wait for us to be *lovable*? (To become the kind of person who is easy to love). _____

LESSON 7

ANDREW – THE APOSTLE

A man with a quiet ministry



A well-known business leader commented on the winners and the losers in his profession. “The winners fly with eagles”, he said, “and the losers run with turkeys.” When Jesus selected the small group to trust with His mission in the world, the men appeared to be anything but “eagles”. Jesus knew that by His power and grace they could soar, but first He had to teach them to fly together.

What a strange mix! There was Peter, hot-headed and crude at times, John and his brother James were “sons of thunder,” ready to call down fire from heaven on any unaccepting individuals. **Andrew was ordinary and believing.** He appeared to be a follower of Jesus that was not in the spotlight. He was committed to being loyal and to bringing others to follow Jesus.

WHAT’S IN A NAME?

Andrew is a Greek name meaning “manly”. He had strength of character and a helpfulness on which the others could always rely. According to John 1:44, Andrew came from Bethsaida. But at the time of Jesus’ ministry he had made his home in Capernaum where he was in a fishing partnership business with James and John, the sons of Zebedee.

ANDREW – A PEOPLE PERSON

Come Meet the Lamb of God!

1. Who first introduced Andrew to Jesus? John 1:35-40 _____

NOTE: Andrew was a disciple of John the Baptist before he became a disciple of Jesus.

2. Who did Andrew introduce to Jesus? John 1:42 _____

It seems from the Bible, that the people Andrew brought to Jesus were noticed more than Andrew was noticed. But this did not stop Andrew from following and serving Jesus. Remember, Jesus knows our hearts. Those who serve God behind the scenes will receive rewards for their service the same as those who are in front and who may be leaders. All of us are needed, no matter what the job or the personality of the server. It is all a matter of heart attitude!

3. What was Andrew's occupation? Matthew 4:18 _____

4. What is the first recorded miracle that Andrew witnessed? Mark 1:29-31 _____

Andrew must have been thrilled to see this happen, as his brother, Peter, must have been so worried. This miracle influenced Andrew's life in a personal way. Although Andrew's name is not mentioned in many other miracles, Andrew must have witnessed most of the miracles that Jesus did because he was one of the apostles who followed Jesus during His earthly ministry.

ANDREW – A MOTIVATED HELPER

Read John 6:5-13

1. What problem did the apostles face in these verses? Fill in the blanks:

Too many _____ and not enough _____



2. With this problem there were four solutions, three of which were not an option:

1) In Mark 6:35-36, what was the apostles' suggestion? _____

2) The second "solution" was addressed by Philip in John 6:5-7. Philip was saying, "If only we had more _____."

3) The third "solution" came from Andrew – although he wasn't sure how this would solve the problem. John 6:8-9 _____

4) The fourth solution came from Jesus. What did Jesus do? _____

3. Who was asking to see Jesus in John 12:20-22? _____

4. Who approached Jesus with the request? _____ and _____

Both Andrew and Philip appeared to be quite active, busy men, but they were not leaders in the group of apostles as some of the others were. It seems Andrew and Philip had a close relationship, as we see Philip going to Andrew about the people wanting to see Jesus. Then they went together to ask Jesus.

5. Where do we find Andrew the last time he is mentioned in the Bible? Acts 1:12-14

6. What was Andrew doing “*constantly*”, along with the other ten apostles? _____

Satan would have loved to bring division into this beautiful group of humble people! But we don't find the apostles arguing over who had accomplished the most for Jesus or who was the most popular in the group. There was a wonderful unity that bound them together in Christ. Their leader was no longer with them. But Jesus had left the Holy Spirit to comfort them, teach them, and give them power.

Little is known of Andrew's later history. The church historian Eusebius records that Andrew preached in Scythia, an area which is now Russian territory between the Black and Caspian Seas.

From other historical writings it is believed that Andrew helped start a church in Constantinople, in Turkey. He also went to Achaia, in Greece, to preach. The governing official in that area was very angry at not being able to stop Andrew from preaching. So he ordered Andrew to join him in sacrificing to the heathen gods. When Andrew refused, the governor ordered that Andrew be severely whipped and then crucified. To make Andrew's death slower and more torturous, he was fastened to the cross, not with nails, but with cords. After hanging for two days, praising and telling other Christians to hang on to their faith, it is said that Andrew died on November 30. The year of his death is not known.

The cross upon which Andrew was crucified was in the form of an “X” and has become known as “St. Andrew's cross”.

WHAT ABOUT ME?

1. How do you feel when others get noticed and you seem to be forgotten? If you need encouragement in this, remember the promises of God found in 1 Corinthians 15:58:

"...because you know that your _____ is not in _____."

Hebrews 6:10. *"God is not _____. He will not forget your _____ and the _____ you have shown Him as you have helped His _____ and continue to help them."*

2. What are you doing to bring people to Jesus? You too can be an Andrew. Many times we have different excuses but that does not excuse us from obeying the command of Jesus in Acts 1:8.

We are to be Christ's _____.

3. How obedient are you to the things God is talking to you about? Are you remaining faithful as you are watching and waiting for Christ's return? What does Christ say about this in Matthew 24:36,42,44?

**"No one knows about that day or hour, not even the _____ in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." Note: The Son did not know while He was in an earthly body.*

**"Therefore, keep _____ because you do not know on what _____ your Lord will come."*

**"So you also must be ready, because the Son of Man will come at an _____ when you do not _____ Him."*

If you are struggling with any of these things, please write us, email us, or call us on our toll free number 1-866-70TRIBE (708-7423). We would love to visit with you and encourage you in any way we can. Hope to hear from you soon.



God builds His church with different stones,
He makes each one belong,
All shapes and sizes fit in place,
To make the structure strong.

LESSON 8

MARTHA AND MARY

Two sisters with special abilities

Many times in a family we can see how the children are alike. Here are two sisters who were very different from one another. Even though they had different personalities, they were both gifted to serve Jesus. An important lesson we can learn is that having different abilities is not a bad thing. It is just different.

1. Who was Mary & Martha's brother? John 11:1-2 _____
2. Much of Jesus' ministry was going from place to place preaching and healing. He took His twelve apostles with Him. In those days there were no restaurants to eat in or hotels to sleep in. As Jesus traveled about, who supplied their needs for food and shelter?
Mark 15:40-41 Luke 8:1-3 _____

TWO KINDS OF SERVICE

Read Luke 10:38-42

Martha – Providing for Needs

Nothing says “*Welcome*” better than a prepared place for company when they arrive. But if guests arrive unexpectedly, the hostess can feel pressured to prepare food, make beds, etc. so the needs of the guests are met on the spur of the moment. God has gifted some people to recognize what is needed and to know what to do about it. It appears from scripture that Martha had that gift.

1. How did Martha help take care of Jesus? Luke 10:38 _____
2. What is the difference between the two sisters? Luke 10:39-40 _____

3. What are the two words Jesus used to describe Martha right then? Luke 10:41
_____ and _____.

4. Jesus was teaching that we must always keep our priorities in proper order. When else did Martha use her gift of hospitality? John 12:1-2 _____

5. Who else entertained strangers in Genesis 18:1-8? _____

What a hospitable man Abraham was! It wasn't possible to run to the neighborhood store for a pizza. So Sarah began making bread and Abraham headed out to his field, killed one of his calves and asked his servant to prepare it for the guests. A little time-consuming, wouldn't you say?

6. Match the reference with what each scripture says about showing hospitality:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| _____ Romans 12:13 | A. <i>“Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.”</i> |
| _____ 1 Timothy 3:2 | B. <i>“Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.”</i> |
| _____ 1 Timothy 5:10 | C. <i>“Rather he must be hospitable, one who loves what is good, who is self-controlled, upright, holy and disciplined.”</i> |
| _____ Titus 1:8 | D. <i>“Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach”</i> |
| _____ Hebrews 13:2 | E. <i>“..and is well known for her good deeds, such as bringing up children, showing hospitality, washing the feet of the saints, helping those in trouble and devoting herself to all kinds of good deeds.”</i> |
| _____ 1 Peter 4:9 | F. <i>“Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.”</i> |

So what's the problem? Martha was a practical person who wanted to get things done. Deep down she wanted to please the Lord. But she made the common mistake of allowing work for the Lord to replace her worship of the Lord. She received Jesus into her house, but then neglected Him. Jesus wanted her attention, and she offered Him a flurry of activity. As a result she felt tired, overworked and resentful. Like Martha, we can become weary in our work for the Lord when we fail to take time to sit at His feet and receive the spiritual food that He wants us to have.

Mary – Sitting and Listening

7. As Mary sat on the floor by Jesus, what does Luke 10:39 say she is doing?

8. John 12:3 finds Mary at Jesus' feet again. What is she doing here?

NOTE: In Luke 7:36-50 the story is told of an unnamed former prostitute anointing Jesus with precious perfume. Some readers wonder if this was Mary. However, this was not Mary of Bethany. But both of these women worshipped Jesus in this way.

9. In Luke 10:42, what did Jesus say about Mary's choice to sit with Him? _____

10. Why would Jesus say this? _____

Servants and slaves were to place themselves at the feet of their masters as a sign of submission. Mary was showing submission to Jesus and honor for Jesus, as the true Messiah.

For each scripture reference below, tell who was at Jesus' feet.

11. Matthew 15:30 _____

12. Mark 5:22-23 _____

13. Mark 7:25 _____

14. Luke 8:35 _____

15. Revelation 1:17 _____

Young mothers are very busy all day long. One such mother hungered after God and longed to have uninterrupted time to "sit at His feet". But each day found her constantly running around to meet the families' needs. Then she got an idea! She put paper and a pencil in each room in the house – up high, away from tiny hands. As she served the Lord in household responsibilities, she kept herself open to hear from God. Whenever a Scripture came to mind, or something to confess, to correct, or to pray about, she jotted it down on the nearest pad of paper. In the evening after the children were asleep, she gathered her pieces of paper and pondered them prayerfully over her open Bible. This young mom found a way to be Martha **and** Mary at the same time.



It is easy to lose sight of Jesus in the midst of all our activity for Him. The story of Mary and Martha shows the necessity of balancing our work with our worship. Jesus made it clear to both Mary and Martha that it is necessary to step away from the unending busyness of life and spend undistracted time with Him. God has given us the opportunity to have personal moments with Him. By taking the time to be alone with the Lord, we are fed, refreshed and renewed.

An old Wesley hymn says:
*“Faithful to my Lord’s commands.
I still would choose the better part:
Serve with careful Martha’s hands
And loving Mary’s heart.”*

A DYING MAN – A DELAYING LORD

Read John 11:1-44

1. Martha and Mary went through a heartbreaking time. How did this begin? John 11:1-2

2. What shows they had faith in Jesus? John 11:3 _____

3. How did Jesus respond to the news? John 11:6 _____

4. How do you think Martha and Mary felt about this? _____

5. Circle the response(s) you may have felt when someone who could have made a difference seemed to ignore the entire situation:

angry betrayed surprised trusting happy despondent

6. In John 11:4, what did Jesus give for the reason He did not come when He was called?

“...No, it is for _____ so that God’s Son may be
_____ through it.”

7. Which would get the greater attention from those watching this situation unfold? (Check One)

_____ Lazarus being healed from his sickness.

_____ Lazarus being brought back to life after dying from the sickness.

8. What was the response of both Mary and Martha when Jesus did arrive?

John 11:21, 32 _____



9. John 11:25-26 reveals the greatest truth Jesus wanted to prove to those watching. Fill in the blanks:

“Jesus said to her, ***I AM*** the _____ and the _____.

He who believes in Me will live, even though he _____; and whoever _____ and _____ in Me will never die....’”

In this great I AM statement, our Lord completely explained the power of the resurrection. This brought comfort to Martha’s heart.

10. What was Marth’s response? John 11:27 _____

This statement from Martha showed that she now understood that Jesus was the One for whom they had waited so long – their Messiah!

11. How did Jesus reward the sisters’ faith? John 11:33-44

12. From both John 11:4 and 11:40, what did Jesus want the people to see? _____

SHARED TEARS

1. In John 11:35 why do you think Jesus cried? _____

A story is told about a little boy with a big heart. His next-door neighbor was an older man whose wife had recently died. When the young boy saw the elderly man crying, he climbed up onto his lap and simply sat there.

Later, the boy's mother asked the boy what he had said to their sad neighbor. "Nothing", the child answered. "I just helped him cry."

2. What is the command given to believers in Romans 12:15? _____

“HOW DO I LOVE YOU? LET ME COUNT THE WAYS!”

Have you ever noticed how many red cars are on the road once you have purchased a red car? When you are shopping for a big screen TV, do you find yourself comparing your neighbor's TV with the one you want to purchase? All of us see what we are looking for. As we go through life, the focus of our eyes shows what is in our heart.

During the week before Jesus was crucified:

- 1) The chief priests and scribes were looking for a way to arrest and kill Jesus. (Mark 14:1)
- 2) Judas was looking for a convenient way to betray Jesus. (Mark 14:10, 11)
- 3) Mary of Bethany was looking for a way to show her love to her Lord (Mark 14:3-9)

Right in the shadow of the cross, those who loved Jesus planned a dinner party for Him. Lazarus was there, as well as his sisters Mary and Martha. Martha was using her gift of serving and Mary had assumed her position at the feet of Jesus.

Read John 12:1-11

1. When Mary used perfume on the feet of Jesus, was this a costly way to worship? John 12:3,5

2. Who criticized Mary for her actions? 12:4 _____

Spikenard is from the root of a plant grown in the Himalayas. It was imported into Israel and is very expensive. The fragrant oil was used mostly for burial and produced a scent that hung on the body for days. The Greek says this perfume was worth *300 denarii*. One *denarius* was equal to a full day's wage. So Mary took about half a liter of expensive perfume and anointed the feet of Jesus

3. How did Jesus respond to Mary's service? John 12:7-8 _____

4. In Mark 14:9 what else does Jesus say in response to Mary's service to Him? _____

5. Both sisters were using gifts that God had given them to serve Him. Which of the two sisters is most like you? _____

6. Whatever your work for the Lord is, how should you do it? Colossians 3:17, 23

7. A very important lesson to learn from this event is that we should present our request to God in prayer. But we should never demand that God answer our prayer the way we think is best.

What greater miracle is Jesus performing because He did not heal Lazarus from his sickness?

WHAT ABOUT ME?

1. Are you struggling because God is not answering your prayers the way you think He should?

2. From this story can you see how important it is to pray in faith without demanding your way?

Why? _____

3. Does it sometimes cost you money or possessions to serve Jesus? If yes, tell of a time.

It would be very helpful to you if you would get together with someone else and share how this lesson has impacted your life.

Then take time to pray for each other.

NAME _____ DATE _____

ADDRESS _____ PC _____

CHIEF PEOPLE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT
MID-TERM TEST
(LESSON ONE – EIGHT)

1. What kind of people did God say Zechariah and Elizabeth were? _____
2. What was Zechariah doing when the angel appeared to him? _____
3. How did Zechariah react to the news? _____
4. What kind of work did God have for John the Baptist? _____
5. What was John's message? _____
6. How did John the Baptist introduce Jesus? Put a check beside the correct answer.
_____ A. "Behold, the Lamb of God ..."
_____ B. "Behold, my cousin."
_____ C. "This is the one who shows me special love."
7. When the angel appeared to Mary, he told her not to fear. Why did he tell her not to fear?

8. How did Mary respond to the angel's message? _____

9. What three messages did the angel give to Joseph in dreams?
A. _____
B. _____
C. _____
10. Why was Jesus taken to the temple when He was twelve years old? _____

11. What truth did Jesus give to Nicodemus? Put a check beside the correct answer.
- _____ A. You must do good deeds to have eternal life.
- _____ B. You must be born spiritually.
- _____ C. You must continue being a Pharisee.
- _____ D. You must be a Jew.
12. How did Jesus say we could get New Life? _____
13. What name did Jesus give to Peter and what does it mean? _____
14. What great statement did Peter make about Jesus? _____
15. What mistake did Peter make during Jesus' trial? _____
16. After Jesus' resurrection, what question did Jesus ask Peter three times? Check the correct one.
- _____ A. "Are you going to betray me again?"
- _____ B. "Do you love me?"
- _____ C. "Peter, do you think I will abandon you?"
17. What happened after Jesus went to heaven that shows He did not disown Peter? _____
- _____
18. What did people recognize about Peter when he faced persecution? _____
- _____
19. What miracle did God perform for Peter when he was put in prison? _____
- _____
20. How did John respond when he saw the empty tomb? Check any that are correct.
- _____ A. He went inside.
- _____ B. He ran away.
- _____ C. He asked the guards where they had taken the body.
- _____ D. He believed that Jesus had raised from the dead.

21. Answer True (T) or False (F) to the following statements:

- _____ John recorded the life of Jesus so people would believe Jesus is the Christ.
- _____ John wrote the gospel of John, Romans, and 1, 2, & 3 John.
- _____ Andrew introduced his brother, John, to Jesus.
- _____ Mary and Martha had different spiritual gifts.
- _____ Martha showed her love for Jesus by sitting and listening to Him.
- _____ Mary put expensive perfume on Jesus' feet.
- _____ Jesus cried at the grave of Lazarus.

If you are taking *Chief People of the New Testament* for credit,
Please send, scan & email, or fax this Mid Term Exam
to the Native Bible Centre. (NBC info is on Page 2)

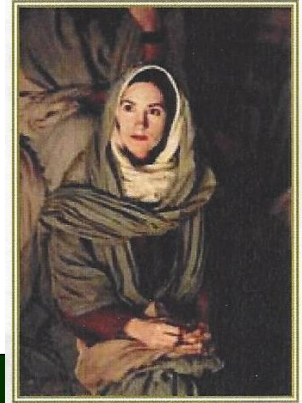
Include Assignments 1 & 2

LESSON 9

MARY MAGDALENE

A woman who was set free!

In Bible times, there were several women named Mary. The Mary discussed in Lesson Nine is from the city of Magdala on the west bank of the Sea of Galilee. Magdala is Greek for “*watchtower*.” It was named for the tower that guarded the city. It was a wealthy city known for its dye works, fine textured wool, shipbuilding, fishing, and agriculture.



NOTE: You may have heard about (or read) the novel *The Da Vinci Code* which claims that Jesus married Mary Magdalene and had children with her. This is not true to history and has been misleading many people.

Lesson Nine tells the Biblical story of this woman.

It is important that we stick to the Bible and we don't let man mislead us.

A GIFT OF FREEDOM

Read Luke 8:1-3

1. What bondage did Mary Magdalene have when she first came to Jesus? Luke 8:2 _____

2. What had Jesus done for her and other women? Luke 8:2 _____
3. We are not told what demons she had. The Bible does tell us of their power. How do the following verses describe evil spirits and their affect on people?

Match the verse with the correct statement.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| ____ Matthew 8:28 | A. Man had been chained hands and feet but always broke them. |
| ____ Matthew 17:15 | B. Men so violent no one could pass by them. |
| ____ Mark 1:26 | C. Jumped on men and beat them until they were naked and bleeding. |
| ____ Mark 5:2-5 | D. Shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek. |
| ____ Acts 19:13-16 | E. Boy had seizures that made him fall into the fire or into water. |

4. Do we, as Christians, need to fear the power of demons?

Again, match the verse with the correct statement.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| _____ Romans 8:37 | A. "... so that by His death He might destroy him who holds the power of death – that is, the devil." |
| _____ 2 Timothy 1:7 | B. "We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us." |
| _____ Hebrews 2:14-15 | C. "God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline." |
| _____ 1 John 4:4 | D. "...The One who is in you is greater that the one who is in the world." |

If you have not received Jesus as your Saviour, please talk to a Christian pastor or friend or call us so we can help you. Freedom is only found in Jesus Christ. Call 1-866-70TRIBE (708-7423) or email [info@ nativebiblecentre.org](mailto:info@nativebiblecentre.org).

5. How did Mary show her love for Jesus? Luke 8:1-3 _____

6. Why did Jesus' followers support Him? Luke 9:58 _____

Mary must have had some money to be able to help Jesus. She was obviously a leader among the women. This is shown in the fact that her name is mentioned more often and is usually listed first.

DARK NIGHT OF SORROW

Read Matthew 27:32-56

1. What sorrowful event did Mary Magdalene witness? Matthew 27:55-56

2. What were the women doing before this? Luke 23:26-28 _____

3. What was Mary Magdalene doing while Jesus was being crucified? Matthew 27:55-56

The only disciple at the cross when Jesus died was John (John 19:35). But many women were watching from a distance. They no doubt were the women who had assisted Jesus in His ministry (Luke 8:2). Most of the disciples were in hiding, fearing for their lives, but these brave women continued to support Jesus by their constant presence.

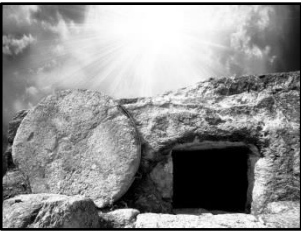
Read Mark 15:40-47

4. What did the women do after Jesus died? Mark 15:47 _____

EARLY MORNING BRINGS CONTINUED SERVICE

Read Mark 16:1-8

What a sorrowful Sabbath Mary Magdalene must have had. She had spent her time with Jesus and spent her money providing for His needs. She had rejoiced in her deliverance from demons and listened to His teachings. And then her heart must have broken as she watched Him suffer so greatly and then die. What could she do now to show her love for the One who had done so much for her?



1. Jewish law commanded that Jews only rest on the Sabbath. No work was allowed. So the day after the Sabbath, what did Mary and others do? Mark 16:1-2 _____

2. What problem did they face? Mark 16:3 _____

3. What three things happened as the women were on the way to the tomb? Matthew 28:2-4

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

4. What good news was given to the women? Matthew 28:6 _____

5. What were the women to do? Matthew 28:7 _____

JOY IN THE MORNING

Read John 20:10-18

1. How did Jesus reward Mary for her devotion? Mark 16:9 _____

2. Read the account of how that happened. John 20:11-16
If this happened to you, how would you feel? _____

3. What wonderful joy did Mary have after this? John 20:18 _____

4. What has God given us so we can witness? Acts 1:8 _____
5. How did Jesus's friends react to Mary's news? Mark 16:9-11 _____

WHAT ABOUT ME?

1. What did Jesus free you from when you first came to Him? _____

2. What have you done to show your love for Jesus? _____

3. What do you plan to do in the future to show your love for your Saviour? _____

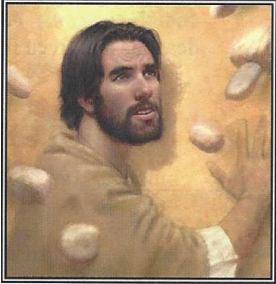
4. Have you stopped to think about the terrible suffering Jesus went through so that you might be forgiven and have power to live for God? Write out a short prayer, thanking God for the great love He has shown to you. _____

5. Are you sharing with others what Christ has done for you? One thing people cannot argue with is what Christ has done for you. We are to tell others the Good News. Matthew 28:19-20.

LESSON 10

STEPHEN

The first man to die for Christ in the early church



The first time we read about Stephen is in the midst of problems in the very early church. The group of believers tried to form communal living, where everything was shared with one another (Acts 4:32-35). For a short time things seemed to be going well with this arrangement. But churches are made up of imperfect people. So one group of people began complaining, saying they were not getting the same attention as another group.

“HEY, WHAT ABOUT US?”

Read Acts 6:1-8

1. Who was complaining? Acts 6:1 _____

The *Grecian Jews* were Greek speaking Jews who had come to Palestine from other nations, So they may not have spoken Aramaic, the language of the Hebrew Jews. These Grecian Jews had a background of Greek culture.

2. Who were they complaining against? Acts 6:1 _____

The *Hebrews* were Jewish residents of the land who spoke both Aramaic and Greek. They closely followed the Law of Moses.

3. What was the complaint? Acts 6:1 _____

The fact that “outsiders” were feeling neglected made a situation that could have divided the church. However, the apostles (*leaders who had been with Jesus*) handled the problem with great wisdom and did not give Satan a chance to do damage to this early church.

4. What were the twelve apostles’ responsibilities? Acts 6:2,4 (Circle two)

Waiting on tables Ministry of God’s Word Prayer Cleaning the church

5. Each Christian has a gift. Who gives each believer at least one spiritual gift?

1 Corinthians 12:4-6 _____

6. How did the apostles solve the problem? Acts 6:3 _____

The job of serving that these seven men were given was later known as the duties assigned to church *deacons*. Although this title is not given to them in this chapter, the qualifications for deacons are given in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. One of the *deacons* chosen was a man named Stephen.

STEPHEN – THE SPIRIT-FILLED WITNESS

1. Acts 6:3,5,8 lists **five** qualities that Stephen was full of. List them below:

- A. _____ C. _____
B. _____ D. _____
E. _____

2. With these qualities, do you think Stephen would do a good work for God and the church?

3. What did Stephen do besides waiting on tables? Acts 6:8 _____

4. What was the result of sharing the church responsibilities? Acts 6:7 _____

STEPHEN – THE SHARER OF GOOD NEWS

Read Acts 6:9-15

This Spirit-filled man did not limit his ministry to waiting on tables. He preached about Jesus dying and rising again. God even gave to Stephen the ability to perform miracles. This was part of God's plan to use Stephen to witness to the leaders of Israel.

1. Satan does not like people to hear the Good News of salvation. What happened when many more people became Christians? Acts 6:9,12 _____

The Jewish Sanhedrin was a ruling body of 71 members and was led by the High Priest. They could condemn people to death but could not execute. (Matthew 26:3, 57) Only the Romans could carry out the execution. Matthew 27:20-26

2. In Acts 6:10, what two things were in Stephen that the Jews could not stand up against?

_____ and _____

3. In Luke 21:15 Jesus said that when His followers are brought before godless leaders, He would give them two things. Fill in the blanks:

“For I will give you _____ and _____ that none of your adversaries (enemies) will be able to resist or _____.”

4. What were the three false charges against Stephen? Acts 6:13-14

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

5. As Stephen heard the false charges, his face changed – but not the way my face or yours might change when someone tells lies about us! What did the accusers see as they looked intently at Stephen? Acts 6:15 _____

Because of God’s grace that is active in our lives, we too can have a daily beauty that comes from inside us. As we walk in the Spirit, our faces will reflect the beauty of Jesus.

STEPHEN – A POWERFUL PREACHER

Read Acts 7:1-53

1. This is the longest sermon by anyone in the book of Acts. It is also one of the most important sermons. Stephen reviewed the history of Israel and reminded them what their important leaders had contributed to them. List six of these leaders.

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____

2. In verses 51-53 Stephen accuses his audience. In verse 51, what did he call these Jewish leaders who had his life in their hands? _____
3. Whom did Stephen say they were resisting? _____
4. Whom did Stephen say they persecuted? _____
5. Whom did he accuse them of betraying and murdering? _____
6. Remember, these leaders took pride in how they obeyed the Law of Moses. What was the last accusation Stephen made concerning the law? _____

We don't need ideal circumstances to be effective witnesses for Christ. Are the purposes of God hindered by our problems? We see they weren't hindered in Stephen's life. He was falsely accused and arrested. Then after he had witnessed for a very long time to the angry religious leaders, they rejected his words. But Stephen still obeyed God and spoke the words God gave him to speak.

STEPHEN – THE FIRST MARTYR

Read Acts 7:54-60

By this time Stephen knew he was in serious trouble with these religious leaders. When God convicts someone of sin, many times that person will strike out at whoever is telling them about God.

1. What two words or phrases show the extreme anger of these men toward Stephen? Acts 7:54
1) _____ 2) _____
2. Right at that moment God gave Stephen a glimpse of something wonderful. What did Stephen see? Acts 7:55 _____

3. Why do you think God did this for Stephen right at that moment? _____

4. Did Stephen keep what he saw a secret? _____
Could you keep it a secret? _____

5. Stephen was now faced with a mob that was set on getting rid of him. Read verse 57 and fill in the blanks: “At this they _____ their _____ and, _____ at the top of their _____, they all rushed at him, _____ him out of the city and began to _____ him.”

6. What amazing request did Stephen ask of the Lord in the midst of a painful and unfair death? Acts 7:60 _____

7. Does this request remind you of another Man who made similar requests at the time of his unjust death? Who was it? Luke 23:34



Was it only in Bible times that Christians were killed for believing in Jesus' death and resurrection? Although North America may not be experiencing it yet, in the 20th century thousands of Christian brothers and sisters throughout the world are being imprisoned, tortured and murdered because of their faith in the Lord Jesus. In fact, more Christians were killed for their faith during the 20th century than in all the previous centuries combined. So far in the 21st century there are signs that martyrdom for Jesus will be in greater numbers than even in the 20th century.

Every stone hurled at Stephen was hurled at Christ. Every stone that hit him, hit Christ. Every pain he felt, Christ felt.

The Lord Jesus knows when we are hurt for His sake. He experiences our pain. No attack comes to us that Christ does not feel. He is a sympathetic Saviour.

Never a weakness that He does not feel,
Never a sickness that He cannot heal,
Never a sorrow that he does not share,
Moment by moment, I'm under His care.
- Whittle

The word “*martyr*” originally simply meant *witness*, but as the early witnesses were put to death rather than agree to give up their faith, “*martyr*” came to mean someone who would rather die than deny their faith in Christ.

The Bible says that Christ was seated at the right hand of God when He went to heaven (Luke 22:69). But He stood to welcome to glory the first Christian martyr. This is the only mention of Christ **standing** at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55,56).

When you take a stand for Christ, He stands with you.

WHAT ABOUT ME?

1. Are you willing to be a worker in the background of the church? Where people may not say “*you did a great job*”, because they didn’t see you working for Jesus?

2. Considering all you learned about Stephen, what do you admire about him the most? _____

3. Have you ever been unfairly accused of something you did not do? _____

4. How did you respond to the accuser? _____

5. Do you think Jesus will stand up to welcome you home when you meet Him in heaven?

(Remember: As God’s child, He delights in you!) See Psalm 18:19

It would be very helpful to you if you would get together with someone else and share what you have learned in this lesson. Then take time to pray for each other.

LESSON 11

CORNELIUS

A man with a special vision

God always sees the good we do and He is on the lookout for people who love what He loves and hates what He hates. Our Father wants to make those God-honoring people His partners in changing the world. Cornelius was a man God chose for a special assignment because He knew the heart of this Roman military official was for Him. The story of Cornelius changes the landscape of the early church. Never before had non-Jews (*Gentiles*) been accepted in the church alongside the Jews.



The name ‘Cornelius’ was a name that could be traced back for 200 years before Jesus was born. The Cornelius of Acts 10 was a centurion of an Italian Regiment. He was in charge of 100 soldiers who had Roman citizenship. Cornelius lived in Caesarea about 69 years after the birth of Christ. Caesarea was on the shore of the Mediterranean Sea, 65 miles from Jerusalem. It was a Roman military base with 3,000 troops.

CORNELIUS – THE SEEKER

Read Acts 10:1-8

1. How does the Bible describe Cornelius and his family? Acts 10:2 _____

So how did Cornelius hear about God? Acts 9:30 tells us that Paul had been in Caesarea and probably some of the other apostles had also been preaching the gospel along the coast. Most Romans of that time believed in many gods – but not Cornelius. He feared the one true God, gave generously to the needy and prayed regularly. He probably didn’t know too much about prayer, but he was hungry to learn more about God, so he prayed to Him.

2. Does it sound to you that Cornelius was a Christian at this time? Acts 10:2 _____

3. What did Cornelius see as he was praying? Acts 10:3 _____

4. What two things was he told?

A. Acts 10:4 _____

B. Acts 10:5 _____

5. Did Cornelius take this vision seriously? _____ How do we know? Acts 10:7-8 _____

Whenever there is a person who seeks after God, and who sincerely wants to know the way to God, God will see that he finds Him.

Read Jeremiah 29:13

GOD PREPARES THE PREACHER

Read Acts 10:9-22

Peter, the man of God, had no idea what had happened to Cornelius. But God knew. And God knew how uncomfortable Peter would be ministering to a Gentile. As far as Peter knew up to this time, God came to save the Jews only. But God was now ready to prepare Peter for this enormous change He was going to make in the Christian church.

1. In Leviticus 11 God gave the Israelites instructions on what was good for them to eat and what foods they were to not eat. The good foods were called “*clean*” and the foods they were not allowed to eat were called “*unclean*”. List three “*clean*” foods for the Jewish people:

1) _____ 2) _____

3) _____

Now list three “*unclean*” foods for Jewish people:

1) _____ 2) _____

3) _____

Read again about the vision Peter saw in Acts 10:9-16.

2. Who were *approaching the city*” when God spoke to Peter on the roof? Acts 10:9

3. God came to Peter in a trance. What did Peter see? Acts 10:11-12

4. In Acts 10:13 God said to Peter: (Circle the correct one)

“See, this is what you are not to eat.”

“Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.”

“Pick out what is *clean* and leave the rest.”

5. Why was this request out of the question for Peter? Acts 10:14 _____

6. Who made all the food *clean*? Acts 10:15 _____

God wanted to make sure Peter got the message so he went over the lesson three times!

7. How did this prepare Peter for the visit from the friends of Cornelius? _____

The Gentiles (non-Jews) had been referred to as *heathen* and even as *dogs* (see Mark 7:25-30). The Gentiles were also considered as *aliens* and *strangers* as far as the promises God had made to the Jews (see Ephesians 2:11-13). What Peter was about to do was going against all he had known before. God was showing favor to all people because of the death of Jesus on the cross. Jesus died for the sin of the whole world – not only one race of people. John 3:16

8. This truth should not have been new to Peter. Why? Acts 1:8. Fill in the blanks:

“But you shall receive _____ when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my _____ in _____, and in all Judea and _____, and to the _____ of the _____.”

PETER GIVES GOD'S MESSAGE

Read Acts 10:24-48

1. How do we know that Cornelius had quite an influence on his family and friends? Acts 10:24

2. When Peter entered Cornelius's house, how did Cornelius respond?

3. What did Peter think about Cornelius's action? (Check the correct answer)

_____ Peter felt he deserved this honor, as God's messenger.

_____ Peter said, "Yes, your people are not the same as us Jews."

_____ Peter said, "Stand up, I am only a man myself."

_____ Peter asked, "Why aren't your family and friends bowing down as well?"

When Peter stepped into the house of Cornelius, it was the first time he had ever been in a Gentile house. He must have still been a little surprised at God's command to go there. But it is obvious that Peter caught the message that God had given him in the vision.

4. Fill in the blanks? Acts 10:28 "...*But God has shown me that I should not call any _____ impure or _____.*"

What a surprise it must have been for Peter to hear from Cornelius how God had given him a vision about Peter! And Peter probably thought he was the only one who had been privileged to hear from God Himself! But God had also spoken directly to a Gentile!

5. After Cornelius had told Peter why he sent his servants to find him, what did Peter say? Fill in the blanks.

Acts 10:34 "...*I now realize how true it is that God does not show _____ but _____ men from _____ who fear him and do what is right.*"

6. Acts 10:34-43 tells us what Peter preached to all who were in Cornelius's house that day. Write the correct verse beside the facts Peter told Cornelius and his family and friends. The first one is done for you. (They may not be in the order you read them.)

- _____ 10:36 _____ Jesus Christ gives peace.
- _____ Everyone who believes in Jesus receives forgiveness of sins.
- _____ God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power.
- _____ Jesus was killed by hanging on a tree.
- _____ Jesus went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil.
- _____ Jesus is Lord of all.
- _____ God raised Jesus from the dead on the third day and caused Him to be seen.
- _____ Jesus commanded His followers to preach to people and to tell that He is the One whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead.

Acts 10:44-48 tells us what happened as a result of these Gentiles hearing about who Jesus was and why He came to earth to die and was raised again. Remember: In the early church time in the book of Acts God gave a proof that could be seen by everyone present that someone had become His child and that the Holy Spirit was living inside of them. That proof was the speaking in another language. The Holy Spirit was first given to those who believed in Jesus in Acts chapter two. So having the Holy Spirit live inside a child of God was something new. God wanted both Jew and Gentile to know that He calls **all people** to be His children.

7. How did the “*circumcised believers*” (Jews) know that the Gentiles had received the same Holy Spirit they had received? Acts 10:45-46 & Acts 2:1-5. _____

8. According to Acts 10:47-48, what was the next step for these new children of God? _____

WHAT ABOUT ME?

1. Is there a race of people that you consider less important than your race? _____

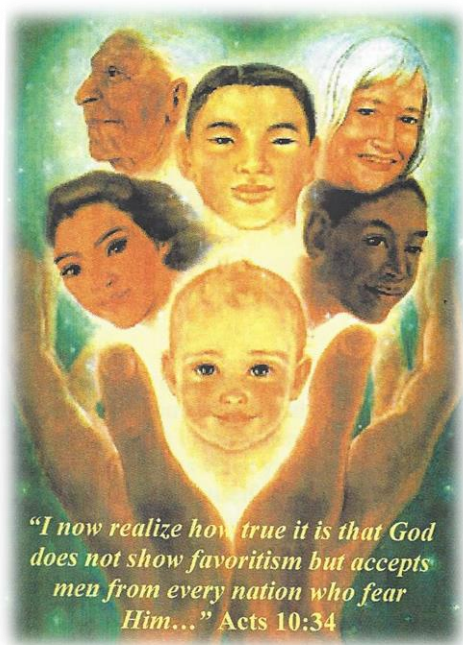
If so, has this lesson helped you see how this kind of thinking is not pleasing to God, the Creator of all of us? _____

2. Do you think God speaks to the hearts of all races on the earth? _____

3. Would you be willing to tell someone of another race about God's offer of eternal life? _____

4. Have you taken the "next step" of being baptized after you were saved? _____

This week tell someone what you have learned in this lesson. Encourage them with God's Word.



**"I now realize
how true it is
that God does
not show
favoritism but
accepts men
from every
nation who fear
Him..."**

Acts 10:34

LESSON 12

BARNABAS

A “come-alongside” kind of friend

A new believer came to church for the first time. He had long, multicolored, spiked hair. He dressed in dark clothes and had multiple piercings and tattoos. Some people gasped; others just gave him that “it’s good to see you in church, but please don’t sit next to me” smile. Yet there were some during the greeting time who went out of their way to welcome and accept him. They were bridge builders. In this lesson we will learn about a bridge builder.



WHAT’S IN A NAME?

1. What does the name *Barnabas* mean? Acts 4:36 _____

2. What did Barnabas do to get his name? Acts 4:37 _____

In some areas First Nations People are given a traditional name with a special meaning. This meaning has something to do with the way the person looks, or something they have done. How would you like a name meaning *Son (or Daughter) of Encouragement*? This name would speak very highly of you.

3. What kind of a man was Barnabas? Acts 11:24

- > “*He was a _____ man.*
- > *full of the _____*
- > *and _____.*”



When Jean was a teenager, she often walked through a park where she saw mothers sitting on benches and talking. Their toddlers sat on the swings, wanting someone to push them. “I gave them a push”, says Jean. “And you know what happens when you push a kid on a swing? Pretty soon he’s pumping, doing it himself. That is what my role in life is – I’m there to give others a push.”

Barnabas was an encourager – pushing along others in life. Anyone can give a “push” of encouragement to others.

BARNABAS – MEETING NEEDS

Read Acts 4:32-35

1. Christ had risen from the dead, and now He had ascended to heaven. The believers were going through hard times. How did they help one another? Acts 4:32-35. Match the columns:

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| _____ All the believers were one in... | A. grace |
| _____ There were no _____ among them. | B. heart and mind |
| _____ They shared _____ they had. | C. given, anyone |
| _____ Much _____ was upon them all. | D. everything |
| _____ Money from the sale of _____ & _____ was given to the apostles. | E. needy persons |
| _____ The money was _____ to _____ in need. | F. lands, houses |

2. In Acts 4:36-37, what did Barnabas do? _____

NOTE: The story that follows these verses in Acts 5:1-11 is the sad story of Ananias and Sapphira who were more concerned with appearing loving and generous, rather than being generous servants so all the brothers and sisters could have their needs met.

3. It is not easy to give away everything we have to help others. We may give a little or even a great amount, but to give all would be a great sacrifice. Read the following verses and tell what Jesus did for us. What sacrifices did Jesus make for us?

2 Corinthians 5:21 _____

2 Corinthians 8:9 _____

“I’D LIKE TO INTRODUCE TO YOU”

What if the leader of a terrorist group walked into your Bible Study this week? Would you put out your hand to welcome him? It was a dilemma such as this that now faced the disciples.



Read Acts 9:1-28

1. Who was terrorizing Christians in Acts 9:1-2? _____

2. Why did the disciples not welcome him into their group? Acts 9:26 _____

NOTE: Paul will be studied in the next lesson.

3. What did Barnabas do that the other apostles were unwilling to do? Acts 9:27 _____

4. According to Acts 9:28, how did Barnabas's "coming alongside" Paul make a difference in the attitude of the apostles? _____

A TRAVELING ENCOURAGER

Read Acts 11:19-30

1. What did God use to spread the Gospel? Acts 11:19-21 _____

2. Why do you think Barnabas was sent to learn what was happening in these areas?
Acts 11:22-23 _____

3. After learning what was happening in Antioch, what did Barnabas do? Acts 11:25-26

4. Why do you think he went searching for Saul? _____

5. What was Barnabas' next assignment? Acts 11:27-30 _____

It was here in Antioch that believers in the Lord Jesus Christ were first called *Christians*.
It simply meant that these were the ones who were followers of Christ – they were *Christ-ians*.

Read Acts 13:1-13

6. What were the prophets and teachers in Antioch doing when the Holy Spirit spoke to them?

They fasted and prayed because of their earnest desire for the will of God.

7. What two men did the Holy Spirit tell them to *set apart*”? _____ and _____.

The church had begun in Jerusalem. It had then spread to other areas, including Judea and Samaria. Now it is time for “*set apart*” men to take the gospel throughout the world as they then knew it.

One man shares, “Three months before a planned missions trip, a friend and I were talking about the event that was coming up. He said to me, ‘If anyone can’t go, I’d be willing to step in and join you.’ This would not be an easy eight days, since we would be painting, repairing and fixing stuff in the July heat of Jamaica. Yet my friend seemed eager to go.

“About six weeks before we were scheduled to leave, there was an opening. So I e-mailed my friend, whom I hadn’t seen since we had talked months before. I asked him if he was still interested. He immediately wrote back, ‘Sure! And I got a passport just in case you asked.’ He had made sure he was ready – just in case he got the call to go!

My friend’s preparation reminds me of what happened when the first missionaries were sent out. Barnabas and Paul were among a number of people getting themselves ready spiritually for whatever God might ask them to do, or wherever He might send them. They didn’t prepare by getting a passport, but they “*were worshipping the Lord and fasting*”. And when the Holy Spirit said, “*Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them*”, they were all set for the journey.

8. Barnabas and Saul began traveling from Antioch to other places to tell others about Jesus Christ. This is known as the first missionary journey. How did they know where to go?

Acts 13:4 _____

9. You will notice that Barnabas’ name is listed before Saul’s. But starting in Acts 13:13 you will see that Paul’s name is mentioned first. What do you think this says about Barnabas?

It is the sign of a good leader when his student becomes the teacher.

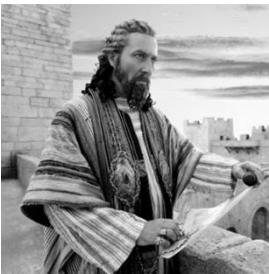
A MISSIONARY'S MEMORIES

Read Acts 13:13 – Acts 14:25

1. Match the columns below to answer questions:

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| _____ Name of Jewish sorcerer in Paphos. | A. Gentiles |
| _____ Name of proconsul in Paphos. | B. Pamphylia |
| _____ Became blind in Acts 13. | C. Jews who refused to believe. |
| _____ Place where John left Barnabas & Paul. | D. Lystra |
| _____ What unusual group did Barnabas & Paul preach to in Acts 13:46-48? | E. Bar-Jesus/Elymas |
| _____ Poisoned people's minds against Paul & Barnabas. | F. Sergius Paulus |
| _____ Place where they healed a crippled man. | |

2. In Acts 14:11-15, what upset Barnabas and Paul? _____



In Acts 12:22, King Herod, dressed in his royal robes, spoke to an audience that wanted to gain the king's approval. He proudly accepted the flattering response of the crowd when they shouted "*This is the voice of a god, not of a man.*" Herod should have protested because of fear and awe in the one true God. But he didn't. Because he did not give praise to God, "*an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died.*" Herod suffered an extremely painful death because of his lack of reverence for God.

In contrast, Barnabas and Paul had such a deep reverence for God that they nearly panicked at the thought of being worshipped. They knew that God is the only One who is worthy of glory, praise and honor. He is the only One who has earned the right to be truly worshipped.

3. In Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, what did Paul and Barnabas do? Acts 14:21-22

- 1) " _____ the disciples."
- 2) " _____ them to remain _____ to the _____."

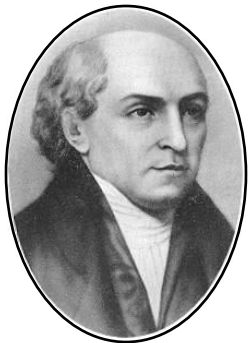
4. Why did Paul and Barnabas return to Antioch? Acts 14:26 _____

Read Acts 15:1-35

5. What were some Jewish leaders saying to the people? Acts 15:15

6. How was this matter settled? Acts 15:2-4 _____

7. What was the result of this meeting? Acts 15:22-29 _____



The progress of the gospel has often been held back by people with closed minds who stand in front of doors of opportunity the Lord has already opened. People may even block the way for others. An example of this is William Carey. When God laid the burden on him to preach the gospel in another country, he went to meet with a group of pastors to share his burden. One minister hotly told William, “Young man, sit down! When God pleases to convert the heathen, he will do it without your aid or mine!” William Carey went on to serve God without the sending of his church. He served many years in India.

8. How did the new believers feel about the letter sent by the new group? Acts 15:31-32

A DISAGREEMENT CHANGES PLANS

Read Acts 15:36-41

Barnabas and Paul were both eager to travel back and visit the places where they had ministered on their first missionary journey. However, when they came to choosing who would travel with them for this ministry there was a difference of opinion. On the first trip they had taken a young man named John Mark.



1. How was John Mark related to Barnabas? Colossians 4:10 _____

2. What happened to John Mark on the first missionary journey? Acts 13:13 _____

Paul was determined in his decision that since John Mark had deserted them part way through the trip the first time, he would not be allowed to begin this second trip with them.

But Barnabas was the kind of man who was eager to help others. That is why the early church named him “*son of encouragement*”. So Barnabas wanted to give John Mark another chance.

3. What was the outcome of this? Acts 15:39 _____

4. What place did Barnabas and Mark head for? _____

5. Who did Paul choose for a new partner? Acts 15:40 _____

6. What places did Paul’s team head for? Acts 15:40-41 _____

God may change his workers, but His work goes right on.
Now there were *two* missionary teams instead of one!
If God had to depend on perfect people to accomplish His work,
nothing would ever get done.

7. Paul wrote about John Mark later in three of his letters. What does he say about John Mark?

- A. Colossians 4:10 – Paul told the church to _____ John Mark.
- B. 2 Timothy 4:11 – Paul said John Mark was _____ to him in ministry.
- C. Philemon 23-24 – Paul calls John Mark his _____.

The Bible tells us the stories of many men and women. Some show us good examples we should follow. Some men & women made mistakes and we can learn to avoid their mistakes.

8. Barnabas had the spiritual gift of encouragement. What spiritual gifts are listed in Romans 12:4-8, 1 Corinthians 12:8, Ephesians 4:11-13

- A. _____ E. _____
- B. _____ F. _____
- C. _____ G. _____
- D. _____ H. _____

9. What else does the Bible say about encouragement? 1 Thessalonians 4:18

“Therefore, _____ each other with _____.”

Just before these verses Paul was writing about being encouraged when a Christian brother or sister dies because Jesus is coming back for all His saved children. Then we will be reunited with those whom we loved but who are not here on earth with us right now.

10. What does 1 Thessalonians 5:11 tell us to do for one another? *“Therefore, _____ one another and _____ each other _____, just as in fact you are doing.”*

11. Hebrews 10:25 tells us to not *“give up _____,”* but we are to *“_____ - and all the more as you see the _____ approaching.”*

The “Day” referred to here is when Jesus comes back to take His saved children home.

We are to encourage one another even if we don’t have the spiritual gift of encouragement.

Other historical writings say that Barnabas started a church in Cyprus, his hometown. He also started a church in Milan, Italy, and became the bishop there.



WHAT ABOUT ME?

1. Are you preparing for what God might want you to do? When the Spirit says, “Go”, will you be ready? List two things you have done to prepare for God’s service:

1) _____

2) _____

“Go” doesn’t necessarily mean you have to change where you are living at all. It just means that God may ask you to do something in service for Him that you have never thought of before. It may be something that makes you feel uncomfortable. Are you willing to ask God to lead you?

2. Write down the name of someone you have encouraged in some way.

NAME

HOW I ENCOURAGED THEM

_____	_____

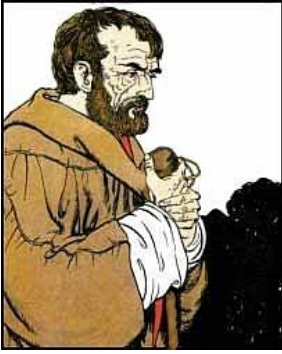
_____	_____

It would be very helpful to you if you would get together with someone else and share what you have learned from this lesson. Then take time to pray for each other.

LESSON 13

PAUL

A man of authority who chose to be a bond-slave



Think right now of a family member or friend who wants nothing to do with God. In fact, maybe they are hurtful towards you and others who love God and want to obey Him. As you study this lesson, write that person's name down and keep looking back at their name. Because you are about to be encouraged as you see a great example of the power of God in a life that didn't seem to be seeking Jesus at all! Only God truly knows a person's heart. That's the way it was with the man in this lesson – and your friend. The first time we see this man in the book of Acts none of us would recognize him. In fact in Lesson Ten he was standing right by us! But even his name was different.

EVERYONE HAS A PAST

1. In Lesson Ten we discovered Stephen – the first Christian martyr in the early church. When Stephen was being stoned to death; there is only one man present whose name we are given.

Read Acts 7:57-58. What was the name? _____

2. What part did he play in the unfair death of Stephen? _____

The fact that the clothes were laid at Saul's feet shows he was a leader in this execution. At this time Saul and Stephen were standing on opposite sides of the cross.

3. In Acts 8:1, Paul's opinion about Stephen's death is made clear. Fill in the blanks:

"And Saul was there, giving _____ to his (Stephen's) death."

WHO WAS SAUL?

Read Acts 9:1-19

1. Where was Saul born? Acts 9:11 _____

Tarsus is in Cilicia about ten miles from the Mediterranean Sea. The city has been there for 6,000 years, making it the oldest city in the world. Along with its commercial and agricultural wealth, it boasted a great university. At the time of Christ, it was a Roman city.

2. What was Saul's citizenship? Acts 22:25-28 _____

When you look at Saul *on the road* (Acts 9:1-2), you see a very eager man who actually thought he was doing God a favor by persecuting the church. Had you stopped him and asked him his reasons for doing this, he might have said something like this:

“Jesus of Nazareth is dead. Do you expect me to believe that a crucified nobody is the promised Messiah? According to our Law, anybody who is hung on a tree is cursed (Deuteronomy 21:23). Would God take a cursed false prophet and make him the Messiah? No! His followers are preaching that Jesus is both alive and doing miracles through them. But their power comes from Satan, not God. This is a dangerous sect, and I intend to get rid of it before it destroys our historic Jewish faith!”

3. In Acts 26:24 we see Paul had “great _____.”

4. But Saul was spiritually blind. Read 1 Corinthians 2:14. Fill in the blanks. *“The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the _____, for they are _____ to him, and he cannot _____ them, because they are _____.”*

5. Why was Saul going to Damascus? Acts 9:1-2 _____

Saul's attitude was that of an angry animal whose very breath was dangerous! Like many other rabbis, he believed the Law had to be obeyed before Messiah could come. And yet these “heretics” were preaching against the Law, the temple and the tradition of the fathers. Saul attacked the churches in Judea and then got authority from the high priest to go as far as Damascus to hunt down the disciples of Jesus. This was not a small, unimportant trip. The authority of the highest Jewish council was behind Paul (Acts 22:5).

LOOKING UP FROM THE DUST

1. What two unusual things happened to Saul to get his attention? Acts 9:3-6

A. _____

B. _____



Saul is right down in the dust on that road to Damascus. This man who hated the Lord Jesus, who did everything he could against Him, now calls Him “*Lord*”. And he asks what the Lord would have him do. He is ready to do the bidding of the Lord. He has completely changed.

2. As Saul got up from the ground, what did he discover? Acts 9:8 _____

AN AVAILABLE BUT RELUCTANT “NEW FRIEND”

Ananias was a devout Jew (Acts 22:12). He was also a believer in Jesus Christ. He knew what kind of reputation Saul had and that he was coming to Damascus to arrest believers.

1. What was Ananias told to do? Acts 9:10-12 _____

2. Why didn't he want to go? Acts 9:13-14 _____

3. In Acts 9:15-16, God told Ananias that Saul was now His:

c_____ i_____.

Have you ever been afraid to do what God has asked you to do? If so, remember the promises of God. He has promised to always be with us. He has also promised to give us strength and wisdom if we ask Him in faith.

4. Even though Saul was a Jew, to what people was he to minister? Acts 9:15 _____

5. Why might this be hard for Saul to do? John 4:9 _____

God said that Saul was a *chosen instrument*. The truth that God was making known was that Saul was someone God had chosen to show the greatness of God. God, not Saul, would be the center of attention. This also became Saul's desire. Read about it in Philippians 3:7-11.

6. Who, besides Ananias, accepted Saul? Acts 9:19 _____



Only God
can change
a heart!

IS SERVING GOD A “BED OF ROSES”?

Read Acts 9:20-31

1. Saul began immediately to tell everyone about the Christ that he had persecuted. He declared boldly that Jesus **is** the Son of God. Some listened and others wanted to stop him from preaching these things. But Saul now knew the TRUTH – he had heard it from Jesus Himself! From verses 20-31, find the **positive (P)** things that happened in this beginning ministry of Saul and the **negative (N)** things that happened to him. Below, mark each happening with **P** or **N**. The first one is done for you.

- 1) P Preached in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God.
 - 2) _____ Saul grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews in Damascus by proving Jesus is the Christ.
 - 3) _____ The Jews in Damascus conspired to kill Saul.
 - 4) _____ Saul’s followers lowered him in a basket through an opening in the wall.
 - 5) _____ In Jerusalem Saul tried to join the disciples but they were afraid of him.
 - 6) _____ Barnabas stood up for Saul and told the disciples he was a genuine believer now.
 - 7) _____ Saul was able to speak boldly in Jerusalem and debated with the Grecian Jews.
 - 8) _____ The Grecian Jews tried to kill Saul.
 - 9) _____ Saul’s believing “brothers” rescued him by sending him to Tarsus.
2. Who came looking for Saul while he was in Tarsus? Acts 11:25 _____
3. Remember what we learned about Barnabas in our last lesson? Remember what his name means? Acts 4:36 _____
4. What was Saul’s next assignment? Acts 11:28-30 _____

This shows two great qualities of Saul. He could be trusted to take help to the believers in Judea, whom he once hated. Saul was willing to do anything he was asked to do. He didn’t have to be up front preaching. He had a heart of service to God and to God’s people.

*“If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated Me first.
If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own.
As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen
you out of the world. That is why the world hates you.”*

John 15:18-19

DIFFERENT HEART, DIFFERENT NAME

Read Acts 13:1-12

1. What were the church leaders in Antioch doing? Acts 13:1-2 _____

2. What work was given to Barnabas and Saul? Acts 13:2-5 _____

Until now, Jerusalem had been the center of ministry. But from this time on, the Good News of who Jesus really is, was on the move! These first missionaries set out to do what Jesus had told them to do in Acts 1:8. They began to preach to the Roman world.

In Acts 13:9 we see *Saul* now beginning to be called *Paul*. Why? Saul was his Jewish name. Now that he was preaching to Roman citizens, he went by his Roman name. From this point on, Paul is the given name – never again in scripture is he referred to as *Saul*.

We will not be studying all the travels of Paul in this course. To learn more about Paul's travels, download or order the course '*Breaking Trail*' from Native Bible Centre.

“I WILL SHOW HIM HOW MUCH HE MUST SUFFER FOR MY NAME.” Acts 9:16

Read 2 Corinthians 4:8-11; 6:4-10 & 11:23-33

1. In these three scripture passages, Paul gives a summary of the hard times he went through because of his faith in Jesus. He also shows what his attitude toward this suffering was.

On the next page match the correct verse with **the suffering Paul endured** or **his attitude toward suffering** for the Lord. The first one is done for you.

2 Corinthians 11:23-33:

- _____ Verse 23 _____ Was in prison
- _____ Was flogged.
- _____ Has known hunger and thirst.
- _____ Received 39 lashes.
- _____ Beaten with rods three times.
- _____ Had been cold and naked.
- _____ Was shipwrecked.
- _____ In danger from bandits.
- _____ In danger from his own people.



2 Corinthians 4:8-11

- _____ Always carry around in our body the death of Jesus.
- _____ Hard pressed on every side, but not crushed.
- _____ Struck down, but not destroyed.
- _____ Perplexed, but not in despair.
- _____ Persecuted but not abandoned.

2 Corinthians 6:4-10

- _____ Known, yet regarded as unknown.
- _____ Have weapons of righteousness in the right hand & left hand.
- _____ Are genuine, but looked on as imposters.
- _____ Poor, but making many rich.
- _____ Having nothing, yet possessing everything.
- _____ Receive bad reports and good reports.

2. What speaks to you about all that Paul went through? _____

3. What did Paul learn through all of these hard times? Philippians 4:12. Fill in the blanks.

Paul is speaking: "I know what it is to be in _____, and I know what it is to have _____. I have _____ the secret of being _____ in any and every _____, whether well _____ or _____, whether living in _____ or in _____."

4. How was Paul able to endure all of those hard times and still learn contentment?

Philippians 4:13 _____

5. Where was Paul when he wrote these verses about learning to be content?

Philippians 1:13 _____



A story is told of a preacher who was able to look at the darkest situation and yet find something to be thankful for. On a dark Sunday morning when the weather was freezing, wet and stormy, one of the church leaders whispered, "I am sure the preacher won't be able to thank God for anything on a day like this. It's absolutely horrible outside!" The pastor began the service by praying, "We thank you, O God, that the weather is not always like this."



Paul had a way of seeing the best in every situation. Most people would have said Paul was a prisoner of Rome. But Paul saw himself as a prisoner of Christ. Each time he was put into prison or was under house arrest he thought of his hardship as an opportunity to bring the gospel to more people, especially the Gentiles (*non-Jews*). Contentment comes from an attitude that is **learned**. Just like we cultivate our garden, we must cultivate right attitudes. As we spend more time reading and studying God's Word, we see Him as a Father who is totally trustworthy. Then, when hard times come, we can rest in Him because we know He is in charge and He is good!

Paul's struggles were from not only outside pressures, but God allowed him to have a physical infirmity (sickness or handicap), as well. This medical condition was given to him after God had given him a vision of paradise (2 Corinthians 12:1-6).

Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10

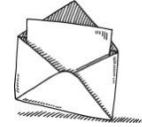
6. For what reason did Paul say that God allowed this "*thorn in the flesh*" in his life?

2 Corinthians 12:7-10 _____

Notice that contentment is learned. We can only be content (at peace) with what happens in our lives when we trust the One who is in charge.

Even the apostle Paul needed to be reminded of his own frailty. He was jabbed time and again by a “*thorn in the flesh*”. He didn’t tell us what the thorn was, but it is obvious that it hurt, humiliated and restricted Paul. Three times he pleaded with the Lord to take it away, but God did not answer in the way Paul would have liked. But God did something even better. He used the *thorn* to teach Paul how to tap into God’s all sufficient grace. Paul came to the place where he no longer looked on his *thorn* as a handicap but instead he saw it as a heavenly advantage. And his advantage was this: When he was weak in himself, he was strong in the Lord
Read 2 Corinthians 12:9 again.

“I’LL WRITE TO YOU”



Paul preached in many places on his three missionary journeys. After staying in a town from a few months to a few years, he had to travel to another place. But the leaders who were left in charge of newly planted churches saw problems come up in the church that they could not handle alone. So someone in the church would write to Paul and ask him what to do about these situations. The only way for Paul to communicate with them was to send a messenger with a letter to that specific town. As Paul’s friends cared for him in prison, they would write letters as Paul dictated to them.

Paul learned that some of the churches he started had been introduced to teaching that was different than what Jesus taught. So he wrote back to them to correct false teaching and to encourage believers to remain true to Christ and His teachings. Of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, twenty-one of them are letters. The apostle Paul wrote thirteen of these twenty-one letters. Listed below are letters Paul wrote to the churches.

The following thirteen books were written by Paul:

Romans	1 & 2 Thessalonians
1 & 2 Corinthians	1 & 2 Timothy
Galatians	Titus
Ephesians	Philemon
Philippians	
Colossians	

PAUL'S LAST DAYS

Paul's last days on earth were spent in a Roman dungeon. His only crime was preaching that Christ was truly God's Son. The dungeons were dark, damp, rat infested holes. They were nothing like our prisons today. How did Paul feel about this unfair treatment? We have some clues in the last letter he wrote.

1. Read 2 Timothy 4:6-8 and match Column A with Column B. The first one is completed for you.

Column A

 C *I am being poured out like ...*

 "..the time has come for ...

 "I have fought...

 "I have finished...

 I have kept ...

 "There is in store for me...

Column B

A. *...the good fight."*

B. *...the crown of righteousness.."*

C. *... a drink offering..."*

D. *...the faith."*

E. *...my departure."*

F. *...the race."*

As the apostle Paul looked back on his ministry, he saw that it had been rewarding but not easy. Measured by the world's yardstick of success, his life seems almost insignificant. Paul wrote this second letter to Timothy while fading away in a cold, damp dungeon. He was waiting for the footsteps of the executioner. In a matter of weeks, Paul knew he would stand before Nero, the insane emperor of Rome, and his life would end. But he also knew that after his death he would receive the crown of life from the King of Kings. And we now know that the influence of Paul's life changed the course of history itself. Paul spent his life preaching to all who would listen that Jesus **is** the promised Messiah and that He came to die for **all** people – not just the Jewish race.

History records that Paul was martyred by beheading during Nero's rule on the Ostian Way at a place called Aquae Silviae. This is about three miles from Rome.

2. In Philippians 1:21-26 Paul gives his view on death. Fill in the blanks for verse 21:

"For me to _____ is _____ and to _____ is _____."

WHAT ABOUT ME?

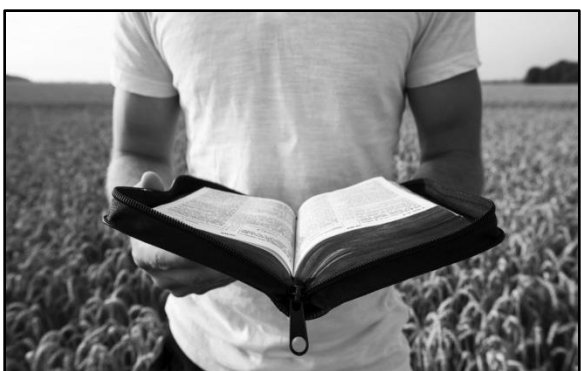
1. Have you felt like your past makes it more difficult for you to serve God now? _____

2. In what ways could your past failures help you in serving God now? _____

3. Name someone you know who is *religious*, but has not received Jesus as their Saviour.

4. What trials have you experienced in trying to obey God? _____

5. How did the story of Paul help you view these trials differently? _____



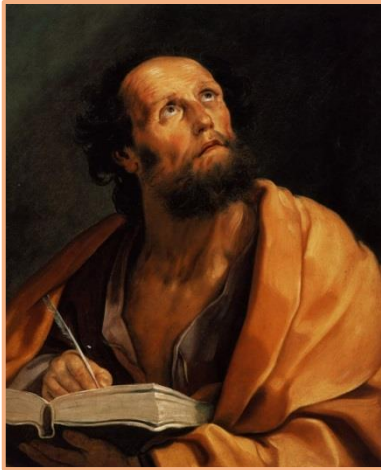
“But He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.” - 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

It would be very helpful to you if you would get together with someone else and share what you learned in this lesson. Then take time to pray for each other.

LESSON 14

LUKE

A doctor on a special journey



One year I attended a conference in the U.S. where many college students were looking at the possibility of going to a mission field. As I was standing by a display, a young woman approached me and asked if our mission agency had a need for medical personnel. I hesitated, thinking this girl must be in her first year of schooling – she looked so young. I asked her, “So do you want to study medicine?” To which she replied, “I am a doctor. I have my own practice, but I didn’t become a doctor to make money. I want to serve the Lord with my skills.”

If I made a list of *People I Admire Most*, at the top of the list would be skilled people, such as this young woman, who leave the financial security of their profession to serve on a mission field in some part of the world. Luke is a very important person in the New Testament.

But for all the important things he did, he did not call attention to himself.

HOW MANY TALENTS DOES ONE MAN HAVE?

1. What was Luke’s profession? Colossians 4:14 _____

DID YOU KNOW ?

There is historical evidence that Luke was not a Jew.

He was the only non-Jew to write books of the Bible!

Luke wrote the New Testament books of Luke and Acts.

He wrote from a Greek background and a Greek viewpoint.

Luke wrote with the mind of a careful historian **and** with the heart of a loving physician.



2. Luke is never mentioned as a disciple of Christ. How did he know what to write about the life of Christ? Luke 1:3 _____

Luke actually used medical terms in the Greek. Here the word used would mean *autopsy* in English. He is saying “We are eyewitnesses who made an autopsy, and I am writing to you about what we found.” This author wrote the book of Luke to give people certainty and assurance about the Lord Jesus Christ.

3. How do we know Luke wrote the book of Acts? Acts 1:1 _____

The book of Acts is the second part of Luke's history. Today we would call it a *sequel*. It was written so we would have the true story of how the Christian church began and how it grew. Luke addresses *Theophilus* in the first verse. This man was probably a Roman official who had trusted Christ and now needed to grow up as a Christian, or Theophilus may have been a seeker after truth who was being taught the Christian message.

4. What important information does Luke share about the birth of Christ that the other writers did not mention? Luke 1:26-38; Luke 2:1-52 _____

Dr. Luke is named only three times in the New Testament. When Paul wrote the book of Colossians, Paul was in prison.

5. According to Colossians 4:14, who was with Paul at the prison? _____

In Bible-time prisons, if the prisoner was going to eat, the family and friends would have to bring him food. Paul spent so much time in chains, it must have been so helpful to have a medical doctor with him.

6. Philemon verse 24 again lists Luke's name. Where is Paul this time? _____

Again, we find Luke attending to his friend, Paul.

7. It sounds like Luke stayed with Paul right up until the time when Paul was taken out and beheaded. In the last lesson we learned that 2 Timothy was the last book Paul wrote before his death.

According to 2 Timothy 4:11, who was with Paul when this book was written? _____

All three of Paul's missionary journeys are studied in this book of Acts. How did Luke know so much about the travels of Paul?

Read Acts **chapters 16, 21, 27, 28**. Notice how Luke uses *they* and *we*.

8. In Chapter 16, where does it sound like Luke joined Paul? (notice the change from *they* to *we*) _____

9. What is the mode of transportation in Acts, chapter 21? _____

10. What crisis event happened in Acts, chapter 27? _____

11. What stood out to you the most in that chapter? (Acts 27) _____

12. What happened in the first part of chapter 28 that shows how fast people can change their minds? (Hint: Paul was no doubt very comforted that a doctor was traveling with him right then.)

13. Why do you think Luke wanted to be a traveling partner of Paul? _____

WHAT ABOUT ME?

1. What skills do you have that you are willing to use in service to the Lord? _____

2. If you are already using talents or learned skills in ministry, what are you doing? _____

3. Are you willing to serve in the background, helping someone who is *up front* and noticed more than you are? _____

4. Name two people you know who are working behind the scenes in ministry or at your job:
1. _____
2. _____

I

ASSIGNMENT #3

A physician takes care of our physical bodies. A careful reading of the miracles of Jesus that Luke recorded shows how he included medical information about the physical well-being of people. What medical information did Luke record in the following scriptures?

Luke 4:31-37 _____

Luke 4:38-41 _____

Luke 5:12-15 _____

Luke 5:17-26 _____

Luke 7:1-10 _____

Luke 7:11-17 _____

Luke 8:26-36 _____

Luke 8:40-56 _____

Luke 13:10-13 _____

Luke 17:11-19 _____

If you are taking this course for credit **send, Fax or scan & email this assignment in with your Final Test.**

LESSON 15

TIMOTHY

A Young, Trustworthy Servant of God

Many children grow up in very difficult situations. It may be because of poverty, sickness, death of a parent, a broken home, or a minority race. Some children never rise above these trying circumstances while others become great people who triumph in spite of their home life. What makes the difference? In this lesson we will learn about a boy who grew up in a home of mixed race which was looked down upon by followers of Christ. Yet he became one of the *Chief People of the New Testament*. Because of his background he had some emotional problems to overcome. If you are struggling because of a difficult childhood, we pray that this lesson will be of help to you.



A CHILD IN A SPIRITUALLY SPLIT HOME

1. From what two different races were Timothy's mother and father? Acts 16:1

Mother: _____ Father: _____

2. This kind of marriage of mixed race was not popular during this time in history. But this was not the most difficult circumstance in this home. What does Acts 16:1 say about Timothy's mother that it does NOT say about his father? _____

3. In spite of this difference, what positive influence did Timothy have? 2 Timothy 3:15

If you are in a position to influence children, no matter how small, do not pass up the opportunity to teach them the Word of God. See what a great change it made in Timothy.

4. What kind of godly heritage did Timothy have? 2 Timothy 1:5 _____

Paul wrote the books 1 and 2 Timothy. Paul pauses here in 2 Timothy to acknowledge the impact that a mother can have. He mentions Lois, Timothy's grandmother, and Eunice, his mother. Paul's mention of these women is interesting because Paul personally could claim a lot of the influence on Timothy's spiritual life. But Paul knew that these two women planted the seeds of faith in Timothy's life. We know little about them, but our imaginations can picture them praying with young Timothy, teaching him the simple stories of Jesus and many truths from God's Word.



The character of our children tomorrow is greatly influenced by what we put into their hearts today.

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Sometimes this man is called Timothy and sometimes he is called *Timotheus*. *Timotheus* is made up of two Greek words which mean "that which is dear to God". Timothy was dear to God, he was dear to the apostle Paul and he was dear to the local churches.

TIMOTHY – AN ASSISTANT & A MINISTER

5. Why did Paul want to take Timothy with him on his missionary journey? Acts 16:1-2

6. How did others show they approved of Timothy? 1 Timothy 4:14 _____

7. After Paul had served with Timothy a few years, he wrote to the church at Philippi. In Philippians 2:19-22, what character quality in Timothy did Paul show admiration for? _____

8. When Paul wrote to Timothy, he encouraged Timothy in some areas he may have been struggling in. What were some of them and how was he to handle them? On the next page, match the problems (or commands) with the correct verses. The first one is completed for you.

- ___C___ 1 Timothy 1:18-19
- _____ 1 Timothy 4:12
- _____ 1 Timothy 6:10-12
- _____ 2 Timothy 1:7
- _____ 2 Timothy 2:3-4
- _____ 2 Timothy 3:14-17

- A. Timothy was timid (*shy, hesitant.*)
- B. He was young.
- C. Working with people with shipwrecked faith.
- D. Don't get involved in community affairs.
- E. Flee from greed and pursue godliness.
- F. Knew the Scriptures.

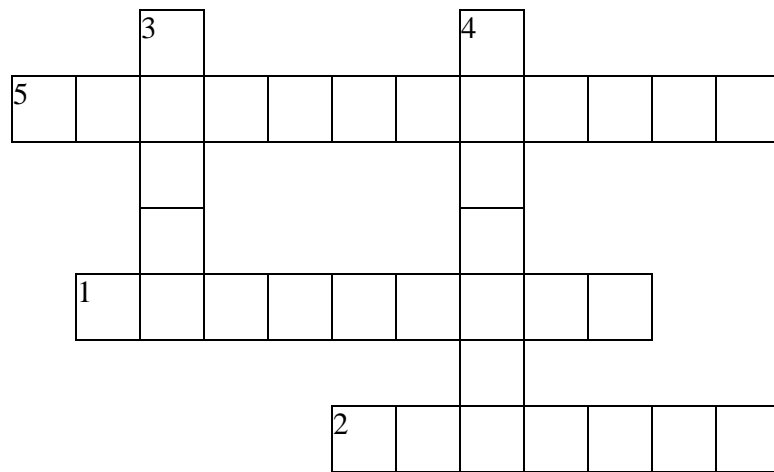
9. Timothy was an important partner to Paul. In the crossword below write out the places where Timothy served God.

Across

- 1. Acts 18:5
- 2. 1 Timothy 1:3
- 5. 1 Thessalonians 3:2
(city: Thessalonica)

Down

- 3. Acts 17:14
- 4. 1 Corinthians 4:17 & 1:2



10. According to Hebrews 13:23 what persecution must Timothy have had to suffer for following Christ? _____

TIMOTHY – A CHURCH LEADER

1. Timothy was very useful to Paul. He was with Paul when he wrote several of his letters to the different churches. Read the first or second verse in each of the thirteen books Paul wrote (For a list of these books turn back to page 124). How many times were the letters coming from Paul and Timothy? Circle the correct number:

- 4 2 10 8 7 6 3 11 13

2. In Paul’s letters, he referred to Timothy in three different ways. Match the relationship between Paul and Timothy stated in the following verses: The first one is completed for you.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <u> E </u> 1 Timothy 1:2 | A. Our brother |
| <u> </u> 2 Corinthians 1:1 | B. Servant of Christ Jesus (along with Paul) |
| <u> </u> 1 Thessalonians 3:2 | C. God’s fellow worker in spreading the gospel |
| <u> </u> 2 Timothy 1:2 | D. My dear son |
| <u> </u> Philippians 1:1 | E. My true son in the faith |



It is clear from these Scripture verses that Paul did not think he was “above” Timothy, even though Paul was the one God used to bring the Good News to Timothy. Each of us must accept new believers and welcome them to serve alongside us. We must help them grow up in their faith by teaching them God’s Word. But as they do grow up and become qualified to serve God, we should not look down on them. God has given gifts to them, just like He has given us gifts of service. Let’s serve alongside our brothers and sisters – we are all the family of God. All races of people and all ages make us this family. One of the jobs Timothy had was setting up the leadership for groups of believers. This leadership would give organization for a church to be the way God had intended. The leaders were also to protect the church from false teachings.

In 1 Timothy 3:2-15, Paul listed requirements for *overseers* (also called *elders*) and requirements for *deacons*. He also includes some requirements for the wives of these leaders.

3. Read 1 Timothy 3:2-15. List 5 requirements for overseers (elders), 5 requirements for deacons, and 2 requirements for wives of these leaders:

ELDERS	DEACONS	WIVES
1. _____	1. _____	1. _____
2. _____	2. _____	2. _____
3. _____	3. _____	
4. _____	4. _____	
5. _____	5. _____	

4. What example did Paul leave for Timothy? 2 Timothy 4:7-8 _____

5. What “trophy” was waiting for Paul? _____

Historical writings tell us that Timothy, like Paul, died as a martyr for serving Christ.

6. What “trophy” was waiting for Timothy after the finish line? 2 Timothy 4:8 _____

WHAT ABOUT ME?

Timothy had a home that was not ideal. Others around looked down on him because of his mixed blood. He could have decided, “What’s the use? I don’t fit anywhere!” Each of us has a choice in how we deal with our past. We can choose to feel sorry for ourselves, or we can ask God to do a special work in our life and make something beautiful of our life so we can help others.

1. Carefully read Isaiah 61:1-3 and see what God desires to do for and through those who have had difficult times. Fill in the missing phrase:

A. I can comfort a _____ w _____ m _____.

B. Instead of ashes, God wants to give a c _____ o _____
b _____.

C. Instead of a spirit of despair, God wants to give a g _____
o _____ p _____.

D. For prisoners God wants to r _____ them from d _____.



2. Look again at the requirements for elders, deacons & wives of leaders. If a man, are you qualified to lead in a church? If a woman, do you live your life in such a way that your husband would be able to lead? _____

LESSON 16

AQUILA AND PRISCILLA

Partners in marriage and ministry



Part of the enjoyment of being involved in a church family is those potluck dinners! One Sunday, following the dinner and after most of the people had left, I noticed a distinguished-looking couple clearing the tables and dumping the paper plates into large plastic bags. When I complimented them on how they were helping out, they said matter-of-factly, “Oh, we’re the ‘garbage detail’. We volunteered to clean up after every church function. We call it our ministry.”

How wonderful that this man and woman were not only available to serve the Lord, but they humbly did what others might consider humiliating work. This couple, with serving hearts, were glad to be what they cheerfully call the *garbage detail*. Some members of the body of Christ are called to serve in places that look important to those around. Other members are called to work quietly behind the scenes where no one usually notices their disciplined hard work. Aquila and Priscilla were a faithful team as they served and partnered with others who were noticed more than they themselves.

WHAT’S IN A NAME

The name **Aquila** means *eagle*. He was a Jew. His name was common among slaves as well as freemen or non-slaves. **Priscilla**, also known as Prisca, means *ancient* or *little old lady*. I don’t know of any lady who would ask for a name meaning *ancient*!

WHERE DID YOU SAY YOU WERE FROM?

Read Acts 18:1-23

1. What nationality was Aquila, and where was he from originally? Acts 18:2 _____

Pontus was an ancient kingdom of Asia Minor. It was located on the Black Sea. It came under Roman rule about 60 years before Jesus was born. There were Jews from Pontus in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. Acts 2:9

2. Why did Aquila and Priscilla leave Rome? Acts 18:2 _____

During the reign of Claudius, hatred toward *Jews* resulted in all Jews being banished from Rome. It was at this time that Aquila and Priscilla settled in Corinth. As you can see from the map this move would have required a ship or a very long journey by land.



3. What occupation did Aquila and Priscilla have in common with Paul? Acts 18:3
-

Aquila and Priscilla had come to Corinth because they were in business. Corinth was a busy seaport and a wise choice for their trade. They opened up their shop and one day there came a Jewish man who had traveled all the way from Antioch. They got acquainted with Paul and invited him to stay with them. Scripture doesn't tell us when or where Aquila and Priscilla became Christians. But it may have been that Paul shared the Good News of who Jesus was while they were sewing tents or while they were around a warm fire in the evenings. We do know that Paul shared about Jesus wherever he went.

A DIFFERENT VIEW OF *SUCCESS*

1. In Acts 18:18 they left Corinth with Paul. Where did Aquila and Priscilla stop? Acts 18:19
-

Leaving Corinth, where they had planned to have a profitable business, shows that Aquila and Priscilla had definitely become believers in the death and resurrection of Jesus. They now wanted to share with others what they had learned.

2. Why did Paul leave Ephesus? Acts 20:20-22
-

Paul knew that a feast in Jerusalem would mean that many of his friends would be attending. This would give him a chance to witness to them. After all, a short time ago Paul would have been attending the feast – and thinking that by keeping all of the Laws of Moses he was becoming righteous and earning God's favor. Since his eyes were opened on the road to Damascus, he wanted to tell his friends at the feast about Jesus.

God had a special reason for Aquila and Priscilla staying back in Ephesus. What they had learned from Paul was going to be very helpful in God's work at this time.

SERVING AS A TEAM

Read Acts 18:24-28

1. Who was the “new preacher in town”? _____
2. What had Apollos been schooled in so he could teach it so well? _____

Acts 18:25 shows how limited Apollos was in his knowledge of Jesus.

3. Although Apollos taught the scriptures accurately, he knew only what? 18:25



Apollos was an exceptional man in many ways. He came from Alexandria, the second most important city in the Roman Empire. He knew the Old Testament Scriptures well and was able to teach them with power. Apollos taught in such a way that people really listened to what he had to say. He was brave enough to go into the synagogue and preach to the Jews.

The only problem was that this enthusiastic man was telling the people a gospel that was not complete. His message got as far as John the Baptist and it stopped! He knew nothing about Jesus dying on the cross and then rising again three days later. He had not heard about Pentecost (Acts 2). He did not know that the Holy Spirit would now live inside true believers in Jesus.

NOTE:
When this passage says that Apollos was *mighty in the Scriptures*, this is not as we know our Bible today. This was only the Old Testament, which taught the Law of Moses.



What was different about John the Baptist’s message?

The ministry of John the Baptist was an important part of God’s plan to save us from our sins. God sent John to prepare the nation of Israel for their Messiah (John 1:15-34). This was studied in Lesson Two. When John baptized people it was a baptism of repentance. Those who were baptized were looking forward to their coming Messiah. John also taught the people about a future baptism of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8). This took place on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1:5). So Apollos knew about these promises, but he did not know that these promises had already been fulfilled. The Messiah (Jesus) had already come, had died, was raised to life again, and had gone back to His Father. The Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost.



When travelling we depend on city maps to show us how to find our way in strange cities. On one particular trip, we got confused because we could not find a certain road. Then we discovered that our map was out of date! We stopped at a station and bought a new map and it showed us the right way – there was the street we were looking for! Apollos had an old map that had been complete in its day, but he desperately needed updated information.

4. According to Acts 18:26, who did God use to tell Apollos the exciting “rest of the story”?

Aquila and Priscilla did not instruct Apollos in public because that would have only confused the Jews. Instead, they took Apollos home and then told him about Jesus Christ and the coming of the Holy Spirit. So now he could go to the synagogue and tell the Jews the rest of the story!

5. How do we know they did a good work of instructing him? Acts 18:27-28 _____

6. While Apollos still used the Scriptures, he now used them to prove what? _____

FELLOW WORKERS

7. Match the verses on the left to what we learn about Aquila and Priscilla.

_____ Romans 16:3-4

_____ 1 Corinthians 16:19

_____ 2 Timothy 4:19

A. They held church service in their home.

B. They risked their lives for Paul.

C. They are greeted in the last letter Paul wrote.

Aquila and Priscilla were encouragers for Paul’s ministry.



When you encourage someone,
Both of your loads will be lighter.

WHAT ABOUT ME?

1. Do you know God's Word well enough to recognize when someone says something untrue about the Bible or about Jesus? _____ (Taking this study will help you.)

2. Who have you been a *fellow worker* with in ministry? _____

3. While studying, who have you thought of that you should encourage? _____

If you can't think of someone right now, ask God to show you someone this week. People all around desperately need to be encouraged.

NAME _____ DATE _____

ADDRESS _____ EMAIL: _____

CHIEF PEOPLE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT FINAL TEST

(Lessons Nine – Sixteen)

1. What had Jesus done for Mary Magdalene? _____
2. Why do we not need to fear demons? _____
3. How did she show her love for Jesus? _____
4. What qualified Stephen to be chosen to serve in the Church? _____
5. How did Jesus honor Stephen? _____
6. How did God answer Cornelius' prayer? _____
7. What important lesson did Peter learn in a vision? _____
8. How do we know that Cornelius became a Christian? _____
9. What does the name 'Barnabas' mean? _____
10. Name two of the times Barnabas lived up to his name.
 - A. _____
 - B. _____
11. What group of people was Paul sent to witness to? _____
12. What important lesson did Paul learn because of his suffering? _____
13. Paul wrote to Timothy encouraging him in his areas of weakness and telling him how to minister. Answer True (T) or False (F) for each area Paul wrote about for Timothy:
 - 1) _____ Told him how to work with people with shipwrecked faith.
 - 2) _____ Timothy was too bold in his speech.
 - 3) _____ Timothy was young.
 - 4) _____ Timothy should get involved in community affairs as much as possible.

- 5)_____ Timothy should flee greed and pursue godliness.
6)_____ Timothy should know the Scriptures well.

14. Name 4 letters that Paul wrote. Hint: *These letters are now books of the Bible.*

- 1) _____ 3) _____
2) _____ 4) _____

15. What important information did Luke write that the other Gospel writers left out? _____

16. How did Luke know so much about Paul? _____

17. What kind of a home did Timothy grow up in? _____

18. What responsibility did Paul give Timothy? _____

19. Why did Aquila and Priscilla leave Rome? _____

20. What important work did Aquila and Priscilla do? _____

21. What person did you enjoy studying the most? _____

22. What about this person encouraged you the most, and why? _____

If taking this course for credit, remember to send, email & scan or FAX this test to Native Bible Centre. Make sure you include any assignments that have not yet been sent.

NATIVE BIBLE CENTRE
6145 Mowatt Street
Wardner, BC V0B 2J0
info@nativebiblecentre.com
FAX: 250-665-8022

Books Used to Write this Course

- Crowder, Bill; John The Baptizer; RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI; 2006
- Gillman, Frederick John; Jesus and The Twelve; Good Will Publishers, Gastonia, NC; 1969
- Gillman, Frederick John; Women of the Bible; Good Will Publishers, Gastonia NC; 1969
- MacArthur, John; Twelve Ordinary Men; W Publishing Group, Nashville; 2002
- Matthews, Alice; Mary & Martha; Radio Bible Class; Grand Rapids, Michigan; 2002
- McGee, J. Vernon; Thru the Bible with J. Vernon McGee; Volume IV & V; Thomas Nelson Publishing; Nashville, TN; 1983
- Moody, D. L.; Men of the Bible; Moody Press; Chicago, IL; 1898
- Ockenga, Harold John; Women Who Made Bible History; Zondervan Publishing House; Grand Rapids, MI; 1962
- Pfeiffer, Charles F., Vos, Howard F., Rea, John (Editors); Wycliffe Bible Encyclopedia; Moody Press; Chicago, IL; 1975
- Sciacca, Fran; To Walk and Not Grow Weary; Navpress; Colorado Springs, CO; 1985
- Sanders, J. Oswald; Bible Men of Faith; Moody Press; Chicago, IL; 1965
- Temple, June M.; Stars on Earth; Heart Beat Productions; Abbotsford, BC; 1999
- Tenney, Merrill C. (General Editor); The Zondervan Pictorial Encyclopedia of the Bible; 5 volumes; Zondervan Publishing House; 1975, 1967
- Thompson, Frank Charles (Editor); The New Chain-Reference Bible; B.B. Kirkbride Bible Co. Inc.; Indianapolis, IN; 1964
- White, R.E.O.; 52 Personality Profiles from the Bible; Pickering & Inglis, UK; 1983
- Wiersbe, Warren W.; The Bible Exposition Commentary; Victor Books; Wheaton, IL; 1989

PRICE LIST

NATIVE BIBLE CENTRE
Email: info@nativebiblecentre.org

6145 Mowatt Street –
www.nativebiblecentre.org
FAX 250-665-8022

Wardner, BC V0B 2J0
Toll Free 1-866-70TRIBE (708-7423)

CHRONOLOGICAL COURSES	
THE BIG PICTURE	\$10.00
IN THE BEGINNING	\$12.00
CHIEF PEOPLE OF OLD TESTAMENT	\$12.00
LIFE OF CHRIST	\$12.00
BREAKING TRAIL (ACTS)	\$12.00
CHIEF PEOPLE OF NEW TESTAMENT	\$12.00
TOPICAL COURSES	
HELP FOR THE HOME	\$10.00
THE CHURCH	\$12.00
SPIRIT WORLD	\$10.00
NO TURNING BACK (HEBREWS)	\$12.00
HOLY SPIRIT	\$12.00
SHOW ME (JAMES)	\$12.00
PRACTICAL COURSES	
PASS IT ON	\$12.00
DAILY POWER (Bible reading journal for <i>Pass It On</i>)	\$ 2.00
SHARING THE GOOD NEWS	\$10.00
HOW TO STUDY THE BIBLE	\$10.00
THE ELDER AND HIS WORK	\$12.00
POWERFUL PREACHING	\$10.00
TEACHING THE NEXT GENERATION	\$12.00
ELECTIVE COURSES	
THE GRIEVING INDIAN (TEXTBOOK)	\$ 5.00
THE GRIEVING INDIAN (WORKBOOK)	\$ 5.00
THE NEW TESTAMENT TRAIL	\$12.00
LIVING IN GOD'S FAMILY	\$10.00
WOMAN DESIGNED BY GOD	\$10.00
WOMEN GROWING IN CHRIST	\$10.00
WOMEN SERVING THE LORD	\$10.00
AUDIO COURSES	
FAMILY LIFE (3 CD'S)	\$ 6.00
FAMILY LIFE (WORKBOOK)	\$ 5.00
FIRST CORINTHIANS (5 CD'S)	\$ 8.00
FIRST CORINTHIANS (WORKBOOK)	\$ 5.00
MINISTRY TOOLS	
WHICH WAY (Evangelistic 4-Lesson Course) Non-Credit	\$ 5.00
52 OBJECT LESSONS (Use Objects to Teach God's Truth)	\$ 5.00
COURSE CREDIT FEE	\$ 5.00

- INVOICE WILL ACCOMPANY ORDER.
- SHIPPING AND HANDLING will be added to invoice
- PAY BY CHEQUE OR MONEY ORDER (info above)