

FOUNDATIONS

from Genesis

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Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

2 Timothy 2:19

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Genesis Foundations

Lesson Format:

The Scripture texts needed for teaching or study in this guide are not supplied. The value retrieved from this study guide will hinge on the diligence of teacher and student to *“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me”* John 5:39.

Each lesson has an introductory overview of the basic doctrine in focus, a foundation verse for thought or memory, a section for study of the doctrine, and a section pertaining to its practical and modern day implications and values. These lessons contain enough material for classes much longer than 45 minutes. Teachers should feel free to choose which questions to study due to time restraints or to direct the teaching in a thought provoking and logical manner.

The opening chapters of the book of Genesis speak with authority. They are unique because they answer with authority fundamental questions of the human mind. They do not answer exhaustively and sufficiently for salvation but within them lie foundations answered in the fuller revelation of the Scriptures. We could think of it another way. The book of Genesis is the seed from which the whole plant of God's Word springs. God's revelation comes to man as an unfolding plan. The beginning point of God's unfolding plan of the ages, as we can know it, begins in the opening chapters of Genesis. In this way the book of Genesis is the base of the pillar of Divine revelation. It is as the root of the tree of the inspired Scriptures. It is as the source of the stream of all the holy writings of the Bible. If the base of a pillar is removed, the pillar falls. If the root of a tree is cut out, the tree must wither and die. If the fountain head of a stream is cut off, the stream must dry up. If man ignores or refutes the validity or accuracy of the Genesis account, he loses his confidence in the remainder of the Biblical revelation.

The Bible as a whole is as a chain hanging upon two staples. The book of Genesis is the one staple; the book of Revelation the other. In this parallel, if we remove either staple the chain falls in confusion. If the opening chapters of Genesis are unreliable, then the revelation of the beginning of the universe, the origin of the human race, and the reason for its redemption are gone. On the other hand, if the book of Revelation is supplanted then the consummation of all things is unknown. To understand the Revelation one needs the Book of beginnings. It is in Genesis where are explained the first heaven, the first earth, the first Adam, and the fall. Without Genesis there is no foundation for the completed truths of mankind redeemed, a new heaven, a new earth, and the last Adam in Paradise regained.

The book of Genesis, especially the first eleven chapters, contain the first authoritative information given to the human race concerning questions of everlasting interest and everlasting importance. They introduce and gender the embryos of all the great Christian doctrines. Sin, atonement, grace, redemption, faith, justification, salvation, and many others are first encountered in Genesis. The Being of God, the origins of Creation and man, the origin of our soul, the reality of Divine revelation, the cosmic warfare between the forces of good and evil, the introduction of sin, the promise of redemption, the primitive divisions of the

human race on the face of earth, the purpose of God's elected people (which are the preliminary parts in the program of Christianity) are all included in these opening chapters. In a few words, in this inspired volume of beginnings, we have a satisfactory rationalization for all the sin and misery and contradiction now in this world, plus explanation for the wonderful scheme of redemption through faith in Jesus Christ.

The book of Genesis is the foundation upon which all the other sixty-five books of God's written Word have been based and upon which one can seek to understand God and His own reasons for life.

Jesus Christ gave key credit to this book of beginnings the same day of His resurrection when two disciples walked with Him on the way to Emmaus. He began to expound upon Himself, *"Beginning at Moses (Genesis -Deuteronomy) and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself,"* Luke 24:27.

Christians do well to follow Jesus example. Those who want to understand the New Testament correctly, first need to understand Genesis. The New Testament contains at least two hundred direct quotations or clear allusions to events described in Genesis, more than any other Old Testament book. The creation of all things from nothing by the eternal, self-existent God is revealed in the very first verses of the Biblical story. It is hardly surprising therefore that some of the greatest attacks on the Bible have been directed against the integrity and authority of Genesis.

This study deals with a mere ten basic foundations projected from the first eleven chapters. Many more lessons are not included in this short study guide. These ten are introduced to stir up your thinking and growth in Scriptural knowledge.

"The New is in the Old Concealed; The Old is in the New Revealed."

*That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken
before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the
apostles of the Lord and Saviour.*

2 Peter 3:2

Lesson 1

God's Personality & Being

Lesson Objective

To see God as a personal force, a Divine Being and Creator. God is interested in the human race that He has created, been involved with, and with which He interconnects.

Verse selection: Romans 11:33-36

*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!
How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!
For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his
counselor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recom-
pensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him,
are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.*

Lesson Overview

"In the beginning God . . ." (Genesis 1:1a). These opening words of the Bible are profound and simple. The Bible closes with similar simplicity, using a single word "Amen" meaning, so be it! Everything between these opening and closing words describe, and reveal, the personality and being of God.

God is an eternal being with His own unique personality. The Holy Scriptures nowhere seek to prove the reality and being of God; they assume God exists; they assume His eternal attributes; they assume that He is sovereign and that He holds supreme freedom, that He began all things, and will also end all things temporal. We might say, the Holy Scriptures always take God and His being for granted. Man does not need to prove it; rather he only should seek to accept and understand it.

The opening words of the Scriptures assume that God's being, His plan, His personhood, His purposes, His principles, and His promises are the center of all things visible and invisible. Learning of these aspects of the Being of God builds faith, courage and energy into our lives. Dealing with life on those foundations stands opposed to dealing with life from humanistic theology which places man at the center of life.

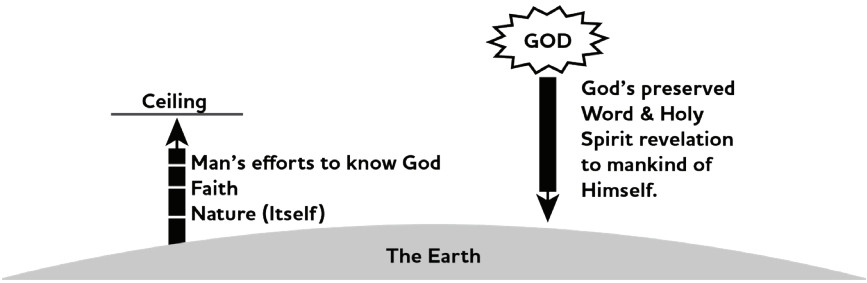
Humanism is false and deceitful. It projects and embraces a man-centered theology. It teaches that the end of all things is the happiness of man. But the Bible teaches that God and His Being are the center of all reality, not man. God is an intelligent, living Being. He is aware of His own existence, and aware that there is a “big picture”. Not only is God aware of the big picture He is the big picture. *“For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen”* Ro 11:36.

Man in his fallen personality makes mistakes but God makes none. He is all wise and all knowing in all things. God never made or makes a mistake.

Who is God and what is He like? Can God be defined or described? Perversions about God abound. The Scriptures are preserved by God so we might know Him. If we are to know God personally we must first learn what God is like and who God is. We learn this from His God-breathed revelation—the Bible. Knowing who God is and what He is like is essential to an intimate walk with Him. By learning of Him, we can in turn respond to Him in an intimate way.

We need information about God but equally as imperative for purposeful obedient lifestyles, we desperately need to move beyond the information and facts into intimate fellowship and a personal relationship with Him. The words of Scriptures provide the first; the Holy Spirit of God performs the second.

God’s personality and being are expansive and inexhaustible. One lesson could not begin to cover all of them. Yes, man’s desire to know God is even limited. Yet the Bible is replete with the revelation of Him, and His personhood. This lesson serves only to help us analyze and learn some of the very basic practical foundations of His Being and personality which we often need in everyday life.



Scriptures to Study and Analyze

God reveals Himself to people

1. Matthew 16:17; John 14:26. According to these verses, how does God reveal Himself to people?

2. Compare Psalm 19:1-3 with Romans 1:19,20. Who is responsible to know about God? Does anyone have an excuse to not know about God?

God has a mind with thoughts

3. Isaiah 55:8,9. In what ways are God’s thoughts diverse from our thoughts?

God has sovereign intentions, plans, and purposes

4. Genesis 50:20. What does this verse and contextual story teach about God’s intentions?

God has knowledge

5. Isaiah 40:13,14. Who taught God His knowledge? What word or attribute is often used to describe this aspect of God's person and being?

God has power

6. Matthew 28:18. How much power does God have? What word or attribute is often used to describe this aspect of God's person and being?

God moderates life and death

7. Hebrews 9:27. God knows and we know the day we were born. What else particularly does this verse indicate that God knows and determines about a person's life? cf. Ge 3:19; Ec 3:20; 2 Co 5:10; Re 20:12-13

8. Should we be afraid of God because He knows so much about us?

God has emotions

9. Numbers 11:1. What is the basic difference between God's anger and man's anger? cf. Ps 78:21

10. Psalm 2:4. What is the basic difference between God's laughing and man's laughing? cf. Ps 37:13; 59:8; Pr 1:26

11. Genesis 6:6. What is the basic difference between the grieving of God and the grieving of man?

God sees, hears, and smells

12. 2 Chronicles 16:9. What word or attribute is often used for God being in every place at the same time. cf. He 4:13; Pr 15:3

13. Compare Isaiah 1:15 with Psalm 66:18. What happens to God's hearing when a person is not obedient to Him?

14. Compare Genesis 8:21 with 2 Corinthians 2:15,16. God smelled Noah's sacrifice and said He would never again curse the ground. How is the smell from Noah's altar symbolized in the 2 Corinthians 2 verses?

For Deeper Discussion

1. Discuss other scenes or verses in Genesis chapters 1-11 that illustrate or reveal the personality and being of God.
2. Discuss how the lifestyles and values of a person who assumes man is the center of reality (humanism) are different from a person who by faith believes that God and His personhood is the center of all reality?
3. Why does God sometimes allow evil to prevail when His intentions for His people are always good? cf. Ro 8:28
4. What is the difference between power and authority? Does God have both? How and why?
5. How can God be absolutely sovereign and yet not be responsible for sin and evil?
6. If God is a Spirit without form, why does the Bible also teach that God has physical qualities and personality?
7. What does the diagram on page 8 illustrate about the relationship of God's personality and being with man's ability to understand Him?

Lesson 2

Principles of Creation

Lesson Objective

To examine Creation principles from the mind and heart of God.

Verse Selection: Acts 17:24,25

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshiped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things.

Lesson Overview

"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the hosts of them" (Genesis 2:1). God ended His six days of creation work. These words from the Biblical account speak of completion and order. God's creation pattern moved from that which was without form and void to a beautiful order and completeness. When the Creation was completed God looked at His own work and said that it was very good.

The creation of all things from nothing by the eternal, self-existent God is revealed in the very first chapter of Genesis. It is hardly surprising, therefore that some of the greatest attacks on the Bible have been directed against the integrity and authority of Creation. There are finally only two basic alternatives to belief in a Divine Creation by the God of the Bible; evolution and its counter part, intelligent design. The false attacks of evolutionism and the deceptive face of intelligent design are both ultimately based upon the assumption that the complex universe can somehow be explained apart from an infinite and creative power of a personal, eternal God who seeks a relationship with the people of His Creation. Therefore both the heresy of evolution and the deceptive face of intelligent design theories finally discredit morality, accountability of man to God, lawful marriage, sanctity of human life, etc. Creation does not need a theory. It stands solely upon faith in the Biblical record and the God of the Biblical record.

In creation of the earth and universe God established principles by which mankind can benefit. When people abuse or ignore Divine Cre-

ation principles in daily life, then God allows havoc, distress, discouragement, and trouble to enter. Life and its circumstances become a farce and sorrow. Chaos reigns where security and peace is possible.

Healthy understanding of orderly lifestyles, work and worship habits, and completeness are intrinsic values of the true Christian. He loves and seeks out God’s values to bring about personal habits, family dynamics, and worship experiences which bring rest to his earthly soul. Creation principles put into practice fill a void brought about by chaos, sin-sickness, and the curses of sin.

Satan seeks to destroy Creation principles in our lives. He is a liar. He wants chaos, selfishness and distorted values concerning orderly habits to govern man’s behavior. As an illustration of Satan’s efforts to skew that which of itself is good, Satan seeks to make work habits become either an idol for gain or a rejection of work so as to attain self-seeking laziness and/or pleasure pursuits. Unbalanced or skewed values concerning Creation principles destroy the blessings of obedience and applications of these principles to life.

Without Jesus, people often live in denial of the wonderful principles of the majestic Creation. God as a Divine Creator was interested in every detail of human life. By ignoring His creation principles people miss the beauty of life God can provide through His infinite Being. Yet God will continue to allow man, created in His own image to choose to cooperate with Him only through voluntary choice. Obeying and cooperating with God through His own designed principles begets harmony, blessing and peace with life.

Scriptures to Study and Analyze

God created

1. John 1:1-3. What does John declare was made by the Word of God? cf. Co 1:16

2. Look up the word “Word” from verse 1 in a Greek lexicon and write in your words what John meant when he wrote that in the beginning was the Word and the Word was God.

By the same Word God created and sustains all things

3. Acts 17:28. What would happen if God stopped sustaining the world and universe He created? Why does it matter? cf. Co 1:17; He 1:3

God is ultimate in authority yet delegates authority in Creation

4. Genesis 1:5a, 8a, 10a. What interesting and unique authority did God retain and exercise in these phrases?

5. Genesis 2:19,23. What unique authority did God delegate to Adam?

God is orderly and purposeful

6. Genesis 1:2–2:1. What can we learn about life from the specific order in which the earth and universe were created? Couldn't God have made Adam on the first day and planet Earth on the sixth day?

7. 1 Corinthians 14:40. What counsel does Paul give about orderliness? cf. 1 Co 14:23-25

God is good and personal

8. Genesis 1:28-30. Name at least four things these verses state or imply which God provided for mankind in the Creation.

Functioning of pairs bring life upon the earth

9. Genesis 1:27. Procreation depends upon God's orderly Creation principles. What principle is evident here? cf. Ge 5:2, 6:19, 7:16; Mt 19:4; Mk 10:6

God established a proper rest cycle

10. Genesis 2:2. Who rested on the seventh day of Creation? What did God's rest symbolize? Did Adam and Eve rest on the first Sabbath Day? cf. He 4:10; Mk 2:27

11. Hebrews 4:10. From what did God rest?

12. What did Jesus say was the purpose of the Sabbath from the beginning?

God's holiness is revealed in the skies and nature

13. Psalm 19:1-5. According to the Psalmist, what is displayed in the nature, the skies, and the universe?

God established proper work habits

14. What happens when proper work habits become unhealthy and focus on a desire for gain? cf. Pr 6:6; Jb 27:16-17; 20:18-22; Ps 39:6; 49:10-11; 52:7; Je 17:11; Ja 4:14

15. Compare Genesis 2:15 with Genesis 3:17-19. How did work change after sin came into the world?

For Deeper Discussion

1. Some intelligent design supporters claim that such belief is a “ramp” to help evolutionists come to the truth of Creation. What is wrong with that theory? How does the doctrine of intelligent design circumvent the Bible and its Divine ability to convince people of Truth?

2. Why do we teach and stand firmly on our day of rest as the first day of the week rather than the Sabbath of Creation?

3. When an accountable adult looks into the sky, what does he understand about himself? cf. Ps 19:1-14; 97:6 and Ro 2:14, 15. How does Paul say this makes him accountable to God?

4. What does the Bible teach about proper habits of rest and work? How can work become an idol? How can rest become a snare?

5. What would happen if God's eternal wisdom had not created male and female pairs? How does this Creation principle defeat perversions of same sex legal unions today?

6. What are some patterns of orderliness a Christian should practice and teach his family?

7. What spiritual parallels and metaphors are there between the Creation principles and the New Birth of a Christian? *Hint. And there was light; God divided the light from the darkness, etc.*

Lesson 3

The Sanctity of Life

Lesson Objective

To understand that God holds a claim on all human life, which He created in His own image. To realize that this has implications regarding both ourselves and relationships with others. God did not place this same claim on the animal kingdom.

Memory Selection: Psalm 139:14,16

I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. . . . Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.

Lesson Overview

“Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man” (Genesis 9:6). This principle of life and its associated sacredness was revealed by God to Noah. This revelation of God’s view and value concerning human blood followed the universal world-wide deluge or as it is often named, The Flood.

Christians know there is something special and holy about human life and people. People are in some way a reflection of God. Something of God can be seen in humans. Christians believe that humans have a soul which lives on after the body has died. This never dying soul will be judged by God and can, through redemption, join God forever in Heaven. Because people have souls, they must be treated as special. People are different from the animal kingdom because they share something joint with God. Genesis describes how God made Adam and “breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” This did not happen with animals and plants, but only with humans.

The term “sanctity of life” is a common phrase used in moral and political debates. In the political world this debate emanates from a wide range of bioethical issues such as abortion, embryo research, cloning, genetic engineering, euthanasia, human trafficking, and such like. This

term is also often used by those who morally oppose technologies or practices which violate the intrinsic value of life.

A Christian also believes in the sanctity of life. However, a Christian understands the term not merely as a political “war word” concerning a handful of bioethical issues, but rather as a broad belief encompassing an ethical approach to life. His belief includes an entire range of moral implications relating to the creation of man, human relationships, and moral responsibilities to others. He realizes his belief is an intrinsic value which must color his full worldview and personal constitution. His beliefs concerning violence, abortion, poverty, child abuse, and man’s final accountability to God are one package which stem from his understanding that people are created in the image of God. He believes that human life has an inherently sacred attribute and dignity which should be protected and respected at all times. While God gave humanity the authority to kill and eat other forms of life in the post flood world, the murdering of human beings was expressly forbidden, with the penalty being death.

Humanity is more sacred than other parts of creation. Human life is not holy in the same sense that God is holy. Only God is holy in and of Himself, but human life is holy in the sense of being “set apart” from all other life created by God. The sanctity of life motivates a Christian’s worldview concerning all forms of evil and injustice that are perpetuated against human life.

Humanity was created in God’s image, but sin has corrupted that image. A Christian’s beliefs concerning the sanctity of human life are not due to the fact that we are such wonderful beings, but rather that since God created people in His image He also set them apart from all other life forms. Although that image has been marred by sin, His image is retained in present humanity. God therefore holds people accountable concerning both personal life and in the lives of all mankind. Human life is always to be treated with dignity and respect.

Love for God is the motivation and undergirding strength for the doctrine of the sanctity of life. Loving the Lord who created us begets love for others. If we love God, we will value our own lives as part of God’s plan, to do His will until the time comes that His will is better served by our death. We will love and care for His people (Jn 21:15-17). Understanding the foundations of the sanctity of life brings about meaning and motivation for acting upon the needs of other humans. We will see to the needs of the elderly and sick. We will understand the needs all around us, including the dark plagues of abuse happening in the human family. Loving God and our neighbor as our self holds huge implications for practical living in a fallen world where selfishness, self abuse, and carelessness concerning life prevail.

Scriptures to Study and Analyze

The human mind and body is fearfully and wonderfully created

1. Psalm 139:14-16. How is the mind of mankind different from the rest of his physical body? cf. Pr 20:27; Jb 10:8,9

2. Compare Proverbs 20:27 with 1 Corinthians 2:11. What does God know about every person?

People are unique. They retain something of God

3. Genesis 1:26a,27. What do people possess that warm-blooded mammals do not possess? cf. Ro 2:14-16

People are morally responsible beings

4. Revelation 20:12-15. Where will all people be judged for their life behavior?

5. What two things will be evaluated at this judgment?

6. What does the Bible say about things men have kept hidden from other's knowledge? Ec 12:14; Lu 8:17

God values life

7. Mark 6:17-26. Herod the king held certain values much more precious than life. What were they?

8. Genesis 4:9,10. What serious questions of accountability did God ask Cain about his ruthless murder of his righteous brother which show God wants us to hold life in high esteem?

9. Genesis 4:11,12. What punishment did God bring upon Cain's irresponsibility and disregard for life?

10. Genesis 4:23,24. What view did Lamech take on the sanctity of life? How is this like the society of the end times? cf. 1 Ti 4:1-4

11. Genesis 9:3. What distinct diet change did God give Noah and his sons after the flood as a direct inference that human life is sacred while animal life is not?

God expects usefulness of life

12. God creates and loves each person, giving every person value. This includes the new-born, the elderly, the handicapped, the healthy, the ill, the useful members of society, and those in need of special care. Christians should treat all human life with respect. Because God has given life, this means that Christians have a responsibility to take care of themselves. They should do something useful with their lives, not waste it. They should take reasonable care of their own health and other people's health. Christians should reverence God's gift of life. What are practical ways Christians should use their lives for usefulness?

The body of a Christian is a temple for God

13. 1 Corinthians 6:19. If the body of a Christian as the house of God should not be defiled, what practices, foods, and abuses common in our modern world should a Christian avoid or shun?

Jesus illustrated the value of all humans

14. Mark 12:31; What indicators show we love others as ourselves? cf. 1John 3:17-10; Matthew 25:40

15. Name favorite stories from Jesus' life which illustrate His value of life. Discuss the particulars of these accounts.

For Deeper Discussion

1. Why is understanding that life begins at conception inseparable from a proper belief in the sanctity of life?
2. How do pro-abortion arguments illustrate the truth that Satan is a liar about the sanctity of life?
3. What should the Christian believe about modern birth control methods which cause abortion?
4. If animals are not included in God's image why does the Bible teach human carefulness with the treatment of animals? How does it relate to the Creation principles of sanctity of life in the human family? cf. Pr 12:10; De 25:4
5. How should Christians relate to the modern ideas of the treatment and care for the elderly? cf. 1 Ti 5:3-16
6. How much effort should Christians place on modern medicine to preserve life? Discuss views of dental health, health remedies, vaccinations, medical assistance for incurable disease, etc., in light of Jesus' teachings and the Scriptures.
7. Pre-flood, God only provided for vegetarian diets. Why is the modern pressure for vegetarian diet an error? cf. 1 Ti 4:3
8. What is wrong about the modern arguments of sentience which states that animals have the right to be protected from pain, from all suffering, and the right to complete freedom of movement?

Lesson 4

Marriage: One-Flesh

Lesson Objective

To study and see and proclaim the beauty of God's marriage ordinance and the singleness of one-flesh unity.

Memory Selection: Ephesians 5:28-30

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Lesson Overview

"... the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man." (Genesis 2:21-23). God knelt down on His own created planet earth and formed a man from its dust. Then He put this man to sleep with "holy anesthesia" and from this man (Adam) He formed a woman (Eve). God then gave this woman to the man in the mystery of marriage and one-flesh union. He declared it very good and a one-flesh bond for life. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit were present as witnesses of this beautiful mystery and union.

Lawful marriage or wedlock was a pre-sin ordinance of Almighty God. Therefore all marriages are of divine origins and of the mind of God. This divine ordinance includes marriages of non-Christians because marriage proceeded forth from the mind of a divine Godhead.

Lawful marriage or wedlock is also a post-sin ordinance of Almighty God. The mystery of a man and woman entering into covenant of life together remains a core foundation concerning God's creation mind. Satan's attack through societies against lawful one-flesh marriage unions is nothing less than proof of the same.

The wedded union and procreation were an inseparable creation

principle and act of Almighty God. Marriage is the very plinth (bed-rock) of procreation. Out of the marriage one-flesh union ordinance issues forth human life. These tandem profound mysteries may boggle the human mind, but were incorporated as the highest “brainchild” of God concerning Creation.

Though spoiled with human limitations because of sin and death, lawful marriage of one man and one woman into a one-flesh union remains as a token of the mystery of life. It evokes thoughts of eternal implications. It is a symbol of the betrothed church; and it is proof that there is a God in Heaven who created it.

Broken marriages in our present day society testify to the disobedience and rejection of God’s mind concerning marriage. Societies reek with human emotional pain, destruction, and torture because of disobedience to permanent one-flesh marriage unions. Defending and acceptance of divorce and remarriage preceded the inroads of acceptance of sexual perversions in modern societies. Divorce is not acceptable in the mind of God, neither was it God’s plan from the beginning. It is sin and will not enter the gates of Heaven. Pastors, churches and the permissive religious society who are calling out against modern moral perversions of all kinds first opened the flood gates when they accepted the damning influences of divorce and remarriage. Such was a plot of Satan through disobedient mankind to reject God’s ordinance of the wedded life and one-flesh union.

Satan is anti-Christ. The end time Anti-Christ (Satan personified) will be against the one man, one woman, one-flesh marriage ordinance and will be anti-marriage. *“Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all”* Da 11:37. The suppressing darkness concerning marriage values and what constitutes marriage is gaining “traction” at a rapid rate. No wonder Satan is intent on destroying this plan of God. The marriage plan is the very root and source of God’s intentions for mankind. The time is indeed at hand for the people of God to unashamedly declare and proclaim by word and deed the beautiful and profound mystery of one man and one woman in one-flesh unions bearing children on earth as witness of a Holy God in Heaven!

Scriptures to Study and Analyze

Marriage was the beautiful “brainchild” of God Almighty

1. Genesis 2:18a. What did God say was the reason He created a wife for Adam?

2. Compare Genesis 2:18b with 1 Corinthians 11:9,11. What beautiful one-flesh role did God have in mind for Eve?

3. Genesis 2:22. How did God provide for Adam to have a wife?

4. Compare Genesis 2:7 with Genesis 2:21-23. How was the method of getting a wife for Adam very different from the creation of male and female in the animal kingdom?

5. Genesis 3:16. What changes affected the marriage union after Adam and Eve sinned?

Marriage is for procreation

6. Genesis 1:28. What specific purposes did God have for marriage which produced families?

7. In what ways is current society rejecting and disobeying this plan of God?

8. Malachi 2:14-16. What does the prophet reiterate about the procreation mind of God Almighty?

Confirmation of Jesus

9. And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them _____ and _____, And said, For this _____ shall a man leave father and mother, and shall _____ to his _____: and they twain shall be _____? Matthew 19:4,5

10. _____ putteth away his wife, and _____ another, committeth _____: and whosoever _____ her that is put away from her husband committeth _____. Luke 16:18

11. Who is accountable for the sin when divorce takes place?

Marriage is a picture of the betrothed church

12. Ephesians 5:32,33 and Revelation 19:7-9. How does the picture of Christ and the Church reveal God's foreknowledge on man's first day of creation?

13. How are unfaithfulness of baptism vows to God and unfaithfulness to marriage vows parallel?

For Deeper Discussion

1. Why do second and/or adulterous marriages sometimes seem to function better than first and lawful marriages?
2. What are the devastating effects to the security of a woman when a man fails to take his proper leadership role in marriage and family?
3. What are the devastating results to the family when father or mother live to pursue selfish interests and ambitions?
4. Discuss practical ways families of father, mother, and children can be as a “city set on a hill” in cultures of broken morals, ideals, and family values.
5. How should Christians relate and respond to broken relationships and adulterous marriages of neighbors and acquaintances? To family? To single moms or dads?
6. Why are adultery, fornication, and other forms of sexual sins which violate the legitimate marriage union such an abomination in the eyes of God Almighty?

Lesson 5

The Nature of the Trinity

Lesson Objective

To search the truth and verity of the eternal trinitarian Godhead, yet in essence One. To notice that the Trinity reveals a God of love and relationships.

Verse Selection: Romans 1:20

For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

Lesson Overview

“Let us make man in our image after our likeness” (Genesis 1:26) are the first words of the preserved King James English translation of the Holy Scriptures indicating there was and is an eternal Triune Godhead. The words us and our are indicative of a triune God, yet in essence only ONE. These words also imply the three-fold makeup of man—body, soul, and spirit.

The doctrine of a Triune God is an antinomy to logical argument. An antinomy means one or more fully equal truths that at face value appear to contradict or be unresolvable. The majestic mystery of a Triune God overloads human mental capacity! But it is true!

The Trinity is rejected by all false religions. Christianity stands alone among world religions as the only faith which teaches a Triune God. This doctrine teaches that God exists eternally in three Persons each glorifying the other in total and perfect harmony. God the Son came as an earthly incarnate manifestation of Deity God. God the Holy Spirit dwells in the earthly “tabernacles” of those who have been bought and sanctified by the blood of God the Son. This Holy Spirit speaks to them and guides them in perfect harmony with the will and purposes of God the Father and God the Son. These attributes and harmonious Persons of the Trinity constitute a relational God; One who relates not only with Himself in perfect unison but also with humans through His Living Word and the indwelling Holy Spirit. No other religion has a god

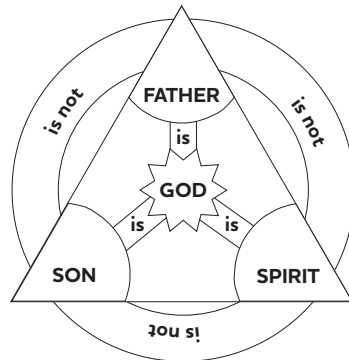
of these relational attributes. The doctrine and faith belief in a Triune God stands fundamental to essentiality of salvation, redemption of mankind, and sanctification of faith obedient people. This is why John wrote that any teaching which denies that Jesus is come in the flesh is anti-Christ. All the essence of the redemption plan is tied up in the validity of a Triune God, though it is an antinomy for the human mind.

The Trinity was a mystery not expressly evident to the Old Testament era and not easily grasped by reading the Old Testament alone. However it becomes an undeniable truth when the New Testament and the incarnation are believed. Its truth is indisputable when comparing all Scripture with all Scripture. God who revealed Himself to the human family in an unfolding revelation and through the prophets, has in these times revealed Himself as God in the flesh—Jesus the Christ (He 1:1-3).

Prior to returning to Heaven as Intercessor and Priest for the sins of those who obey Him, Jesus revealed clearly that after His departure from earth His eternal Spirit would dwell in those who obey Him. Paul the apostle by divine revelation teaches that the body of those who obey the Word are the dwelling temple of God the Holy Spirit (1 Co 3:16; 2 Co 6:16)

Men sometimes use word illustrations in an attempt to describe the trinitarian aspects of a Triune God. Finally though, they fail because of the essence of such wonder and truth. Some have attempted using the illustrations of egg white, yolk, and shell. Others have attempted illustrations of water, steam, and ice to illustrate a Triune God. Such attempts, in essence though they help the human mind to somehow grasp and comprehend the Biblical evidence of a Triune God, fail to illustrate the mystery of this doctrine and truth. The wonder and truth of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit remain clouded in human realms of understanding. Its truth can only be believed by faith. After all, without faith it is impossible to please or understand a Holy God.

The early church used this diagram in an effort to illustrate the Divine Triune Godhead.



Scriptures to Study and Analyze

Moses declares the Trinity

1. Genesis 1:26. Who was the “us” in v26 that created humans in Their Own image? Cf. Col 1:15-16

2. According to the answer for exercise number 1, Who attended and officiated the marriage of Adam and Eve in Genesis 2:22?

John declares God the Son

3. John 1:18. What word picture does John use to describe the relationship of the Father with the Son? What might John’s declaration imply?

The Trinity glorifies Itself

4. John 16:14. Who does Jesus declare that the Holy Spirit glorifies?

5. John 17:1. Who does Jesus declare glorifies the Father?

6. John 17:5. Who does Jesus declare the Father glorifies?

God the Father glorifies God the Son.

7. How long has this glorifying been going on?

Each Person of the Trinity revolves around the other in perfect unselfish relationships. None demands that the other revolve around Him for They are THREE yet ONE! All pouring into Themselves perfect love and adoration. The triune Godhead is the center of reality and the fountainhead of relationships among the human family.

8. 1 John 4:16, John 3:16,17. How does this perfect triune relationship reach the human family?

The Three-in-One Godhead created the Human Family with the purpose of intimate fellowship.

9. 1 Corinthians 2:7-10. Who was unaware of God's eternal plan of fellowship when He made His Son vulnerable to evil?

10. 1 Corinthians 2:9. Who will participate in these relational joys with the Trinity?

11. 1 Thessalonians 5:23. How did God create man to reflect the Trinity?

For Deeper Discussion

1. How does the doctrine of a Triune God explain how God is love when there were no people to love in "pre-creation history".

2. Why is a triune Godhead essential to Christian faith and belief in forgiveness of sins?

3. For what reasons do false religions deny the Trinity?

4. The Father . . . Son. . . and the Holy Spirit glorify each other. At the center of the universe, self-giving love is the dynamic currency of a relational Triune Godhead. Each Person of the Trinity exalts, communes with, and defers to one another. How can this same activity be maintained in a Christian brotherhood comprised of those that are living IN HIM?

5. Discuss the three pointed triangle and circle diagram of the early church in the *Lesson Overview* section and find the seven statements that may be made about the Trinity.

6. Discuss the parallel aspects of the three-fold makeup of people with the aspects of the Trinity.

Lesson 6

Sin & Death

Lesson Objective

To find that sin brought death as a consequence of disobedience to God's law. To grasp the truth that sin brought death both physically and spiritually, that redemption came by way of a sinless man. Man can be redeemed from the curse of sin and the second death of eternal judgment.

Memory Selection: 1 Corinthians 15:55–57

O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Lesson Overview

“... of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die” (Genesis 3:3). These words of Eve to Satan were a quote of the revelation that the creation of humanity also included the possibility of death through a choice to sin. The Bible records that after Eve had eaten and when Adam ate of the forbidden fruit, their eyes were opened and they were ashamed. Death had seized the human family. Sin kills! Sin constitutes death.

Satan at the time of the sin of Adam and Eve had already “died”. Comparing Scriptures with Scriptures we can confidently conclude that Satan had already “died” by his own sin of rebellion against his Creator. Now he came with his pernicious and sneaky character tempting the first humans to also sin. He succeeded in his murderous attempt. Sin which had already entered cosmic realms, now also seized planet earth. Now all mankind and all creation fell under the crushing weight of sin. Sin imprisoned nature in the chains of death which no man could break.

The sting of death is a universal humans event. Death favors no person. The same amount of babies which are born is the exact same amount of people that die. Some die old, some die young. But all people are clutched in the process of physically dying because the penalty for sin was death.

Sin and death brought fear and shame to the human experience. Adam and Eve hid from God because of their sin. They were now ashamed because of their nakedness. All the fear and shame in the world is a direct result of sin and its consequence—death. Modern atheists, antagonists, and perverted teachers intend to teach society that nakedness is not shameful, but they are wrong! The Bible foundations of truth are sure.

Satan himself twists God’s answer to the shame problem brought about by sin. He uses clothing in his kingdom to display vanity, self expression, and sinful desire. In the venues of fashion, lust, and prideful image Satan masquerades the death penalty due to sin.

The whole world was changed and affected by death. Aging, sickness, pain, yes even all of the problems of the world are the result of death from sin. We cannot know all the implications and changes that death brought. But this we know, the whole earth was affected and changed. Paul the apostle declares that the whole earth groans and travaileth waiting for its redemption. Sin and death brought consequences of global magnitude. Only through Jesus the last Adam can humanity regain what was lost in the fall.

Man needs a proper understanding of death and its origins to respond correctly to life. Death with dignity, the right to die, doctor assisted suicide, and euthanasia are all forms of Satanic deception concerning the reality of death. People often ignore the finality and implications of death. Some indulge in pleasure to distract from its realities. Some claim false religion to alleviate its finality. Others simply deny its realities, but the truth stands. All must face death. Accepting the finality of death and knowing that God in His great mercy has provided a way to be redeemed gives a Christian the tools to face physical death and the aging process with confidence.

Sin and death changed Adam and Eve

- Spiritually**
- Separation, (Spirit Death)
 - Darkened Hearts to Truth
 - Rebellion Centered
 - Bent with Pride, Impurity
- Physically**
- Weariness, Sweat
 - Sickness, Imperfection
 - Pain, Suffering
 - Aging, Death

- Socially**
- Competition, Selfishness
 - Critical, Blaming, Suspicious
 - Unkind, Unforgiving
 - Regrets, Boredom
- Emotionally**
- Fear, Shame
 - Despair, Depression
 - Self Pity, Heartache

Scriptures to Study and Analyze

The consequence of sin—Genesis 2:17

1. Romans 6:23. What does sin receive? What does God provide in contrast? What is the difference described in these verses?

2. James 1:15. What brings about death? How is it connected with sin?

Sin brings fear and shame from guilt

3. Compare Genesis 3:10 with John 3:19. What does sin seek to do to evade consequences?

4. Genesis 3:7. What did Adam and Eve do about their shame? Why did their efforts not satisfy God’s holy requirements for clothing?

5. 2 Timothy 1:7-8. What is the remedy for fear brought on by sin?
What kind of mind does a person have because of salvation? cf. Ph 4:7

Death is unpleasant

6. 1 Corinthians 15:56. To what picture does Paul compare death?
What does this picture conjure up in our minds?

Death is universal in human scope

7. Romans 5:12. Who is condemned by the curse of sin and earth?
Which race is exempt?

8. 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17. Who are the only people that will escape the
sting of physical death?

The outward man dies

9. 2 Corinthians 4:16,17. What does Paul state is the outward experience of the Christian compared with his inner spiritual man?

10. What does this experience mean for the Christian emotionally?

For Deeper Discussion

1. Are we born *sinners* by default or are we born *safe* by default? Are the words *saved* and *safe* synonymous?

2. Why is the truth that death came *after* the fall an imperative truth about redemption? How does the Biblical truth that death came *after* sin debunk the false doctrines of evolution that must hold there was death *before* sin?

3. Why is there so much fear and anxiety abounding in the last days of the earth? How are hyper fear and sin in our society connected? What do Christians have to replace fear?

4. What could be reasons anti-depressants are flourishing in western cultures? cf. Lk 21:26. How might sin and depression be connected?

Lesson 7

Life & Redemption

Lesson Objective

To study the Redemption plan of God which brings life from the dead. To grasp that Jesus was the promise of life, the Sacrifice to restore life and the Author of eternal life to all those who obey Him.

Verse Selection: 1 John 5:12

He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.

Lesson Overview

“I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel” (Genesis 3:15). God’s promise to the woman after she had sinned pictured hope for a Redeemer. The Bible does not give clear indications if the woman understood the implications that through childbirth and human lineage, God Himself would come in the flesh to restore life to the human race. However as we look backward, this inevitable truth stands clearly as God’s promise to redeem men.

But God must have told them enough that Adam understood his wife was to be the progenitor of the human family which represented life and not death. We know this because Adam now named his wife Eve (Ge 3:20). Formerly Adam had simply named her Woman (Ishshah, Ge 2:23). Through childbirth the human family would be restored and given life for death. Through a sinless Man redemption would be accomplished. That which was lost through sin would be restored through the seed of Adam and Eve.

Eve conceived and bore the first human son, Cain. Original Hebraic word meanings suggest that Eve may well have thought she had given life to the promised Redeemer. In chapter 4:1 the original word meanings could be translated as “I have gotten a man, the Lord.” Life would indeed be regained by a man. But 4,000 years of history would first be accomplished before in the fullness of time Messiah would appear to die for the sins of the people. This Man would provide a way for restoration

of life that was lost.

Life was an act of Creation. However, death from murder entered the world because Cain served himself and the devil. Cain killed Eve’s godly son Abel.

The ungodly lineage of Cain grew. After one-hundred thirty years Eve bore a third son, Seth. Men began to call upon the name of the Lord (Ge 4:26). This lineage of Seth also grew. The earth began to fill with people. In the “dying human” sense, both of these family lines represented human life. From these shadowy beginnings the promise of God sprung until in the fullness of time Jesus the Redeemer was born as the seed of Eve.

God is true. His promise of life was fulfilled. The man who would bruise Satan was named Jesus, meaning Saviour. Jesus as a sinless Man on earth, and by His death on an earthly cross, satisfied the death sentence as the consequence for sin. His resurrection from the dead secured life from death. Jesus began to restore what was stolen by Satan. Spiritual life and eternal salvation from the second death is the reward of any person who believes, repents and obeys this Man Jesus. All throughout time, men of God by faith, clung to the promise of resurrection from the dead unto life. Job, one of the earliest patriarchs of the Scriptures, declared victory from death and the promise of eternal life “. . . after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God” Jb 19:26.

Life opposes death. Life lost by sin was regained by a sinless, Man Redeemer. Jesus said . . . *“I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live!”* Jo 11:25. So life comes though faith in Jesus. Man need not die without hope. Man need not die the second death. Man can live spiritually now and rise in a celestial body to never die again. *“O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? . . . But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”* 1 Co 15:55,57.

Jesus as the last Adam brings life. In the original creation before Adam and Eve sinned humans would never die. This suggests that the universe was also created to last forever. But sin changed that. Now life was needed. Jesus as the Author of eternal salvation restores life to all those who obey Him. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life!

The first Adam (DEATH)	Jesus the last Adam (LIFE)
• First Born from the Dust • Disobedience • Chose Death for All • Condemnation • Sinner • Sin • Living Soul • Natural • Of the Earth; Earthly	• First Born of the Dead • Obedience • Vanquished the Power of Death • Justification • Righteousness • Grace • Life Giving Spirit • Spiritual • From Heaven; Heavenly

Scriptures to Study and Analyze

Origins of life

1. Genesis 2:7b. What specific thing did God do after He formed Adam?

2. How were God’s Creation actions different with Adam than the animals? How were they similar?

3. Genesis 3:20. How would physical life be maintained in the human world beyond Adam and Eve's life? What implications did this hold concerning a Saviour? cf. Mt 1; Lk 3:23-38; Jn 1:1-34.

4. John 11:25,26. What did Jesus say specifically about His own life giving abilities? How do these verses parallel 1Th 4:16-17?

5. Hebrews 5:9. What specific "life" ability does this verse declare that Jesus holds? How is this ability the same as His Creation abilities?

Jesus' blood secured life and redemption

6. Compare Genesis 9:4-6 and Leviticus 17:11 with Hebrews 9:22. What does the shedding of blood teach us about the sacrifice of Jesus?

7. 1 Peter 1:19. Name the things about Jesus' life blood which bring about redemption for sin.

8. Luke 24:39 What normal human element will Jesus not have when He appears in the second coming? What will He be? cf. Col 3:4

9. Genesis 3:21. What needed to happen to cover the shame of Adam and Eve?

10. Genesis 22:1-19. What happened in this account which was a shadow of the redemption plan of God? (Specifically v. 13)

11. Joshua 2:18,19. What would happen by Rahab's faith if she obeyed? What was the signal of faith? What color was the signal?

12. Luke 21:34-36. What did Jesus say about end times and our redemption? What did He mean if redemption is already accomplished through His sacrifice on the cross and resurrection from the dead?

For Deeper Discussion

1. Can human death exist in the presence of Jesus? How? Why or why not?
2. Since Jesus is the resurrection and the life; what will be the existence of all those rejected from His presence?
3. According to Jesus in John 12:25 and Matthew 16:26, what life principles should we exercise so that we can we keep that which we will ultimately lose anyway?
4. Discuss the concepts of loving life which the Bible teaches in 1 Peter 3:10. How does this relate to life according to James 4:14?
5. Hebrews 12:14 tells us about another important concept of life that we should exercise. What is it and how should Christians apply this teaching?

Lesson 8

The Nature of Satan

Lesson Objective

To study and understand that Satan is a liar. He is the father of all lies and deception. Even “truth” he may use or tell is a lie! He and his demons roam the earth to find people, hold them captive, and destroy life.

Verse Selection: 1 Timothy 4:1

Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils.

Lesson Overview

“Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made” (Genesis 3:1). This text does not mention the name Satan but in the Book of Revelation in the twelfth chapter, Satan is identified as that “old serpent.” There is no question that when Moses wrote “the serpent,” he was writing of an animal, which became the tool of Satan himself. Satan’s first work among the human family was with Eve and his deception came as a question of “truth”. It was true that God had commanded Adam and Eve not to eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. However, Satan’s question was a deceptive trick to instill doubt and to question God. The devil was and is a liar from the beginning.

Evidence of direct Satanic forces and intervention against the plan of God is recorded in seven Old Testament books. They are the Books of Genesis, 1 Chronicles, Job, Psalms, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Zechariah. There were also direct communications with the evil realms in the Book of Daniel, though Satan is not specifically mentioned. The existence of Satan is taught by every New Testament author, affirming the existence of Satan and his evil nature. Furthermore, the deceptive, pernicious nature of Satan is taught by Jesus Himself.

Satan’s work is about bringing sorrow, sickness, pain and rebellion into and upon the human family. God’s origins for humanity was only peace, blessing, joy, love, and unity. As a liar and deceiver the very

nature of Satan is to destroy, destruct, and plunder. Chief in this all is Satan's pride.

Satan is excessively presumptuous. Not only does he tempt people, he took initiative to tempt God in the flesh by words of "truth". He came quoting the Scriptures in a sinister attack to destroy even God (Jesus) and His plan for redemption. We read that Jesus being led into the wilderness was tempted forty days by this evil being.

Satan is a conspirator seeking to draw others into his clutches of bondage. This he first accomplished by the mob spirit in the realms of Heaven by convincing one-third of the created angels to join his war-faring ranks. By these associate demons Satan goes out into the earth to and fro seeking the same mob spirit in the heart and lives of people on earth. From man's perspective he has been given "a lot of space and time." From the perspective of Heaven and eternity Satan's space is very limited.

Satan often clothes himself as beautiful and desirable. Other times he rushes forward as a roaring lion upon prey. Sometimes darkness, sometimes light, he is always in essence darkness, devastation, a liar, an ultimate deceiver, and a "death bringer." There is not a speck of good in Satan. He is not merely a liar but rather the grand progenitor of lies. He is the prince of the power of the air about the business of blinding the minds of people so that the glorious light of the Gospel is stolen from them.

Satan is finite. He is not everywhere present, everything powerful, nor everything knowing. His Satanic nature is limited and he will ultimately be cast into eternal fire to suffer from his own nature and evil plan from the beginning. His own very nature will bring incredible and incomprehensible sorrow falling upon his own head, upon the head of his wicked demon cohorts, and upon the heads of all those who follow his pernicious ways.

As a spiritual being, Satan has access to the third heaven. He apparently dwells in the heavenlies but he also walks up and down in the earth. But his proper and ultimate place is hell, for Jesus said about Gehenna, that it is the place that is prepared for the devil and his angels. *"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever"* Re 20:10.

Scriptures to Study and Analyze

Satan is the essence of lies

1. John 8:44. What essential element of Christian life does Jesus state that the devil does not have or even desire? cf. Ge 3:4

Satan is a prince

2. Ephesians 2:2. Of what kingdom is Satan a prince?

3. 2 Corinthians 4:4. What is Satan as the god of this world actively doing?

4. 2 Corinthians 4:4. What is Satan's goal as a prince?

Satan's stratagems are evil

5. Ephesians 6:11,12. What kind of strategies does Satan employ?

Satan is not a physical being

6. Ephesians 6:12. What kind of being is Satan?

Satan has emotions, intellect, volition, and power

7. Revelation 12:17. What specific kind of emotion did Satan reveal?

8. 2 Thessalonians 2:9. What kind of power does this verse indicate that Satan possesses? cf. Re 13:13; 16:14; 19:20

Satan is an imitator

9. Revelation 16:13,14. How does this Scripture show Satan seeking to imitate God. What other ways does the Bible reveal Satan as an imitator?

Satan's defeat

10. James 4:7. How can a Christian defeat the devil? How can a Christian do these things? cf. 1 Pe 5:9; Ep 4:27

11. 1 John 4:4. What promise of safety is given to those who love the Lord?

12. Revelation 20:10. What is the ultimate and final punishment of Satan? How is this "abode" different from his present abode?

For Deeper Discussion

1. For what reasons do you think Satan first attacked the weaker vessel, Adam's help meet?
2. What place of authority did Satan steal from mankind?
3. Find descriptive names of Satan in the Bible. How do they describe his sinister, evil nature.

Satan's Church & Deceptive Kingdom

- Satan has his own counterfeit "trinity"—the devil, the beast, and the false prophet (Re 16:13).
- Satan has his own church, "a synagogue of Satan" (Re 2:9).
- Satan has his own ministers, "ministers of Satan" (2 Co 11:14, 15).
- Satan has formulated his own system of theology "doctrine of devils" (1 Ti 4:1).
- Satan has established his own sacrificial system; "The Gentiles . . . sacrifice to demons" (1 Co 10:20).
- Satan has his own communion service, "the cup of demons . . . and the table of demons" (1 Co 10:21).
- Satan has his own ministers who proclaim his own gospel, "a gospel contrary to that which we have preached" (Ga 1:7-8).
- Satan has his own throne with his own worshipers (Re 13:2,4).
- Satan has developed a thorough imitation of Christianity, viewed as a system of religion. In his role as the imitator of God, he inspires false christs, and self-constituted messiahs (Mt 24:4-5).
- Satan employs false teachers who are specialists in his "theology," to bring in "destructive heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them" (2 Pe 2:1).
- Satan's teachers are adept at mixing truth and error. They do so in such proportions as to make error palatable. They carry on their teaching surreptitiously and often anonymously.
- Satan sends out false prophets. "And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many" (Mt 24:11).
- Satan introduces false brethren into the church, who "came privily in to spy out our liberty . . . that they might bring us into bondage" (Ga 2:4).
- Satan sponsors false apostles who imitate the true (2 Co 11:13).

Credit: <https://bible.org/seriespage/5-satan-s-methods>

Lesson 9

Sowing & Reaping

Lesson Objective

To understand that God Almighty has established both agricultural and spiritual laws of sowing and reaping. These laws are in action both positive and negative in nature.

Verse Selection: 2 Corinthians 9:6

But this I say, He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.

Lesson Overview

“And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind” (Genesis 1:12). Much of the Bible was originally written to those living an agrarian society. In fact the very first people, Adam and Eve, were created and “planted” into this kind of environment. They were commanded to make this agrarian system flourish and even given dominion over it. Working the land, managing livestock, and raising crops was commonplace. Many of Jesus’ parables involve the farming life. Not surprisingly then, the Bible contains many references to sowing and reaping.

Sowing and reaping is a natural agrarian earth term yet it is also a supernatural eternal spiritual term. Its word picture was set in the only law God placed upon mankind at Creation. This sowing and reaping law was inherent in the law, *“Of every tree of the Garden thou mayest freely eat (sowing); But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”* (reaping) Ge 2:16,17.

Sowing and reaping means there is a wait time. Sometimes this wait is a long wait before reaping while other times the wait is very short. The farmer must be patient in order to see the fruit of his work. When the Bible likens the ministry to planting, watering and reaping (1 Co 3:6-8), it suggests a length of time and the fact that it is God’s law. God will bring forth fruit to His glory in His time. Until then, we faithfully labor in His field (Mt 9:38), knowing that at the proper time we will

reap a harvest, if we do not give up (Ga 6:9; Ps 126:5, 6).

Sowing and reaping has always been as a Sovereign God planned it. The seed (or deed) has within it, “itself.” God uses this law to feed the population of the earth and also in spiritual realms to bless those who love and serve Him. No amount of physical genetic engineering or spiritual manipulation will ever change this ultimatum *“whose seed is in itself, after his kind.” “God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap”* Ga 6:7. In common terms—sow a seed, reap the same. Sow a lot of good seed, reap a lot of the same. Sow a lot of bad seed, reap a lot of the same.

Sowing and reaping is proportional in nature. More is reaped than is sown. Even in drought or adverse conditions one seed produces more than one seed. Maybe thirty bushels, maybe fifty bushels, or maybe one-hundred bushels but the law is—more.

Sowing and reaping is used as a metaphor for death and resurrection. When Paul taught the doctrine of the resurrection of the body, he used the analogy of planting a seed to illustrate physical death. *“So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body”* 1 Co 15:42-44. A seed may “die” when it falls to the ground, but that is not the end of its life (Jn 12:24).

This law was enacted, implanted, and has existed in physical and spiritual realms from the foundations of Creation. Mankind has known of no other. Its law affected and guided man of all ages since the beginning of time. Its presence colors the entire annals of times given in Scripture from Genesis to the Revelation of Jesus. This law of sowing and reaping is a paramount principle imparting wisdom for both this world and the next.

Sowing and reaping is one of the simplest yet most ignored concepts of the Bible. Anything we put our energy, money or focus on is an act of sowing. Reaping is the result of those efforts and energy. The Bible gives us clear teaching on this reality that influences both our present life and our eternal rewards.

Scriptures to Study and Analyze

God’s agrarian rule

1. Genesis 8:22. What sowing and reaping rule does this verse establish?

The nature of seeds and deeds

2. John 12:24-25. What must happen to a seed in the sowing and reaping process? How does Jesus liken this to the life of a Christian?

3. Genesis 3:7. What sowing happened when Eve took the fruit and then gave it also to Adam and they both ate? What reaping took place?

4. Genesis 3:15-24. Name at least four other reaping aspects that entered human experience because of Adam and Eve’s decision to disobey their Creator?

Biblical rules concerning sowing and reaping.
(Write each rule from the Scriptures)

5. Proverbs 11:18

6. Proverbs 22:8

7. Psalm 126:5,6

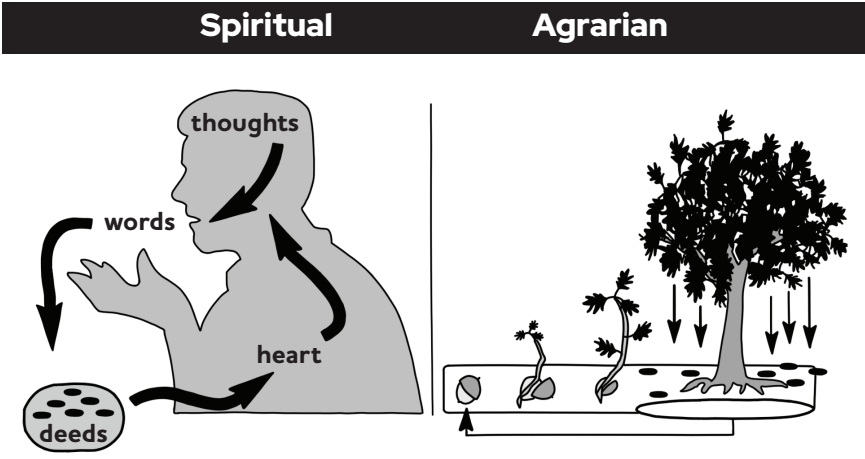
8. Job 4:8; Hosea 8:7

9. Galatians 6:7,8

10. 2 Corinthians 9:6

11. Luke 19:20-23

12. Matthew 13:24



For Deeper Discussion

1. Why does reaping continue even when sin is repented of?
2. What is inherently wrong about the false belief that repentance eliminates reaping and consequences? Does repentance affect reaping at all?
3. What paradigm shift concerning sowing and reaping takes place in the mind of a person who repents and takes on the yoke of Jesus Christ?
4. How is a person's life "one big field" of sowing and reaping?
5. According to 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, does the doctrine of sowing and reaping financial gain still exist in the New Covenant era? How would the teachings of a "health and wealth gospel" differ from Paul's teaching in this chapter?
6. What about a health and wealth gospel* is so wrong and conflicts with Jesus' teaching about money and financial success? Even secular men who misinterpret God and His Word understand that there is a law of sowing and reaping.

"Sow a thought and you reap an action; sow an act and you reap a habit; sow a habit and you reap a character; sow a character and you reap a destiny."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

**Prosperity theology (sometimes referred to as the prosperity gospel, the health and wealth gospel, the gospel of success, seed-faith gospel, Faith movement, or Word-Faith movement)[1][A] is a religious belief among some Charismatic Christians that financial blessing and physical well-being are always the will of God for them, and that faith, positive scriptural confession, and giving to charitable and religious causes will increase one's material wealth.[2] Material and especially financial success is seen as an evidence of divine grace or favor and blessings.*

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prosperity_theology

Lesson 10

Judgment & Mercy

Lesson Objective

To study the "two-fold" but inseparable attributes of God in His dealings among men. To notice the scattering of the nations upon the face of the earth and His related judgment and mercy.

Verse Selection: Micah 7:18

Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever; because he delighteth in mercy.

Lesson Overview

"God said unto Noah, The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth" (Genesis 6:13). The cup of iniquity was full and judgment for sin was imminent. Man without God drifts farther and farther from God and holy living. By selfish hearts and interests people heap upon themselves woe, troubles, and unholiness. The very nature of God is Holy. Holy is His chief attribute from which all His Being flows. Through the centuries, God has repeatedly allowed sin to get worse and worse. Then at such time as His Holy character can no longer forebear and in His Omnipotent wisdom, God metes out judgment to restrain mankind and sin. These "smaller waves" of judgment in the midst of mercy are a picture of the final judgment and mercy God will exercise at the end of the age. These smaller measures of judgment amidst mercy hold back sin in world population centers and also restrain sinners in individual realms.

"But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord" (Genesis 6:8). Mercy is a consoling theme of the Scriptures flowing out from the heart of God. Noah as a man amidst a wicked world was saved by grace. Although he was only a small part of the world population, yet he found grace in the eyes of God. He and his family being the sole family of the known world, then or now, who could say "everyone else is doing it" and be correct, was found alone in the grace of God. Though being alone in the midst of wickedness, the mercy of God remained abundantly avail-

able.

God continued His unfailing plan of mercy to all people and kindreds when He called Abram out of the dispersed, heathen nations. (Genesis 11:27-32). He called out a special people to covenant with them. He would work His special promise through them. Through His plan He would eventually fulfill His promise to all nations; mercy for judgment—life for death—pardon for sin—peace for chaos!

In judgment God shows mercy. In mercy God also shows judgment. This antinomy is illustrated by the scattering of the nations. Men building the Tower of Babel were intent on unifying and solidifying their desires to acquire power and prestige. They also intended to defy God's plan to populate the earth. But God cannot be defeated. God scattered the people by creating a language barrier thereby saving mankind from his own vice. That is to say, God fulfilled judgment and mercy by the same event. He both saved them from inevitable, innate, self-destruction while in the same venue fulfilled His plan to populate the earth with people. Judgment and mercy while seemingly separate in character are inseparable attributes of a Holy God.

God's judgment and mercy never fail. Since God is supreme and sovereign He can never change or fail. We need not worry; we can rest upon the fact *"that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us"* He 6:18.

God's judgment and mercy are in accordance to opportunity and human deeds. Sometimes those who do right suffer with those who do wrong and those who do wrong receive undue mercy because of the deeds of the righteous. While in a given time frame some individuals deserve mercy and others deserve judgment, overarching that is God's worldwide eternal view and perspective.

God's judgment and mercy are always completely accurate. Man sees things from a limited view. He cannot see as God sees. He cannot understand as God understands. Yet as the patriarch Abraham prophesied *"That be far from thee to do after this manner; to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"* Ge 18:25.

Innately, man does not deserve mercy, he deserves only judgment. However in this present life, since mercy and judgment flow from the same Source, man receives them both! At the end of this age, God will measure out all due justice upon every sin upon every person who has not repented and lived under the saving blood of Jesus Christ. Those who loved and followed His Word will then receive only mercy forever!

Scriptures to Study and Analyze

God determines judgment

1. Genesis 6:5-7, 12-13. What did God see which caused Him to bring the worldwide flood upon the earth?

2. Genesis 6:8,9. What did God see that caused Him to protect Noah from judgment? How does this apply to 21st century America?

3. 2 Peter 3:3-7. What two defining attitudes will prevail at the end of the age which were the attitudes and beliefs people held in Noah's day? How do these attitudes gender more sin? cf. Mt 24:48-51

4. Ecclesiastes 8:11. What other prevailing attitude concerning judgment is a serious violation of the nature of God?

5. Genesis 7:15-17, 21-23. How was the ark a place of safety from the judgment of death? How was obedience an essential part of salvation from judgment?

God extends mercy

6. Luke 6:35-36; What attitude and acts of God should the Christian mirror? What is the consequence for not possessing this attribute?

7. 1 Peter 1:3. What does the mercy of God give to those who believe in Jesus' resurrection from the dead?

8. 2 Peter 3:9. What attribute of God in this verse affects how we should live regarding sinners about us?

9. Hebrews 4:16. How can Christians access mercy and grace when they feel stressed out?

10. Ephesians 2:4-7. Name at least three things that a Christian may receive by reaching out to the love and mercy of God?

11. 1 Peter 2:9,10. Name five things Christians are "called" as recipients of mercy? Define each of these in modern practical terms.

12. Genesis 11:27-12:3 What plan of God was instituted in this account and then continued throughout the whole Bible?

13. James 2:13. What happens to those who do not exercise mercy? What else does James state about mercy in relation to judgment?

For Deeper Discussion

1. Discuss ways the ark as safety from judgment prefigured the church. 1 Pe 3:20, 21
2. Did God's decision in Genesis 6 to destroy the earth constitute a change in His mind and a lack of mercy? Why or why not?
3. Discuss practical circumstances where the righteous suffer with the wicked and times where the wicked receive mercy because of the righteous.
4. God chastises those whom He loves, He 12:5-11. What is the difference between chastising and judgment?
5. Is there a difference between mercy and grace? What is the difference?
6. How will Jesus reveal Himself in the Day of the Lord and His wrath upon sin in ways He has not yet done?
7. How did scattering the nations fulfill a greater part of God's plan for earth?
8. From which people group of Noah did the Anabaptists beginnings originate?

