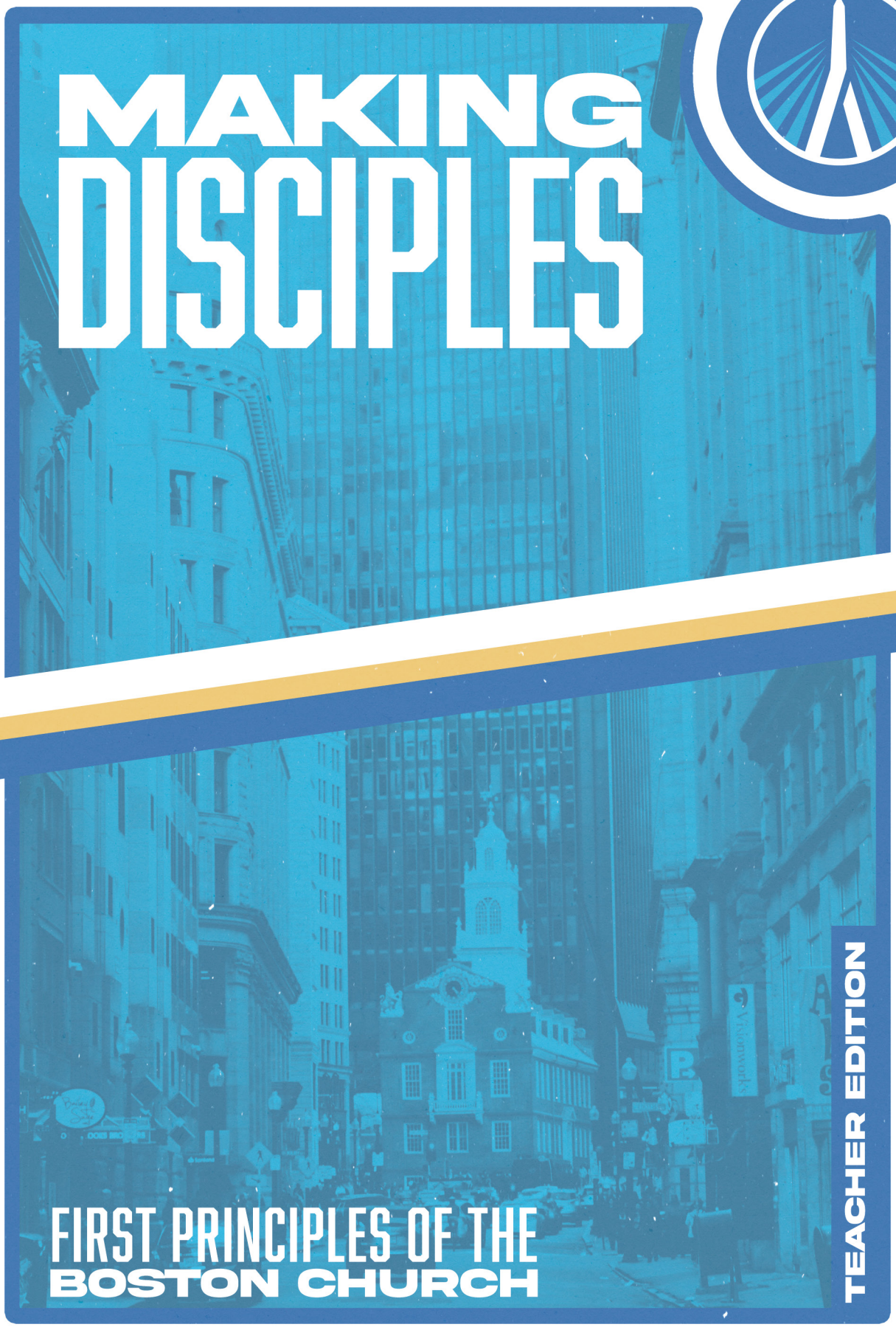
MAKING DISCIPLES



FIRST PRINCIPLES OF THE BOSTON CHURCH

TEACHER EDITION

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INTRODUCTION: YOU ARE ON A MISSION

You are engaged in the Great Commission, the most important and significant undertaking of your life.

You have been chosen by the great God in heaven to be part of an organized assault against the kingdom of darkness.

You have been commissioned to liberate captives enslaved in sin to bring them into the freedom of the kingdom of God. You are empowered with the indwelling Spirit of God and his inspired Word as the sword of the Spirit with which you will have the power to demolish strongholds of Satan.

Your Enemy is crafty, deceitful and enraged against you. But God will protect you. He has also been preparing people for your arrival into their lives. He has been setting places in their life where you will encounter these seekers.

It is not all up to you. God is the one who will draw people (John 6:44). He is the one who will move the hearts of seekers as you present the gospel (I Cor 3:3; II Tim 2:25). You will be working with God and within the power of the Almighty to accomplish His plan for mankind (I Cor 3:9)

These lessons are part of your "sword of the Spirit." They have been crafted in a sequential way to bring a seeker into a greater understanding of Jesus and what it takes for them to have a personal relationship with their Creator.

How These Eight Lessons are Ordered:

Seeking Jesus: The seeker understands God is seeking them out to have a relationship with them. Jesus is sent so one can have a personal relationship with God.

The Word of God: The seeker commits to the authority of the Word of God to direct their life to God.

Sin: The seeker understands that their sin creates a wall separating him from God that must come down.

Faith and the Cross of Christ: The seeker understands what Jesus did on the cross and how we accept his gift of eternal life through faith.

Repentance: The seeker understands a saving faith includes a complete change of heart and allegiance.

Discipleship: The seeker learns the necessity of becoming a follower of Jesus who learns and puts what they learn into practice.

Baptism: The seeker understands that faith saves at the point of baptism.

The Church: The seeker understands that it is the church where disciples function.

There are appendices on: **The Reliability of the Bible** (Appendix A), **Resources on the Bible as the Word of God** (Appendix B), **The Medical Account of the Crucifixion** (Appendix C), **How to Deal with Persecution** (Appendix D), **The Coming of the Kingdom** (Appendix E), **The Holy Spirit** (Appendix F), **Resources on Baptism** (Appendix G), and **Counting the Cost** (Appendix H). There are also four follow-up studies included at the end of the booklet.

How Each Lesson is Organized

Each lesson has a main goal. Each seeker should attain the goal of the lesson before moving on to the next lesson.

Each lesson consists of carefully selected scriptures along with specific questions to ask the seeker with common answers in a bulleted form. These questions help you move the heart of the seeker closer to God.

Most lessons also have "Teacher Tips" sections throughout. These are tips and ideas to help you to help your seeker attain the knowledge, understanding and heart change needed in each lesson.

Therefore, prepare fully

Get to know the person and build a trusting relationship with them.

Buy a Bible for them if they do not have one.

Take notes so that they can review the notes after you have left. If not, they will forget much of the lesson.

Share from your life as much as possible so the seeker will be free to share from their life as well.

Have them read the Bible on their own. Have them start with the gospels of John and Mark.

Pray intently for this person to accept God's word by God working in their life to open their heart

Read the lesson thoroughly. Know the purpose, the questions and expected answers and goals for each lesson. Prepare yourself as well as you can and God will work with you to move the seeker's heart closer to a relationship with him.

SEEKING JESUS

Big Idea: God is seeking you and wants to be found by you. Jesus was sent so that we could find God and have a relationship with him. Key word: "Awe"

Teacher tip: The first two scriptures could be discussed in a fellowship time before the actual Bible study. They would be discussed to set up the study.

Jeremiah 29:11-13

This is an amazing description of God's plan/intention for our lives. God has good will towards us: blessing, hope and a future. This should put us in "awe" of God.

God is seeking you in order to bless you. He wants good will for you. But there is one condition: God will be found only if you seek him with all your heart.

Q. Have you ever done anything with all your heart?

Q. Will you commit to seek God with all your heart?

Acts 8:26-40

This is a great story of a God-seeking man who finds what he is looking for.

Q. What are some principles of seeking God that you see here?

- A seeking person prioritizes.
- A seeking person takes time to seek.
- A seeking person reads the Bible.
- A seeking person is humble to other followers of God.
- A seeking person responds eagerly to the word of God.

Q. Are you willing to seek God by studying the Bible with us and on your own?

Let's begin by studying about Jesus.

John 1:1-5, 14, 18

Q. What do you see here about Jesus?

- Jesus is from eternity.
- He is the creator.
- He is God.
- Jesus was sent to us to reveal the God that he knew from an upfront, close relationship.

Teacher tip: If the seeker is uncertain whether Jesus really is God, go to other scriptures on his divinity such as Phil. 2:5-8, John 20:28, Col 2:9, John 8:58, Mark 2:1-12 (where Jesus has authority to forgive sins which only belongs to God), II Peter 1:1, Tit 2:13 and Romans 9:5.

Mark 1:29-34

Q. What do you see here about Jesus?

- Jesus cared for both men and women.
- He cared for the sick, suffering and downtrodden.
- Jesus used his power as God in the flesh to help us.

Mark 1:35-39

Q. What do you see here about Jesus?

- Even though Jesus was God in the flesh, he was still reliant on God his Father; he is not self-reliant.
- Jesus shared the message of salvation and reconciliation of man to God wherever he went.

Mark 1:40-45

Q. What do you see here about Jesus?

- Jesus came with the love and power of God and compassion for humanity.

Q. What about this truth endears you to Jesus?

Mark 3:1-6

Q. What do you see here about Jesus?

- Jesus was persecuted.
- He was seen as a threatening authority to the religious establishment of his day.

Q. Why do you think he was a threat?

Mark 4:35-41

Q. What do you see here about Jesus?

- Jesus had power over nature.

Q. How do you think you would have reacted?

Teacher tip: The purpose of these and other scriptures is to build faith in the seeker. Make sure they see the love and the power of Jesus in all these points.

John 14:1-6

Q. What do you see here about Jesus?

- Jesus believed that he was more than a good man or teacher, but that he is the only way to the Father.

Q. What do you think about his claim to be the only way to the Father?

Teacher tip: Let the seeker know we are going to investigate why this is so.

Conclusion

Acts 17:24-28

Do you ever wonder why you are alive and what your purpose is in life?

Q. How does this scripture answer these questions?

- God created you to have a personal relationship with him.
- He has determined the times and the exact places where you have lived in order that you would seek him.

Q. Why do you think the word "perhaps" is included?

- God is expecting you to respond to his invitation to have a personal relationship with him.

It's not a coincidence that you are studying the Bible right now. It is part of God's plan for your life to be found by you.

Q Are you willing to seek him with your heart and with your time, by studying the Bible?

Teacher tip: Make sure to set up another time for Bible study.

Additional Scriptures: Col 2:9; Is 53:1-12; Heb 4:14-16; 1 Jn 2:3-6; Is 11:1-9; Heb 1:13, 2:14-18; Ps 22:1-18; Mic 5:2; Acts 2:22-38; Jn 1:29; 1 Pet 2:21-25; Jn 20:26-28; Jn 20:30-31; Rom 9:5

THE WORD OF GOD

Big Idea: To help your friend establish the Bible as God's Word and God's standard for their life so it is worthy of their time and devotion. Key word: "trustworthy"

2 Peter 1:20-21

Q. Where did the Bible come from?

- Men wrote the Bible, as they were "carried along" (meaning "directed" or "led") by the Holy Spirit.

Q. Do you believe the Bible is the Word of God?

Teacher tip: If they do not, ask if it is possible that God could have inspired his thoughts into a document for his people.
Teacher tip: If they do not believe, let them know this study will help them. Also direct them to Appendices A and B to look on their own.

I. The Purpose of the Word of God

2 Timothy 3:16-17

Again, we see that the Bible comes from the mind and mouth of God. It is a "trustworthy" source of truth.

Q. What is the Bible useful for?

- Teaching, reproof, correction and training, to equip us for every good work.

The Word of God ministers to every part of our life such as marriage, work, relationships, making decisions, etc.

Q. What role do you think the Bible should play in your life?

1 Timothy 4:15-16

The way we live and what we teach are both necessary for salvation. Illustration: A plane must have both wings to fly. Likewise, we need to know and believe the correct teaching, and to live out these truths.

Q How can you know you are following the right doctrine/teachings in your life?

Q. How can you know you are living the life of a follower of God?

Romans 10:17

Reading the Word of God produces faith. The more we read, the more our faith grows and understands God.

Q. How can you plan to begin reading the Bible daily?

II. The Power of the Word of God

Hebrews 4:12-13

Q. What does the Word of God do?

- The Word of God is not boring, but relevant, living and active.
- It has the power to remove what is wrong with our life like a surgeon's knife removes unhealthy tissue.
- It has power to go inside us and transform us. It can change our spirit, mind, emotions and will.

Q. Which one of these characteristics of the Word of God stands out to you? Why?

John 8:31-32

Note that Jesus is speaking to people who already believe in him.

Q. What do these two scriptures tell us?

- Intellectual belief is not enough.
- One must hold to the truth to be a true disciple and to be set free.
- Sincerity is not truth for one can be sincerely wrong.

We need to hold the truths of the Word of God close to our heart and be committed to following them.

Q. Are you willing to begin the journey of holding to the truths in the Word of God to truly be set free?

III. The Priority of the Word of God

Matthew 15:1-9

Q. What is Jesus saying about traditions?

- Religious traditions, or cultural practices can hinder us from following Jesus.

Examples of religious traditions could be prioritizing the teaching of pastors, parents, friends, denominations, etc. over the Word of God. This can make our worship of God pointless and empty.

Q. Are you willing to examine any religious traditions you may have?

Acts 17:10-12

Q. What attitude did the Bereans display?

- They had eagerness for they examined the scriptures daily.
- They had a personal pursuit of truth for they did not blindly accept what religious leaders were saying.

Teacher tip: Encourage the seeker that you see them as noble as they seek God (if you do).

Q. The Bereans are described as "noble." What do you think "noble" means?

The definition is "having or showing fine personal qualities or high moral principles and ideals."

Q. Do you want to be "noble" in God's eyes by pursuing truth for your life?

John 12:47-48

Q. By what are we going to be judged?

- The words of Jesus as found in the Bible. Jesus came to save, but his words will judge us.

Conclusion

Ask them: "Are you willing to build your faith on what the Bible says? Do you believe your faith in the Bible is growing? Is this study helping you?"

Encourage them to imitate the Bereans and read the Bible every day to form solid convictions.

Teacher tip: This lesson is intended to build the faith of the seeker in the Word of God, not be an end study if they do not believe in its authority.

Teacher tip: Give the seeker the Bible Overview so they can understand the way the Bible is assembled. You would not go over it in the study however.

Additional Scriptures: Jn 20:30-31; Acts 8:26-40; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:32; 2Pet 2:16-18; 1Jn 1:1-4; Jn 14: 15-17; Jn 14:25-26; Jn 15:26-27; Jn 16:12-15; Col 4:16; 2Pet 3:15-16; 1Tim 5:18; Lk 10:7; Rom 10:17

BIBLE OVERVIEW: OLD & NEW TESTAMENTS

Goal:

- To help you know how to read the Bible and know what you are reading.
- Example: Google earth allows you to zoom in and know where you are located.

Overview: The Bible is a collection of 66 books (39 O.T. and 27 N.T.) written by 40 different authors in three different languages over the course of 1,600 years.

Old Testament	New Testament			
Jesus The Prophets wrote about the coming of Jesus Old Testament Points to Jesus	**Gospels** Matthew - Mark - Luke - John (The Life of Jesus)	**Acts** The acts of... The early Church, The Holy Spirit, The Apostles	**Epistles** Letters written to... Churches and Disciples	**Prophecy** "Current" (at the time) and future events

The Bible is divided into 2 Testaments or Agreements God made with human beings.

I. The Old Testament

- The Old Testament was God's covenant, contract, or agreement he made with his people, Israel.
- The Old Covenant was written by God's Prophets. Men who spoke as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 1:20-21).
- Many Old Testament scriptures are written to prophesy the coming of the Messiah... Pointing to Jesus!
- Examples: Psalm 22: 1,000 B.C. / Isaiah 53: 750 B.C. (Both scriptures describe what will happen to Jesus on the cross).

II. The New Testament (The New Testament is divided into 4 main sections)

- The New Testament is God's covenant, a contract or agreement made with anyone who wants to follow Him through his son, Jesus Christ.

1. The Gospels

- Four men wrote their own account of the life of Jesus while on this earth. (Matthew – Mark – Luke – John).
- The word Gospel means – Good News... (The Good News of Jesus Christ).
- If you want to know about the life of Jesus, then simply read the Gospels.

2. The Book of Acts

- The book of Acts is a chronological, historical account of the early church written by Luke who wrote the Gospel of Luke.
- Some refer to Acts as... The Acts or Actions of the Early Church, The Acts of the Holy Spirit, or The Acts of the Apostles. The book of Acts covers approximately 30 years.
- It gives a historical account of the church after Jesus' resurrection, the first gospel sermon ever preached is in Acts 2, the growth of the early church, the apostle Paul's conversion and missionary journeys.

3. The Epistles – The word "Epistle" means letter.

- A letter or multiple letters that were written to churches, to individuals or from individuals.
- Letters written to churches in certain cities such as Rome... Romans or Corinth... 1 & 2 Corinthians.
- Letters written to or from a disciple - Timothy, Titus, 1 & 2 Peter.

4. Prophecy

- The book of Revelation addresses events in the first century and in the future.
- It shows that God is in control and that Christians will ultimately be victorious no matter what sufferings we currently endure.

Q&A

Q. If you want to know about the life of Jesus, where in the Bible would you look?

- The Gospels – The Gospels tell you about the life of Jesus from his birth till his resurrection.

Q. If you want to learn about the Church in the 1st Century, where in the Bible would you look?

- The Book of Acts and the Epistles.

Q. If you want to see someone become a New Testament Disciple, where in the Bible would you look?

- The Book of Acts – It is the only place where you read about a person making a decision to become a New Testament Disciple / Christian.

Q. Why would you NOT find someone becoming a New Testament Christian in the Gospels?

- The 4 Gospels end with Jesus having just been raised from the dead.
- Jesus then tells the apostles to go to Jerusalem and the Holy Spirit will show them what they must do (Luke 24: 45-49).
- The New Covenant is based on the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.
- Without the resurrection of Jesus, our faith is in vain and he is no different than any other prophet (1 Cor. 15:14).
- The Gospels give us an account of the life of Jesus, but no one ever became a New Testament Disciple because Jesus had not yet conquered death and the message of salvation had not yet been preached.
- While on this earth, Jesus did have authority to forgive men's sin (Mark 2:5-12). Since we can't wait for Jesus to tell us our sins are forgiven, we must obey God's New Testament plan and respond to the message of salvation.

Q. Why would you NOT find someone becoming a Christian in one of the Epistles / Letters?

- These letters were written to churches or disciples who had already responded to the message of salvation and become New Testament Disciples / Christians.
- You will never find someone becoming a Disciple / Christian, but you will find references to when they made their decision to become a disciple.

SIN

Big Idea: Sin separates us from God. It is a wall that exists for all human beings and it must be removed to be saved. Key Words: "dire situation"

1 Peter 2:9-10

Peter is encouraging these Christians with all that they are as Christians. Verse 10 compares what they are versus what they were.

Q. How many categories?

Q. Where would you put yourself?

Darkness Not a People No Mercy	Light People of God Mercy
Lost Not a Christian Not a disciple	Saved Christian Disciple

I. What is sin and what are its consequences?

Isaiah 59:1-2

Q. How does sin affect our relationship with God?

- There is a wall of separation between God and man due to our sin.

In a relationship, we care about the feelings and desires of the other person, so we should care about God. We want to develop a heart that asks God: "Show me how I am hurting you?"

Man Darkness Sin	WALL	God Light Forgiveness

Q. What must be done for a relationship to exist between God and anyone?

- The wall of sin must come down. This is the forgiveness of sins.

Q. How would you feel about not having a relationship with God?

Q. Has the wall of sin come down in your life? If so, describe how that happened.

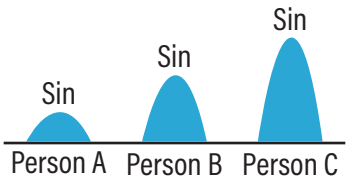
Teacher tip: Given the spiritual confusion of the religious world, it is important to help the seeker understand their spiritual journey.

Romans 3:23-25

Q. How is sin defined?

- Sin is falling short of the standard of God, of the will of God for our lives. We are in a "dire situation."

Sin means "to miss the mark." When we sin, we miss the mark of God's required perfection. We fall short of his glory.

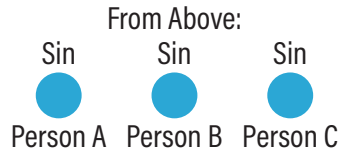


Q. How many have sinned?

- Answer: All.

No one is righteous by their own deeds. Two Illustrations:

- Example #1: No one can jump over the Grand Canyon. Everybody would fall short just as everybody falls short of God's perfect standard.
- Example #2: 3 piles of sin. Who is further away from God? All are equal, all are lost. A good moral life does not save you.



II. What does sin look like?

Galatians 5:19-21

Paul tells these Christians that if they live this way, they will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Teacher tip: Make sure to go over the explanations of the sins in this list using the explanations at the end of this study. It is important for the presenter to be vulnerable at this point.

2 Timothy 3:1-5

There are also sins that might not be as obvious as the list above.

James 4:17

It is also considered sin when we don't do the good we know we should do.

In addition, one can also use sin lists in Mark 7:20-23, Col. 3:5-9, and Rev. 21:8 as needed. Also Gen 6:5-6 which shows that our sin grieves God.

III. Our attitude toward sin

Romans 6:23

Q. What is a wage?

- A wage is something that is earned because of work/effort. Our sins earn spiritual death or separation from God; a break in our relationship. V. 23 shows us what God has done to help us be restored to Him.

Q. What has God provided for us?

- Answer: The gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ.

God has taken steps to break down the wall of sin so we can receive the gift of eternal life. We take steps to accept the gift of eternal life in order to have a relationship with him and be healed because of our "dire situation."

Conclusion

James 5:16

Q. What does confession of sin bring about?

- Answer: Healing.

The goal for our next study is to confess our sins together.

Teacher tip: Emphasize that God is the one who forgives sin and not the person to whom one confesses.

Teacher tip: The rule of thumb is to have a person leave to think about the sins they have committed and then come back to confess them, so it is not needed for them to confess their sins during this study.

You might suggest they examine their life and heart, their personal sins, and their sin tendencies. At the beginning of the next study he/she can talk about these sins (But it will most probably be a whole study). Note: Be considerate of the setting.

In addition, one can also use Mark 7:20-23 which shows sin comes from our heart and Gen 6:5-6 which shows that our sin grieves God.

This is a time when we promote healing in our lives through confession. After confession of sins we will then further study what Jesus has done so our sins can be forgiven.

Additional Scriptures: Mk 7:14-23; Rom 6:15-18; Rev 21:8; Rom 1:21-32; 1 Cor 6:9-11; Col 3:5-11; Jas 2:10-11

SINS OF GALATIANS 5:19-21 EXPLAINED

Sexual Immorality: Fornication, any sexual union outside of marriage. Denotes ungodly sexual acts and relationships- prostitution, rape, homosexuality, sexual touching, adultery, child abuse, bestiality.

Impurity/uncleanness: Any sinful thinking, anything vulgar, wrong thoughts, lust, masturbation, wrong motives, pornography, fantasy.

Debauchery/lasciviousness: Unbridled lust, any misuse of the body. Usually referring to sexual excesses, but in general refer to a readiness to indulge in any pleasure (indecency, lewd dancing). There is no respect for anyone else. In this state, a person is at the mercy of their passions, impulses, emotions, etc. They are completely undisciplined (examples: gives in to gluttony, laziness, smoking, cravings, masturbation, unlimited pleasures).

Idolatry: Worshipping anything other than God. Giving or devoting one's time, substance, talents, and /or self to anything that keeps one from obeying and following God in every way (status, symbols, investments, engrossing sports or hobbies, selfish ambitions, relationships, property, possessions, pleasure and wants, school, work, pride). Also includes praying to anyone other than God, Jesus or the Holy Spirit.

Witchcraft: Seeking or being involved in any spiritual realm other than God's. Includes astrology (example: the stars control, consequently, saying God does not rule), horoscopes, Satan worship, the occult, magic spells, good-luck charms or picture. Praying to saints, drug use, tarot cards, palm reading, channeling (The New Age movement, Ouija Board, etc.)

Hatred: Wishing ill or harm on anyone, looking down on anyone, bitter feelings, resentment, wanting revenge, murder, abortion.

Discord/variance: Anything that breaks up relationships, stirring up trouble, an inability to get along with people, arguing, slander, gossip, malicious talk and criticalness.

Jealousy/emulation: Possessiveness, not sharing.

Fits of rage/wrath: Uncontrolled anger, losing your temper, temper tantrums, quick temper, angry shouting, cussing, profanity, fighting.

Selfish ambition/strife: Living to please self, wanting one's own way, getting what one wants at any cost, desiring to be first at any cost, overly competitive spirit. Not willing to do menial or demanding tasks, refusing to admit being wrong, arrogance, doing things for honor or glory, wanting to look good for others, refusing to compromise, pride, selfishness and independence.

Dissension/sedition: Rebelling against authority, not submitting, habitually disagreeing, arguing, causing division, starting arguments, stirring up trouble.

Factions/heresies: Feeling superior to others, cliques, refusing to associate with anyone because they are different or for any other reason, wanting to be with "own" kind," prejudice, bigotry, racism.

Envy: Desiring something another person has while wishing that they did not have it at all (example: wealth, status, ability, physical features, spirituality, relationships).

Drunkenness: Anything that causes one to lose control-intoxication, alcohol, drug abuse.

Orgies: Living without restraint. Includes partying, sexual parties, unrestrained sex, vandalism, carousing.

And the like: Lying, stealing, cheating, deceit, etc.

FAITH AND THE CROSS OF CHRIST

Big Idea: A saving faith in Jesus only occurs through the cross. We are studying the cross to better understand the love of God and the price of our forgiveness. Key Words: "Life changing love"

Romans 3:23

We are reminded from the last study that we did, that all of us have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Can you recall what the definition of sin means? (Answer: Missing the mark).

Q. Do you remember any of the analogies we gave?

Romans 3:25

Faith in the blood of Jesus is necessary. Jesus shed his blood on the cross so we could be saved through faith. Without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness (Heb. 9:22). What is faith? It is an active trust and reliance upon what Jesus has done for our salvation. So what did Jesus actually do? Read on in Mark.

Teacher tip: Jesus went to the cross because he loves us. Be sure to emphasize this thought over and over again after each Mark reading.

Mark 14:26-42 Jesus was abandoned by those who walked with him

Q. What do you notice in these verses?

- His disciples (particularly Peter), made a promise that they did not keep (v31).
- They fell asleep when Jesus needed them the most.

Q. Can you describe how Jesus would have felt?

Mark 14:43-51 Jesus was betrayed by one who was close to him

Q. What do you notice in these verses?

- Judas kissed Jesus to show the soldiers who he was.
- It was customary for disciples to greet their Rabbi with a kiss.

Reflection: What is the hardest thing about being betrayed?

Mark 14:53-72 Jesus was falsely accused, and none came to his defense

Q. What do you notice in these verses?

- In the morning the full Sanhedrin met to accuse him. (Luke 22:66-67)
- Jesus gave no answer to the false evidence, except when asked: Are you the Son of God? (vs 62)
- It was hard for Jesus to have Peter deny him three times.

Reflection: How would Jesus have suffered emotionally during a time like this?

Mark 15:1-20 Jesus was condemned to crucifixion, while a criminal walked free

Q. What do you notice in these verses?

- Jesus did not answer any of these accusations brought against him (vs 5).
- Pilate knew it was a set up, so he gave the crowd a choice (vs 14).
- Those who were loyal to the Jewish leaders chose Barabbas over Jesus (vs 11).
- Jesus was flogged and set to be crucified (vs 15).

Reflection: Everyone was responsible for Jesus's death: His disciples who deserted him; Peter who denied him; Judas who betrayed him; The crowds who stood by watched; Pilate who wanted to please the crowd; and the soldiers who tortured him.

Mark 15:21-41 Jesus was tortured with whips and insults, then nailed to a cross

Q. What do you notice in these verses?

- Jesus was beaten approximately forty times by a whip with lead and bone.
- Victims were forced to carry their crosses along the longest routes, as a method of shame and warning.
- Jesus was nailed to the cross.

Teacher tip: Encourage them to view the videos and read the medical account for homework (see Appendix C)

Mk. 16:1-8 Jesus was raised from the dead

Jesus not only died, but he was raised from the dead. The truths of Christianity are based upon Jesus rising from the dead (See I Cor 15:14). There is indisputable evidence that Jesus was raised from the dead.

Q. Do you believe that Jesus was raised from the dead?

Teacher tip: If the seeker answers no, or is not sure, Appendix C has resources on the resurrection such as "More than a Carpenter." Teaching the gospel necessitates that the seeker believe Jesus rose from the dead.

Romans 4:23-5:2

We are justified by faith in what Jesus did on the cross. This is the example of the "life changing love" of Jesus. This justification by faith includes Jesus as our "Lord."

Q. What is a Lord?

- Answer: A master.

Repentance (Jesus as our Lord) is a part of being justified by faith.

Teacher tip: This scripture ties the cross, justification by faith, and Jesus as Lord (repentance) together. Make sure to emphasize that a person must have Jesus as Lord in order to be justified by faith.

Teacher Tip: Additional Scriptures are 1 Peter 2:22-24 - Jesus bore our sins that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; 2 Corinthians 5:17-19 - Anyone in Christ is a new creation because Christ reconciled us to himself through the cross

Conclusion

The Good News is that when we respond to the cross through biblical faith in what Jesus did for us, we encounter his blood, and our sins are washed away! We will explore what a biblical, faithful response is in our next study.

REPENTANCE

Big Idea: Saving faith in Jesus is not a dead faith, but a faith that includes repentance. This lesson shows the necessity of repentance, what it is, and what the results of repentance will look like.
Key Words: "Radical change"

Teacher tip: Now that we have established what sin has done to us, and what Jesus has done for our sin, we are now going to look at three studies (repentance, discipleship and baptism) that show what our saving response of faith looks like. We call this "Conversion Corner." We are going to show our friend what the Bible calls us to do to be saved, examine whether this person has responded biblically in their own life, and encourage them to do so.

Romans 6:23

We have spent the last few studies looking at sin and its effects, as well as Jesus and the work that he did to offer us the gift of salvation.

We are going to take the next few studies to look at exactly how God is calling us to receive this gift.

Teacher tip: Remember, it is important to build a relationship with the seeker for you will be engaging in some challenging questions about their life.

Acts 1:1-5

The events that take place in Acts 1 immediately follow the events of the cross and resurrection.

- We see Jesus convincing his followers that he is alive.
- However, their ministry had not begun yet, and they were told to 'wait.'
- The New Testament covenant has not arrived yet.

Teacher tip: Summarize the events surrounding Acts 1 and 2:22-24 without going into too much detail.

Acts 2:1-4

- The apostles are filled with the Holy Spirit. The baptism of the Holy Spirit is the beginning of their ministry in the New Testament covenant. Jesus actually lived and died under the Old Testament covenant.

Acts 2:22-24

- The apostles focus on what Jesus had done and how they crucified him but God raised him from the dead.
- This is the first time the gospel message is preached.

Acts 2:36-41

Q. How did they feel when Peter tells these Jews they killed the Messiah?

- They felt cut to the heart because they realized they were responsible for killing Jesus.

Q. What does it mean to you to be cut to the heart?

Shouldn't we feel the same? Jesus died for our sin. We should be cut to the heart also.

Q. How does he call them to respond to have the wall of sin come down?

- He calls them to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins and to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- Repentance is essential to receive forgiveness and the gift of the Holy Spirit. It includes "radical change."

Repentance is a turning, or a changing.

- The Greek term for repentance is "metanoia" which signifies a "turning" or a "change of mind and heart."
- Repentance is a change of mind, heart, and allegiance.
- A change of mind from viewing your life from a secular mindset to making God the center of your life.
- You change your heart in that you turn to loving God over loving self.
- You change your allegiance from serving yourself to putting God first in your life.

Teacher tip: After making these points, we will ask the seeker "Is this what you did to recieve forgiveness and salvation? We will begin to compare their story to the biblical examples in order to help them fully obey the scriptures.

Teacher tip: At this point, we want to focus their attention on repentance, not baptism. This is not the time to focus on baptism.

Luke 13:1-5

Q. What do you see here?

- Repentance is essential to salvation. Jesus says without repenting we will perish.

Four Characteristics of Repentance

Acts 26:19-20: The Deeds of Repentance

Q. What do you see here?

- True repentance is shown by the deeds that accompany it. Repentance is a change of heart.

Q. Have you ever had that kind of change in your life? If so, what changed in your life?

Mark 9:42-48: The Radicalness of Repentance

Q. What do you see here?

- Repentance is a radical change of heart in getting rid of sin.
- Repentance is an attitude of hatred toward sin; it is running away from sin.

Q. Is this your attitude toward sin? If not, are you willing to adopt this attitude?

2 Corinthians 7:8-11: The Fruit of Repentance

Q. What do you see here?

- Sorrow and repentance are not the same thing. There can be sorrow without repentance.
- Only godly sorrow produces repentance.

Q. What does repentance look like?

- Earnestness – serious/sincere about changing.
- Eagerness to clear – a desire to know.
- Indignation – Upset at self for where you've been.
- Alarm – Urgency, I want to get it right.

Q. Have you ever repented in this manner? If not, what do you need to repent of?

Teacher tip: This would be a good time to encourage them with the repentance you've witnessed or to encourage them to follow the standard described in the scriptures.

Teacher tip: Ask the seeker: "Now that we have studied repentance, 'Is this what you did to be saved?'"

Conclusion

Acts 3:17-19: The Result – The Refreshment of Repentance

Q. What does Peter say is the result of repentance?

- Times of refreshing. This is an ongoing process and not just a one-time repentance.

This is the atmosphere you see at church. The people that have been broken and have repented are the most joyful people. Repentance brings refreshment.

Q. Are you ready to be refreshed by repentance?

We will continue to study repentance through the lens of discipleship in our next study.

Additional Scriptures: Mk 1:15, Mt 3:8; Lk 19:1-10; Rev 3:19; Rom 2:4; Acts 17:30; Joel 2:12-13; Ez 18:30-32; Jas 4:8; Ps 51; Eph 4:17-32

DISCIPLESHIP

Big Idea: Saving faith in Jesus includes being a disciple of Jesus, a wholehearted follower who fishes for men. Key Word: "Wholehearted"

Matthew 28:18-20

Teacher tip: Don't get into a discussion about baptism here. The purpose of this lesson is to teach that one must learn AND put what they learn into practice.

Q. What does Jesus want everybody to become?
- A disciple.

Q. What do you think a disciple is?
- A disciple is a follower of Jesus who is a "disciplined learner." A disciple of Jesus intentionally puts into practice what he/she learns. A disciple is like an apprentice.

Q. Do you believe you are a disciple of Jesus? If so, when did you become a disciple?

We will investigate what a disciple is for the rest of this study.

Acts 11:25-26

Q. What do you see here?
- In Antioch a disciple and a Christian were the same thing.

Q. Which is the more popular term - "Disciple" or "Christian" in the Bible?
- The word "Christian" only appears three times in the New Testament (as in Acts 11:26).
- The word "disciple" occurs over 270 times in the New Testament.

According to the scriptures, a disciple and a Christian are the same thing. You can't be a Christian without being a disciple.

Mark 1:14-18

Q. What was Jesus' call to these men?
- "Come, follow me" (Christ). A disciple is someone committed to following God in all areas of their life.
- A disciple is a person committed to making other disciples.

Q. How wholehearted and urgent was their commitment?
- They left their nets immediately and followed him, which shows a "wholehearted" commitment.

Q. If you believed Jesus was the Messiah, would you follow him wholeheartedly? Would you want to be with him and become like him?

Q. Is this how you became a disciple? Were you "wholehearted" and committed to making disciples?

Teacher tip: This is the third time we are asking "Were you converted in a biblical way?" We need to be prepared to help them compare their story to what is written in the scriptures.

Luke 9:23-26

Q. If anyone would come after me ... Who is anyone?
- All of us! Jesus is talking to anyone who wants to follow him.

Q. Jesus tells us to deny self. What does it mean to deny yourself and take up your cross?
- It is following the example of Christ in the garden (Matthew 26:36-39, "Not my will, but your will.")

Q. What is going to be the hardest thing for you to deny?

Teacher tip: This is a great place to be vulnerable about your own challenges.

Luke 14:25-33

Q. What do you see here?

- Jesus applies this teaching to all ("if anyone"), which means us.
- Prior to being a Christian, everyone is supposed to count the cost and give up everything (v. 28).
- Consider the alternatives if you don't follow Jesus and give up everything (v. 31-32).
- Love Christ more than any person (v. 26); Jesus must come first, even over our closest relationships.
- Everything, not just anything (v. 33).

Q. What will be the greatest challenge for you that you see here?

Mark 3:20-22, 31-35

Q. What do you see here?

- Jesus was thought to be crazy and dangerous by even his own family.

Q. If you are going to follow Jesus, how do you think your family will respond?

Teacher tip: If they believe they will be persecuted by their family or their friends, go to Appendix D.

Luke 11:1-4

Q. What do you see here?

- Jesus taught his disciples how to pray in order to have a powerful walk with God.
- Daily personal relationship with God (v. 3) through daily prayer.

Q. Are you willing to learn to pray to have a powerful walk with God?

Teacher tip: Have you prayed with the seeker? If not, this would be a good time to begin.

John 13:34-35

Q. What do you see here?

- Disciples are to love other disciples just as Jesus did.

Q. Are you willing to begin loving the disciples?

Teacher tip: This is a good time to talk about commitment to church and to be active in the fellowship.

Conclusion

As we have looked at what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, let's read Matthew 28:18-20 again and reflect on the following questions:

Matthew 28:18-20

Q. Are you a biblical disciple?

Q. If not, then what do you need to do to become a disciple?

Q. Is becoming a disciple what you want to do?

Someone ready to be a disicple is ready to be baptized. We will study that topic next.

Additional scriptures: Lk 6:20-26; Rom 6:15-18; Jn 4:1-2; Mt 10:34-39; 2 Tim 3:12; Jn 1:35-42; Jn 1:43-50; Jn 4:28-42; Acts 8:1-4.

BAPTISM

Big Idea: A saving faith in Jesus saves at the point of baptism. Baptism is the point where one obtains the forgiveness of sins. Key Word: "Rebirth"

Baptism is an essential part in the plan of salvation. In this study, we will explain the "Why of baptism;" the "What of baptism" and the "How of baptism."

I. Why Baptism?

Matthew 28:18-20

Q. What do you see here?

- Baptism is a major component of the Great Commission.
- It is not an option. It is commanded.
- It is part of being a disciple of Jesus.

Acts 2:36-39

Q. What does the audience believe when they say "What shall we do?"

- They believe that Jesus is the Messiah and they are responsible for his death.
- They believe God has made Jesus both "Lord and Christ."
- They are expressing their guilt. They want to know what to do in order to be saved.

Teacher tip: It is important to emphasize that at this point the people in the audience in Acts 2 are not saved. They are asking what to do to be saved.

Q. What does Peter tell them?

- He tells them to repent and be baptized. Both repentance and baptism are commanded, not just suggested.
- When they repent and are baptized, they will receive forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- This plan is promised to every one for all time.

Teacher tip: Be sure to explain that baptism literally means "immersion" or "dunking."

Q. Does repentance and baptism occur before one receives the forgiveness of sins or does it occur afterwards?

- Both repentance and baptism occur BEFORE one receives the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Q. Did you do this?

II. What is Baptism?

John 3:1-7

Q. What do you see here about baptism?

- Baptism (being born of water) is a "rebirth." It is necessary to enter the kingdom of God.
- Here, water and the Spirit are closely linked with being born again.

Romans 6:1-7

Q. What do you see here about baptism?

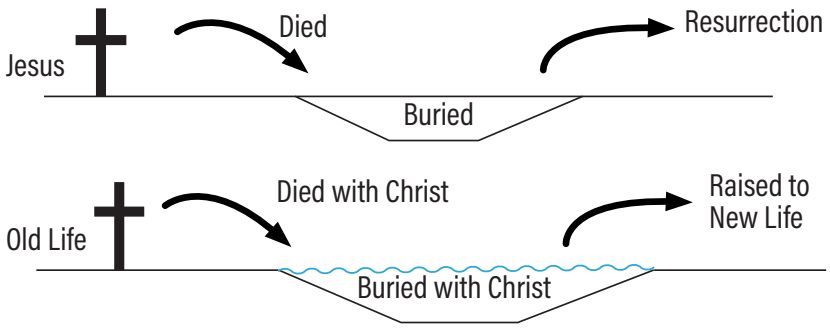
- When one is baptized, they are baptized "into Christ."
- When baptized, one is sharing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.
- Baptism is the point at which a person enters a new life.

Teacher tip: Explain that one cannot be baptized into Christ if they are already "in Christ" just like one cannot go "into a room" if they are already in the room. Therefore, one must be outside of Christ (lost) in order to be baptized into Christ (and be saved).

Teacher tip: Be sure to show this illustration to the seeker when teaching this lesson.

Through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, the forgiveness of sins is now available.

Baptism is a participation in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.



Acts 22:6-16

Paul encounters Jesus, he repents, prays, fasts (Acts 9:9-11) and is healed by Ananias. Yet Paul did not yet have his sins washed away at that time.

Q. What does Ananias tell Paul to do to wash away his sins?

- Arise and be baptized. (Acts 22:16)

We see in this passage that baptism is the point when one's sins are "washed away" which is consistent with previous passages on baptism. Baptism is:

- For the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38).
- The point when one is born again (John 3:5).
- The point when one enters Christ and begins to experience the new life (Romans 6:3-5).

Teacher tip: It is important to emphasize that Paul was not saved when he repented, fasted or prayed. Ananias made it clear that Paul needed to be baptized in order to have his sins washed away.

1 Peter 3:18-22

Q. What do you see here about baptism?

- Water separated the lost from the saved.
- The water of Noah symbolizes Christian baptism which is the point that separates the lost from the saved.
- Baptism saves you by the resurrection of Jesus and your internal pledge to God.

III. How is One Baptized?

Colossians 2:12-13

Q. What do you see here about baptism?

- One is buried with Christ in baptism and raised through their faith. Scriptural baptism occurs with faith.
- It is essential that there be faith at that point. Therefore, anyone who cannot have faith cannot be baptized.
- Baptism is the point where faith saves.

Conclusion

Acts 8:26-40

Q. What do you see here about baptism?

- It is done in water. Water is the element in which one is baptized.
- There is an eagerness to be baptized.

Q. Based upon what you have learned, why do you think the eunuch was eager to be baptized?

- The eunuch most probably knew that when he was baptized, he would be born again, participate in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, be saved, receive forgiveness of his sins, have his sins washed away, be baptized into Christ, and have a new life in Christ. Why would he NOT want to be baptized?

Q. Do you want to imitate the eunuch and be baptized?

Additional scriptures: Acts 19:1-5; Tit 3:3-7; Eph 4:4-6; Rev 3:20 Heb 10:19-22 1Cor 12:12-3; Rom 10:9; Ez 18:19-20;

See Appendix G for more resources on Baptism.

FALSE DOCTRINES ABOUT SALVATION

Big Idea: There are many non-Biblical ideas about how one is saved. It is important to recognize what Jesus and the Bible does and does not teach about how to be saved.

Acts 20:28-30

There are some very important prerequisites that precede a biblical baptism for the forgiveness of your sins: faith, repentance and discipleship. Where many teachings about baptism go wrong is they get the prerequisites and order out of line. Even the early church needed to be aware of false teaching infiltrating the church.

Teacher tip: Pick those teachings where you think your seeker will struggle. Not all teachings need to be necessarily taught to all seekers.

Concerning Catholic Teachings...

Original Sin

This is the idea that because of Adam and Eve's sin, we are all born in a state of spiritual death. Therefore, we inherit original sin at birth.

Exodus 34:6-7 says that children certainly suffer consequences of their parent's sin. When their parents divorce, do not love God, abuse them, or do not deal with their own character, it will inevitably affect their children. However, God does not hold the children spiritually responsible for their parent's guilt. This scripture does not mean that we inherit any original sin.

Ezekiel 18:19-20 teaches that the soul that sins is the one that will die. We are each responsible for our own sin.

Infant Baptism

This doctrine refers to the practice of baptizing infants before they are old enough to make their own faith decision to have their original sin forgiven.

The scriptures are very clear on prerequisites for baptism: Colossians 2:11-12 states that one is buried in baptism through your faith in the working of God. Q: Can an infant have faith? (See also Hebrews 11:6, Romans 10:17).

Acts 2:38 commands us to repent when we are baptized. Q: Can an infant repent?

Concerning Protestant Teachings...

Faith Alone Saves You

This doctrine became popular with Martin Luther during the reformation period (16th century A.D.) in reaction to the "works doctrine" of the Catholic Church. It is interesting to note that Luther did not believe the book of James should be included in the Bible. Why? James contradicts this false doctrine.

James 2:19-26 says that while faith is necessary, faith must be active in order to be credited for righteousness. Other elements of a saving faith would include discipleship (Matthew 28:18-20), and repentance and baptism (Acts 2:38). It is at the point of baptism, when combined with repentance and discipleship, that faith saves since that is when we participate in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (Romans 6) and have our sins washed away (Acts 22:16).

Faith without deeds is dead. Faith does save. The idea of faith alone is problematic.

Once Saved, Always Saved

There are many churches that teach that once you have been saved, it is impossible to lose that salvation.

Many scriptures refute this teaching such as Hebrews 6:4-8, Hebrews 10:29-30, and 2 Peter 2:20. God does not force anyone to continue to have a relationship with him against their will. God gives us the freedom to continue to have a relationship with him, to continue to know him better, or to turn our backs and walk away to do our own thing.

Stubborn refusal to repent of sin can certainly lead to a hardened heart that no longer responds to God. God's grace is magnificent. We should never want to test where that line lies!

FALSE DOCTRINES ABOUT SALVATION

Pray Jesus into Your Heart / Accept Jesus as Your Savior

This doctrine originated in the 18th century and became popular in Christian revivals in the early 20th century. It is the belief that you only need to believe in Jesus, accept him as your personal savior, and pray for salvation.

This doctrine is often attempted to be justified by Revelation 3:20. This verse, however, was written to the church, to people who were already baptized disciples. This is NOT a verse about initial salvation; it is about how to get right with God as a lukewarm church member.

Romans 10:9-10 is another verse that is used to attempt to justify this false teaching. The context is critical. This passage is addressed to the Israelites in Romans 10:1. They struggled with faith that Jesus was the Son of God. So Paul emphasizes having Jesus as Lord and belief that God raised him from the dead.

Romans 10:9-10 does not mention all element needed for salvation. It does not mention that Jesus is God in the flesh, it does not mention that there is only one God and not multiple gods. The fact that Paul does not mention baptism likewise does not mean baptism is not necessary since it is written to the Roman church where all members were baptized into Christ to have a new life (Romans 6:1-5).

Acts 22:8-16 is a great example connecting faith, repentance, and baptism. They must all go together for salvation.

Baptism is a Mere Symbol

This is also known as an "outward sign of an inward grace." It assumes that one is saved before baptism, and that baptism only symbolizes the salvation that occurred before.

This false conclusion evolved in conjunction with the previous two false doctrines. If faith alone and praying Jesus into your heart saves you, what role does baptism have? Baptism is downgraded from its importance to a mere symbol to justify these other false teachings.

But Romans 6:1-5 states that baptism IS an actual participation in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It is the outward expression of what is actually occurring: participating in the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. This is when new life begins.

Acts 2:38 states that baptism is for the forgiveness of sins, not because we are already saved.

1 Peter 3:20-21 states that we are saved at the point of baptism, and it is compared to Noah being saved through water during the flood.

The Thief on the Cross

The story of the thief on the cross is found in Luke 23:39-43. The argument is that since the thief was never baptized, then we don't need to be baptized to receive forgiveness.

However, the thief on the cross lived and died under the Old Covenant. Baptism in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins only began after Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection when the New Covenant begins on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2).

People under the Old Testament had to offer sacrifices at the temple in order to be forgiven. Jesus told the thief he would be forgiven and be with him in Paradise without offering sacrifices. Jesus makes an exception for the thief. Jesus could do that because he is God.

But today under the New Covenant, Jesus has ordained that faith, repentance, discipleship and baptism are necessary for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38).

Conclusion

We are saved BY grace (Ephesians 2:8), THROUGH faith (Romans 3:22), AT Baptism (Acts 2:38).

THE CHURCH

Big Idea: A seeker is baptized not only for forgiveness, but also into the body of Christ, the church (I Cor 12:13). The church is a necessary, continual source of encouragement and is part of God's plan for every disciple. Key Word: "Family"

I. The Foundation of the Church

Colossians 1:15-18

Q. What do you see here about Jesus and the church?

- Jesus is the head of the church. The church is his body.

Q. What is the relationship between a head and body? Apply that to Jesus and the church.

- As a head directs the body, Jesus directs the church.
- The church is essential and is part of God's plan for us.
- It is important for us to follow the directives of Jesus and be an active member of his body.

Ephesians 2:19-21

Q. What do you see here about the church?

- It is the household of God. A household is a "family." The church is the "family" of God.
- The church is built on the foundation of the Bible as taught by the apostles and prophets.
- Jesus is the chief cornerstone.
- It is a holy temple in the Lord. The temple was where God dwelt. God dwells in his church.

Ephesians 4:1-6

Q. What do you see here about the church?

- There should be unity in the church reflected in the right attitudes in relationships with one another.
- There needs to be the right doctrines about the one body, one Lord, one Spirit, one faith, and one baptism.

Teacher tip: Emphasize that while any group can call themselves a "church", that does not mean that God necessarily recognizes them as a "church." They must at least adhere to the Biblical teaching on how to become a Christian.

II. Relationships in the Church

I Corinthians 12:12-31

Q. What do you see here about the church?

- When we are baptized, we are baptized into the one body, the universal church. The universal church however functions on a local level. It is important to be part of a local church.
- The church is like a body that has distinct parts, but all function together. God has arranged the church and given each member gifts and abilities to help build up the body so that it functions as God desires.
- There are weaker and stronger members, but all are important and essential.

Q. How can you use your abilities and talents to build up the body of Christ?

Teacher tip: Have a discussion about what church they will attend if they move to another city. It should be a church that teaches biblical conversion.

2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1

Q. What does this passage tell us about relationships?

- We should not be unequally yoked with unbelievers.

Q. Why does the Bible call us to this standard?

- It protects our holiness. Being unequally yoked with another who is not a Christian could cause us to compromise our holiness (II Cor 7:1) and fall back into the world.
- This includes dating or marrying a non-Christian (1 Corinthians 7:39-40).

Teacher tip: If not brought up previously, discuss the sensitive realities of a romantic relationship as a disciple of Jesus.

Hebrews 3:12-13

Q. What do you see here about relationships in the church?

- Christianity is a "one another" religion. Encouragement should be given daily to one another so we don't develop a hard heart or become discouraged by the deceitfulness of sin.

Teacher tip: Discuss their involvement in the church and their need for relationships.

III. The Purpose of the Church

Hebrews 10:23-25

Q. What do you see here about spurring one another on?

- It helps others to hold unswervingly to the hope we profess.
- It helps us to grow in love and good works.

Q. How do we spur one another on?

- By attending the meetings of the body with a committed attitude.
- By encouraging one another when we meet together.

Teacher tip: This would be a good time to discuss the rhythms of the church and to invite them to participate and see how they feel about them.

Q. Are you willing to be committed to attend the meetings of the body and spur one another on through encouragement?

2 Corinthians 9:6-8

Q. What do you see here?

- God wants us to sow generously. This specifically has to do with giving to the mission of the church.
- We give what we have decided in our heart to give, not under compulsion, but cheerfully.

Teacher tip: Summarize chapter 8-9 briefly so that 9:6-8 has more context.

Q. How do you feel about taking some time to think about what to give to the church that is both generous and cheerful?

Acts 2:42-47

Q. What characteristics do you see in 2:42 about the early church?

- They are devoted to the apostles' teaching, to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread (the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

Q. What was the result of these characteristics?

- The church grew daily (Acts 2:47).
- The purpose of the church is not just to meet together, but for every member to have a vibrant relationship with God, where we are devoted to one another in order to take the gospel to the lost and dying world.

Conclusion

Q. Are you committed to being devoted to follow only the Bible, to the fellowship, to meet on Sundays for the Lord's Supper, and to prayer to fulfill the mission of the church?

In the next study, we will be talking through the concept of "Counting the Cost" as a review of what we've learned in this series to make sure you are ready to follow Jesus.

Additional scriptures: Jn 13:34-35, Rom 12:3-5, I Cor 1:10-13; 2 Tim 4:1-5; Gal 1:6-10; Gal 5:2-4; Mk 3:20-22; Jn 15:18-16:4

APPENDIX A: THE RELIABILITY AND TRUTHFULNESS OF THE WORD OF GOD

The Bible is the best-selling book of all time. It was written by 40 different people over 1600 years (1500 BC to about 100AD). It was written over 2 continents, in 3 different languages and in many different cultures.

Yet there is an unparalleled harmony and unity throughout its pages as it weaves the history of how God so loved mankind that he sent his son as a redeemer so willing individuals could have a personal relationship with God now and into eternity.

But what is the evidence that it is true, reliable and God-breathed? Read on.

Internal Evidence

- The gospels, for example, were written by eye witnesses or those who had access to eyewitnesses. Matthew and John are apostles and eyewitnesses of what they wrote. Mark was the scribe of Peter so the gospel of Mark is Peter's gospel. Luke "carefully investigated" and accumulated his information from "eyewitnesses" (Luke 1:1-3).
- The gospels were written soon after the recorded events. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are written in the 50s and 60s, John slightly later. Therefore, there was no time for legends or myths to infiltrate the New Testament. Many of those involved in gospel events were still alive and could have disputed the reporting. Opponents to Christianity would certainly have pointed out errors in their stories, but we do not find any such criticism.
- Fulfilled Prophecies. The Bible contains many prophecies fulfilled in the life of Jesus, written hundreds of years before Jesus' time. These include the place of his birth in Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) and many specific details of his crucifixion (Isaiah 53).
- There is an unparalleled unity of thought and purpose from the Old to the New Testament that gives credibility to its message as being God-breathed.

Manuscript evidence

- There is an abundance of manuscript evidence, so we have great confidence that what we read in the scripture is what was written in the original. We have over 5,800 Greek manuscripts, over 18,000 translations of the Greek into other languages such as Coptic, Syrian, Latin, Georgian, Armenian and Ethiopian.
- We have very early copies of New Testament manuscripts. The earliest is from about 125-150AD, within 50 years of the writing of the gospel of John.
- The Bible has far, far more evidence than any comparable ancient document. For example: The Iliad by Homer has about 1,900 manuscripts, Plato (only 237 manuscripts), Herodotus (only 106 manuscripts), and Tacitus (only 36 manuscripts).
- Due to the huge number and recent dates of the Biblical manuscripts, we are certain of the truthfulness of any doctrine in the Bible.

External evidence

- Many contemporary non-Christians wrote about people and events mentioned in the New Testament. This includes: Josephus, a historian of the 1st century, mentions both Jesus and James his brother; Thallas, a first century Roman historian mentions the 3 hours of darkness; Tacitus and Suetonius, both 2nd century historians also mention Jesus as does Pliny the Younger, a Roman statemen. Even the Jewish Talmud mentions Jesus.
- Archaeological evidence: All archaeological finds confirm the truthfulness of the Biblical record. There are no archaeological findings that contradict the Biblical teaching.

APPENDIX B: RESOURCES ON THE BIBLE AS THE WORD OF GOD

The following resources will help you to understand the authenticity and the truthfulness of the Bible as the word of God.

How We Got the Bible and Why it is Reliable

- "How We Got the Bible and Why You Can Trust It" by Mike Taliaferro
- Keydogo: Prophecies About Jesus that Could Not Have Been Coincidence (9:01) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDaqffik7FM
- ICOC Disciples Today: "Can You Trust The Bible? 3 Reasons to Consider (7:26) https://youtu.be/pMYnxlZNZaY?si=wrqV62UbWZ8Vy6D6
- Keydogo Video: "The Bible's Indisputable Historical Accuracy" (7:44) at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ifs_N4svnPM

How to Understand the Bible

- "A Quick Overview of the Bible: Understanding How All the Pieces Fit Together " by Doug Jacoby
- "Getting The Most From The Bible" by Steve Kinnard

Evidences for God

- "Is There a God" by John Oakes
- "Reasons for Belief: A Handbook of Christian Evidence" by John Oakes
- "Field Manual for Christian Apologetics" by John Oakes
- "Answering Skeptics" by Doug Jacoby
- "That You May Believe: Reflections on Science and the Miracles of Jesus" by David Eastman and John Oakes

Evidence for the Christian Faith

- "Evidence that Demands a Verdict" by Josh McDowell and Sean McDowell
- "I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist" by Norman Geisler and Frank Turek
- "Compelling Evidence for God and the Bible: Finding Truth in an Age of Doubt" by Doug Jacoby

Evidence for the Resurrection

- "More than a Carpenter" by Josh McDowell and Sean McDowell
- "Who Moved the Stone" by Frank Morrison

APPENDIX C: RESOURCES ON THE CROSS

Three Videos on the Crucifixion of Christ

One: Crucifixion: A Medical Perspective

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-EVfxABSoU (6:32)

It includes medical explanations of:

- the scourging,
- the crown of thorns,
- carrying the cross,
- the nails, the spear,
- did he really die, and
- what does his sacrifice mean to you.

Two: Third Day - Carry My Cross - Music Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G8RVYjfgsto (5:16)

Three: Medically, what was it like for Jesus to be Crucified?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_MLxlZhn4WI (8:57)

Taken from Dr. Truman Davis' medical account to help you understand the agonizing weekend of the cross, and highlight Jesus' incredible love.

The Passion of Christ From a Medical Point of View

https://www2.cbn.com/article/suffering/physicians-view-crucifixion-jesus-christ

Dr. C. Truman Davis

(Originally published in Arizona Medicine, March 1965)

About a decade ago, reading Jim Bishop's The Day Christ Died, I realized that I had for years taken the Crucifixion more or less for granted -- that I had grown callous to its horror by a too easy familiarity with the grim details and a too distant friendship with our Lord. It finally occurred to me that, though a physician, I didn't even know the actual immediate cause of death. The Gospel writers don't help us much on this point, because crucifixion and scourging were so common during their lifetime that they apparently considered a detailed description unnecessary. So we have only the concise words of the Evangelists: "Pilate, having scourged Jesus, delivered Him to them to be crucified -- and they crucified Him."

I have no competence to discuss the infinite psychic and spiritual suffering of the Incarnate God atoning for the sins of fallen man. But it seemed to me that as a physician I might pursue the physiological and anatomical aspects of our Lord's passon in some detail. What did the body of Jesus of Nazareth actually endure during those hours of torture?

This led me first to a study of the practice of crucifixion itself; that is, torture and execution by fixation to a cross. I am indebted to many who have studied this subject in the past, and especially to a contemporary colleague, Dr. Pierre Barbet, a French surgeon who has done exhaustive historical and experimental research and has written extensively on the subject.

Apparently, the first known practice of crucifixion was by the Persians. Alexander and his generals brought it back to the Mediterranean world -- to Egypt and to Carthage. The Romans apparently learned the practice from the Carthaginians and (as with almost everything the Romans did) rapidly developed a very high degree of efficiency and skill at it. A number of Roman authors (Livy, Cicero, Tacitus) comment on crucifixion, and several innovations, modifications, and variations are described in the ancient literature.

For instance, the upright portion of the cross (or stipes) could have the cross-arm (or patibulum) attached two or three feet below its top in what we commonly think of as the Latin cross. The most common form used in our Lord's day, however, was the Tau cross, shaped like our T. In this cross the patibulum was placed in a notch at the top of the stipes. There is archeological evidence that it was on this type of cross that Jesus was crucified.

Without any historical or biblical proof, Medieval and Renaissance painters have given us our picture of Christ carrying the entire cross. But the upright post, or stipes, was generally fixed permanently in the ground at the site of execution and the condemned man was forced to carry the patibulum, weighing about 110 pounds, from the prison to the place of execution.

Many of the painters and most of the sculptors of crucifixion, also show the nails through the palms. Historical Roman accounts and experimental work have established that the nails were driven between the small bones of the wrists (radial and ulna) and not through the palms. Nails driven through the palms will strip out between the fingers when made to support the weight of the human body. The misconception may have come about through a misunderstanding of Jesus' words to Thomas, "Observe my hands." Anatomists, both modern and ancient, have always considered the wrist as part of the hand.

A titulus, or small sign, stating the victim's crime was usually placed on a staff, carried at the front of the procession from the prison, and later nailed to the cross so that it extended above the head. This sign with its staff nailed to the top of the cross would have given it somewhat the characteristic form of the Latin cross.

Gethsemane

But, of course, the physical passion of the Christ began in Gethsemane. Of the many aspects of this initial suffering, the one of greatest physiological interest is the bloody sweat. It is interesting that St. Luke, the physician, is the only one to mention this. He says, "And being in Agony, He prayed the longer. And His sweat became as drops of blood, trickling down upon the ground."

Every ruse imaginable has been used by modern scholars to explain away this description, apparently under the mistaken impression that this just doesn't happen. A great deal of effort could have been saved had the doubters consulted the medical literature. Though very rare, the phenomenon of Hematidrosis, or bloody sweat, is well documented. Under great emotional stress of the kind our Lord suffered, tiny capillaries in the sweat glands can break, thus mixing blood with sweat. This process might well have produced marked weakness and possible shock.

After the arrest in the middle of the night, Jesus was next brought before the Sanhedrin and Caiphus, the High Priest; it is here that the first physical trauma was inflicted. A soldier struck Jesus across the face for remaining silent when questioned by Caiphus. The palace guards then blind-folded Him and mockingly taunted Him to identify them as they each passed by, spat upon Him, and struck Him in the face.

Before Pilate

In the early morning, battered and bruised, dehydrated, and exhausted from a sleepless night, Jesus is taken across the Praetorium of the Fortress Antonia, the seat of government of the Procurator of Judea, Pontius Pilate. You are, of course, familiar with Pilate's action in attempting to pass responsibility to Herod Antipas, the Tetrarch of Judea. Jesus apparently suffered no physical mistreatment at the hands of Herod and was returned to Pilate. It was then, in response to the cries of the mob, that Pilate ordered Bar-Abbas released and condemned Jesus to scourging and crucifixion.

There is much disagreement among authorities about the unusual scourging as a prelude to crucifixion. Most Roman writers from this period do not associate the two. Many scholars believe that Pilate originally ordered Jesus scourged as his full punishment and that the death sentence by crucifixion came only in response to the taunt by the mob that the Procurator was not properly defending Caesar against this pretender who allegedly claimed to be the King of the Jews.

The Scourging

Preparations for the scourging were carried out when the Prisoner was stripped of His clothing and His hands tied to a post above His head. It is doubtful the Romans would have made any attempt to follow the Jewish law in this matter, but the Jews had an ancient law prohibiting more than forty lashes.

The Roman legionnaire steps forward with the flagrum (or flagellum) in his hand. This is a short whip consisting of several heavy, leather thongs with two small balls of lead attached near the ends of each. The heavy whip is brought down with full

force again and again across Jesus' shoulders, back, and legs. At first the thongs cut through the skin only. Then, as the blows continue, they cut deeper into the subcutaneous tissues, producing first an oozing of blood from the capillaries and veins of the skin, and finally spurting arterial bleeding from vessels in the underlying muscles.

The small balls of lead first produce large, deep bruises which are broken open by subsequent blows. Finally the skin of the back is hanging in long ribbons and the entire area is an unrecognizable mass of torn, bleeding tissue. When it is determined by the centurion in charge that the prisoner is near death, the beating is finally stopped.

The half-fainting Jesus is then untied and allowed to slump to the stone pavement, wet with His own blood. The Roman soldiers see a great joke in this provincial Jew claiming to be king. They throw a robe across His shoulders and place a stick in His hand for a scepter. They still need a crown to make their travesty complete. Flexible branches covered with long thorns (commonly used in bundles for firewood) are plaited into the shape of a crown and this is pressed into His scalp. Again there is copious bleeding, the scalp being one of the most vascular areas of the body.

After mocking Him and striking Him across the face, the soldiers take the stick from His hand and strike Him across the head, driving the thorns deeper into His scalp. Finally, they tire of their sadistic sport and the robe is torn from His back. Already having adhered to the clots of blood and serum in the wounds, its removal causes excruciating pain just as in the careless removal of a surgical bandage, and almost as though He were again being whipped the wounds once more begin to bleed.

In deference to Jewish custom, the Romans return His garments. The heavy patibulum of the cross is tied across His shoulders, and the procession of the condemned Christ, two thieves, and the execution detail of Roman soldiers headed by a centurion begins its slow journey along the Via Dolorosa. In spite of His efforts to walk erect, the weight of the heavy wooden beam, together with the shock produced by copious blood loss, is too much. He stumbles and falls. The rough wood of the beam gouges into the lacerated skin and muscles of the shoulders. He tries to rise, but human muscles have been pushed beyond their endurance.

The centurion, anxious to get on with the crucifixion, selects a stalwart North African onlooker, Simon of Cyrene, to carry the cross. Jesus follows, still bleeding and sweating the cold, clammy sweat of shock, until the 650 yard journey from the fortress Antonia to Golgotha is finally completed.

The Crucifixion

The crucifixion begins, Jesus is offered wine mixed with myrrh, a mild analgesic mixture. He refuses to drink. Simon is ordered to place the patibulum on the ground and Jesus quickly thrown backward with His shoulders against the wood. The legionnaire feels for the depression at the front of the wrist. He drives a heavy, square, wrought-iron nail through the wrist and deep into the wood. Quickly, he moves to the other side and repeats the action being careful not to pull the arms to tightly, but to allow some flexion and movement. The patibulum is then lifted in place at the top of the stipes and the titulus reading "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews" is nailed in place.

The left foot is now pressed backward against the right foot, and with both feet extended, toes down, a nail is driven through the arch of each, leaving the knees moderately flexed. The Victim is now crucified. As He slowly sags down with more weight on the nails in the wrists excruciating pain shoots along the fingers and up the arms to explode in the brain -- the nails in the wrists are putting pressure on the median nerves. As He pushes Himself upward to avoid this stretching torment, He places His full weight on the nail through His feet. Again there is the searing agony of the nail tearing through the nerves between the metatarsal bones of the feet.

At this point, as the arms fatigue, great waves of cramps sweep over the muscles, knotting them in deep, relentless, throbbing pain. With these cramps comes the inability to push Himself upward. Hanging by his arms, the pectoral muscles are paralyzed and the intercostal muscles are unable to act. Air can be drawn into the lungs, but cannot be exhaled. Jesus fights to raise Himself in order to get even one short breath. Finally, carbon dioxide builds up in the lungs and in the blood stream and the cramps partially subside. Spasmodically, he is able to push Himself upward to exhale and bring in the life-giving oxygen. It was undoubtedly during these periods that He uttered the seven short sentences recorded:

The first, looking down at the Roman soldiers throwing dice for His seamless garment, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do."

The second, to the penitent thief, "Today thou shalt be with me in Paradise."

The third, looking down at the terrified, grief-stricken adolescent John -- the beloved Apostle -- he said, "Behold thy mother." Then, looking to His mother Mary, "Woman behold thy son."

The fourth cry is from the beginning of the 22nd Psalm, "My God, my God, why has thou forsaken me?"

Hours of limitless pain, cycles of twisting, joint-rending cramps, intermittent partial asphyxiation, searing pain where tissue is torn from His lacerated back as He moves up and down against the rough timber. Then another agony begins...A terrible crushing pain deep in the chest as the pericardium slowly fills with serum and begins to compress the heart.

One remembers again the 22nd Psalm, the 14th verse: "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels."

It is now almost over. The loss of tissue fluids has reached a critical level; the compressed heart is struggling to pump heavy, thick, sluggish blood into the tissue; the tortured lungs are making a frantic effort to gasp in small gulps of air. The markedly dehydrated tissues send their flood of stimuli to the brain.

Jesus gasps His fifth cry, "I thirst." One remembers another verse from the prophetic 22nd Psalm: "My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaves to my jaws; and thou has brought me into the dust of death."

A sponge soaked in posca, the cheap, sour wine which is the staple drink of the Roman legionaries, is lifted to His lips. He apparently doesn't take any of the liquid. The body of Jesus is now in extremes, and He can feel the chill of death creeping through His tissues. This realization brings out His sixth words, possibly little more than a tortured whisper, "It is finished." His mission of atonement has completed. Finally He can allow his body to die.

With one last surge of strength, he once again presses His torn feet against the nail, straightens His legs, takes a deeper breath, and utters His seventh and last cry, "Father! Into thy hands I commit my spirit." The rest you know. In order that the Sabbath not be profaned, the Jews asked that the condemned men be dispatched and removed from the crosses. The common method of ending a crucifixion was by crucifracture, the breaking of the bones of the legs. This prevented the victim from pushing himself upward; thus the tension could not be relieved from the muscles of the chest and rapid suffocation occurred. The legs of the two thieves were broken, but when the soldiers came to Jesus they saw that this was unnecessary.

Apparently to make doubly sure of death, the legionnaire drove his lance through the fifth interspace between the ribs, upward through the pericardium and into the heart. The 34th verse of the 19th chapter of the Gospel according to St. John reports: "And immediately there came out blood and water." That is, there was an escape of water fluid from the sac surrounding the heart, giving postmortem evidence that Our Lord died not the usual crucifixion death by suffocation, but of heart failure (a broken heart) due to shock and constriction of the heart by fluid in the pericardium.

Thus we have had our glimpse -- including the medical evidence -- of that epitome of evil which man has exhibited toward Man and toward God. It has been a terrible sight, and more than enough to leave us despondent and depressed. How grateful we can be that we have the great sequel in the infinite mercy of God toward man -- at once the miracle of the atonement (at one ment) and the expectation of the triumphant Easter morning.

"A Physician Analyzes the Crucifixion"

From New Wine Magazine, April 1982. Originally published in Arizona Medicine, March 1965, Arizona Medical Association.

APPENDIX D: PERSECUTION

Persecution by others is something that comes with being a disciple. The Bible talks about the certainty of persecution, why it comes, how we are to react to persecution when it comes and a resolve to follow Jesus regardless.

I. The Certainty of Persecution

1 Timothy 3:12

The Bible states if we are living a godly life, there will be persecution coming from some source. In fact, if one is not persecuted in some manner, then they may not be living a godly life before God.

Matthew 10:34-36

Jesus says that his teaching will bring a "sword" that can divide families. While we may get the picture of Jesus holding a sheep and having a docile personality, Jesus' teaching caused people to make tough decisions that could result in strained relationships and enmity even within their household. Even Jesus faced persecution.

II. Examples of Persecution in the Life of Jesus

Mark 3:20-22

Here we see two examples. Jesus is persecuted even by his own family who thought "he is out of his mind" and by the religious leaders who accuse him as acting as an agent of the devil. Tough stuff that even Jesus went through.

III. The Why of Persecution

Why such violent, negative responses from people to whom you are sharing the gospel and your life with? The reasons often come from two sources.

One: The clash of worldviews

The Christian worldview holds that there is a God in heaven who desires to have a relationship with each one of us. He has sent Jesus, his son, as the only source and the only way to the Father. To accept the gift of eternal life, there are objective moral values and principles to be upheld.

This is in direct conflict with the "secular worldview." The secular worldview holds that there are no moral objective values, that one makes up their own truth. Feelings rather than objective truths are the ultimate guide, happiness is the ultimate goal rather than holiness, and the ultimate sin is judging another's motives or opinions.

The secular worldview feeds into the concept of the "authentic self" and our sinful nature, where we want to be in control, independent, and determining what is right and wrong for ourselves.

Those with the secular worldview will persecute the objective moral truths and values championed by Christians. We see this clearly in the abortion debate. The Christian viewpoint is that God determines whether we can take life or not. He says in the Ten Commandments "You shall not murder" which is reaffirmed in the New Testament as well. The pro-abortion argument is "my body, my choice." The source of authority as to whether to take the life of another (a baby in the womb) is up to the mom, not God.

Clue: when you share your faith with others, listen for their source of authority. Is it themselves or is it an objective moral authority centered in the authority of God? If it is themselves, then it is just their opinion. And why should anyone else follow their opinion? But if our source of moral truth comes from God, then it is something we need to follow.

Two: The clash of subjectively held religious beliefs

Even those who are religious will persecute true Christians. Subjectively held beliefs are beliefs obtained by religious tradition or from non-Christian religions taught from men. The Jews in the time of Jesus had certain mistaken beliefs about the Messiah that contradicted what Jesus taught and persecuted him as a result.

Clue: Therefore, don't think it strange that religious people, even in your own family, persecute your beliefs. The source of authority for belief comes from the Bible, not creeds. Make sure when you are sharing your faith you rely on scripture for your beliefs. If a religious person becomes argumentative, let the scripture do the arguing for you.

IV. How to React to Persecution

1 Peter 4:12-16

Here the Bible says we are to "rejoice," "be overjoyed" and "you are blessed," not exactly what we want to hear about how to react; definitely not easy to do.

Matthew 5:11-12

Here Jesus says we are "blessed," and we are to "rejoice and be glad." I Peter 2:20-23 tells us the secrets of how Jesus overcame persecution in a godly, righteous manner before God.

1 Peter 2:20-23

Jesus leaves us an example so we can follow in his steps. Notice the three ways Jesus reacted when he suffered:

First: Jesus did not commit any sin.

Jesus, like anyone, would have been tempted to become angry, distraught, even depressed with his circumstances. Jesus knew what he was going to go through in the Garden of Gethsemane. He even could have been tempted to think the pain, suffering, and separation from God that he endured was not worth it.

But he didn't give in to these temptations. He maintained a godly attitude toward his tormentors. In fact, he cries out to God "Father, please forgive them for they know not what they do." This shows he has compassion for them.

This example tells us that we need to guard our hearts against negative, sinful thoughts against those who persecute us. They may not know what they are doing. They are in reality precious souls in God's sight who have misguided judgments against us due to darkened understanding.

Second: Jesus did not have any deceit, nor did he retaliate.

Jesus also would have been tempted to retaliate, to think about how to get revenge, to pay them back for the pain and suffering they caused him.

But we don't see this reaction. He could have called down angels to get him off the cross. He could have sent lightning to fry his tormentors. He could have called on his Father to make us humans pay for the pain and suffering he endured. But we don't see retaliation in any sense.

This tells us we need to make sure we do not retaliate against our persecutors or take revenge of any sort. The godly way is to forgive.

This does not mean that we must remain silent. When Jesus was persecuted and accused of being of the devil and casting out demons by Beelzebul (Matt 12:22-32), Jesus responded with logic and truth but not with vengeance. When Paul was unjustly cast into a prison in Philippi, he made the officials come and escort him out of the city, to give credibility to the emerging church (Acts 16:38-40), but not to get even.

So how do we attain this attitude? That leads to the third point . . .

Third: He entrusted himself to him to judges justly

Jesus entrusted the injustices he suffered to the faithful judging of the Father. The Father is just and fair. In the last judgment and before, the Father will repay justly those who inflicted pain and suffering on his son. Everybody will reap what they have sown, unless forgiven by the blood of Christ.

This is a great lesson for us. In the end, it is going to be OK no matter what persecution we will have suffered. Justice will be meted out. Anyone who has sinned against us in any way or persecuted us will be justly compensated. We just need to trust God to take care of any injustices we have suffered from persecution.

Because we know it will be OK in the end, this allows our spirit to rejoice and to have peace.

Romans 5:3-5

In addition, we see that sufferings and trials build character which produces hope when we react in a godly way.

Any persecution we endure in a godly way will make us stronger, show we have perseverance, increase our character, and show that we truly do have a real hope (a confident expectation) of eternal life.

V. Become Resolute Toward Following God in Persecution

Is it worth it to endure persecution or not? Jesus says to his disciples in Matt 10:22 "You will be hated by everyone because of me, but the one who stands firm to the end will be saved."

Standing firm during persecution requires conviction, courage, and steadfastness amid crushing blows from the world forces. But God will give you the ability to stand firm, to persevere, to even rejoice, and be glad, and to enjoy the fruits of your labor as you entrust justice to the God of justice so you will obtain the salvation of your soul.

APPENDIX E: THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM

Many Old Testament passages discuss the Kingdom of God. In this study you will see the continuity of the Old and New Testaments with regards to this kingdom in order to produce faith.

Old Testament Predictions of the Kingdom

Isaiah 2:1-14 (750 BC)

- Occurs in the last days.
- The mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established (referring to the kingdom).
- All nations shall flow into it.
- Jerusalem will be the starting point.

Daniel 2:44, 7:18 (550 BC)

Daniel writes more about this kingdom:

- "In the days of those kings" refers to the emperors of the Roman Empire.
- God will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed.
- The kingdom will break all other kingdoms to pieces and bring them to an end.
- The saints of the Most High will receive the kingdom and possess it forever.

New Testament Predictions of the Kingdom (About 30AD)

Matthew 3:1-6

- John the Baptist (25 AD) announces that the Kingdom of God is near.

Matthew 4:17

- Jesus states the Kingdom is near.

Mark 9:1

- The Kingdom will come in the lifetime of some of the disciples.
- The Kingdom will come with power.

John 3:1-7

- The Kingdom is entered by the new birth.

Luke 17:20-21

- The Kingdom of God is within you.

Matt 16:13-19

- Peter has the keys of the Kingdom.
- The Kingdom and the church will be built on the truth that Jesus is the Christ (I Cor 3:11).

Luke 23:50-51

- Joseph of Arimathea is still waiting for the Kingdom at the time of Jesus' death so it was not yet present.

Luke 24:44-49

- Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached first in Jerusalem to all nations.

APPENDIX E: THE COMING OF THE KINGDOM

Fulfillment of the Old and New Testament Predictions on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 1-2) (33 AD)

Prediction	Where Predicted	Day of Pentecost Fulfillment
Occurs in the last days	Isaiah 2:2	Acts 2:17
All nations will flow into it	Isaiah 2:2, Luke 24:47	Acts 2:5
Jerusalem is the starting point	Isaiah 2:3, Luke 24:44-49	Acts 2:5
It is an eternal kingdom	Daniel 2:44	Acts 2:37-42
Date of coming approximately 33AD	John the Baptist - "Is near" (Matthew 3:1-2) Jesus - "Is near" (Matthew 4:17)	Acts 1-2
Will come in the lifetime of some disciples	Mark 9:1 "Some" - Judas died (Acts 1:18-19)	Acts 2:14
The kingdom comes with power	Mark 9:1	Acts 1:8, 2:1-4
One enters the kingdom through the new birth: the forgiveness of sins	Water and Spirit (John 3:1-7)	Acts 2:38
The kingdom is within you	Luke 17:20-21	Acts 2:37
Peter with the keys	Matthew 16:19	Acts 2:14, 38
Repentance and forgiveness of sins	Luke 24:44-49	Acts 2:38

Conclusion

The kingdom of God on earth was established in approximately 33 AD.

Acts 2:42: As citizens of the kingdom and members of the body (the church), we must be devoted to:

- Doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer.

Matthew 6:33: We must seek His kingdom first.

APPENDIX F: THE HOLY SPIRIT

Big Idea: The scriptures promise that when we are baptized into Christ, we receive the Spirit of Christ to dwell within us. We do not walk this new life alone, the Spirit is our helper, comforter and guide.

Jesus gives the Holy Spirit and refers to the Holy Spirit as the Helper

John 14:26; 15:26

The word used for the Holy Spirit in scriptures is "Parakletos" and it means advocate, helper, comforter, intercessor and guide.

The Holy Spirit is a promise of God to us

Acts 2:37-39

v. 39 - to the Jewish believers in Jesus; to generations of their children who believe; and to those who are far off – that is us. (Eph. 2:13, 17).

The Holy Spirit is received at baptism in obedience to the gospel

Acts 2:37-39; 5:32

John 3:1-8 – through the Spirit we are born again into the kingdom of God (Titus 3:5-7).

The Spirit of Jesus indwells us and is proof that we belong to God

- Acts 2:38 – The Spirit is given along with forgiveness of sins in baptism.
- Galatians 4:6-7 - The Spirit lives in our hearts and is a sign of daughter/son relationship to God (Romans 8:15-17).
- Romans 8:9–11 - The Spirit in us is necessary to our eternal life.
- Ephesians 1:13-14 – The Spirit is a mark showing that we belong to God, and the Spirit is a deposit or guarantee of the blessings to come.

How the Spirit helps us

- 2 Corinthians 3:18 – The Holy Spirit transforms us.
- Romans 8:26-27 - The Holy Spirit helps us to pray.
- Galatians 5:22-23 – The Holy Spirit develops the character of Christ in us.
- Ephesians 6:17 – The sword of the Spirit is the word of God. The Spirit can work through the scriptures to help us to learn truth and to be transformed.
- Romans 8:13-14 - The Holy Spirit helps us put to death our fleshly nature.
- Romans 8:15 – The Spirit sets us free from sin and fear.
- Ephesians 3:14-21 – The Spirit strengthens us in our inner being and helps us to understand the depth of God's love for us.

We can sin against the Spirit

Ephesians 4:29-32

- This passage says that we can grieve the Spirit That means we can cause deep emotional pain to the Spirit of Christ in us. According to the context of this passage, we can cause this pain by having anger towards one another and creating hurt and disunity in our relationships.

1 Thessalonians 5:15-22

- Verse 17 says that we can quench the Spirit. That means that we can suppress His divine influence in our lives.
- Read the context of the passage in which verse 17 appears and name some ways we can "quench" the Spirit's influence in our lives.

References:

- Shining Like Stars by Douglas Jacoby; pp148-149;183-186
- The Spirit: The Work of the Holy Spirit in the Lives of the Disciples by Douglas Jacoby
- Forgotten God by Francis Chan

APPENDIX G: BAPTISM RESOURCES

Big Idea:The purpose of baptism is a controversial topic today. But it was not controversial to the Early Church Fathers nor to the inspired writers of the New Testament. This study shows how both the Early Church Fathers and the Bible writers agree that baptism was and is for the forgiveness of sins.

We will explore 4 baptism resources:

1. Early Christian Writings on baptism;
2. New Testament Conversions;
3. Video resource on "Is baptism necessary for the forgiveness of sins?
4. The origin of the "Sinners Prayer" where one prays a prayer to receive Jesus for salvation.

I. Early Christian Writings on Baptism

140-230 AD TERTULLIAN "Baptism itself is a corporal act by which we are plunged into the water, while its effect is spiritual, in that we are freed from our sins" (Baptism 7:2).

TERTULLIAN "The prescript is laid down that 'without baptism, salvation is attainable by none' chiefly on the ground of that declaration of the Lord, who says, 'Unless one be born of water, he hath not life.'" (On Baptism, Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 3, pg. 674-675)

TERTULLIAN "'Unless a man has been born again of water and Spirit, he will not enter into the kingdom of the heavens.' These words have tied faith to the necessity of baptism. Accordingly, all thereafter who became believers were baptized. So it was, too, that Paul, when he believed, was baptized" (On Baptism, chap 13).

110-165 AD Justin Martyr "As many as are persuaded and believe that what we teach and say is true, and undertake to be able to live accordingly, are instructed to pray and to entreat God with fasting, for the remission of their sins that are past, we praying and fasting with them. Then they are brought by us where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner in which we were ourselves regenerated. For, in the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water. For Christ also said, 'Except ye be born again, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' Now, that it is impossible for those who have once been born to enter into their mothers' wombs, is manifest to all... And for this we have learned from the apostles this reason. Since at our birth we were born without our own knowledge or choice, by our parents coming together, and were brought up in bad habits and wicked training; in order that we may not remain the children of necessity and of ignorance, but may become the children of choice and knowledge, and may obtain in the water the remission of sins formerly committed, there is pronounced over him who chooses to be born again, and has repented of his sins, the name of God the Father and Lord of the universe." (Justin Martyr, "First Apology," Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 1, pg. 183)

120-205 AD IRENAEUS "This class of men have been instigated by Satan to a denial of that baptism which is regeneration to God, and thus they have renounced the whole faith... for the baptism instituted by the visible Jesus was for the remission of sins... but there are some of them (Gnostics) who assert that it is unnecessary to bring persons to the water. Rather, they mix oil and water together, and they place this mixture on the head of those who are to be initiated... This they maintain to be redemption... Other (heretics), however, reject all these practices, and maintain that the mystery of the unspeakable and invisible Power should not be performed by visible and corruptible creatures... These claim that the knowledge of the unspeakable Greatness is itself perfect redemption" (Against Heresies, bk. 1, chap. 21, sec. 1, Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. 1, pg. 345).

IRENAEUS, "And dipped himself says [the Scripture] seven times in the Jordan." It was not for nothing that Naaman of old, when suffering from leprosy, was purified upon his being baptized. Rather, this was a symbol for us. For as we are lepers in sin, we are made clean from our old transgressions by means of the sacred water and the invocation of the Lord. We are spiritually regenerated as new-born babes, just as the Lord has declared: "Unless a man is born again through water and the Spirit, he will not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Fragment 34).

Does This Mean That Early Christians Believed One Earns Salvation by Works?

No, the early Christians did not teach that we earn salvation by good works. As in the following quotes, they taught that salvation is through faith and not by "works done in holiness of heart." Faith is the means through which God justifies by grace. and that no one receives salvation without the grace of God.

Clement of Rome wrote, "[We] are not justified by ourselves. Nor by our own wisdom, understanding, godliness, or works done in holiness of heart. But by that faith through which Almighty God has justified all men since the beginning."

Polycarp wrote, "Many desire to enter into this joy, knowing that 'by grace you are saved, not of works,' but by the will of God through Jesus Christ [Eph. 2:8]."

Are Faith and Works Mutually Exclusive?

So we might ask how could the early Christians say "We are made clean from our old transgressions by means of the sacred water," "they are brought by us where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner," "'without baptism, salvation is attainable by none,'" and "Baptism itself is a corporal act by which . . . we are freed from our sins" and yet still believe they are saved by faith and not works?

There is only a problem if one believes that salvation by faith and works are mutually exclusive. But that is just a modern-day fallacy. The early Christians did not teach that faith and works are mutually exclusive.

The early Christians replied that while one receives salvation as a gift through faith, there are conditions to receive the gift. But the conditions when met does not mean one earns the gift, but only that they met the conditions. There are two different types of works: one is works of merit, where one earns something as a result of their effort. Then there are works of acceptance where one performs some function in order to receive the gift. Salvation by grace through faith occurs when one loves and obeys God in faith. If a king wants to give his son half his kingdom if the son first brings him a bushel of apples, the son did not earn his half of the kingdom due to his work; it was only a small condition for him to receive the portion of the kingdom.

Likewise early Christians had no problem proclaiming that salvation is through faith, yet also identifying that the point in which faith saves is at baptism. They believed that salvation is a gift from God, that it cannot be earned or deserved. But they believed that faith saved when it obeyed the provisions of God on which to accept the gift.

II. New Testament Conversions

The Bible teaches in numerous places that salvation is by grace through faith (John 3:16, Eph 2:8-9).
But the questions are:

1. What are the necessary elements that accompany an initial saving faith in order to be justified by faith (Romans 5:1-2)?
2. When does faith save?

This study of New Testament conversions answers these questions.

There are several places where there are more specific details about the essential elements that accompany an initial saving faith and when faith initially saves. These are found in:

1. Acts 2:36-38 – the day of Pentecost;
2. Acts 8:9-13 -- the conversion of the Samaritans;
3. Acts 8:26-40 – the Ethiopian Eunuch;
4. Acts 10:1-47 – the conversion of the household of Cornelius;
5. Acts 16:11-15 – the conversion of Lydia and her household;
6. Acts 16:30-34 – the conversion of the Philippian jailor;
7. Acts 18:8 – the conversion of the Corinthians;
8. Acts 9, 22 – the conversion of Paul.

As we study these conversion stories, let's remember that there is only one plan of salvation. All these conversion stories do not necessarily include each element of conversion, but put together we can see how God wants us to respond to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus to receive his "gift of eternal life" (Romans 6:23).

APPENDIX G: BAPTISM RESOURCES CONTINUED

1. The Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:36-38)

The apostles are filled with the Holy Spirit. It is the beginning of the New Testament covenant. Peter preaches that Jesus is the Messiah and that God rose him from the dead. Peter proclaims that God has made Jesus both "Lord and Christ" (2:36).

The people are cut to the heart and ask "what shall we do?"

All people are saved by faith (Eph 2:8; John 3:16). But Peter gives two definitive requirements in order to be saved by faith and be born again:

- 1. Repentance
- 2. Baptism (Acts 2:38)

Peter says that repentance and baptism are "for the forgiveness of sins." **Peter states that an initial saving faith includes repentance and baptism.**

2. Acts 8:9-13 – The conversion of the Samaritans

Philip goes to Samaria and preaches the gospel to the Samaritans. How do they respond? Acts 8:12 says they "believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women."

Here we see two elements:

- 1. They believed the message, that is they had faith.
- 2. They were baptized (Acts 8:12). Why were they baptized? Acts 2:38 tells us that their baptism was for the forgiveness of sins.

This tells us that the point when faith saves is the point when a person is baptized for the forgiveness of their sins as we saw in Acts 2:38.

3. Acts 8:26-40 – the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch

Philip goes on a road from Jerusalem to Gaza. He encounters an Ethiopian Eunuch who is an official of Candace, the queen of the Ethiopians.

Philip tells him the "good news about Jesus" (Acts 8:35). They come to some water and the eunuch wants to be baptized as a result of hearing the good news about Jesus. So Philip baptizes him.

Here we see that when the good news of Jesus is proclaimed, baptism is the response. Why? We see the answer from Acts 2:38: **The eunuch is baptized when Jesus is preached because baptism is necessary for the forgiveness of sins and is the point when faith saves.**

4. Acts 10:1-47 – the conversion of the household of Cornelius

Peter is called by the Holy Spirit through a series of events to proclaim the good news to a gentile for the first time. Peter told them that "everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name" (Acts 10:43).

The gift of the Holy Spirit fell on those who were listening to Peter's message. Uncircumcised gentiles were never previously allowed to be part of God's family. But Peter realizes that God is now allowing them in.

Peter then says "Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people who received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" (Acts 10:47). Then Peter "commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ" (Acts 10:48).

What is "baptism in the name of Jesus Christ?" It is a water baptism. Acts 2:38 tells us that baptism in the name of Jesus is "for the forgiveness of sins."

The filling/baptism of the Holy Spirit on the household of Cornelius told Peter that he could baptize them for the forgiveness of sins. Their faith saved them (Acts 10:43) when they were baptized in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins. This is consistent with the other conversion accounts.

5. Acts 16:11-15 – the conversion of Lydia and her household

Paul went to Philippi and found Lydia and other women praying. "The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul. And after she was baptized, and her household as well, she urged us saying 'If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay.'" (Acts 16:14-15).

Why were they baptized? Paul's preaching of the good news included baptism. Lydia considered herself "faithful to the Lord." Acts 2:38 tells us that baptism is for the forgiveness of sins.

Lydia considered herself faithful to the Lord because she responded to the gospel. We see that the gospel included baptism for the forgiveness of sins. This is consistent with other conversion accounts.

6. Acts 16:30-34 – the conversion of the Philippian jailor

After Paul and Silas were thrown into prison, an earthquake occurred, the Philippian jailor came to them and asked "What must I do to be saved?"

Paul said "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved" (Acts 16:31). Are there any elements associated with faith/belief or is it a faith only salvation?

We read further that the jailor washed their wounds (indicative of repentance), and that he and all his family were baptized at once. He rejoiced with all his family that he had believed in God.

We see evidence of:

1. **Belief** in the life of the jailor.
2. Also **repentance**, (as we saw in Acts 2:38) that accompanies an initial saving faith.
3. We also see they were **baptized**. Baptism would have been in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins (Acts 2:38).
4. After they were baptized, it is then that they rejoiced.

Their belief in the Lord Jesus had saved when it was accompanied by repentance and baptism for the forgiveness of sins. They rejoiced afterwards. This is consistent with other conversion accounts.

7. Acts 18:8 - the conversion of the Corinthians

Paul preached the gospel in Corinth. Acts 18:8 says "Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together, with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized."

Here again, we see that when the gospel is preached, people respond with belief and baptism. This is consistent with other conversion accounts.

8. Acts 9, 22, 26 – the conversion of Paul

We see his conversion story in Acts 9:1-19, 22:1-16 and 26:12-18. Paul is a persecutor of Christians. Jesus appears to him on the way to Damascus.

Paul is blinded. Then "for three days, he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank" (Acts 9:9). Ananias comes to him, heals him and proclaims "And now, why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name" (Acts 22:16).

Paul is told very clearly what he is to do and why. He comes to a belief in Jesus during his three days of blindness. We also see he has repented by the way he responds afterwards. Now he was to be baptized to wash away his sins. It was at this time that he was to call on the name of the Lord.

Baptism is the point, when it is accompanied with faith and repentance, when one's sins are washed away. This is consistent with other conversion accounts.

III. Video Resources

Keydogo video on "Is baptism necessary for the forgiveness of sins?" It is a logical and Bible-based discussion about this topic with points and counter points.

https://youtu.be/MRb6oiQnrww?si=J_7djJCIUhBC3l5v (22:05).

IV. History of the Sinner's Prayer

The Sinner's Prayer is more popularly known as the Four Spiritual Laws. It is the belief that one can pray Jesus into his or her heart and that baptism is merely an outward sign. Historically, no one ever held this belief until relatively recently so it is a late development. This article explains its origin.

https://stevekinnard.wordpress.com/2017/01/11/church-history-13-the-sinners-prayer/

APPENDIX H: COUNTING THE COST PREPARATION

Big Idea: Although not everyone will "Count the Cost" with a seeker, use the following questions as a guide to prepare the seeker's heart for the study.

This study is a review to help a person determine if he/she is ready to follow Jesus and be baptized. Nothing new should come up during this study, everything in question should have already been discussed. The purpose of this time is to make sure Jesus is Lord.

Luke 14:28-30

- We have to count the costs of following Jesus.

Q. What does this passage say about making the decision to follow Jesus?

Some questions to ask a seeker who wants to be baptized:

1. Why do you want to become a Christian?
   - Their answer could include love for God & gratitude for Jesus' sacrifice, to have their sins forgiven, but especially to have a personal relationship with God and to know God.
2. What is your understanding of how to become a Christian?
   - Their answer should include faith/trust in what Jesus has done for them on the cross, a change of heart (repentance), wanting to be like Jesus (becoming a disciple) and baptism for the forgiveness of their sins.
   - If they do not mention the aspect of faith/trust, then they might think salvation is by works, about them being good enough. Make sure they understand salvation is based upon a gift that cannot be earned and an acceptance of that gift through faith, repentance and baptism.
3. Do you believe that the Bible is God's Word? Are you willing to make it the standard for your life from this point on?
4. Are you ready to pursue God through daily Bible study and prayer? Why?
5. Do you understand that in the Bible there is one church? What does this mean? Who is the part of the church? If you go home or move somewhere else, where will you worship? Why?
6. Do you realize the commitment in our congregation? Are you committed to being there at the specific times when the body gathers (midweek, devos, Bible Talks, Sunday worship, discipleship groups, etc.)? Why?
7. Are you ready to repent of all your sin? What will be the most challenging ones?
8. Are you ready to put your love life (marriage & dating) in God's guiding hands? What specific changes are you making in this area? What will your new challenges be?
9. Are you ready and willing to happily contribute, heart, mind, soul, and money to God's church? ("Money?" 2 Corinthians 9:7-8).
10. Are you ready to make disciples and be a fisher of men and women? Why?
11. Are you feeling clear about everything? Do you have any questions or reservations?

Encourage them & talk about what will happen specifically when they are baptized:

- Forgiveness of all your sin (past, present & future through the connection to Christ and his blood)
- Gift of the Holy Spirit
- Baptized into the body of Christ
- Become Jesus' brother, God's son or daughter, etc.