

Basics of Biblical Christianity Bible Study

All Scripture based upon the New American Standard Version of the Bible, unless noted otherwise.

Introduction: The Bible: Its Uniqueness, Content, and Historical Reliability.

Lesson 1. The Creation: Why are we here?

Lesson 2. The Fall of Man: From What are We Saved?

Lesson 3. Salvation: What is the Gospel, and What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Lesson 4. Receiving the Promise: The Gift of God's Holy Spirit.

Lesson 5. The Way of the Cross: Abiding in Christ Through Holiness.

Lesson 6. The Word of God: Spiritual Food For Our Souls.

Lesson 7. Prayer: Communion With God.

Lesson 8. Covenant: What Is It, and Why Is It Important?

Lesson 9. Baptism and The Lord's Supper: Their Significance and Meaning.

Lesson 10. False Prophets: Satan's Instrument to Destroy You.

Lesson 11. The Return of the Lord: Are You Ready?

Lesson 12. Be Fruitful and Multiply: Evangelism and Discipleship.

Books of the Bible

Old Testament

1. Genesis
2. Exodus
3. Leviticus
4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy
6. Joshua
7. Judges
8. Ruth
9. 1 Samuel
10. 2 Samuel
11. 1 Kings
12. 2 Kings
13. 1 Chronicles
14. 2 Chronicles
15. Ezra
16. Nehemiah
17. Esther
18. Job
19. Psalms
20. Proverbs
21. Ecclesiastes
22. Song of Solomon
23. Isaiah
24. Jeremiah
25. Lamentations
26. Ezekiel
27. Daniel
28. Hosea
29. Joel
30. Amos
31. Obadiah
32. Jonah
33. Micah
34. Nahum
35. Habakkuk
36. Zephaniah
37. Haggai
38. Zechariah
39. Malachi

The Pentateuch,
written by Moses

Historical Books

Wisdom/Poetic
Books

Major Prophets

Minor Prophets

New Testament

1. Matthew
2. Mark
3. Luke
4. John
5. Acts
6. Romans
7. 1 Corinthians
8. 2 Corinthians
9. Galatians
10. Ephesians
11. Philippians
12. Colossians
13. 1 Thessalonians
14. 2 Thessalonians
15. 1 Timothy
16. 2 Timothy
17. Titus
18. Philemon
19. Hebrews
20. James
21. 1 Peter
22. 2 Peter
23. 1 John
24. 2 John
25. 3 John
26. Jude
27. Revelation

The Gospels

The History of
the Early Church

The Pauline
Epistles

The General
Epistles

The Apocalypse

Introduction. The Bible: Its Uniqueness, Content, and Historical Reliability

1. What is the Bible?
2. What makes the Bible so unique? It is unique in its _____.
Unique in its _____.
Unique in its _____.
Unique in its _____.
Unique in its _____.
3. How is the Bible organized? The Bible is a book of _____. It is divided into two parts: The _____ contains ___ books, and the _____ contains ___ books.
4. How are the books of the Old Testament organized? Who wrote them, and when? The first 5 books are called the _____ or _____. They were written down by _____ in the ___th century BC, although he no doubt drew upon earlier sources (see Gen 5:1, 6:9, 10:1, etc..., Num 21:14).

The next 12 books are _____ in nature. They were compiled from various sources that were written over the period from _____ BC to _____ BC, such as royal court records and the words of various prophets (see 2 Sam 1:18, 1 Kings 14:19,29, 1 Chron 29:29, 2 Chron 9:29). _____ and various other prophets were likely involved in the compiling process of the earlier books, _____ and _____ of the later books.

The next 5 books constitute the _____ literature of the Old Testament; they are _____ in nature. Many (but by no means all) of the psalms were written by _____ (c. 1000 BC). _____ wrote the Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, and most of Proverbs (c. 950 BC). _____ is likely the oldest book in the Bible, dating to the time of the Patriarchs (c. 2000 BC).

Each book of the prophets was written by _____. (_____ was written by Jeremiah following the destruction of Jerusalem). They range in date from Obadiah (c. 850 BC) to Malachi (c. 450 BC). The _____ prophets are distinguished from the _____ prophets simply by the length of the books.
5. How are the books of the New Testament organized? Who wrote them, and when? The 4 Gospels were written by _____, _____, _____ and _____. There is strong evidence to believe _____ had written and was distributing copies of his gospel prior to 56 AD, and that _____ was written before this from records he had gathered shortly after the resurrection. The near universal testimony of the early church was that _____ gospel was the first to be written down, and for this reason it was placed _____ in the canon; both he and _____ likely made use of the records that had been accumulated by _____. Dates for all three _____ gospels is c. 45-55 a.d. _____ was written last (c. 60-90 AD).

The book of _____ gives _____, especially of its spread to the Gentile world by the apostle _____. It was also written by _____ c. 62 AD.

The 13 _____ were written by the apostle Paul c. 49-65 AD. They are arranged roughly according to length; their chronological order is as follows: _____, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, _____, Ephesians & Colossians & Philemon, Philippians, (these last four are called the _____ Epistles), 1 Timothy & Titus, 2 Timothy. These last three are referred to as the _____ Epistles.

The author of the book of _____ is unknown, though some have attributed it to Paul, Barnabas, or Apollos. It was written prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Each of the other _____ Epistles bears the name of its author. _____ is perhaps the earliest of the books in the New Testament (c. 45 AD) and was written by the brother of Jesus. The 2 epistles of _____ were written c. 65 AD, and the 3 of _____ c. 90 AD. _____ was another brother of Jesus; he wrote c. 66-80 AD.

The _____ or Revelation was the last book of the New Testament to be written. It was written by the apostle _____ near the end of his life c. 95 AD.

6. Who decided what to include in the Bible, and why were these books included in the canon of Scripture, but others omitted? The basic test for inclusion was _____. See 2 Tim 3:16, 2 Pet 1:21.

How was it determined if a book was divinely inspired?

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

7. What is the Apocrypha, and why is it in some Bibles and not others?
8. What is the difference between the many different Bible versions?

What about the King James Version?

9. How do we know that what we read in the New Testament accurately reflects what was originally written and hasn't been changed down through the ages?
10. How do we know that what we read in the Old Testament accurately reflects what was originally written and hasn't been changed down through the ages?
11. Is the New Testament historically reliable?
12. Is the Old Testament historically reliable?

Assignment: Read over the handouts with additional information on the above topics.

Introduction. The Bible: Its Uniqueness, Content, and Historical Reliability

1. **What is the Bible?** “This book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword and the Christian's charter. Here paradise is restored, heaven opened, and the gates of hell disclosed. **CHRIST** is its grand object, our good its design, and the glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given to you in life, will be opened in the judgment, and will be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and will condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents.” (Introduction to Gideon Bible).
2. **What makes the Bible so unique? It is unique in its continuity:** “The Bible, at first sight, appears to be a collection of literature—mainly Jewish. If we enquire into the circumstances under which the various Biblical documents were written, we find that they were written at intervals over a space of nearly 1500 years. The writers wrote in various lands. From Italy in the west to Mesopotamia and possibly Persia in the east. The writers themselves were a heterogeneous number of people, not only separated from each other by hundreds of years and hundreds of miles, but belonging to the most diverse walks of life. In their ranks we have kings, herdsmen, soldiers, legislators, fishermen, statesmen, courtiers, priests and prophets, a tentmaking Rabbi and a Gentile physician, not to speak of others of whom we know nothing apart from the writings they left us. The writings themselves belong to a great variety of literary types. They include history, law (civil, criminal, ethical, ritual, sanitary), religious poetry, didactic treatises, lyric poetry, parable and allegory, biography, personal correspondence, personal memoirs and diaries, in addition to the distinctively Biblical types of prophecy and apocalyptic. For all that, the Bible is not simply an anthology; there is a unity which binds the whole together. An anthology is compiled by an anthologist, but no anthologist compiled the Bible.” (Evidence, pg. 7).

“The Bible addresses hundreds of controversial subjects, subjects that create opposing opinions when mentioned or discussed. The biblical writers treated hundreds of hot topics (e.g., marriage, divorce and remarriage, homosexuality, adultery, obedience to authority, truth-telling and lying, character development, parenting, the nature and revelation of God). Yet from Genesis through Revelation these writers addressed them with an amazing degree of harmony.” (Evidence, pg. 6).

“In spite of its diversity, the Bible presents a single unfolding story: God’s redemption of human beings... The ‘Paradise Lost’ of Genesis becomes the ‘Paradise Regained’ of Revelation... The unifying thread is salvation from sin and condemnation to a life of complete transformation and unending bliss... The [unifying] character throughout is the one true, living God made known through Jesus Christ. Consider first the Old Testament: The Law provides the *foundation* for Christ, the historical books show the *preparation* for Christ, the poetical books *aspire* to Christ, and the prophecies display an *expectation* of Christ. In the New Testament, the Gospels record the historical *manifestation* of Christ, the Acts relate the *propagation* of Christ, the Epistles give the *interpretation* of Christ, and in Revelation is found the *consummation* of all things in Christ. From cover to cover, the Bible is Christocentric.” (Evidence, pg. 6).

Unique in its circulation: No other book in history even begins to compare with the Bible in terms of its total circulation. Complete Bibles and New Testaments exceed over 40 million/year, with over 350 million portions/year distributed. (<http://biblesociety.org/index.php?id=21>).

Unique in its translation: “No other book in history has been translated, retranslated, and paraphrased more than the Bible”. It is currently in over 2400 languages representing more than 90% of the world’s population. (<http://biblesociety.org/index.php?id=22>).

Unique in its survival: “Many have tried to burn it, ban it, and outlaw it from the days of Roman

emperors to present-day Communist-dominated countries. In A.D. 303 the Roman emperor Diocletian issued an edict to stop Christians from worshiping and to destroy their Scriptures... Twenty five years after Diocletian's edict the Roman emperor Constantine issued an edict ordering that fifty copies of the Scriptures should be prepared at the government's expense." (Evidence, pg 10).

"The noted French infidel Voltaire, who died in 1778 declared that in one hundred years from his time Christianity would be swept from existence and passed from history. Only fifty years after his death, the Geneva Bible Society used Voltaire's press and house to produce stacks of Bibles." (Evidence, pg 10).

"The hammers of infidels have been pecking away at this book for ages, but the hammers are worn out, and the anvil still endures. If this book had not been the book of God, men would have destroyed it long ago. Emperors and popes, kings and priests, princes and rulers have all tried their hand at it; they die and the book still lives." (Evidence, pg 11).

"A thousand times over, the death knell of the Bible has been sounded, the funeral procession formed, the inscription cut on the tombstone, and the committal read. But somehow the corpse never stays put. No other book has been so chopped, knived, sifted, scrutinized, and vilified. What book on philosophy or religion or psychology or *belles lettres* of classical or modern times has been subject to such a mass attack as the Bible? with such venom and skepticism? with such thoroughness and erudition? upon every chapter, line and tenet? The Bible is still loved by millions, read by millions, and studied by millions." (Evidence, pg. 11).

Unique in its teaching: "It is the only volume ever produced by man, or a group of men, in which is to be found a large body of prophecies relating to individual nations, to Israel, to all the peoples of the earth, to certain cities, and to the coming of One who was to be the Messiah... Mohammedanism cannot point to any prophecies of the coming of Mohammed uttered hundreds of years before his birth. Neither can the founders of any cult in this country rightly identify any ancient text specifically foretelling their appearances." (Evidence, pg. 12).

"The Bible is not such a book as man would write if he could, or could write if he would. The Bible deals very frankly with the sins of its characters, even when those sins reflect badly on God's chosen people, leaders, and the Biblical writers themselves." (Evidence, pg. 13).

Unique in its influence: "If every Bible in any considerable city were destroyed, the Book could be restored in all its essential parts from the quotations on the shelves of the city public library. There are works, covering almost all the great literary writers, devoted especially to showing how much the Bible has influenced them." (Evidence, pg. 14).

"A student of English literature who does not know the Bible does not understand a good deal of what is going on in what he reads: the most conscientious student will be continually misconstruing the implications, even the meaning." (World renowned literary critic Northrop Frye). (Evidence, pg. 15).

"The influence of the Bible and its teaching in the Western world is clear for all who study history. And the influential role of the West in the course of world events is equally clear. Civilization has been influenced more by the Judeo-Christian Scriptures than by any other book or series of books in the world. Indeed, no great moral or religious work in the world exceeds the depth of morality in the principle of Christian love, and none has a more lofty spiritual concept than the biblical view of God. The Bible presents the highest ideals known to men, ideals that have molded civilization." (Evidence, pg 15).

3. **How is the Bible organized?** The Bible is a book of books. It is divided into two parts: The Old Testament contains 39 books, and the New Testament contains 27 books.
4. **How are the books of the Old Testament organized? Who wrote them, and when?** The first 5 books are called the Pentateuch or Torah. They were written down by Moses in the 15th century BC, although he no doubt drew upon earlier sources (see Gen 5:1, 6:9, 10:1, etc..., Num 21:14).

The next 12 books are historical in nature. They were compiled from various sources that were written over the period from 1400 BC to 400 BC, such as royal court records and the words of various prophets (see 2 Sam 1:18, 1 Kings 14:19,29, 1 Chron 29:29, 2 Chron 9:29). Samuel and various other prophets were likely involved in the compiling process of the earlier books, Ezra and Nehemiah of the later books.

The next 5 books constitute the wisdom literature of the Old Testament; they are poetic in nature. Many (but by no means all) of the psalms were written by David (c. 1000 BC). Solomon wrote the Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, and most of Proverbs (c. 950 BC). Job is likely the oldest book in the Bible, dating to the time of the Patriarchs (c. 2000 BC).

Each book of the prophets was written by the prophet for which the book is named (Lamentations was written by Jeremiah following the destruction of Jerusalem). They range in date from Obadiah (c. 850 BC) to Malachi (c. 450 BC). The major prophets are distinguished from the minor prophets simply by the length of the books.

5. **How are the books of the New Testament organized? Who wrote them, and when?**

The 4 Gospels were written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. There is strong evidence to believe Luke had written and was distributing copies of his gospel prior to 56 AD, and that Mark was written before this from records he had gathered shortly after the resurrection. The near universal testimony of the early church was that Matthew's gospel was the first to be written down, and for this reason it was placed first in the canon; both he and Luke likely made use of the records that had been accumulated by Mark. Dates for all three synoptic gospels is c. 45-55 a.d. John was written last (c. 60-90 AD).

The book of Acts gives the history of the early church, especially of its spread to the Gentile world by the apostle Paul. It was also written by Luke c. 62 AD.

The 13 Pauline Epistles were written by the apostle Paul c. 49-65 AD. They are arranged roughly according to length; their chronological order is as follows: Galatians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Romans, Ephesians & Colossians & Philemon, Philippians (these last four are called the Prison Epistles), 1 Timothy & Titus, 2 Timothy (these last three are referred to as the Pastoral Epistles).

The author of the book of Hebrews is unknown, though some have attributed it to Paul, Barnabas, or Apollos. It was written prior to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD. Each of the other General Epistles bears the name of its author. James is perhaps the earliest of the books in the New Testament (c. 45 AD) and was written by the brother of Jesus. The 2 epistles of Peter were written c. 65 AD, and the 3 of John c. 90 AD. Jude was another brother of Jesus; he wrote c. 66-80 AD.

The Apocalypse or Revelation was the last book of the New Testament to be written. It was written by the apostle John near the end of his life c. 95 AD.

6. **Who decided what to include in the Bible, and why were these books included in the canon of Scripture, but others omitted?**

Because the books we now regard as Scripture were immediately recognized as valuable for instruction they were collected, copied, and circulated to meet the needs of the people of God. However, with the rise of heretical teachings and the circulation of spurious writings the need for a *canon* of what was authentic Scripture also arose. It is important to note though that there was no one person, church, or council that decided what would be included as Scripture, and no definitive process of canonization. Rather, over a period of time and through the providential circumstances that faced the people of God, the books we now regard as Scripture came to be widely accepted as canonical. The last book of the Old Testament was written c. 400 BC, and the canon of Old Testament Scripture as we know it today was fully recognized c. 250-150 BC (the earlier books of the OT, such as the Torah, were recognized as canonical much earlier). The last book of the New Testament was written c. 95 AD, and the canon of New Testament Scripture as we know it today was fully recognized by 367 AD (the gospels and many of Paul's letters were likewise recognized as canonical much earlier). Some writings were omitted because they were regarded as counterfeit. Others were omitted not necessarily because they were regarded as false, but because they did not bear the same divine nature and quality as the books that were included ("if in

doubt, throw it out”). The basic test for inclusion was divine inspiration. See 2 Tim 3:16, 2 Pet 1:21.

How was it determined if a book was divinely inspired?

- 1) Was the book written by a prophet of God?
- 2) Was the writer confirmed by acts of God?
- 3) Did the message tell the truth about God?
- 4) Does it come with the power of God? Heb 4:12
- 5) Was it accepted by the people of God? 2 Pet 3:15-16

7. **What is the Apocrypha, and why is it in some Bibles and not others?** The Apocrypha consists of 15 books appended to the Greek version of the Old Testament Scriptures (the *Septuagint* or LXX). They were originally written in Greek, not Hebrew, during the period of time between the Testaments (c. 400 BC to 100 AD). They were never considered canonical by the Jews, but regarded as instructive in Jewish history and traditions, especially by the many Hellenistic Jews who lived outside of Judea. They were never considered part of the Christian Scriptures until the Roman Catholic church declared them canonical at the Council of Trent during the Counter Reformation because they gave limited support for some of the doctrines the Reformers were arguing against. They were originally included in the King James Version of the Bible and are still included in some Protestant Bibles because of their historical value for understanding the time between the two Testaments.
8. **What is the difference between the many different Bible versions?** Because the Bible was originally written in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, those who do not understand these languages must read the Bible in a translation. As anyone who has ever studied a foreign language knows, text in one language generally does not translate word for word into text in another language, and different translators may use different words to communicate the same meaning. This gives rise to the different translations of the Bible. Among the English translations of the Bible are: 1) Those which try to retain a more literal rendering of the original text while still making good sense in English (such as the King James Version and the New American Standard Bible); 2) Those which try to render the most easily readable translation by giving a “dynamic equivalence” of the meaning of the original text without so great a concern for being strictly literal (such as the New International Version); and 3) Those (such as the Living Bible, the Message, and the New Century Version) that are not translations at all, but rather paraphrases which are more interpretive than a direct translation. The attempt of a paraphrase is to make the Bible more understandable, but will necessarily reflect the doctrinal bias of the paraphraser. Some translations (such as the New World Bible or New American Bible) also reflect a distinct doctrinal bias (Jehovah’s Witness, Catholic) while others (the Revised Standard Version) are distinctly liberal and/or ecumenical. The best translations (such as the KJV, NASB, and NIV) were done by a large committee to help guard against doctrinal bias. To understand the basic gist of the Bible the NIV or NET are good choices. The NET is available free online (net.bible.org) and offers TONS of excellent study notes. However, for serious Bible study readers will want a more literal translation such as the NASB (now also available in an even more readable updated version).

What about the King James Version? The King James Version is an excellent literal translation into old English. However it is not God’s inspired version for English speaking people as some claim. It is based upon a relatively small number of late Greek manuscripts from a narrow textual spectrum (the Byzantine texts), whereas our more modern versions are based upon a much larger number of manuscripts not available to the KJV translators that are both earlier and represent a broader textual spectrum (the Alexandrian, Western, and Caesarean, as well as the Byzantine texts). However, it is important to note that the main drawback to the KJV is its archaic language, some of which is no longer understandable to the modern reader, and not its inferior textual foundation. For while variations do exist in the different manuscripts and text types, the vast majority involve only minor details such as word order or spelling. Only in rare instances is the meaning of a passage affected, and there is no major doctrine affected by variant readings. By applying the same sound principles of hermeneutics and Biblical exegesis to the KJV and NASB the results will be the same. The Bible has been preserved for us by an abundance of manuscript evidence that enables us to accurately reconstruct the original Greek and Hebrew manuscripts, not by an inspired English translation.

9. **How do we know that what we read in the New Testament accurately reflects what was originally written and hasn't been changed down through the ages?** “The works that made up the Christians’ New Testament were the most frequently copied and widely circulated books of antiquity. As a result, the fidelity of the New Testament text rests on a multitude of manuscript evidence... We have close to, if not more than, 25,000 manuscript copies of portions of the New Testament in existence today. No other document of antiquity even begins to approach such numbers and attestation. In comparison, Homer’s Iliad is second, with only 643 manuscripts that still survive. The first complete preserved text of Homer dates from the thirteenth century.” (Evidence, pg. 34).

“Besides number, the manuscripts of the New Testament differ from those of the classical authors... In no case is the interval of time between the composition of the book and the date of the earliest extant manuscripts so short as in that of the New Testament”. (Evidence, pg. 35).

“The importance of the sheer number of manuscript copies cannot be overstated. As with other documents of ancient literature, there are not known extant original manuscripts of the Bible. Fortunately, however, the abundance of manuscript copies makes it possible to reconstruct the original with virtually complete accuracy.” (Evidence, pg. 35).

“To be skeptical of the resultant text of the New Testament books is to allow all of classical antiquity to slip into obscurity, for no documents of the ancient period are as well attested bibliographically as the New Testament.” (Evidence, pg. 35).

In addition to the actual texts, we also have over 32,000 direct quotations from the early church fathers prior to 258 a.d., from which almost the entire New Testament could be reconstructed even if we had no actual texts. There are also numerous and very early translations of the Bible into other languages (Syriac, Latin, Coptic, etc...) that support the accurate transmission of the New Testament texts.

“In an article in the *North American Review*, a writer made some interesting comparisons between the writings of Shakespeare and the Scriptures, which show that much greater care must have been bestowed upon the Biblical manuscripts than upon other writings, even when there was so much more opportunity of preserving the correct text by means of printed copies than when all the copies had to be made by hand. He said: ‘It seems strange that the text of Shakespeare, which has been in existence less than two hundred years, should be far more uncertain and corrupt than that of the New Testament, now over eighteen hundred years old, during fifteen of which it existed only in manuscript... With perhaps a dozen or twenty exceptions, the text of every verse in the New Testament may be said to so far settled by general consent of scholars, that any doubts as to its readings must relate to the interpretation of the words than to any doubts respecting the words themselves. But in every one of Shakespeare’s thirty-seven plays there are probably a hundred readings still in dispute, a large portion of which materially affects the meaning of the passages in which they occur.’” (Evidence, pgs. 9-10, quoting John Lea, *The Greatest Book in the World*, 1929.)

10. **How do we know that what we read in the Old Testament accurately reflects what was originally written and hasn't been changed down through the ages?** The fidelity of the textual transmission of the Old Testament is of a different nature from that of the New Testament. Whereas the accuracy of the New Testament Scriptures was ensured by the large and widespread number of manuscripts, the accuracy of the Old Testament Scriptures was ensured by the meticulous care given by the Jews in the copying process.

“[1] A synagogue roll must be written on the skins of clean animals, [2] prepared for the particular use of the synagogue by a Jew. [3] These must be fastened together with strings taken from clean animals. [4] Every skin must contain a certain number of columns, equal throughout the entire codex. [5] The length of each column must not extend over less than 48 or more than 60 lines; and the breadth must consist of 30 letters. [6] The whole copy must be first lined; and if three words be written without a line, it is worthless. [7] The ink should be black, neither red, green, nor any other color, and be prepared according to a definite recipe. [8] An authentic copy must be the exemplar, from which the transcriber ought not in the least deviate. [9] No word or letter, not even a yod, must be written from memory, the scribe not having looked

at the codex before him... [10] Between every consonant the space of a hair or thread must intervene; [11] between every new parashah, or section, the breadth of nine consonants; [12] between every book, three lines. [13] The fifth book of Moses must terminate exactly with a line; but the rest need not do so. [14] Besides this, the copyist must sit in full Jewish dress, [15] wash his whole body, [16] not begin to write the name of God with a pen newly dipped in ink, [17] and should a king address him while writing that name he must take no notice of him... The rolls in which these regulations are not observed are condemned to be buried in the ground, or burned; or they are banished to the schools, to be used as reading-books” (Evidence, pg. 74).

“They numbered the verses, words, and letters of every book. They calculated the middle word and the middle letter of each. They enumerated verses which contained all the letters of the alphabet, or a certain number of them. These trivialities, as we may rightly consider them, had yet the effect of securing minute attention to the precise transmission of the text; and they are but an excessive manifestation of a respect for the Scriptures which in itself deserves nothing but praise.” (Evidence, pg. 76).

“When a manuscript had been copied with the exactitude prescribed by the Talmud, and had been duly verified, it was accepted as authentic and regarded as being of equal value with any other copy. If all were equally correct, age gave no advantage to a manuscript; on the contrary age was a positive disadvantage, since a manuscript was liable to become defaced or damaged in the lapse of time. A damaged or imperfect copy was at once condemned as unfit for use.” (Evidence, pg. 75).

For this reason old manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible (written in Hebrew; the Christians for the most part made use of the Septuagint, a Greek translation) were virtually non-existent, with the oldest dating to c. 1000 AD. However, the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947 verified the accuracy and reliability of the Old Testament text. They date from the 2nd century BC and include more than 800 manuscripts, including most of the Old Testament. As an example:

“Of the 166 *words* in Isaiah 53 [which gives the most precise prophecy of Christ’s ministry in the Old Testament], there are only seventeen *letters* in question. Ten of these letters are simply a matter of spelling, which does not affect the sense. Four more letters are minor stylistic changes, such as conjunctions. The remaining three letters comprise the word “light”, which is added in verse 11, and does not affect the meaning greatly. Furthermore, this word is supported by the LXX and IQ Is (one of the Isaiah scrolls in the Dead Sea caves). Thus, in one chapter of 166 words, there is only one word (three letters) in question after a thousand years of transmission—and this word does not significantly change the meaning of the passage.” (Evidence, pg. 79).

“In conclusion, we should accord to the Masoretes the highest praise for their meticulous care in preserving so sedulously the consonantal text of the Sopherim which had been entrusted to them... Because of their faithfulness, we have today a form of the Hebrew text which in all essentials duplicates the recension which was considered authoritative in the days of Christ and the apostles, if not a century earlier. And this in turn, judging from Qumran evidence, goes back to an authoritative revision of the Old Testament text which was drawn up on the basis of the most reliable manuscripts available for collation from previous centuries. These bring us very close in all essentials to the original autographs themselves, and furnish us with an authentic record of God’s revelation. (Evidence, pgs. 81-82).

11. **Is the New Testament historically reliable?** “Whole books are not large enough to contain all the [archaeological] finds that have bolstered confidence in the historical reliability of the Bible.” (Evidence, pg. 61).

“Nelson Glueck, the renowned Jewish archaeologist, wrote: “It may be stated categorically that no archaeological discovery has ever controverted a Biblical reference.’ He continued his assertion of ‘the almost incredibly accurate historical memory of the Bible, and particularly so when it is fortified by archaeological fact.’” (Evidence, pg. 61).

“The excessive skepticism shown toward the Bible by important historical schools of the eighteenth- and nineteenth centuries, certain phases of which still appear periodically, has been progressively discredited.

Discovery after discovery has established the accuracy of innumerable details, and has brought increased recognition to the value of the Bible as a source of history.” (Evidence, pg. 61).

“Millar Burrows of Yale observes, ‘Archaeology has in many cases refuted the views of modern critics. It has shown in a number of instances that these views rest on false assumptions and unreal, artificial schemes of historical development... The excessive skepticism of many liberal theologians stems not from a careful evaluation of the available data, but from an enormous predisposition against the supernatural.’” (Evidence, pgs. 61-62).

“After trying to shatter the historicity and validity of the Scripture, I came to the conclusion that it is historically trustworthy. If one discards the Bible as being unreliable, then one must discard almost all literature of antiquity.” (Evidence, pg. 68).

12. **Is the Old Testament historically reliable?** “In the nineteenth century, the Biblical critic could hold with good reason that there never was a Sargon, that the Hittites either did not exist or were insignificant, that the patriarchal accounts had a late background, that the sevenfold lampstand of the tabernacle was a late concept, that the Davidic Empire was not as extensive as the Bible implied, that Belshazzar never existed, and that a host of other supposed errors and impossibilities existed in the Biblical record. Archaeological discoveries showed, on the contrary, that Sargon existed and lived in a palatial dwelling some twelve miles north of Nineveh, that the Hittites not only existed but were a significant people, that the background of the patriarchs fits the time indicated in the Bible, that the concept of a sevenfold lamp existed in the Early Iron Age, that a significant city given in the record of David’s Empire lies far to the north, that Belshazzar existed and ruled over Babylon, and that a host of other supposed errors and contradictions are not errors at all.” (Evidence, pg. 93).

“The great antiquity of the Bible histories in comparison with those of other writings, combined with the evolutionary preconceptions of the 19th century, led many scholars to insist that the Bible histories also were in large part merely legendary. As long as nothing was available, except copies of ancient manuscripts, for the evaluation of ancient histories, such teachings may have been persuasive. Now, however, it is no longer possible to reject the substantial historicity of the Bible, at least as far back as the time of Abraham, because of the remarkable discoveries of archaeology.” (Evidence, pg. 98).

“In every period of the Old Testament history, we find that there is good evidence from archaeology that the Scriptures speak the truth. In many instances, the Scriptures even reflect firsthand knowledge of the times and customs it describes. While many have doubted the accuracy of the Bible, time and continued research have consistently demonstrated that the word of God is better informed than its critics. In fact, while thousands of finds from the ancient world support in broad outline and often in detail the Biblical picture, not one incontrovertible find has ever contradicted the Bible.” (Evidence, pg. 98).

The above quotes are taken from [The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict](#), by Josh McDowell, Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999. All are from leading scholars in the field of Biblical research. This book is an excellent resource for further study; it is heavily documented and has a 40 page bibliography.

For further study on the authorship, date, and historical background of each book of the Bible, [Talk Thru the Bible](#) by Bruce Wilkinson and Kenneth Boa, Thomas Nelson Publisher, 1983 is another excellent resource. It is non-technical, complete, and very user-friendly.

Sir Robert Anderson: "I appeal to all intelligent and fair-minded thinkers. The only kind of person I wish to ignore is the fool. We all know the sort of morbidly active-brained child who will pull a valuable watch to pieces, and then tell us with a smile that "there was nothing in it but wheels and things." He has his counterpart in the foreign infidel type of scholar who, albeit as ignorant of man and his needs as a monk, and as ignorant of God and his ways as a monkey, sets himself with a light heart to tear the Bible to pieces" (J. W. McGarvey, "Short Essays in Biblical Criticism," 1910, pp. 420-424).

Lesson 1. The Creation: Why Are We Here?

1. Who created the heavens and the earth? See Genesis 1:1, Isaiah 40:26, 42:5, 44:24.
2. How did He create them? See Genesis 1:3,6,9,11,14,20,24,26, Psalm 33:6, 2 Peter 3:5.
3. From what did God create the heavens and the earth? See Romans 4:17, Hebrews 11:3.
4. What part did Jesus Christ have in the creation? See John 1:1-3,10, 1 Corinthians 8:6, Colossians 1:16.
5. How long did it take God to create the heavens and the earth, and all that is in them? See Genesis 2:1-3.

What leads us to believe that the creation took place in 6 literal days? See Exodus 20:9-11.

Does a “big bang” billions of years ago make more scientific sense than a literal 6-day creation thousands of years ago?

6. Why did God create the “lights in the expanse of the heavens”? See Genesis 1:14-19.

If you were out hiking and found a pocket-watch, would it be reasonable to assume that it was formed by chance?

The sun, moon, planets and stars move about in the heavens with a precision that exceeds the best clocks man has ever made! Is it reasonable to assume that they were formed by chance? See Romans 1:20.

7. What does it mean that God created the plants and animals “after their kind” (Genesis 1:11,12,21,24,25, 6:19-20)?

Have scientists ever observed a life form successfully reproduce in a manner that is not “after its kind”?

Have scientists with all of their scientific knowledge and technology ever succeeded in causing a life form to reproduce so as to form a new “kind”?

Does the fossil record indicate that life forms in the past reproduced in a manner not after their kind to produce the billions of transitional forms Darwinian macro-evolution predicts?

Is it therefore reasonable to believe that the incredible diversity of life we observe in the world today is the result of life forms in the past reproducing in a manner that is not after their kind? See Romans 1:20.

8. How was the creation of man different from that of the animals? See Genesis 1:26-27.

What does it mean that man was created in the image of God? Contrast Jude 1:10.

9. The greatest scientific and technical achievement of mankind in all of history and the culmination of thousands of years of scientific knowledge and technology is the space shuttle: it's rocket science! And yet biologists have discovered that a single celled bacterium is infinitely more complex than the space shuttle, and a human being is infinitely more complex than a single celled bacterium. No one has ever succeeded in permanently restoring life to a living creature that has died, even though all of the material parts are still there. Much less has anyone ever succeeded in creating even the simplest form of life from scratch in the laboratory. Is it therefore reasonable to believe that something infinitely more complex than the space shuttle came into existence by chance? See again Romans 1:20.

10. What was God's original command to man? See Genesis 1:28, 9:1,7, 35:11.

What does that mean physically? See Psalm 127:3-5.

What does it mean spiritually? See Galatians 5:22-23, 4:19, 1 Timothy 3:4-5.

11. Why did God create man? See James 2:23, 3John 1:4.

12. How does the Bible describe God's original creation? See Genesis 1:4,10,12,18,21,25, and especially verse 31.

What does this teach us about God's original intention for man? See also Isaiah 45:18.

Is that still his intention? See Jeremiah 29:11, Rev 2:7, 21:1-7.

Scriptures to Memorize: "There is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things, and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him." (1 Corinthians 8:6).

"Since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse." (Romans 1:20, NIV).

"The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God.'" (Psalm 14:1).

Assignment: Read Genesis 1-2.

Lesson 1. The Creation: Addendum

Does a Big Bang Billions of years Ago Make More Sense than a Literal 6-day Creation Thousands of Years Ago?

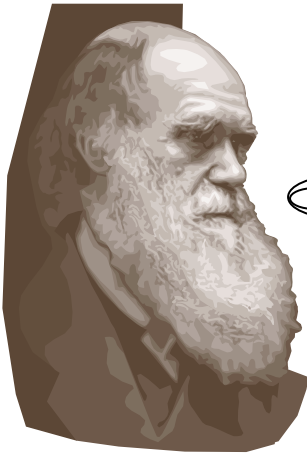
- May 2004: Dissidents wrote an open letter published in New Scientist warning that failure to fund research into big bang alternatives was suppressing free debate in the field of cosmology.
- Crisis in Cosmology conference: June, 2005. Researchers gathered in Moncao, Portugal to discuss how the Big Bang fails to explain crucial observation.
- “The basic big bang model fails to predict what we observe in the universe in three major ways.” The temperature of today’s universe, the expansion of the cosmos, and even the presence of galaxies, have all had cosmologists scrambling for fixes.
- “Every time the basic big bang model has failed to predict what we see, the solution has been to bolt on something new—inflation, dark matter and dark energy”
 - Riccardo Scarpa of the European Southern Observatory in Santiago, Chile
- “This isn’t science. Big bang predictions are consistently wrong and are being fixed after the event”
- Cosmology research “is bankrolled by just a few sources, and the committees that control those purse strings are dominated by supporters of the big bang.”
- “Our ideas about the history of the universe are dominated by big bang theory. But its dominance rests more on funding decisions than on the scientific method.”
 - Eric Lerner, president of Lawrenceville Plasma Physics in West Orange, New Jersey

What does it mean that God created the plants and animals “after their kind” (Genesis 1:11,12,21,24,25, 6:19-20)?

- **Have scientists ever observed a life form successfully reproduce in a manner that is not “after its kind”?**
 - E.g., have scientists ever observed peppered moths reproduce to give monarch butterflies? hummingbirds? anything but a peppered moth?
 - Have scientists ever observed Darwin’s finches reproduce to give sparrows or pigeons?
- **Have scientists with all of their scientific knowledge and technology ever succeeded in causing a life form to reproduce to form a new “kind”?**
 - Think: after subjecting hundreds and thousands of generations of fruit flies to radiation and other means to induce “mutations”, have scientists ever obtained a housefly? Dragonfly? A new species never seen before?
 - In spite of thousands of years of careful and diverse dog breeding, have breeders ever developed an entirely new *species*?
- **Does the fossil record demonstrate the billions of transitional forms Darwinian macro-evolution predicts?**
 - “As is well known, most fossil species appear instantaneously in the fossil record.” (Evolutionist Tom Kemp, Curator of the University Museum at Oxford)
 - “The known fossil record fails to document a single example of phyletic evolution accomplishing a major morphologic transition.” (Evolutionist Steven M. Stanley)

- “Despite the bright promise that paleontology provides us a means of “seeing” evolution, it has presented some nasty difficulties for evolutionists, the most notorious of which is the presence of ‘gaps’ in the fossil record. Evolution requires intermediate forms between species and paleontology does not provide them.” (David Kitts, evolutionary paleontologist, head curator of the Dept. of Geology of the Stoval Museum).
- “All paleontologists know that the fossil record contains precious little in the way of intermediary forms; transitions between major groups are characteristically abrupt.”
- “The family trees which adorn our textbooks are based on inference, however reasonable, not the evidence of fossils.” (Evolutionist Stephen J. Gould, Professor of Geology and Paleontology at Harvard).
- **Is it therefore reasonable to believe that the incredible diversity of life we observe in the world today is the result of life forms in the past reproducing in a manner that is not after their kind?**

Romans 1:20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.



A chemical factory in Chicago
blew up and formed thousands
of pocket watches that keep
perfect time! **Believe it?**

Hydrogen is a colorless,
odorless gas, that in billions of
years turns into people.
Believe it?

Lesson 2. The Fall of Man: From What Are We Saved?

1. What had the Lord God commanded the first man Adam in regard to the tree of the knowledge of good and evil? See Genesis 2:16-17.
2. How does the Bible describe man's innocence before his fall into sin? See Genesis 2:25.
3. How did the serpent begin to deceive the woman? See Genesis 3:1.
Who was the serpent that deceived the woman? See Revelation 12:9.
Do you suppose he continues to deceive people in the same way today?
4. What was the second thing that the serpent said to deceive the woman? See Genesis 3:4.
Was this true? See again Genesis 2:17, and also John 8:44.
5. What was the third thing the serpent said to deceive the woman? See Genesis 3:5.
How had this same temptation caused the devil himself to fall? See Isaiah 14:12-14.
What is it within a person that makes him susceptible to this temptation? See Ezekiel 28:2-5, 12-17, Proverbs 16:18.
6. What was it that tempted the woman to eat of the forbidden fruit? See Genesis 3:6.
How are people tempted in the same way today? See James 1:14-16, 1 John 2:16.
Was Jesus tempted in the same way we are? See Luke 4:1-13.
How was He different? See Hebrews 4:15.
7. What was the immediate result of the man and his wife's disobedience to God, and what did they do to try and fix it? See Genesis 3:7.
Were they able by the works of their own hands to cover their nakedness before God? See Genesis 3:8-10.
In what way do people today still try and cover their nakedness before God? Cf. 1 Sam 16:7.
8. What did the man and the woman both do when confronted by God with their sin? See Genesis 3:12-13.
How is that like what people still do today?

9. What curses came upon the man and his wife for their sin? See Genesis 3:16-19.

How were these related to their original creation? See Genesis 2:15,18-24, 1:28.

10. What has been the result of man's fall into sin both for man himself and for all of creation? See Romans 1:21-32, 8:20-22.

11. Are there any who have not sinned? See Romans 3:10-18,23, Isaiah 64:6.

Why is man unable to do good even when he wants to? See John 8:34, Romans 7:14-24.

12. God had warned man that in the day he ate of the forbidden fruit he would surely die (Genesis 2:17), and yet he did not die physically on that very day. How did he die, and what does this teach us about the meaning of death?

What did die physically on that day, and why? See Genesis 3:21, Hebrews 9:22.

Although the man and his wife were unable to cover their own nakedness, who could?

To whom did God refer when he spoke to the serpent in Genesis 3:15 about the "seed" of the woman who would bruise him on the head, and whom he would bruise on the heel?

Hint: it is the same person God gave in order that our nakedness might be covered by the skin of His righteousness. See John 3:16.

What does this teach us about God's great love for man? See Romans 5:8.

Scriptures to Memorize: "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23).

"All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away." (Isaiah 64:6, NIV).

Assignment: Read Genesis 2-3, Romans 1-3. Match the following passages from Genesis with the corresponding result of man's fall into sin:

1) Genesis 4:8,23.

2) Genesis 5:5,8,11,14,17,20,27,31.

3) Genesis 12:10.

4) Genesis 12:12-13.

5) Genesis 14:1-2.

6) Genesis 16:1-2.

7) Genesis 19:4-5.

8) Genesis 19:33-36.

9) Genesis 21:14.

10) Genesis 31:19.

11) Genesis 34:2.

12) Genesis 48:1.

A) Incest.

B) Divorce.

C) War.

D) Sickness.

E) Rape.

F) Murder.

G) Homosexuality.

H) Theft.

I) Physical Death.

J) Polygamy.

K) Famine.

L) Deception.

Lesson 3. Salvation: What is the Gospel, and What Must I Do To Be Saved?

1. Why is man in need of a Savior? See John 8:34, Romans 3:23, 6:23, 7:18-24.
2. Immediately following man's fall into sin, what provision did God make for his sin? See Genesis 3:21, 4:3-5, Leviticus 4:1-7, 13-15, 22-25, 27-30.
3. Why was it necessary that the animal being sacrificed be without defect? See Leviticus 22:20-21.
4. Why was the shedding of blood necessary for a sinner to receive forgiveness? See Leviticus 17:11, Hebrews 9:22.
5. Why was the blood of animals inadequate to completely take away sins? See Hebrews 10:1-4.

Why would the blood of an ordinary person be inadequate to take away sins? See again Romans 3:23 and Leviticus 22:20.

Why was the blood of Jesus Christ adequate to take away our sins? See 2Corinthians 5:21, 1Peter 2:22, 1John 3:5.

6. Romans 5:12 says that "through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned." And yet Jesus "was tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:15). Why was Jesus unaffected by Adam's original sin? See Matthew 1:18-25.

Who was Jesus? See John 1:1, 10:30-33, 20:28, Titus 2:13, 2Peter 1:1.

How do the claims of Jesus Christ make the Christian faith exclusive of every other religion of man? See Exodus 3:13-14, John 8:24-25,58, 14:6.

7. What is the gospel? See 2Corinthians 5:18-19, 1Corinthians 15:1-4.

What is the importance of Christ's death to the gospel message? See Isaiah 53:4-6, 1Peter 3:18.

What is the importance of His resurrection to the gospel message? See 1Corinthians 15:14,17, Romans 6:4-7, 8:11, 1Peter 2:24.

8. Jesus said "Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3,7). What does it mean to be born again, and what is the "seed" that gives us new birth? See 1Peter 1:3,23, John 1:1.

How is one born again into that newness of life that saves him from his sins? See John 1:12-13, 3:15-16, 11:25-26, 20:31, Acts 16:30-31, Romans 10:9-10.

What does it mean to believe? See Luke 6:46-49, Hebrews 3:17-19, 1Peter 2:7-8.

What is the result of being born again? See 2Corinthians 5:17.

9. What is repentance? See Acts 26:20.

What is the importance of repentance to believing in Jesus for salvation from our sins? See Matthew 3:1-2, 4:17, Luke 13:3,5, 24:46-47, Acts 2:37-38, 3:19, 20:20-21, Hebrews 6:1, James 2:18-19.

10. Are our own works and repentance able to save us? See Isaiah 64:6, Romans 4:1-5, Titus 3:3-5, Ephesians 2:8-9.

11. If one is saved by grace through no works of his own, why would he not continue in his sins? See Romans 6:15-16.

What is the nature of the true grace of God by which one is saved? See Titus 2:11-14, Ephesians 2:10 (notice the context of 2:8-9).

“Grace” means *unmerited favor*; by God’s mercy we do not receive what we deserve (i.e., the eternal destruction or separation from God), by His grace we receive what we don’t deserve (salvation from our sins back into the eternal life of knowing Him, see John 17:3).

12. Can one know for sure that he is saved and has eternal life? See 1John 5:13.

How may he know this? See 1John 2:3-6, 3:5-10, 14, 18-19, 24, 5:2.

Scriptures to Memorize: “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life.” (John 3:16).

“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” (2Corinthians 5:21).

“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.” (Ephesians 2:8-10).

“For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy.” (Titus 3:3-5).

Assignment: Read Romans 4-8.

Lesson 4. Receiving the Promise: The Gift of God's Holy Spirit

1. Who is the Holy Spirit? See Acts 5:3-4.

Whose spirit is the Holy Spirit? See Acts 16:6-7, Romans 8:9.

From whom does the Holy Spirit proceed? See John 15:26.

2. What had God promised in the Old Testament scriptures about His Holy Spirit? See Isaiah 32:12-18, 44:1-5, Joel 2:28-29.

For what purpose did God promise He would pour out His Holy Spirit upon men? See Ezekiel 36:25-27, Jeremiah 31:33, 32:40.

3. What did John the Baptist teach about the coming of the Holy Spirit? See Matthew 3:11, John 1:32-34.

4. What did Jesus teach about the coming of the Holy Spirit? See Luke 24:46-49: The Spirit would clothe them with _____ from on high.

John 14:14-18: Jesus said the Father would send his disciples a _____ so He would be with them forever.

John 14:25-26: The Holy Spirit _____ us all things. See also 1 John 2:27.

John 15:26: The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of _____ who _____ about Jesus.

John 16:7: The Holy Spirit could not come until _____ went away. See also John 7:39.

John 16:8-11: The Holy Spirit convicts the world in regard to _____, _____ and _____.

John 16:13-15: The Holy Spirit of truth guides Christ's disciples into all _____.

Acts 1:4-5: Christ's disciples receive the promise of the Father when they are _____ in/with the Holy Spirit.

Acts 1:8: Christ's disciples shall receive _____ when the Holy Spirit has come upon them and they shall be His _____ to the remotest parts of the earth.

5. What is the nature of the power which the Holy Spirit bestows upon believers? See Romans 1:4, 7:1-6, 8:4,11.

6. On what day was the Holy Spirit first poured out upon the early Church? See Acts 2:1-4.

Why is it significant that the Jews believed God had given the Law to Moses on this day?

7. What must one do to receive the promised gift of the Holy Spirit? See Luke 11:9-13, Galatians 3:14, Acts 2:33,37-38.

How do we know that the promised gift of the Spirit is also for us today and not just for the first century disciples? See Acts 2:39.

Can the Spirit be earned by our own works or purchased with money? See Acts 8:18-20.

8. Is it possible for someone to be a Christian and not have the Holy Spirit? See 1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:9,14.

How does a person know that he is being led by the Spirit of God? See Romans 8:5,13, Galatians 5:16-18.

What fruit does a person who is led by the flesh bear, and what fruit does a person who is led by the Spirit bear? See Galatians 5:19-25.

9. What is the importance of the Holy Spirit to the gospel of our salvation? See Titus 3:5-6, Colossians 1:25-27.

10. How does the Holy Spirit help us to pray? See Romans 8:26-27

11. What are the gifts of the Spirit? See Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:4-11.

Do all have the same spiritual gift? See 1 Corinthians 12:18-20,28-30.

For what purpose is a Christian to use his spiritual gift? See 1 Peter 4:10-11.

12. What future promise does the present gift of God's Holy Spirit guarantee for the Christian? See 2 Corinthians 1:22, 5:1-5, Ephesians 1:13-14, Romans 8:16-17.

Scriptures to Memorize: "Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God." (Romans 8:14).

"But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh... Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit." (Galatians 5:16,19-25).

Assignment: Read John 14-16, Acts 1-2, 1 Corinthians 12-14.

Lesson 5. The Way of the Cross: Abiding in Christ Through Holiness.

1. What was God's original command to man? See Genesis 1:28, 9:1,7, 35:11.
2. What did Jesus teach about what one must do in order to be fruitful? See John 15:4-5.
What is the blessing of abiding in Christ? See John 15:7.
3. What does it mean to abide in Christ? See 1 John 2:6.
How is one to abide in Christ and so bear much fruit? See John 12:24-26.
4. What did Jesus teach about the way of the cross? See Matthew 10:38, Luke 9:23-26, 14:25-27.
What does the cross primarily symbolize? See Acts 5:30, 10:39, Philippians 2:8.
5. To what things must one die in taking up his cross in order to follow Christ? See Romans 6:2,6,11, 7:4-6, Galatians 2:19, 5:24, 6:14, Colossians 2:20-23, 3:5-9, 1 Peter 2:24.
6. What is the importance of being crucified with Christ? See Romans 6:5-9, 8:13, Galatians 2:20, 5:24, Philippians 3:7-11.
7. How were Christ's own sufferings an example for us to follow? See John 15:18-21, 1 Peter 2:21, 4:1.
8. What is the result of following Christ in the way of the cross and being crucified with Him? See Romans 6:22.
What is sanctification/holiness? See 2 Corinthians 6:17-7:1, 1 Thessalonians 3:12-13, 5:23.
Why is it important? See Hebrews 12:14, 1 Peter 1:14-16.
9. Why is the cross also a symbol of shame and humiliation? See Luke 23:32-33,35-39, Hebrews 12:1-2, 13:13.
In the eyes of the world, what is the shame or social stigma of following Jesus Christ? See 1 Corinthians 1:18,23-24,26-28, 2 Timothy 1:8,12,16, 1 Peter 4:16. See also Hebrews 11:37-38.
10. Why must one be willing to suffer shame and reproach from the world in order to follow Jesus? See Luke 9:26, John 15:19-20, 2 Timothy 3:12.

11. What does the way of the cross teach us about the manifestation of God's power in our weakness? See 1 Corinthians 2:2-5, 2 Corinthians 12:9-10, 13:4.
12. What is the reward for walking in the way of the cross? Luke 24:26, Philippians 2:5-11, 1 Peter 1:11; Matthew 5:10-12, Romans 8:17-18,29-30, 1 Peter 4:13-14.

Scriptures to Memorize: "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it. For what is a man profited if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels." (Luke 9:23-26).

"Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal." (John 12:24-25).

"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.." (Galatians 2:20).

"Therefore, since Christ has suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves also with the same purpose, because he who has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, so as to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. (1 Peter 4:1-2).

"Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord." (Hebrews 12:14, NIV).

Assignment: Read Philippians and 1 Peter.

Once to every man and nation, comes the moment to decide,
In the strife of truth with falsehood, for the good or evil side;
Some great cause, some great decision, offering each the bloom or blight,
And the choice goes by forever, 'twixt that darkness and that light.

Then to side with truth is noble, when we share her wretched crust,
Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 'tis prosperous to be just;
Then it is the brave man chooses while the coward stands aside,
Till the multitude make virtue of the faith they had denied.

By the light of burning martyrs, Christ, Thy bleeding feet we track,
Toiling up new Calv'ries ever with the cross that turns not back;
New occasions teach new duties, time makes ancient good uncouth,
They must upward still and onward, who would keep abreast of truth.

Though the cause of evil prosper, yet the truth alone is strong;
Though her portion be the scaffold, and upon the throne be wrong;
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and behind the dim unknown,
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above His own.

James Lowell, 1845

Lesson 6. The Word of God: Spiritual Food For Our Souls

1. When tempted by the devil to turn stones into bread, how did Jesus respond? See Matthew 4:1-4.

What did Job treasure more than his necessary food? See Job 23:12.

What did Jeremiah do when the word of the Lord came to him? See Jeremiah 15:16.

2. In what ways is spiritual food for our souls like physical food for our bodies? Is there labor involved with obtaining food for our bodies/souls? See 2 Timothy 2:15.

How often does one eat physical food? How often should one eat spiritual food? See Matthew 6:11, Psalm 1:2, 119:97

What happens to one physically if he does not eat physical food, or if the food he eats is not good for his body? What happens to one spiritually if he does not eat spiritual food, or if the food he eats is not good for his soul? See Isaiah 5:12-14, Hosea 4:6.

Can one grow to physical/spiritual maturity eating only baby food? See Hebrews 5:12-14.

3. What invitation has God given to the feast He has prepared in His word? See Isaiah 55:1-2, Luke 14:15-17.

What is the danger of refusing His invitation? See Luke 14:18-24.

4. What commandments has God given in regard to studying the Scriptures? See Deuteronomy 6:6-9, Joshua 1:8.

5. What is the importance of the word of God to our salvation? See Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23, 1 Peter 1:23, 2:2.

6. Why is it important to memorize God's word? See Psalm 119:11.

7. How does knowing the written word of God also lead us to know Jesus? See John 1:1, 14, 6:26-35, 48-58, Revelation 19:13.

8. What is the significance of knowing Jesus Christ, the living Word of God? See John 17:3, Philippians 3:7-11.

What is the Biblical significance of "knowing" another intimately? See Gen 4:1, 17, 25 in the KJV or note the literal reading in the margin of the NASB.

What is the importance of knowing Christ intimately through His word, and the danger of not coming to know Him in this way? See again 1 Peter 1:23, Matthew 7:23, 25:12.

9. Is it possible for someone to know the written word of God and still not know Jesus? See Luke 13:23-27, John 5:37-39.
10. What must one possess in order for the written word of God to lead one to know the living Word of God? See Luke 8:15.
11. How does the living Word of God use the written word of God to effect our salvation? See Ephesians 5:25-27, John 15:3, 17:17, Hebrews 4:12.
12. Is it enough to just understand and know the word of God, even if what we know is the truth? See James 1:21-25, 2:19, Mat 7:24-27.

Scriptures to Memorize: “Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.” (Isaiah 55:1-2, NIV).

“Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD. (Deuteronomy 8:3, NIV).

“Do not let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful.” (Joshua 1:8, NIV).

“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12, NIV).

“For you have been born again, not of seed which is perishable, but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God.” (1 Peter 1:23, NASB).

Assignment: Read Psalms 19 & 119.

Lesson 7. Prayer: Communion With God

1. What was Jesus' example of prayer? See Matthew 14:23, Mark 1:35, Luke 5:16, 6:12, Hebrews 5:7.

What two significant events happened while Jesus was praying? See Luke 3:21-22, 9:28-29.

What was the early Church's example of prayer? See Acts 1:14, 2:42, 6:4.

What significant event of central importance to the spread of the gospel does Scripture record as happening while people were praying? See Acts 10:1-20,30-32.

Is it possible that we fail to experience significant spiritual events and the power of God because we fail to pray? See James 4:2.

2. What did Jesus teach about prayer? Matthew 6:5-6: We should not pray ___ ___ _____ by men, but we should pray ___ _____.

Matthew 6:7: We should not pray using _____, supposing we shall be heard for our _____. See also Ecclesiastes 5:2.

3. How should we pattern our prayers, and what elements should they contain? See Matthew 6:8-13.

Whose name is to be hallowed? Whose kingdom is to come? Whose will is to be done?

Is it only for our daily *physical* bread we should pray? See Amos 8:11-13.

1 John 1:9 says that if we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all our unrighteousness. Besides confession, what else is necessary on our part in order to receive forgiveness? See Matthew 6:12,14-15, Mark 11:25.

Why should Matthew 6:13 be an important part of our prayers? See also Matthew 26:41, Luke 22:40,46, 2 Peter 2:9, Revelation 3:10; cf. 1 Corinthians 10:13, James 1:13-16, Hebrews 4:15-16.

4. What Christian discipline should often accompany prayer? See Matthew 6:16-18, Luke 2:37, 5:33-35, Acts 13:2-4, 14:23.

5. How *often* shall we pray? See Ephesians 6:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 1 Timothy 5:5.

6. For *whom* shall we pray? See 1 Timothy 2:1-4, Matthew 5:44.

Are there people for whom God might not have us to pray? See Jeremiah 7:16, 14:11-12, 1 John 5:16.

7. For what *sorts* of things shall we pray? See Philippians 4:6; James 5:13-15; Luke 21:36; 2 Thessalonians 1:11; Acts 4:29-31, Ephesians 6:19-20; Ephesians 1:16-19, 3:14-19, Philippians 1:9-11, Colossians 1:9-12.
8. Why do Christians offer thanks to God for their physical food and pray before eating? See 1 Timothy 4:4-5.
9. What is the importance of the Holy Spirit to prayer? See Romans 8:26-27; cf. Ephesians 6:18.
10. What was Jesus' promise concerning our prayers? See Matthew 7:7-8, 18:19, 21:22.

What is the significance of asking in His name? See John 14:12-14, 16:23-24.

11. Are there conditions that must be met in order for our prayers to be answered? See John 15:7, 1 John 3:21-22, 5:14-15; Mark 11:24, James 1:5-8; James 4:3; see also 1 Corinthians 11:4-5,10,13, 1 Peter 3:7.

When we do not perceive that our prayers are being answered, what must we do? See Luke 18:1-8.

12. The prayers of what sort of person does the Lord hear? See James 5:16, 1 Peter 3:12.

Whose prayers will the Lord not hear? See Psalm 66:18; Proverbs 15:29, 28:9, Isaiah 1:15, 59:1-2, Micah 3:4, Zechariah 7:13, John 9:31.

What is the one prayer that the Lord will hear from sinners? See Luke 18:9-14.

Scriptures to Memorize: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7).

"And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him." (1 John 5:14-15).

"If I regard wickedness in my heart, The Lord will not hear." (Psalm 66:18).

"You do not have because you do not ask." (James 4:2).

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (James 5:16, KJV).

Assignment: Read 2 Chronicles 6, Ezra 9, Nehemiah 9, Daniel 9, John 17.

For further reading: see *The Complete Works of E.M. Bounds on Prayer*.

Lesson 8, Part 1. Covenant: What Is It, and Why Is It Important?

1. What is a covenant? See Genesis 31:43-55. Note: a covenant is a solemn agreement of binding force that joins together two parties in a united relationship; the covenant with which westerners are most familiar is that of marriage. Notice the following elements that make up a covenant:
2. What were the terms of the covenant that Jacob made with Laban? See Genesis 31:50,52.

What are the terms of a marriage covenant?

What were the terms of the Mosaic covenant God made with the Jews at Mount Sinai? See Exodus 19:5-6, 20:1-17.

What are the terms of the new covenant? See Hebrews 8:8-13.

3. What was the sign of the covenant that Jacob made with Laban? See Genesis 31:45,48,51-52.

What is the sign of a marriage covenant?

What was the sign of God's covenant with Noah? See Genesis 9:12-13.

What was the sign of the covenant God made with Abraham? See Genesis 17:11.

What was the sign of the Mosaic covenant? See Exodus 31:13-17.

What is the sign of the new covenant? See Colossians 2:11-12.

4. What was the purpose and binding nature of the oaths that were sworn in making a covenant? See Hebrews 6:16, Genesis 31:53, 26:26-31, Joshua 9:3-21, 10:1-10, 2 Samuel 21:1-6, Hosea 10:4.

What oaths were made in regard to the Mosaic covenant? See Exodus 19:8, 24:3, Deuteronomy 26:16-19, 29:1,9-15.

What oaths/vows/promises are made in a marriage covenant?

What agreement does a person make in entering into the new covenant? See 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1, Ephesians 5:22-27.

For what reason is the nature of the oaths that are typically sworn by men incompatible with the requirements of the higher law we are called to in Christ? See Matthew 5:33-37, James 5:12, and think: should the word of a Christian be more or less binding depending upon who or what he swears by, or even if he swears at all?

5. What was the significance of the sacrifice that was offered to make the covenant binding? See Genesis 31:54, Jeremiah 34:18-19, Genesis 15:7-10,17-18, Hebrews 9:16-17, and NASB text note on Heb 9:17. Note: the language used in the Bible to “make” a covenant is literally to “cut” a covenant, referring to the sacrifice that was divided asunder for each party to pass through the parts; this ceremony made the covenant binding by representing the death of each party.

In a marriage covenant, in what sense must the individual man and woman die to enter into covenant with one another? See Philippians 2:3.

Was the Mosaic covenant put into effect by a sacrifice? See Hebrews 9:18-20.

Was the new covenant put into effect by a sacrifice? What was that sacrifice? See Luke 22:20, 1 Corinthians 11:25.

6. What was the significance of the covenant meal that was eaten together as part of the covenant ceremony? See Genesis 31:54, 26:30.

What is the covenant meal called in the marriage ceremony? What is the significance of the part of the ceremony when the bride and groom eat each other’s cake and drink each other’s wine? See John 6:53.

What meal was eaten when the Mosaic covenant was established? See Exodus 24:1-11.

What meal was eaten when the new covenant was established? See Matthew 26:26-28.

What covenant meal will be eaten when Jesus returns? See Matthew 25:1-10, Rev 19:7-9.

Scriptures to Memorize: “Behold, days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them,” declares the LORD. “But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days,” declares the LORD, “I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” declares the LORD, “for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.” (Jeremiah 31:31-34).

Assignment: Read the book of Hebrews.

Lesson 8, Part 2. Covenant: What Is It, and Why Is It Important?

7. What blessings for obedience to the Mosaic covenant were promised? See Deuteronomy 7:9-15, 28:1-14, Psalm 25:8-14, 103:17-18. (See also Leviticus 26:3-13.)

Did such blessings prove true? See Joshua 23:14, 1 Kings 8:56.

What blessings for obedience to the new covenant are promised? See 2 Corinthians 1:20, Hebrews 8:6, 6:7, 1 John 2:25.

8. What curses for disobedience to the Mosaic covenant were promised? See Deuteronomy 28:15-68. (See also Leviticus 26:14-39.)

Did such curses prove true? See 2 Kings 17:1-18, 18:11-12, Isaiah 24:5-6. (See also Jeremiah 11:1-15.)

What curses for disobedience to the new covenant are promised? See 1 Corinthians 11:27-30, Hebrews 6:8, 10:26-31.

9. What indications did God give before Jesus came that He would establish a new covenant with His people? See Isaiah 42:6-7, 49:5-11, 14-16, Ezekiel 16:59-60, Hosea 2:18-20.

10. How did God say the new covenant (testament) would differ from the old covenant (testament)? See Jeremiah 31:31-34, Ezekiel 37:24-28, John 1:14, 14:23, Hebrews 9:6-8.

11. Why was it necessary that there be a new covenant? See Hebrews 8:7.

Why was the old covenant inadequate? See Hebrews 7:11-12, 18-19, 9:8-10, 10:1-4. Since the old covenant was inadequate, why was it given? I.e., what was the purpose of the terms of the first covenant contained in the law? See Galatians 3:19-25, Romans 7:7.

12. How is the new covenant superior to the old? See 2 Corinthians 3:6-11, Galatians 4:21-31, Hebrews 8:6-13, 9:11-14, 10:8-18.

Scriptures to Memorize: “Then it shall come about, because you listen to these judgments and keep and do them, that the LORD your God will keep with you His covenant and His lovingkindness which He swore to your forefathers. And He will love you and bless you and multiply you; He will also bless the fruit of your womb and the fruit of your ground, your grain and your new wine and your oil, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock, in the land which He swore to your forefathers to give you. You shall be blessed above all peoples; there shall be no male or female barren among you or among your cattle. And the LORD will remove from you all sickness; and He will not put on you any of the harmful diseases of Egypt which you have known, but He will lay them on all who hate you.” (Deuteronomy 7:12-15).

“[Jesus] has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises.” (Hebrews 8:6).

Assignment: Study the following covenants found in Scripture:

God with Noah (Genesis 6:18, 9:1-17).

God with Abraham: (Genesis 15:1-18, 17:1-21).

Abraham with Abimelech (Genesis 21:22-32).

Isaac with Abimelech (Genesis 26:26-21).

Jacob with Laban (Genesis 31:44-54).

The covenant at Sinai (Exodus 19:1-24:11, esp. 24:1-11, 34:1-28, see Deuteronomy 4:13, 5:2ff, 9:9-21, 27:1-29:29).

Israelites with the Gibeonites (Joshua 9:1-10:11, 2 Sam 21:1-6).

David and Jonathan (1 Samuel 18:1-4, 19:1, 20:1-42, 22:8, 23:16-18, 2 Samuel 1:26).

David with Abner and the northern tribes (2 Samuel 3:12-13, 21, 5:3).

Miscellaneous covenants of leaders with the people to serve God: Asa (2 Chronicles 15:1-15), Jehoiada (2 Chronicles 23:1-3, 16-17), Hezekiah (2 Chronicles 29:10), Josiah (2 Kings 23:1-3, 2 Chronicles 34:30-33), Ezra (Ezra 10:1-17).

Zedekiah with the people to release their servants in accordance with the law (Jeremiah 34:8-22).

Zedekiah with the King of Babylon to submit to him (Ezekiel 17:11-21).

Antichrist with the people of God (Daniel 9:27, cf. 11:28-33).

Covenant of marriage (Malachi 2:14-16).

Lesson 9. Baptism and the Lord's Supper: Their Significance and Meaning

1. What command did Jesus give concerning baptism? See Matthew 28:19.
2. In what way does the New Testament rite of baptism (βάπτισμα) differ from the ceremonial "washings" (βαπτισμός) of the Jews? Mar 7:4, Heb 6:1-2, 9:10, Mat 3:7-12 and note below.
3. What is the meaning of baptism? Baptism is a picture of the washing away of _____. See Acts 22:16, Titus 3:4-7.

Baptism in/with/by water is a picture of the baptism in/with/by the _____: Matthew 3:11-16, John 1:33, Acts 1:5, 2:38, 9:17-18, 10:47-48, 19:5-6, 1 Cor 12:13.

Baptism unites us with Christ in His _____ and _____: Romans 6:1-11, 1 Peter 3:21.

Baptism is the sign of the new covenant just as the _____ was the sign of the Mosaic covenant and _____ was the sign of the Abrahamic covenant: Hebrews 4:10, Colossians 2:11-13. It is a picture of the _____ of the heart and symbolizes a "cutting away" of the sinful flesh that frees the believer to walk in the Spirit: Deuteronomy 30:6, Jeremiah 4:4, Romans 2:29. As _____ was done after physical birth as a setting apart into the covenant community of the Jews, so is baptism done after spiritual birth as a setting apart into the covenant community of the Christians. It is a testimony before witnesses that one is entering into a covenant relationship with God, just as in the marriage relationship. It is the public record of our betrothal to Christ to become His Bride: 2 Corinthians 11:2, Galatians 3:27, Isaiah 61:10-11, Ruth 3:9, Ezekiel 16:8.

Baptism is a picture of the _____ one can expect to face as a Christian: Mark 10:38-39, Luke 12:50, 2 Tim 3:12.

4. What requirements must be met before a person can be baptized? See Acts 2:38-41, 8:12, 16:14-15, 18:8.
5. From the examples of Scripture, how long after conversion (as evidenced by faith in Christ and repentance from sin) should a person wait to be baptized? See Acts 8:36-38, 9:17-18, 10:47-48, 16:30-33.
6. In whose name is a Christian baptized? See Acts 2:38, 8:16, 10:48, 19:5, Rom 6:3. Note: Baptism in the name of Jesus is a recognition of the Father who sent Jesus and of the Holy Spirit poured out upon those who join themselves in covenant to Him; see Mat 28:19.
7. What modes of baptism are described in Scripture? _____ See John 3:23, Acts 8:38; cf. Romans 6:1-4. _____ Compare Joel 2:28 and Acts 2:17-18,33 with Matthew 3:11 and Acts 1:5; see also Acts 11:15-16, 1 Corinthians 10:1-2, Psalm 77:17-21. _____ See Ezekiel 36:25-27, Hebrews 10:22. Note: The efficacy of Baptism lies not in its mode of application, but in understanding its meaning and becoming obedient to the newness of life in Christ into which we are baptized.

Note: While the dead formalism of the Jewish purification rituals came to epitomize the fleshly religious traditions that so many Jews supposed would save them, the rite of baptism came to epitomize the exact opposite: that true religion was religion of the heart and if one wished to truly be saved he needed not just a cleansing of the flesh but a cleansing of the heart that comes from the heartfelt repentance that John the Baptist preached to prepare the way for the Lord. It was thus in preparing the way for the Lord that John the Baptist transformed the empty formalism of the Jewish βαπτισμός into the New Testament rite of βάπτισμα that became the sign of the new covenant.

8. As baptism is the *sign* of the new covenant, what is the significance of the Lord's Supper to the new covenant? See Exodus 24:1-11, 1 Corinthians 10:16.
9. Why did Jesus say we should celebrate the Lord's Supper? See 1 Corinthians 11:24-26.
10. Of what were the sacrifices of the old covenant a reminder? See Hebrews 10:3. What did they look forward to? See Hebrews 10:1,11-12, 8:5-6.

Of what is the Lord's Supper a reminder? See 1 Corinthians 11:26. What does it represent and look forward to? See Isaiah 25:6-9, Matthew 22:2, 25:10, 26:29, Luke 22:15-18, Revelation 19:7-9.

11. When Jesus said of the bread, "This is my body", and of the wine, "This is my blood" (Matthew 26:28), did He mean that the elements were literally His body and blood, or figuratively? See also John 6:47-63.

What is the relationship between observing the Lord's Supper and studying the Scriptures? With Jesus' words in John 6:47-63 see also John 1:1,14.

12. What great danger does Paul warn about in regard to partaking of the covenant meal of the Lord's Supper? See 1 Corinthians 11:27-30.

How does this danger relate to the violation of the terms of a covenant? See Leviticus 26:14-39, Deuteronomy 27:15-26, 28:15-68, etc...

What example do we have in Scripture of a person who ate the bread and drank the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner? See Luke 22:21-22, John 13:21,26-27, 1 Corinthians 11:23. What warning does his example give us? See Acts 1:18-20, 1 Corinthians 11:17-22,27.

Scriptures to Memorize: "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:3-4).

"Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ?" (1 Corinthians 10:16).

"Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly." (1 Corinthians 11:28-29).

Assignment: Write down in your own words the significance and meaning of baptism and the Lord's Supper in relation to the new covenant.

Lesson 10. False Prophets: Satan's Instrument to Destroy You

1. What does it mean to prophesy, and in what way does a false prophet fail in this regard?*

What warning does Scripture give Christians concerning false prophets? See Matthew 24:4,11,24-25, Acts 20:28-31, 2 Peter 2:1, 1 John 4:1.

2. What is the religious nature of a false prophet? Matthew 7:15: They come to you in _____ clothing but inwardly are _____.

2 Corinthians 11:13-15: They disguise themselves as servants of _____.

2 Timothy 3:1-5: They have a _____ of _____ but deny its power; see Titus 1:16.

Who is most like Satan: He who is outwardly vile and a wicked sinner, or he who has a form of godliness but in his heart is unrepentant and still loves the vain pleasures of sin?

3. Does a false prophet know he is a false prophet? Matthew 15:14: He is a _____ guide.

2 Tim 3:13: A false prophet is an imposter who _____ others and is himself _____.**

4. What is the true nature of false prophets? Isaiah 56:10-11: They are _____ for gain.

Micah 3:5,9-11: They instruct for a _____ and divine for _____.

2 Timothy 3:2,4: They are lovers of _____, lovers of _____, and lovers of _____ rather than lovers of God.

2 Timothy 4:3: They _____ ears; i.e., they tell the people _____.

2 Peter 2:2-3,14,18: They follow their _____ and in their _____ they will _____ you with _____. Their heart has been _____. They speak _____ and entice by _____ those who escape from the ones who live in error.

5. Who does the New Testament uphold as the epitome of a false prophet? See 2 Peter 2:15-16, Jude 1:11.

What outward appearance did Balaam have that would lead one to believe he was a true servant of God? See Numbers 22:7-18,34, 23:5-12,25-26, 24:1-2,10-13,17.

Because a person prophesies words of truth and speaks blessings over God's people, does that mean he must necessarily be a true servant of God? See Matthew 7:22-23.

What evidences do we find that Balaam's heart was not right with God and God was giving him over to his lusts? See Number 22:18-22,32,35.

* To prophesy is not so much to "foretell" as to "forth-tell". The purpose of prophesy is not to predict the future, but to call people to God by proclaiming the certainty of God's purposes in the events of history, whether they be past, present or future. The failure of a false prophet in this regard is the failure to truly call people to God.

** A false prophet doesn't know he is a false prophet, because the very nature of deception prevents him from knowing he is deceived! Like the religious leaders who put Jesus to death, false prophets are deceived to believe they are actually serving God.

What was Balaam's great sin that made him the epitome of a false prophet? See Joshua 24:9-10, Revelation 2:14, Numbers 25*.

6. What is the overall message of a false prophet? See Jeremiah 6:13-15, 8:8-12, 14:13, 23:14,16-17,21-22, Ezekiel 13:8-10.
7. How is the deception of a false prophet the same as that of the devil? See Genesis 3:1-4.
8. What is the result of a false prophet's message in the hearts of those who give heed to his message? See Deuteronomy 29:19-21, Jeremiah 5:1-6,12,30-31, 7:1-15, Ezekiel 13:22.
9. Does the New Testament describe religious people who had a false security that they were saved but in fact would be destroyed by the wrath of God? See Matthew 3:1-3,7-10, Luke 13:23-28, John 8:31-47,59, 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3, 2 Peter 2:18-22, Jude 1:3-5.
10. What warnings does the Bible give us against believing the peace and safety message of the false prophets and developing a false security? See 1 Corinthians 10:1-13, Hebrews 3:5-4:11.
11. When the Bible commands us to not be deceived, is it possible that we could be deceived? See 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, Galatians 6:7-8, Ephesians 5:3-7, 1 John 3:7-10.
12. What passage of Scripture summarizes the Bible's teaching about false prophets and false security? See Matthew 7:13-27.

Scriptures to Memorize: "Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it. Beware of the false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit; but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'" (Matthew 7:13-23).

Assignment: Read Jeremiah 5-8,23, Ezekiel 13, 2 Peter 2, and Jude.

Note: Prevented by God from cursing the people of God and caused to give a blessing instead, Balaam counseled Balak to lead the people of God into sin so that God Himself would destroy them. In doing so Balaam did what all false prophets before and after him have done thus making him the epitome of a false prophet: He surrendered the people of God to sin out of greed for the worldly gain such would bring. Consider that a minister who waters down the word of God so as to not offend the tithers who pay his salary is no different than Balaam. And just like Balaam he is deceived that because he speaks blessings over God's people he is a true servant of God.

Lesson 11. The Return of the Lord: Are You Ready?

1. What promise do we have that the Lord Jesus will return? See Acts 1:9-11.
2. For what two-fold purpose will Christ return? See John 14:1-3, Hebrews 9:28, 1 Corinthians 4:5, Matthew 16:27, 25:31-33, Jude 1:14-15, 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10.
3. In Matthew 24 and 25 is found the Olivet Discourse in which Jesus teaches about the last days and gives many signs about His coming. What did Jesus mention first when asked by his disciples about His return? See Matthew 24:1-4, Luke 21:7-8.

When Jesus warns us to not be deceived, is it possible we could be deceived?

4. What two things did Paul warn must happen before Christ returns? See 2 Thessalonians 2:1-5.

By what other name is the man of lawlessness called? See 1 John 2:18.

Is his spirit already at work in the world? See also 2 Thessalonians 2:7.

5. What signs will mark the coming of the *antichrist*? See 2 Thessalonians 2:8-9. Who will he thus resemble in outward appearance, and how does this reflect the nature of Satan? See 2 Corinthians 11:13-15.
6. Why will people be deceived by the coming of the lawless one? See 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12, Matthew 24:11-12,24-25.
7. Because of the great deception of the last days, what will the character of most people be like who claim to know God? See Matthew 24:12, 2 Timothy 3:1-5,13, 4:3-4. Do we see this today?
8. Because of the great deception of the last days, how will most people live in light of the coming judgment? See Matthew 24:37-39, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-3, Amos 5:18-20. Do we see this today?
9. The scriptures warn that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night; is the coming of a thief a good thing or a bad thing? See John 10:10.

When Jesus warns that He will come like a thief, to what aspect of His coming does He refer: His coming to bring salvation for those who love and obey Him, or His coming to bring judgment upon the wicked? See Revelation 3:1-3, 16:12-16, 1 Thessalonians 5:4.

10. When Jesus returns, will the righteous be taken away from the midst of the wicked, or like in the days of Noah will God preserve the righteous through the midst of His wrath while the wicked are taken away in judgment? See Matthew 13:24-30,36-43, 49-50 24:38-43.

Were there just a few who were saved in the days of Noah? See 1 Peter 3:20.

Will there be just a few who are saved in the day of the Lord? See Luke 13:23-27.

11. What sequence of events will take place for the true believers when Christ returns, and what event must take place before the Lord's people are caught up to meet Him in the air? See 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, 1 Corinthians 15:50-55, Revelation 20:4-6.
12. Do we know when the Lord will return? See Matthew 24:36.

In light of Christ's promised and imminent return to bring salvation to His true people and to act in judgment upon the wicked, what must we do? See Matthew 24:44, 25:13, Luke 21:34-36, 1 Thessalonians 5:4-9, 2 Peter 3:10-18.

What is the great hope for those who prepare for the Lord's return, but the great danger to those who do not? See Matthew 24:45-51, 25:1-12, 14-30, 31-46, Luke 12:35-46, Revelation 21:1-8.

Scriptures to Memorize: "Now as to the times and the epochs, brethren, you have no need of anything to be written to you. For you yourselves know full well that the day of the Lord will come just like a thief in the night. While they are saying, 'Peace and safety!' then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pangs upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape." (1 Thessalonians 5:1-3).

"The coming of the lawless one will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. For this reason God sends them a powerful delusion so that they will believe the lie and so that all will be condemned who have not believed the truth but have delighted in wickedness." (2 Thessalonians 2:9-12, NIV).

Assignment: Read Matthew 24-25, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-5:11, 2 Thessalonians 1 & 2, Revelation.

Lesson 12. Be Fruitful and Multiply: Evangelism and Discipleship.

1. What was the first commandment God gave to man? See Genesis 1:28.
What was the last commandment Jesus gave his disciples? See Mark 16:15.
Are these related?
What is the great danger of not being fruitful? See Mat 3:10, 7:19, John 15:2.
2. What is the Great Commission? See Matthew 28:19-20.
3. By whose authority are we to go forth and proclaim the gospel? See Matthew 28:18, Luke 9:1, 10:19, John 20:21.
4. What power does Jesus give His disciples to go forth and proclaim the gospel? See John 20:22, 15:26-27, Acts 1:8.
5. What is the substance of the gospel Christ's disciples are to proclaim? See Luke 24:46-49.
6. What was the first word of the gospel proclaimed by John the Baptist? See Matthew 3:2. by Jesus? See Matthew 4:17. by Peter? See Acts 2:37-38. by Paul? See Acts 26:16-20.
7. What is the high cost of proclaiming the truth and calling sinners to repentance? See John 15:18-20, Acts 4:1-4, 7:51-54, 58-60, 13:50, 14:19,22, 16:23, 17:5, 13, 32, etc, 2 Timothy 3:12.
8. In light of this high cost, what must the true disciples of Christ do in order to faithfully carry out the Great Commission? See Acts 4:29, Eph 6:19-20; See also Acts 4:31, 13:46, 14:3, 19:8, 2 Corinthians 3:12, 1 Thessalonians 2:2.
9. Why should a Christian not be afraid to speak out boldly and proclaim the truth? See Luke 21:15, 2 Timothy 1:7-8, 4:17-18.
What should a Christian expect will be the response as he sows the seeds of the Gospel message in the world's fields? See Matthew 13:3-9.
10. In the Great Commission, did Jesus command us to make disciples or converts? See Matthew 28:19.
Was the early Church composed of disciples or converts? See Acts 6:7, 11:26, 14:21-22.
What is the difference between a disciple and a convert? See John 8:31, Matthew 23:15, Galatians 4:17.

11. God's original command to man was to be fruitful and *multiply*; what is the difference between spiritual *addition* and spiritual *multiplication*?

Spiritual Addition: *Tell* 10 people per week about Jesus... 10 people/week x 52 weeks/year x 40 years = 20,800 *converts*. (Linear Growth).

Spiritual Multiplication: See 2 Timothy 2:2, Matthew 28:20. *Disciple* 2 people for 2 years who will then go on to *disciple* others in the following years:

Year 2 = $2^1 = 2$ *disciples*

Year 4 = $2^2 = 4$ *disciples*

Year 6 = $2^3 = 8$ *disciples*

...

Year 40 = $2^{20} = 1,048,576 =$ over 1 million *disciples*! (Exponential Growth).

12. Are there any costs involved with just "going along" with Jesus as a *convert*?

What costs are required to become a *disciple* of Christ? See Luke 14:25-33.

What time/life commitment did the people in the early church make to become disciples of Christ? See Acts 2:42.

Will you make the same commitment?

Scriptures to Memorize: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:18-20).

Assignment: Read the book of Acts.