

# Principles of Christianity

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*An overview of the Christian faith for young and old believers*

*The Bible and The Story of the Bible*

*God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit*

*Humans, Sin, and Salvation*

*Love, Grace, and Mercy*

*Baptism and Communion*

*Worship, Prayer, and Bible Study*



Soroti Calvary Chapel

# The Bible

*By the end of this lesson, you should be able to answer these questions:*

- *How is the Bible organized?*
- *Who wrote the Bible?*
- *How is the Bible useful to me in my life?*
- *What is the overall message (story) of the Bible?*

The Bible is the very word of God and is given to us for our instruction as a solid foundation on which our faith is built. It is the only Scripture that is divinely inspired and given to us by God; we believe there are no other divinely inspired scriptures other than the Bible. God gave us the Bible as the standard of truth in what we should believe and it is the final authority on all matters of faith and life. We also know that the words of God are eternal and never change – just as God is eternal and never changes.

*James 1:17*

*Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*

*Psalms 119:89*

*Your word, LORD, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens.*

As God will not change, contradict, or remove things from His revealed word to us, we should also take care to not manipulate the words of God.

*Proverbs 30:5-6*

*Every word of God is flawless; he is a shield to those who take refuge in him. Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.*

*Revelation 22:18-19*

*I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll.*

The Bible is actually a collection of 66 smaller books that were written by about 40 different authors through the inspiration of God at different times, at different places, and with different formats. These books are organized into 2 main sections – the Old Testament and the New Testament.

## The Old Testament

The Old Testament (OT) is the collection of 39 books which were the Jewish Scriptures. They were originally written in the Hebrew and Aramaic languages. These are the writings revealed by God to His people before the life of Jesus. They were written for God's chosen people (the Israelites/Jews) to prepare them to understand what Jesus was coming to teach them and to show them the need for the sacrifice that he would make with his own life.

There are several different writing styles found in the OT. It is important to understand what the writing style is to help us interpret the meaning of these various passages. Included in the OT, you will find the following styles:

- Law and legal regulations
- History, which tells about people, nations, and events
- Poetry
- Proverbs and wisdom, which are short statements of truth and common rules of life
- Prophecy, which is a statement made by one of God's chosen spokesmen (prophets) to proclaim God's message and/or foretell something about the future

Sometimes a book is made entirely of one style or sometimes the styles may be mixed in the same book. In general, the books of the OT fit into the following categories:

<b>Law – 5 Books</b>	<b>History – 12 Books</b>	<b>Poetry/Wisdom – 5 Books</b>	<b>Major Prophets – 5 Books</b>	<b>Minor Prophets – 12 Books</b>
Genesis	Joshua	Job	Isaiah	Hosea
Exodus	Judges	Psalms	Jeremiah	Joel
Leviticus	Ruth	Proverbs	Lamentations	Amos
Numbers	1 Samuel	Ecclesiastes	Ezekiel	Obadiah
Deuteronomy	2 Samuel	Song of Solomon	Daniel	Jonah
	1 Kings			Micah
	2 Kings			Nahum
	1 Chronicles			Habakkuk
	2 Chronicles			Zephaniah
	Ezra			Haggai
	Nehemiah			Zechariah
	Esther			Malachi

### The New Testament

The New Testament (NT) is a collection of 27 books, most of which were originally written as letters to be distributed and read aloud among the churches. They used the common language of Greek. These are the writings revealed by God to His people after the life of Jesus. They were written by the Apostles and other early church leaders to record the life and teachings of Jesus and to instruct the church in matters of faith.

There are several different writing styles found in the NT. It is important to understand what the writing style is to help us interpret the meaning of these various passages. Included in the NT, you will find the following styles:

- Gospels, which are the accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus
- History, which tells about the early church and missionary work
- Letters (also called Epistles), which were written to specific churches or individuals to address particular topics
- Apocalyptic, which is a specific type of prophecy related to the end times

The NT is made up predominantly of letters. These letters can be further divided into 2 groups – those written by Paul and those written by other people. Paul’s letters are given the name of the intended recipient of that letter. The general letters are given the name of the author of that letter. A possible exception to this naming system is the book of Hebrews as the author is not clearly known. The books of the NT fit into the following categories:

<b>Gospels – 4 Books</b>	<b>History – 1 Book</b>	<b>Paul’s Letters – 13 Books</b>	<b>General Letters – 8 Books</b>	<b>Apocalyptic – 1 Book</b>
Matthew	Acts	Romans	Hebrews	Revelation
Mark		1 Corinthians	James	
Luke		2 Corinthians	1 Peter	
John		Galatians	2 Peter	
		Ephesians	1 John	
		Philippians	2 John	
		Colossians	3 John	
		1 Thessalonians	Jude	
		2 Thessalonians		
		1 Timothy		
		2 Timothy		
		Titus		
		Philemon		

### Divine Inspiration

The books of the Bible were in fact physically written by about 40 different human authors. Though written down by human hands, each of these authors was divinely inspired. The very words of the message were given by God to men and these writers cooperated with God in writing the Scriptures using their own styles and personalities as God’s Spirit worked through them.

## Knowledge Check

Instructions: Use each passage from the Bible to answer the following question(s).

1.      *2 Timothy 3:16*  
*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

Where did all Scripture come from?

Name 4 ways that the Bible is used in our lives.

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2.      *Deuteronomy 4:2*  
*Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.*

When dealing with the words of God, what two things are we instructed not to do?

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3.      *John 17:17*  
*Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth.*

If God's word is truth, are there any errors or mistakes in God's Scriptures?

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Instructions: For each item, write "OT" if it is associated with the Old Testament or write "NT" if it is associated with the New Testament.

4.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Original language was Hebrew and Aramaic
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contains a large number of letters (epistles)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contains 39 books
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contains books of the Law
- \_\_\_\_\_ Most books were written by the Apostles
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contains 27 books
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contains teachings to prepare people for Jesus to come
- \_\_\_\_\_ Contains the teachings of Jesus
- \_\_\_\_\_ Original language was Greek
- \_\_\_\_\_ The same writings as the Jewish scriptures

# The Story of the Bible: The History of Redemption

## What has God done in the Past?

<i>Genesis 2:15-17</i>	In the beginning, God dwelled among his people; God created mankind to live in perfect relationship with him. He instructed them to live obediently or the consequence would be death.
<i>Genesis 3:15</i>	People suffered the consequences of their disobedience (sin) and their relationship with God was broken. God promised to send an offspring from Eve who would crush the head of the serpent (Satan). This is the first promise of the Messiah, the one who would come to save the Lord's people.
<i>Genesis 12:1-3</i>	God promised Abraham that the entire world would be blessed through him; God would bless Abraham so that his offspring could bring this blessing to others. The Messiah, from the family of Abraham, would bring that blessing to all people of the world.
<i>Exodus 34:6-7</i>	God reveals himself more completely to Moses; his love, grace, compassion, and faithfulness. His justice requires that sin is either punished or forgiven. This forgiveness was made possible through the Messiah.
<i>2 Samuel 7:12-16</i>	God promises that a descendent from David will become king and his kingdom will last forever. This is another promise that the Messiah will be a great King.
<i>Isaiah 9:6-7, 53:2-6</i>	God confirms his promise to send a Messiah to save his people and he gives them a description so that they will recognize him when he comes.
<i>Jeremiah 31:31-34</i>	Because the people of Israel have been unfaithful to keep the Lord's directions and have not brought his blessings to the other nations, he promises that he will bring a new covenant. This covenant will be confirmed by the Messiah who is coming.
<i>Luke 1:31-33</i>	Jesus, the Son of God, is born as a human so that he could save all people and fulfill all of the prophecies made about the Messiah.
<i>Luke 24:44-48</i>	The Old Testament tells a story leading up to the Messiah. The New Testament tells us how Jesus the Messiah brings a gospel of forgiveness for all people.

## What is God doing in the Present?

<i>Matthew 24:14</i>	Jesus has given us, as his disciples, the task of sharing his gospel with all people of the earth as we look forward to his Second Coming.
<i>Ephesians 3:10-12</i>	The church now makes God's eternal purpose known and it is this purpose that allows us to be in relationship with him.

## What will God do in the Future?

<i>Revelation 7:9-12</i>	Through Jesus the Messiah, God's blessings will be brought to all the nations of the earth so we can look forward to the day in the future when we will stand before his throne with believers from every nation to worship him, fulfilling the promise made to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3.
<i>Revelation 21:1-4</i>	We are promised a future when we will go back to how it was in the very beginning, when God will dwell with his people. This is all made possible for us through the work of Jesus, our Messiah, our Lord, and our King.

### Knowledge Check

1. Genesis 3:15 talks about the offspring of the woman who will crush the head of Satan, and Satan will strike his heel. Who is the offspring of Eve that is referred to here?
2. What are 3 things that God promised to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3?
3. What caused God to give Abraham this promise? Did Abraham deserve God's blessings (Galatians 3:18)?
4. Genesis 12:1-3 contains a summary of the gospel message. Which phrase from Genesis describes the good news that Jesus would bring (Galatians 3:8)?
5. When humans sin, what are the 2 possible ways that God will respond to this sin (Exodus 34:7)?
6. What are 4 phrases that Isaiah 9:6 calls the Messiah?
7. When will King David's descendant stop reigning over his kingdom (2 Samuel 7:16)?
8. In what ways did mankind receive the Messiah (Isaiah 53:3)?
9. What benefit do we receive from the treatment of the Messiah (Isaiah 53:5)?
10. In Jeremiah 31:31, God promises to make a new covenant. This new covenant is begun by the Messiah by the pouring out of what (Luke 22:20)?
11. When the angel speaks with Mary, what are 5 things that he promises that Jesus will do (Luke 1:32-33)?
12. Which thing must happen before the end of the world can come (Matthew 24:14)?
13. What does the phrase "eternal purpose" mean? (Ephesians 3:11)?
14. Who is the Lamb in Revelation 7:9-10? Why is he called the Lamb (1 Corinthians 5:7)?
15. When the old order of things has passed away – what are some of the new things that will happen in the new heaven and new earth (Revelation 21:3-4)?

## God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

*By the end of this lesson, you should be able to answer these questions:*

- *Do Christians believe in one God or three gods?*
- *Who is God and what are some of His characteristics?*
- *Is Jesus also God?*

The Bible is very clear that there is only one God.

*Deuteronomy 6:4*

*Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.*

*Isaiah 43:10-11*

*"You are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "and my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor will there be one after me. I, even I, am the LORD, and apart from me there is no savior.*

Without any doubt, there is only one true God. At the same time, the Bible also states that there are 3 different persons who are rightly called God – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

### God the Father

God the Father is well known as the creator and sustainer of the world, the one who controls both life and death, and who is our loving caregiver among many other things.

God the Father is called by many different titles in the Bible. He is called the God Most High, God Almighty, God the King, the Holy One of Israel, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and many other names. In the book of Exodus, God reveals to Moses the name that he calls himself:

*Exodus 3:13-14*

*Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?" God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"*

To see the characteristics of God, we can read how he describes himself when he meets with Moses on Mt. Sinai:

*Exodus 34:6-7*

*And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The LORD, the LORD, the compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation."*

### God the Son

The name given to God the Son is Jesus (Matthew 1:21); this name means "the LORD saves." Jesus is also called by many other names and titles such as Immanuel ("God with us"), the Son of Man, the



Word, Lamb of God, King of the Jews, Lord, Savior, and Messiah. The name Messiah (literally meaning “anointed one” in Hebrew) refers to the one who was prophesied in the Old Testament to come and save the Lord’s people. The word Messiah translated into Greek is Christ; therefore “Jesus the Messiah” using the Greek is “Jesus the Christ,” or more commonly just Jesus Christ.

*Philippians 2:9-11*

*Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

Remembering that God referred to himself as I AM in Exodus, Jesus clearly identifies himself as God:

*John 8:58-59*

*“Very truly I tell you,” Jesus answered, “before Abraham was born, I am!” At this, they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself, slipping away from the temple grounds.*

Jesus also has all the characteristics of God and is identified as God by himself and by others.

*John 1:1, 18*

*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.*

*John 10:30, 37-38*

*I and the Father are one. Do not believe me unless I do the works of my Father. But if I do them, even though you do not believe me, believe the works, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.*

*John 20:28-29*

*Thomas said to him, “My Lord and my God!” Then Jesus told him, “Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”*

As God, Jesus is an eternal being – not created but always existing with God the Father and the Holy Spirit – and it was through him that all of creation was made at the beginning of time. At a time determined by God, Jesus took on flesh and became a human being. He lived a perfect life as a human, experiencing life like we do, but never sinning. He remained fully God but was also fully man at the same time. According to God’s plan, he was put to death by being nailed to a cross (crucifixion) and the sacrifice of his sinless life took the place of the debt we owed for our sins.

Though he died on the cross, he did not remain dead; he was resurrected from the grave on the third day. After another time on the earth to appear to his disciples and many other believers, he ascended into heaven where he sits at the right hand of God the Father. He has promised that he will return to earth again a second time when we believers will go to be together with him for the rest of eternity.

As the Messiah, who was promised to come to save God’s people and set up a kingdom that will never end, Jesus has been talked about from the beginning of the Old Testament (Genesis 3:15, Genesis 12:1-3, 2 Samuel 7:12-16, Isaiah 9:6-7, Isaiah 53:2-6, Jeremiah 31:31-34), though his identity

was not clear until the proper time when he would come to earth. Jesus has revealed to us that he has fulfilled all the prophecies of the Old Testament about the Messiah.

*Luke 24:25-27*

*He said to them, "How foolish you are, and how slow to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Messiah have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?" And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.*

### **God the Holy Spirit**

Just as God the Father and the Son are not created beings but have existed eternally, so also is the Holy Spirit (also traditionally called the Holy Ghost). Genesis 1:2 mentions the Spirit of God being present over the waters at the time the earth was created. The Holy Spirit is also identified in the Bible as God and as having the same characteristics as God.

*2 Corinthians 3:17*

*Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

In the account of Ananias and Sapphira, it is mentioned that the couple lied to the Holy Spirit. Then, again they are said to have lied to God. In this case, God and Holy Spirit are used interchangeably as they are one and the same being.

*Acts 5:1-4*

*Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself, but brought the rest and put it at the apostle's feet.*

*Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied just to human beings but to God."*

As God, the Holy Spirit also has the characteristic of being present everywhere at the same time. The New Testament also teaches us that the church specifically is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and that each individual Christian is also a temple of the Holy Spirit as the Spirit dwells within each of us when we become believers.

*1 Corinthians 3:16-17*

*Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.*

*1 Corinthians 6:19-20*

*Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.*

The Spirit only lives within believers of Jesus Christ, not unbelievers. The presence of the Spirit within us is the guarantee that we are saved in Christ.

*2 Corinthians 1:21-22*

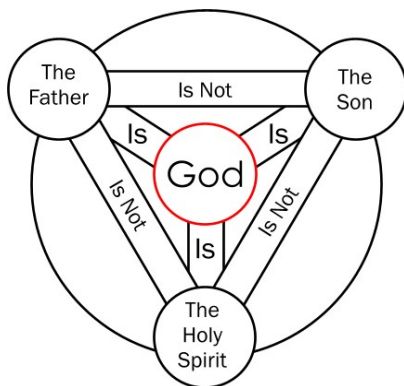
*Now it is God who makes both us and you stand firm in Christ. He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.*

*Ephesians 1:13-14*

*And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession – to the praise of his glory.*

## The Trinity

The word "Trinity" is not in the Bible, but is a word used to describe a Biblical concept. The term emphasizes the tri-unity of God with "tri" indicating the 3 persons (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) and "unity" indicating the fact that these 3 distinct persons are in unity as the one and only God.



The diagram shows the connection of the 3 persons of the Trinity (or sometimes called the Godhead). God is the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. The Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. At the same time though, each person is distinct from the others. The Father is not the Son, the Son is not the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit is not the Father; though all 3 are in fact the same God.

As humans, our knowledge is limited in what we are able to understand. We do not know or understand everything in the

universe; some things are mysteries to us even though we know that they are real. We know that there is only one eternal God. We also know that though one God, he exists in three distinct persons; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We know these things to be true, but it is still beyond our human understanding to know how one God can exist as three persons. The details of this relationship remain a mystery for us, but we still believe it by faith because the Bible tells us it is true.

You might consider water as an example to help explain this. Water exists in 3 forms; as ice, as liquid, and also as steam. All 3 components are still water; though ice is not the same thing as liquid water and liquid water is not the same thing as steam. Though distinctly different forms, all 3 are still the same thing – water.

## Knowledge Check

Instructions: Use each passage from the Bible to answer the following question(s).

1. *2 Corinthians 13:14*  
*May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

Which characteristic of God is most closely associated with Jesus?

Which characteristic of God is most closely associated with the Father?

Which characteristic of God is most closely associated with the Holy Spirit?

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2. *1 Corinthians 8:6*  
*Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.*

All things came (were created) from whom? All things came (were created) through whom?

Who do we live for? Who are we alive through?

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3. *Galatians 5:22-25 (ESV)*  
*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. If we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.*

Those of us who belong to Jesus now live by whom?

What is the evidence that the Holy Spirit is working in our lives?

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4. *Hebrews 1:1-3*  
*In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom also he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.*

True or False: Jesus is the same as the Old Testament prophets (Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, etc.).

True or False: Jesus was not present when the earth was created.

True or False: Jesus sacrificed himself for our sins and is in heaven until he comes back again.

## Humans, Sin, and Salvation

*By the end of this lesson, you should be able to answer these questions:*

- *Where did people come from?*
- *What is sin and what are its effects?*
- *How can we overcome sin?*

The Bible tells the story of mankind from the beginning of time and how humans interact with the God who created them. It tells how humans have abandoned the God who loves them to pursue other things instead; causing a great separation in the relationship that once existed between God and man. The greatest blessing found in the story of the Bible is how God did not abandon his love for his people, and he continued to pursue them even when man rebelled. God showed us what true love really is by giving us a way back to him, so that we could once again live in a relationship with the Lord of the universe.

### Humans

The word genesis means “beginnings.” As the first book in the Bible, Genesis tells the story of the beginning of creation – the universe, the earth, and everything that lives on the earth. As God was creating the earth, the land and seas, the sun and moon, and the plants and animals; God saw that it was good. Finally, on the sixth day of creating, God made mankind and he saw that it was *very* good.

*Genesis 1:27*

*So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.*

The first humans, Adam and his wife Eve, were placed in the Garden of Eden where they were instructed to fill the earth and to care for the things that God had created (Genesis 1:28). As long as they obeyed God’s instructions then they could live in a close and personal relationship with the Lord. This was God’s perfect design and his desire was to live in harmony with his creations as they lived according to his instruction.

We have all been created by God in his image. God’s plan for all of us is the same as Adam and Eve; that we would walk in a close and personal relationship with him, obeying his every command.

*Psalms 139:13-14*

*For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.*

*Ephesians 1:4a*

*For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.*

### Sin

God has created every human with free will; the ability to choose for ourselves if we will obey God or if we will chose to disobey. God’s desire was for Adam and Eve to obey his command out of their love for him – something that cannot be forced, but must be freely chosen.

*Genesis 2:16-17*

*And the LORD God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."*

Eventually, Adam and Eve were tempted by the serpent (Satan) and they chose for themselves to disobey God and they ate the fruit from the tree. This was the first sin. Now that sin was present in their lives, they lost the ability to live in a close and personal relationship with God. There was now a separation between them and God.

*Genesis 3:8-10*

*Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he walked in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."*

Since they had chosen to disobey God, the Lord judged the man and the woman, as well as the serpent. The serpent and also the ground that the man would work for food were now cursed. Sin had entered the world and all of creation was affected by mankind's disobedience. Most significantly for Adam and Eve, their relationship with God was broken and they could no longer be in his presence because of their imperfection.

*Genesis 3:23*

*So the LORD God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.*

Adam and Eve lost the ability to walk with the Lord in the garden as someone would walk with a close friend. Their relationship was broken, and there was nothing that they could do to repair it. Unfortunately, the same thing is now true for each and every one of us as well.

*Romans 5:12*

*Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all people, because all sinned.*

Sin entered the world through the one man, Adam. Now, as descendants of Adam, we all share in this legacy of sin. As men and women, this is now our human condition. We are sinful beings and our natural tendency is to follow the desires of our selves (sin) instead of following God's will. As humans who live according to a sinful nature (our flesh), we cannot submit to God and we therefore cannot please God.

*Romans 8:7-8*

*The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those who are in the realm of the flesh cannot please God.*

The Apostle Paul describes his experience with his sinful nature this way:

*Romans 7:17-20*

*As it is, it is no longer I myself who do it, but it is sin living in me. For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to*

*do – this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.*

Sin is not doing what God desires; following our own desires instead of God's plan. Sin is anything that is less than God's perfect glory, which no sinful human is capable of achieving. There are no exceptions, all have sinned. We have all turned away from God and we have all fallen short of his standard of perfection.

*Romans 3:10-12*

*As it is written: "There is no one righteous, not even one; there is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God. All have turned away, they have together become worthless; there is no one who does good, not even one."*

*Romans 3:23*

*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*

We face the same consequences that Adam and Eve faced for their sinful actions. We are separated from God and cannot have a close relationship with him. Adam and Eve were sent out from the garden and had to face the fact that they would one day die because of their sinful actions.

*Romans 6:23a*

*For the wages of sin is death...*

*Romans 7:10-11*

*I found that the very commandment that was intended to bring life actually brought death. For sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, deceived me, and through the commandment put me to death.*

In our sin, we face a life without God walking beside us in relationship. We face a physical death when our life here on earth ends and after that death, we face the rest of eternity separated from the God who created us. This place where sinful humans are separated from God for the rest of eternity is called hell. These are some of the teachings the Jesus had about hell:

*Matthew 5:22*

*"But I tell you that anyone who is angry with a brother or sister will be subject to judgment. Again, anyone who says to a brother or sister, 'Raca' (an Aramaic word of disrespect), is answerable to the court. And anyone who says, 'You fool!' will be in danger of the fire of hell."*

*Matthew 25:46*

*"And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."*

Hell is described as a place of eternal fire and punishment for those people who are separated from God. But, as Matthew 25:46 points out, there is also an alternative available – eternal life.

## **Salvation**

Through Adam, sin entered the world, and all of mankind was condemned because of sinfulness. People became separated from God now and for the rest of eternity because of their disobedience.

But there was also one man who did live a life of perfect obedience which can bring us back to righteousness.

*Romans 5:18-19*

*Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.*

This only man who was perfectly obedient and without sin was Jesus Christ. He was able to accomplish this because he was not only a man, but he was also God himself who took on flesh to live a perfect human life.

*John 1:14*

*The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

Jesus Christ is the most unique man who has ever lived on the earth. He was not only a man, he is actually the Son of God, part of the Trinity. He was not just a good teacher and a righteous man, he is God himself. Being God, he lived a perfect life, never sinning. Through his life, he began to build a bridge to close the separation between God and man that mankind had caused through their sin. This bridge was made complete through his death. In his death, his sinless life was offered as a perfect sacrifice to pay the death penalty that was due for all the sins of mankind. Not only did he take on our penalty for sin through his death on the cross, he overcame the power of death by being resurrected to life after being buried in the tomb.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, we are offered salvation from our sins. Salvation is a change in the relationship between God and a person – the relationship that was once broken is now fixed. Salvation includes God's adoption of believers into his family, his acceptance of them as righteous, and his forgiveness of their sins. It also includes personal renewal and transformation through the work of the Holy Spirit.

*John 17:2-3*

*For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those who you have given him. Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*

*Titus 3:5-7*

*He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.*

*John 3:16*

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

*Romans 4:7-8*

*Blessed are those whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord will never count against them.*



Not only are we saved from our sins through Christ, we are actually made into a new creation. We leave our old lives behind, and we begin a new life in Christ. We give up everything completely to him and become his disciples, following him and learning from him as our lives are transformed to be more like him. This is why Jesus used the term “born again” (John 3:1-7) to describe this new life.

*2 Corinthians 5:17*

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!*

The Bible is very clear that there is only one way to restore the broken relationship between people and God. Believing and trusting in Jesus Christ is the only way that we can have a relationship with God, the only way we can be saved from our sins.

*John 14:6*

*Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”*

*Acts 4:11*

*Jesus is “the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone.” Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.”*

*Matthew 7:13-14*

*“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.*

Not everyone will be saved. God freely offers us salvation through Jesus, but only those who accept his free gift will actually experience his salvation. The Bible tells us what we must do in order to be saved. The message of the Bible is very clear that we are not saved by any effort or by any good works that we have done. There is nothing we can do to save ourselves from our sinful state. We must simply believe the message of Jesus and trust in the free gift of salvation that he offers to us.

*Romans 10:9-10*

*If you declare with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.*

When Peter preached to the crowds after Pentecost and he shared with them the good news about Jesus, the people believed the message he shared with them. When the people then asked Peter what they should do now that they had believed, his response to them was very simple:

*Acts 2:37-38*

*When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”*

## Knowledge Check

Instructions: Use each passage from the Bible to answer the following question(s).

1. *Genesis 1:26*  
*Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."*

God created mankind in His image. Who is God referring to when He says "us" and "our" in the plural form?

- 
2. *James 1:13-15*  
*When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.*

Does God want us to sin? Does God cause us to sin?

Where does sin come from in our lives?

What is the result of sin?

- 
3. *Romans 8:5-6*  
*Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind governed by the flesh is death, but the mind governed by the Spirit is life and peace.*

What is the condition of our human nature, to live according to the flesh or according to the Spirit?

When people live according to the flesh, what are they interested in? What does this lead to?

When people live according to the Spirit, what are they interested in? What does this lead to?

- 
4. *Romans 5:1-2*  
*Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God.*

In order to be at peace with God, who do we have to go through?

How is it that we are justified (declared accepted) before God?

What do we have after we are justified?

## Love, Grace, and Mercy

*By the end of this lesson, you should be able to answer these questions:*

- *How do we know that God loves us?*
- *What does it mean to be “saved by grace”?*
- *What is the difference between grace and mercy?*

The Bible tells us the story of a God of never-ending love, seeking a relationship with the people that he loves. The relationship that he seeks with us is based on two of his greatest characteristics – his graciousness and his mercifulness. Without these two things, his grace and his mercy, then we would have nothing and would be completely lost in our sinfulness. When we experience his love, grace, and mercy, then we have gained everything that we could ever need.

### Love

Everything that we know about God and the way that he interacts with humans is based on the fact that he loves us deeply and completely. In fact, he has shown us the greatest love possible.

*John 15:13*

*Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.*

And this is exactly what God did for us. Jesus Christ laid down his life for us because of his great love for us; Jesus could not possibly love us any more or less than he already does. We are truly and completely loved by God. We know this because Jesus did something even greater than giving up his own life for a friend – he did it while we were still his enemies, lost in our sinfulness.

*Romans 5:8*

*But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

Jesus' love for us is so powerful and so great and so complete that there is absolutely nothing that we can do to separate ourselves from God's love. There is nothing in the world that can take God's love away from us. We can be confident in the fact that he loves us.

*Romans 8:38-39*

*For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

We know without any doubt that God loves us. That is why he gave up his beloved son to die as the punishment for the sins we have committed.

*John 3:16*

*For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

We have experienced God's love in our lives and we recognize and appreciate his love for us in our salvation. When we acknowledge the death and resurrection of Jesus we are also acknowledging

the great love he has for us. When we confess that he paid the penalty that we owed for our sins then we also confess his great love for us. When we accept his offer of a new life in Jesus then we also accept his great love for us. Our salvation has been offered to us because of God's great and unfailing love.

*Psalm 13:5-6*

*But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I will sing the LORD's praise, for he has been good to me.*

God has been so good to us; loving us so completely that he would even offer to save us from our helpless sinfulness. In return, he asks us to also love. He commands us to love him and to love one another (this is what we call the "Great Commandment"). In fact, we should love one another so much, that this is our defining characteristic. This is the very way that others will know that we are Christians.

*Matthew 22:37-40*

*Jesus replied: "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and Prophets hang on these two commandments."*

*John 13:34-35*

*"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

This may seem like a difficult thing to do, but we know that God makes it possible for us. In our human sinfulness, we would fail to love others to the same standard that we love our selves. It is through the Holy Spirit living within us, changing our lives, and making us new that this is possible. The love that we show to God and others is evidence of the Spirit working in our lives.

*Galatians 5:22-23 (ESV)*

*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law.*

The Bible mentions the word "love" about 550 times so there is so much that we can learn from the Bible on this subject. There are two very helpful passages where you can study more about love:

- 1 Corinthians 13 (commonly called "The Love Chapter") describes what love is
- 1 John 4:7-21 describe God's love for us, how he demonstrated that love for us, and what our response to his love should be

## **Grace**

Grace is one of the most critical concepts from the Bible for us to understand. When we understand grace, we have a better understanding of how God interacts with us, the people that he loves, and how it is that we are saved through our faith in Jesus Christ.

Put simply, grace is frequently referred to as "unmerited favor." It is something good that is not deserved. When God gives us blessings and good things, this is because of his grace, not because we

earn them. When God gives us salvation through Jesus, it is a free gift because of his grace, not because we deserve it.

*Ephesians 1:6-8a*

*To the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us.*

It is essential that we recognize that our salvation has come to us through Jesus Christ because of God's grace. It is not because we earned it or deserved it. There is no amount of good work that we can do to make God save us. We cannot work our way to heaven by following the regulations of the law. God will not accept us just for being "good people" and he will not remove our sin because of our "good works." It is a terrible mistake to think any other way.

*Ephesians 2:8-9*

*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.*

*Romans 4:5*

*However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness.*

So many people have the wrong idea that they have to make themselves worthy of God's salvation. They think that in order to be saved, they must change their behaviors first and they must begin acting like a Christian. It is an unfortunate lie to think that you must stop sinning before God can save you, because we all know that we cannot cause ourselves to stop sinning by our own strength – it is not possible. The Bible leaves no question that our salvation is based on God's grace alone:

*Romans 11:6*

*And if by grace, then it cannot be based on works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.*

If there were any way to earn salvation by our works, then grace would be pointless. If we could be saved by changing our behavior, then we wouldn't need grace. If we could be saved by just going to church, then we wouldn't need grace. If we could be saved by taking communion, then we wouldn't need grace. If we could be saved by the sprinkling of water on us as an infant, then we wouldn't need grace. If we could be saved by being good people, then we wouldn't need grace.

That is not the case though; the Bible tells us that we cannot do any of these things in order to save ourselves. Instead, we must have grace. Everything we have is only because of the grace of Jesus Christ, who was willing to give up the majesty of his home in heaven so that he could die a humiliating death on our behalf. All of this was done by his grace and for our benefit.

*2 Corinthians 8:9*

*For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.*

When we talk about the fact that we are saved by grace, it reminds us that God is the one who has saved us and otherwise there was nothing that we could have done to overcome the sin in our lives. God's grace is absolutely essential for us, because there is no other way for us to be saved.

*2 Timothy 1:9-10*

*He has saved us and called us to a holy life – not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has destroyed death and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.*

We come to God as broken and sinful people who put our faith in the power of Jesus Christ, and that is the point when he receives us into his family. In his grace, he accepts us and offers to forgive all of our sins because of the sacrifice of Jesus. Even when we were sinners, the enemies of God, he accepted us, forgave us, and saved us, so that he could then begin to purify us. After we become his children, his Spirit begins to work in our lives to convict us of our sins and to teach us to become more and more like Jesus himself.

*Titus 2:11-14*

*For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope – the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.*

The Bible teaches us that grace is a free and undeserved gift that comes from God. We also see that God’s saving grace can only be received by those who have put their faith in Jesus. A careful study of the Bible shows what happens to believers through the grace of God: we are justified, we receive righteousness, we are redeemed, we receive spiritual gifts, we are encouraged, we receive help in our times of need, and we have hope for the future. All of this is only possible because of the greatness of God’s grace working in our lives.

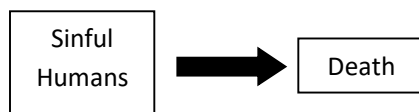
## **Mercy**

We can also know with confidence that God saved us because he had mercy on us.

*Titus 3:5*

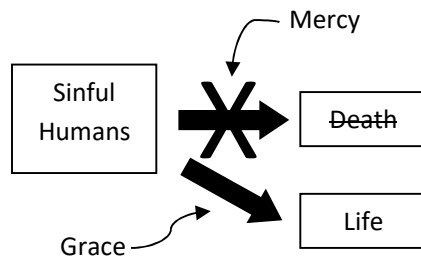
*He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit.*

There is sometimes confusion between the terms grace and mercy. These are actually 2 different things, though closely related. While grace is giving something good that is not deserved, mercy is taking away something bad that is deserved. Looking at the example of our sinfulness, the Bible tells us (Romans 6:23) that because of our sin, we deserve death – an eternal separation from God in hell. The direct consequence for our sin is death; death is what we have earned because of our sinfulness.



When God’s mercy intervenes in this process, he removes the bad thing that we deserve. Through forgiving our sins, he removes the punishment that we deserve, which is our death and separation

from him. When God's grace intervenes in this process, he adds in something good that we do not deserve. Even though we did not earn it ourselves, he gives us an eternal life with him.



When we receive Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, his mercy forgives our sins and his grace gives us our undeserved salvation. We see the processes of grace and mercy working together throughout the Bible and they define the way that God interacts with us.

*Hebrews 4:16*

*Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*

In God's mercy, he does not treat us in the way that we deserve. Instead, in his grace, he considers us as adopted sons and daughters and gives us even what we don't deserve. He does this because of his great love for us.

*Ephesians 2:4-5*

*But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved.*

## Knowledge Check

Instructions: Use each passage from the Bible to answer the following question(s).

1. *1 John 4:19-21*

*We love because he first loved us. Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.*

If we love God, what must we also do?

What are 4 reasons that we should love others?

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2. *1 Corinthians 13:4-8a*

*Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.*

What are some things that love does?

What are some things that love does not do?

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3. *Acts 15:10-11*

*Now then, why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.*

In this case, when Gentiles wanted to become Christians, which of these things is not true:

- a. They are saved just as they are
  - b. They do not have the burden (carrying the yoke) of following the Old Testament law
  - c. They are saved by grace through Jesus Christ
  - d. They must first change their behavior to act like Christians before they can be saved
- 

4. *Romans 6:14*

*For sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace.*

Before we became believers, what was our master?

When we put our faith in Jesus, we made him the new master of our lives and we began to live a new life. This new life is governed by which principle? (We are under what?)



## Baptism and Communion

*By the end of this lesson, you should be able to answer these questions:*

- *Why should people be baptized?*
- *What is the meaning of baptism?*
- *What is the benefit to taking communion?*

There are some activities that we practice as believers in Jesus Christ that might be confusing to non-believers or people that are new Christians. When we read and study the Bible, we see clearly the instructions that Christians should follow, but over time some of these things have become confused by other ideas and by divisions within the church. When we rely on the Bible as the final authority of how Christians should behave, then we can better understand how we should participate in these activities like baptism and communion. The Bible is not meant to confuse us, it is meant to instruct us clearly.

### **Baptism**

The word “baptism” comes from the Greek word “baptizo” which means to immerse, plunge, dip or bury in water. The purpose of baptism is to demonstrate to others our decision to accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior and it also represents our relationship with Jesus and what he has done in our lives. It is significant because it represents the forgiveness and cleansing from sin that comes through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

In the New Testament, we see the practice of baptism beginning with John the Baptist. He encouraged the people to leave their sinful ways and turn back to God.

*Mark 1:4-5*

*And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.*

Those baptized by John acknowledged their sins and professed their faith that they would be forgiven through the coming Messiah that John told them about. John was preparing the way for Jesus to come and give an even more complete understanding to the people. Before Jesus began his teaching and ministry work, he even went with the other people to affirm John’s ministry and was also baptized himself.

*Mark 1:9-11*

*At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.”*

In this way, Jesus gave his disciples a demonstration from his own life of what they should also do. After Jesus’ resurrection and before his ascension into heaven, he gave a final instruction to his followers. As part of these instructions, he tells his disciples that new believers should be baptized. This is the most important reason that we practice baptism – because Jesus commanded us to.

*Matthew 28:18-20*

*Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

Jesus instructed that as people become new believers, then they are baptized and taught to obey his teachings. Jesus clearly associated the process of becoming a believer and being baptized.

*Mark 16:16*

*Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.*

As we read through the history of the early church recorded in Acts, we see that the Apostles took these directions seriously.

At the time of Pentecost, Peter spoke to the crowds and shared with them the good news about Jesus. Many people believed the message he shared with them and they asked Peter what they should do now that they had believed, his response to them was very simple.

*Acts 2:37-38*

*When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."*

Based on the instructions of Jesus and on the example given to us by the Apostles, we see that baptism was an integral part of the conversion process. As people became Christians, baptism was always a part of this process. We don't see any exceptions to this noted in the Bible. We see that baptism was an immediate and important part of becoming a believer in Jesus. Three examples of this are in the conversions of Paul, Lydia, and the Ethiopian eunuch:

*Acts 9:17-18*

*Then Ananias went to the house and entered it. Placing his hands on Saul, he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord—Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here—has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the Holy Spirit." Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he could see again. He got up and was baptized, and after taking some food, he regained his strength.*

*Acts 16: 14-15*

*One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul's message. When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. "If you consider me a believer in the Lord," she said, "come and stay at my house." And she persuaded us.*

*Acts 8:34-39*

*The eunuch asked Philip, "Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?" Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.*

*As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?" And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.*

There is sometimes some confusion when the Bible mentions the baptisms of whole households of people and this is sometimes used to support the practice of infant baptism. If we study these events, we see clearly that it says those people were baptized because they had believed in Jesus; there is no indication here that children and babies were included in this as they were not capable of believing the gospel message which was being preached.

*Acts 16:31-34*

*They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved —you and your household." Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized. The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household.*

*Acts 18:8*

*Crispus, the synagogue leader, and his entire household believed in the Lord; and many of the Corinthians who heard Paul believed and were baptized.*

There is no benefit for someone to be baptized unless they are a believer in Jesus Christ and have put their faith in his sacrifice for their salvation from sin and death. Without a saving faith in Jesus, there is no meaning behind going into the water. As a Christian believer though, the practice of being immersed in the waters of baptism carries a lot of meaning. For the believer, baptism is an act of obedience, it is a public testimony of a decision to follow Jesus, and it identifies us with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ who took our place as our savior.

*Romans 6:3-5*

*Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.*

One reason why conversion is so closely followed by baptism is because baptism is a powerful symbol of what happens when a person gives their life to Jesus. Through our faith, we are united with Christ so our old self has died and we are born again to a new life with Jesus and free from sin and death.

## **Communion**

The practice of taking communion is another powerful symbolic activity that Jesus instructed us to take part in. While the practice of baptism of a believer only happens once, communion is an ongoing instruction for the church to regularly remember and reflect on the sacrificial death of Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins.

Communion (also called the Lord's Supper) began with Jesus the day before his death on the cross.

*Luke 22:7-8*

*Then came the day of Unleavened Bread on which the Passover lamb had to be sacrificed. Jesus sent Peter and John, saying, "Go and make preparations for us to eat the Passover."*

At the time of Passover, the Jewish people remembered how God spared their lives while the firstborn sons of Egypt were killed in the last plague. At that time, each family killed a lamb without defect and cooked it without breaking any of its bones. They took the blood from the lamb and spread it across the doorpost of their house so that when God saw that they were covered by the blood of the lamb, their lives would be spared.

Jesus and his disciples celebrated Passover together, to remember how God saved his people through the blood of a lamb. They prepared the traditional meal and ate it together in the upstairs guest room in a house in Jerusalem. As they reflected on the salvation that God had brought to his people in Egypt, Jesus revealed to them the new sacrifice that would be made to save all of God's people.

*Matthew 26:26-27*

*While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."*

In the same way that the blood of the Passover lamb saved the people in Egypt, the blood of Jesus would be used to forgive our sins and save all those who trust in him. This blood would form a new covenant between God and his people, an everlasting promise that God will save us if we put our faith in the sacrifice of Jesus for the forgiveness of our sins. The old covenant, the Old Testament sacrificial system, was completed in Jesus and was therefore no longer needed – we now live under a new promise which is the new covenant in the blood of Jesus.

*Hebrews 9:14-15*

*How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God! For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance – now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.*

*John 6:53-58*

*Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever."*

The only way that we have salvation is in Jesus. The only way that we have forgiveness is by joining Jesus in his death. The only way that we have a new and eternal life with God is by joining our lives

with Jesus in his resurrection. All of this is done through faith, when we place our trust in Jesus and believe that he has truly forgiven our sins and given us an opportunity for a new life.

The church has always celebrated this fact and remembered the sacrifice that Jesus made through his death. As part of their fellowship gatherings, the early church would share a meal together to celebrate their new lives in Christ. They would break bread together and remember the sacrifice of Jesus and the new promise given to us through his death. Paul gives these instructions to the church in Corinth regarding their time of communion together:

*1 Corinthians 11:23-26*

*For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me." In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.*

We celebrate communion as a remembrance of the sacrifice of Jesus. We reflect on what he has done and we examine our own lives (1 Corinthians 11:28) to confess our sins before God and remember his promise to forgive us. We honor his sacrifice and we remember our love for Jesus because of the grace he has shown us. It is also a time of fellowship as the church joins in this celebration together and reminds us that we are united in the body of Christ.

*1 Corinthians 10:16-17*

*Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf.*

This is what we remember and celebrate when we take communion together. We give thanks for the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross for our sins and we celebrate that we are joined together in one family as adopted sons and daughters of God.

## Knowledge Check

Instructions: Use each passage from the Bible to answer the following question(s).

1. Acts 8:9-12

*Now for some time a man named Simon had practiced sorcery in the city and amazed all the people of Samaria. He boasted that he was someone great, and all the people, both high and low, gave him their attention and exclaimed, "This man is rightly called the Great Power of God." They followed him because he had amazed them for a long time with his sorcery. But when they believed Philip as he proclaimed the good news of the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Simon himself believed and was baptized. And he followed Philip everywhere, astonished by the great signs and miracles he saw.*

What was the message that Philip was proclaiming?

Why were Simon and the others baptized?

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2. Acts 10:44-48

*While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God.*

*Then Peter said, "Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water. They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.*

When Peter recognized that Cornelius and the others were truly believers, what did he instruct them to do?

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3. Matthew 28:18-20

*Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

What 4 things did Jesus command in the Great Commission (4 actions)?

Is the order of these things significant?

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4. 1 Corinthians 11:28

*Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup.*

Before we participate in communion, what are some things that we should examine ourselves for?

## Worship, Prayer, and Bible Study

*By the end of this lesson, you should be able to answer these questions:*

- *What is the purpose of worship?*
- *How should we pray to God?*
- *How can I study the Bible?*

Our life with Jesus is a relationship. Maintaining a relationship with someone takes time, dedication, and energy for it to grow and flourish. There are activities that believers should participate in to help us grow in our relationship with Jesus. Through these things our knowledge of God expands, our relationship becomes closer and more intimate, we experience the love and presence of God in our lives, and they show God how much we love, honor, and thank him for his many blessings. As we worship God, talk to him through prayer, and study his words in the Bible then our relationship with him develops and our lives grow closer to him.

### Worship

Worship simply means to show God the respect and honor that he deserves through our adoration and devotion to him. This happens naturally when we love him deeply and completely. Worship is not just one specific activity that we participate in, but it is a lifestyle that we take up when we devote our lives to God and to his service. God is worthy of our praise and worship and because he is so deserving, we are obligated to give him all that we can.

*Revelation 4:11*

*You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being.*

*Psalms 29:1-2*

*Ascribe to the LORD, you heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength. Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness.*

When we dedicate ourselves to glorifying God in our lives, even our everyday activities can become acts of worship. We can worship God through our work, as we study at school, as we play sports, and as we talk with other people. We worship him any time we dedicate our actions to him and for his honor. God's desire is that we would worship him through our whole lives.

*Romans 12:1*

*Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship.*

Though a believer can commit their lives individually to worship God at any and all times, Christians also participate in specific times of worship in fellowship with one another. These worship services are characterized by the reading of Scripture, preaching, praying, singing, giving of offerings, using spiritual gifts, celebrating baptisms, and taking communion together. All of these things are acts of worship when they are done out of devotion to God and for his honor.

The Bible shows us that every day is to be dedicated to God through our holy living and devotion to him (Psalm 145:2, Philippians 4:4, Romans 12:5-6). We know that the early church met together regularly and frequently throughout the week to worship as a community of believers.

*Acts 2:46-47*

*Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

They also chose to meet together specifically on the first day of the week which came to be known as the Lord's Day. For this reason we have continued the habit of meeting for community worship on Sundays.

*Acts 20:7*

*On the first day of the week, we came together to break bread. Paul spoke to the people and, because he intended to leave the next day, kept on talking until midnight.*

*1 Corinthians 16:2*

*On the first day of every week, each one of you should set aside a sum of money in keeping with your income, saving it up, so that when I come no collections have to be made.*

*Revelation 1:10*

*On the Lord's Day I was in the Spirit, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet.*

We see in the Bible many instructions on how we should worship God. We should worship:

- By exalting God to the place he deserves *Psalm 99:5*  
*Exalt the LORD our God and worship at his footstool; he is holy.*
- In humility *Psalm 95:6-7a*  
*Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.*
- With joy and gladness *Psalm 100:1-3*  
*Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.*
- With reverence and awe *Hebrews 12:28-29*  
*Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our "God is a consuming fire."*
- With our offerings *Psalm 96:8*  
*Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering and come into his courts. Worship the LORD in the splendor of his holiness; tremble before him, all the earth.*



- With full participation by the church as we use our spiritual gifts  
*1 Corinthians 14:26*  
*What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. Everything must be done so that the church may be built up.*
- With clarity and understanding  
*1 Corinthians 14:9,15*  
*So it is with you. Unless you speak intelligible words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air....So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding.*
- In an organized way  
*1 Corinthians 14:32-33,40*  
*The spirits of prophets are subject to the control of prophets. For God is not a God of disorder but of peace – as in all the congregations of the Lord’s people....But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.*
- With all the nations  
*Psalms 86:8-10*  
*Among the gods there is none like you, Lord; no deeds can compare with yours. All the nations you have made will come and worship before you, Lord; they will bring glory to your name. For you are great and do marvelous deeds; you alone are God.*

## Prayer

Prayer is a conversation between us and God. This can take many different forms and is done in different ways. Prayer can be done in silence, or spoken out loud, or written down. It can be at home, it can be in a small group, it can be before meals, it can be in church, and it can even be done through songs. To help us understand the content of our prayers, we can divide the things we pray for into 4 categories. These can be remembered by using the acronym ACTS.

- A** – *Adoring*: praising God for who he is (his nature) apart from what he has done for us
- C** – *Confessing*: acknowledging to God our specific sins and repenting
- T** – *Thanking*: appreciating God for what he has done in our lives
- S** – *Seeking*: interceding for ourselves or others according to God’s will

Our prayers should include a balance of all of these things. As we admit our sins and repent before him (*Confessing*), we should do it in response to the greatness of his character, his holiness, and his great love for us (*Adoring*). As we ask God to help us in certain ways (*Seeking*), we should also remember all the ways that he has already faithfully blessed us (*Thanking*). As we acknowledge to God the ways we have sinned and failed (*Confessing*), we should appreciate the fact that he has already given us complete forgiveness through Jesus (*Thanking*) because of his mercy and grace (*Adoring*), and we should ask for the strength of his Spirit to help keep us from sinning in the future (*Seeking*).

In the book of Matthew, chapter 6, as Jesus was preaching the Sermon on the Mount, he gave some clear and specific instructions about how we should pray. First, he said that the purpose of prayer is

to have a conversation with God. The purpose is not to look good in front of other people. We should not use prayer as a means to glorify ourselves in front of others; instead we should humble ourselves before God.

*Matthew 6:5-6*

*And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.*

Jesus continued in his teaching that we should not try to manipulate God through our prayers. We don't need to use fancy words and we don't need to try to impress God (or others) through long and complicated prayers. God already knows what we need and what we are going to ask him for before we even say it, so we can just talk with him simply and clearly.

*Matthew 6:7-8*

*And when you pray, do not keep on babbling like pagans, for they think they will be heard because of their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.*

Finally, Jesus gave us an example that we could follow in prayer. This doesn't mean that these are the only words that we can pray as we see examples throughout the New Testament of Jesus, the Apostles, and the church praying in different ways. Jesus gives us this example to show us what things we should include in our prayers and what our attitude towards God should be.

*Matthew 6:9-13*

*This, then, is how you should pray: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."*

There are some Scripture passages that people have taken out of context to promote false ideas about prayer. Those false teachers who promote the idea of prosperity (health and wealth) as God's purpose for the church focus on the idea that we can ask for anything in the name of Jesus and God has promised to give it to us. Their lie is that if you have enough faith, God will give you anything that you want and so they try to manipulate God for their own benefit. Instead, if these verses are looked at in context, the message becomes clear that Jesus has encouraged us to ask for anything that will continue on the work that Jesus has been doing for the purpose of glorifying the Father.

*John 14:12-14*

*Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.*

When we pray in the name of Jesus, it is not a magical formula so that we can get anything that we desire. Instead, when we pray in the name of Jesus, we try to align ourselves with the thoughts, desires, plans, and purposes of Jesus so that we ask for the very things that he would want us to ask

for. We ask, according to what we know of his nature and his character through the Holy Spirit, for what he would want – and if that becomes our desire also, then certainly God will give it to us for the purpose of glorifying his name and not our own.

We see in the Bible other instructions on how we should pray. A few examples show us that we should pray:

- For all people, especially for our leaders  
*1 Timothy 2:1-3*  
*I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people – for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness. This is good, and pleases God our Savior.*
- For strength from the Holy Spirit  
*Ephesians 3:16*  
*I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being.*
- Persistently  
*Colossians 1:9*  
*For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives.*
- In community  
*Acts 4:24*  
*When they heard this, they raised their voices together in prayer to God. “Sovereign Lord,” they said, “you made the heavens and the earth and the sea, and everything in them.”*
- With thanksgiving  
*Philippians 4:6*  
*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*
- In any kind of situation  
*James 5:13-14*  
*Is anyone among you in trouble? Let them pray. Is anyone happy? Let them sing songs of praise. Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.*
- With confidence  
*Hebrews 4:16*  
*Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.*
- For each other  
*James 5:16*  
*Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*

### **Bible Study**

Remembering that the Bible is the only scripture that has been given to us by God, we know they are his very words given to us for our instruction. The message that he has for us are the words of the

Bible which have been preserved through the centuries so that we can receive God's truth today. Psalm 119 is a discussion of the power and importance of God's words to us. This is the longest chapter in the Bible with 176 verses. If we consider just a few of them, we get an idea of how we should apply God's word in our lives.

*Psalm 119:6*

*Then I would not be put to shame when I consider all your commands.*

First, it is absolutely essential for us to recognize that the Bible is the true word of God. When we realize this, then we begin to see the importance of the Bible in our lives. When we consider God's word, think about it, reflect on it and how it applies to our lives, we realize that we do not need to worry because of our condition. God's words contain everything we could hope for.

*Psalm 119:7*

*I will praise you with an upright heart as I learn your righteous laws.*

Once we have recognized the Bible as God's word for us and have considered its importance in our lives, then we can begin to study it. We look at its structure and how it is organized. We appreciate the main themes such as God's love and our salvation. We begin to recognize ideas, thoughts, and concepts throughout the 66 books of the Bible that provide supporting evidence for these main themes. We begin to see the truth of God and so we take the time to study it and understand it so that our knowledge of God can increase as we learn from the Bible.

*Psalm 119:9*

*How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word.*

As we learn about the Bible and as we learn from the Bible, it is not enough to study it just to increase our knowledge and wisdom of spiritual things. We must learn from God's truth so that we can begin to apply it in our own lives. Even if we know every fact there is to know about the Bible, if we have not applied it to our own lives then we have gained nothing. We must begin living according to the salvation that we learn about in the Bible.

*Psalm 119:11*

*I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*

We also begin to see the usefulness of God's word of instruction in all aspects of our daily lives. So that it is a benefit to us in all ways in all situations, we need to begin to understand it and commit it to our memories. In this way, we can be thinking about it at any time throughout the day and night. It becomes a constant comfort to us and gives us strength. As we think about his words, we are drawn to a closer relationship with God and it changes us to be more like Jesus. Also, as we begin to memorize portions of Bible verses, we can share those with others as we go about our everyday lives.

*Psalm 119:15-16*

*I meditate on your precepts and consider your ways. I delight in your decrees; I will not neglect your word.*

Sometimes our lives become busy and we face many distractions. We always have to remember that there is nothing more important in this world than our relationship with God – without that

relationship we are nothing and are completely lost. Reading the Bible and studying its words should not be a burden to us, it should be our delight to get to know our heavenly Father. For this reason, we should make Bible study a priority in our lives, taking time each day to read and study.

*Psalm 119:105*

*Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.*

As we read the Bible, study its meaning, apply it to our lives, and share it with others then we see great benefit in our own lives. This is because the Bible has been given to us by God so that we can grow in our relationship with him; to more intimately know the God who created us and loves us and also to instruct us in all things and show us the way that God desires us to go.

### **Bible Study Tools**

The idea of studying the Bible for yourself might seem difficult. One of the most important steps is to just begin reading. As we read the Bible more and more, we begin to find answers to our questions and we find verses that help us to explain and understand other verses that might have been more confusing. It is also important to ask the Holy Spirit to help guide you as you study.

There are also many tools available to us to help us study the Bible. Most Bibles will have a short introduction to each of the books that help give you details about the author, the date it was written, who the original audience was, and what the main themes are for that book. Reading this introduction will help prepare you to better understand the context of that book.

Sometimes, there are small text notes that might be included at the bottom of the page. When a verse has a text note with it, then there might be a small italicized superscript letter or number (example: <sup>a</sup>) in the verse and then the verse number is listed at the bottom of the page along with the text note. These are usually simple notes explaining the meaning of a word or name, or alternative translations for a word, or other notes of explanation.

Most Bibles include a cross-reference system. Frequently this looks like a column that runs down the center of the page. The verses listed in this column indicate other passages in the Bible that discuss the same idea or the same specific word. If you are reading a verse that you want to study more, you can look up these cross-referenced verses which talk about the same concept or phrase.

One of the most powerful Bible study tools is the concordance. A concordance may be included at the end of the Bible and is a listing of key words. For each key word, it lists all of the verses that use that word. This is helpful if you want to do a Bible study on a particular topic, such as prayer. You would look up the word “prayer” in the concordance and it would list out different verses that you can read about prayer. Also, it is a very helpful tool if you are trying to look up a passage but you don’t know the book, chapter, or verse number. For example, if you remembered the phrase “*Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins,*” then you could look up “repent” or “baptized” in the concordance and look through the list until you find the verse you are searching for.

There are other Bible study tools that may or may not be included in a Bible. These might include maps, timelines, pictures, charts, or tables to convert measurements. Some Bibles may also have lists of people’s names and a description of who they are and the verses that they are mentioned in.

## Knowledge Check

Instructions: Use each passage from the Bible to answer the following question(s).

1. *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18*

*Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for that is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.*

What 3 things should we be doing constantly and in all circumstances?

Why should we be doing these things?

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2. *Luke 11:5-13*

*Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.' And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.*

*"So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.*

*"Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"*

In this parable that Jesus told, the friend outside knocking represents who? The friend inside with the bread represents who?

Why did the friend inside give the one outside the bread he was asking for? What does this teach us about our relationship with God?

So then, which 3 things does Jesus instruct us to do?

Which good gift does our Father in heaven want to give to us when we ask?

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3. *2 Timothy 3:15-17*

*And how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*

When we know the Holy Scriptures, what thing do we become wise about?

What are 4 things that the Bible is useful for? What do these things prepare us for?