



# INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY

16 BIBLE DOCTRINES



1 TIM. 3:14-15





# **INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY**

---

**16 BIBLE DOCTRINES**

## Front Cover Description

Throughout much of human history and across many nations, huge stone pillars have often supported the most important buildings. Likewise, in the spiritual realm, Paul's words to Timothy remind us of the nature and responsibility of the Church. Paul writes:

*<sup>14</sup>Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that, <sup>15</sup>if I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth (1 Tim. 3:15).*

The Church must be the pillar and foundation of the truth that God has given us in Scripture –through Christ, the prophets and the apostles. The Church upholds and preserves the truth as we:

- Receive and obey the truth (Mt. 7:24-25; 13:23)
- Treasure the truth in our hearts (Ps. 119:11)
- Defend the truth (Ph. 1:16; 1 Tim. 1:3-8; Jude 3)
- Proclaim the truth as the word of life (Mt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8;)
- Demonstrate the truth through Spirit-empowered living and ministry (Acts 4:29-33; 6:8; Rom. 8; 12-13; Gal. 5:16, 22-25; Eph. 5:18; Php. 2:14-16).<sup>1</sup>



❤️ **Thank You** ❤️

Special thanks to BGMC and LFTL  
for helping fund the Faith & Action Ministry.



## Contact Information

Address: Faith & Action Team  
637 Meadowview Ln  
Chestnutridge, Missouri 65630 U.S.A.

Telephone: (417) 881-4698  
E-mail: [Office@FaithAndActionSeries.org](mailto:Office@FaithAndActionSeries.org)  
Web: [www.FaithAndActionSeries.org](http://www.FaithAndActionSeries.org)

# INTRODUCTION TO THEOLOGY:

## 16 BIBLE DOCTRINES

### *Student Manual*

by Dr. Quentin McGhee  
and Dr. Faith Elizabeth Lund

Instructional Design by  
Dr. Quentin McGhee, Senior Editor



***Faith & Action Series***

Faith & Action  
637 Meadowview Ln.  
Chestnutridge, Missouri 65630 U.S.A.

# Copyright Information

Cover layout and logo design by Greg Grace: Imaginational; www.Imaginational.biz; 406 W. Commercial St., Springfield, Missouri 65803

All rights reserved on all photos in this book.

The Holy Bible: New International Version, International Bible Societies, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, ©1984.

The Holy Bible: King James Version, Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Company.

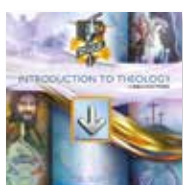
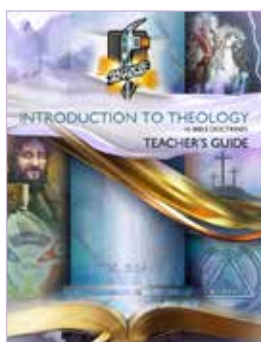
The Holy Bible: New King James Version, Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers, ©1979.

The Holy Bible: New American Standard Bible, Philadelphia and New York: A. J. Holman Company, ©1973.

Faith & Action Team purchased graphics through Imaginational, or from art stock sources. All tables, questions, and exercises are by the Faith & Action Team unless endnotes indicate otherwise. All photos are used by license or permission. All stories and illustrations are created by the authors from research of public documents, personal creativity or experiences, and contributors, unless endnotes indicate otherwise.

## Components That Complement This Book

Visit [www.FaithAndActionSeries.org](http://www.FaithAndActionSeries.org) to see components with this book:



**eVisuals**—project all figures in color with captions. Download from our website.

2 **Kindle** color versions from Amazon: Matches the printed book for your computer or large tablet. Or for your tablet, phone, or computer [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) (search **Faith & Action Team**)



**Teacher's Guides**—To purchase a TG submit our online form for approval as a teacher, pastor, or administrator.

[www.faithandactionseries.org/teachers.html](http://www.faithandactionseries.org/teachers.html)



First Edition 2024, First Printing March 2024

*Faith & Action Series*—Introduction to Theology: 16 Bible Doctrines  
©2024 Faith & Action Team

Course: TH 1013  
ISBN: 978-1-60382-338-8  
Item # 4511-11E0

## SCHOLARLY REVIEW BY DR. FRENCH L. ARRINGTON

### THEOLOGY: 16 BIBLE DOCTRINES



Drs. Quentin McGhee and Faith Lund, authors of this course, provide us with a masterful introduction to several major biblical themes, including: the Scriptures, the One True God, the fall and salvation of humans, the ordinances of the Church, spiritual empowerment, sanctification, the Church, the church's mission and ministry, divine healing, and Last Things (the Second Coming, Millennium, the Final Judgment, and the new heavens and earth).

Dr. McGhee is a long-term missionary of more than 40 years and developer of the *Faith & Action Series*. He is a competent biblical scholar in the Pentecostal Movement. Likewise, his daughter, Dr. Faith Lund, has served for 13 years as a missionary, has received outstanding academic honors, and is an adjunct professor in the Spanish Master's program at Evangel University.

Drs. McGhee and Lund bring to this study rich insights from many years of missionary service and biblical scholarship, providing ministerial students and other Christians with a substantive introduction to a number of basic teachings of the Bible. They do so using language and style that make the truths of the Bible easy to understand. As a result, this study guide is clear, practical, and pastoral. Also, it is rooted in the Scriptures and allows the Bible to speak for itself.

This course on Theology: 16 Bible Doctrines is particularly designed for students enrolled in the *Faith & Action* program of study, so that they are better prepared both spiritually and academically to take more advanced courses in Bible and theology. Indeed, in the *Faith & Action* program, beginning students who study this initial course on Bible Doctrines will be better equipped to take the three *Faith & Action* courses (*Theology 1–3*). I can speak about the importance of such an introductory course from my own personal experience. As a college student, I did not have the good fortune of taking a course that introduced me to biblical theology. If I had, I would have been better equipped later to take the more advanced theology courses required in my seminary program.

Let us explore some of the details of this introductory study of Theology: 16 Bible Doctrines. This course has nine chapters. Each chapter deals with one or more biblical doctrines with definitions of theological terms, lessons and lesson goals. Careful exposition of the doctrine(s) follow, along with appropriate figures, illustrations, charts, applications, discussion questions, explanations and self-tests for students.

**Chapter 1** focuses on the doctrine of *the Scriptures*, which are described as *revealed, inspired, and infallible*. The books of the Bible in their entirety are inspired by the Holy Spirit and written by individuals guided by the Holy Spirit. This high view that the Scriptures are fully reliable affirms that a variety of people contributed to the Bible and that through inspiring these individuals' writing, God expressed exactly the words and ideas that He desired.

**Chapter 2** is about *the One True God*. The Bible teaches that God is One existing in three Persons—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. From the beginning to the end of the Bible, there is only One God. There are only hints of the three Holy Persons of the Godhead in the Old Testament. However, the New Testament clearly affirms that One God exists in Three Persons. The One God is the only God, but the distinctions within the One God are *the Person of the Father, the Person of the Son, and the Person of the Holy Spirit*. *The One in Three* and *The Three in One* do not mean there are three Gods, but mean that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are equal and share the same nature, attributes, and purpose. They work in unity with one another. We refer to this biblical basis of our understanding of God as *the doctrine of the Trinity*.

**Chapter 3** considers *the fall and the salvation of humans*. The chapter begins with the origin of sin and evil in the human race, focusing on the biblical account of the fall of Adam and Eve and its significance. Genesis records that soon after the creation of the first human couple, sin entered their hearts—through their choice of wrong over right and disobedience over obedience. The tempter instigated their disobedience, and sin

with its horrible consequences, came into the world (Gen. 3; compare Rom. 5:12-21; 2 Cor. 11:3). The discussion of the story of Adam and Eve, divided into five parts, makes clear that the nature and effects of sinning shatter humans' relationship with God. Without faith and repentance, sin leads to final condemnation and eternal death.

The only hope of humankind is God's great plan of salvation initiated through the Second Adam, Jesus Christ. God's plan for our salvation involves a process, which includes:

- God's invitation, followed by our faith and repentance,
- The resulting *new birth* at the moment we receive spiritual life in Christ,
- *justification* at the same moment of the new birth, whereby God forgives sin and declares us in a right relationship with Himself,
- *sanctification* that begins at the new birth and continues throughout our Christian life of holy living,
- and finally *glorification*, the completion of our salvation, when Christ returns, and God transforms our bodies to be like Christ's glorious body (Phil. 3:21).

The total process of our salvation is grounded in the person and work of Christ. Jesus Himself, in His atoning death on the Cross, bore the full consequences of our sins and then sealed our salvation by His resurrection.

**Chapter 4** discusses *the ordinances of the Church*. Our Savior initiated two ordinances, *baptism in water* and *the Lord's Supper*. These reflect His atoning work of providing our salvation.

*The ordinance of water baptism* by immersion represents *the believer's dying to sin* with Christ and *being resurrected* with Christ to a new life of love, discipleship, worship, and service.

*At the ordinance of the Lord's Supper*, the *bread* represents the broken body of Christ, and the *fruit of the vine* represents the blood Christ shed at His violent death. We celebrate this Holy Supper as we look forward to our Lord's return. Both ordinances are a memorial of Christ's suffering and death and our living union with Him.

**Chapter 5** describes the transition "*from weakness to witness.*" This is an appropriate way to describe the *baptism in the Spirit*, since through this experience, believers receive spiritual power for witnessing, holy living, and serving Jesus Christ. Also, the baptism in the Spirit is referred to in the Scriptures as *the promise of the Father*, *the promise of the Spirit*, *the coming of the Spirit*, *the outpouring of the Spirit*, *the gift of the Spirit*, and *the filling with the Spirit*.

Believers receive this spiritual experience after conversion. The Holy Spirit fills us, empowering us to follow, exalt and serve our Savior. The evidence accompanying receiving this gift of power is the sign of speaking in tongues (technically known as *glossolalia*). This manifestation of speaking in tongues is understood to be *the initial physical* (outward) *evidence* or *the initial outward sign* of receiving the spiritual gift of power for witnessing, holy living, and service (Acts 2:1-4; 10:44-46; 19:1-7; Rom. 8:9-14; Gal. 5:16-25; Eph. 5:18).

From the moment of their conversion, all Christians have the *indwelling presence* of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 3:16). Likewise, we all have one or more spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:4-7, 11; 1 Pet. 4:10). The later blessings of baptism in the Spirit and living filled with the Spirit are a powerful anointing of believers to increase our sensitivity and ability to use the spiritual gift(s) God gives. The enthusiastic worship of Pentecostals reflects the powerful presence of the Holy Spirit in believers.

**Chapter 6** emphasizes the doctrine of *sanctification*. As we have noted, when we first accept Christ as our Savior, we are born again, which involves being morally and spiritually renewed. The experience of the new birth is the beginning of our new life in Christ—*the initiation of sanctification*.

It is significant that in the New Testament, the experience of salvation is referred to in all three tenses—past, present, and future. Believers *were saved* when we first believed in Christ (Eph. 2:5, 8); we *are daily being saved* (2 Cor. 2:15), and we *will be saved* completely when Christ returns (2 Tim. 4:18). The use of the present tense in our salvation emphasizes what we call "*progressive sanctification.*" We *are being sanctified*



daily (in a progressive, continuous manner). This requires us to live a holy life *daily*—growing in the love of Christ, experiencing the power of the Spirit, and increasing in faith and knowledge of the gospel.

**Let us consider two perspectives of sanctification.**

*First and foremost is God's role in our sanctification. Positional sanctification* emphasizes that God has set apart all believers and brought us into union with Christ. Therefore, our *position* is *in Christ*. This is the reason Paul describes believers in Corinth as “*sanctified in Christ Jesus,*” even though spiritual weaknesses and errors were among them (1 Cor. 1:2; compare 1:30; Rom. 1:22).

*A second perspective of sanctification is the participation of believers* in the process of becoming more and more like Jesus. *Submission* to the Holy Spirit enables believers to reflect our position “*in Christ*” in practical, visible ways, through our thoughts and actions. In the Old Testament, God sanctified His people (Ex. 31:13). Yet He told them to sanctify themselves (Num. 11:18). We believers are to work together daily *with* God to keep ourselves separated from what is sinful and to remain dedicated to what is righteous and holy. Paul’s prayer for believers is “*May God himself...sanctify you through and through*” (1 Thess. 5:23). Even so, Paul also urges believers *to be holy people by working out* our salvation. This does *not* mean that we should work *for* salvation, which is a gift, but that *we should daily work out our “sanctification”* (Phil. 2:12-13). Likewise, even though we are holy in Christ, Hebrews exhorts believers to *make every effort to live in peace and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord* (Heb. 12:14). And Peter reminds believers: <sup>14</sup>*As obedient children, do not conform to the evil desires you had when you lived in ignorance.* <sup>15</sup>*But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do;* <sup>16</sup>*for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy”* (1 Pet. 1:14-16).

Sanctification of believers, like a coin, has two sides. It involves God’s *and* believers’ working together for God’s glory so that we become more like Jesus, by the grace and power God freely provides.

**Chapter 7** focuses on two doctrines: ***the Church and the Church’s mission and ministry.*** Under normal conditions, when people become followers of Jesus, they become members of a Christian community with other fellow believers. Jesus did not come into the world to save individuals in isolation from one another. Rather, Jesus came to establish *communities of redeemed people* so that His followers can *build up each other* in the faith and *share with the world* His invitation to forgiveness, salvation, and true life. As people of God, Christians are to share in the life of a local church. This is in keeping the Greek term used in the New Testament—*ekklesia*, which means the assembly of God’s people.

The most frequent term used in the teachings of Jesus is *the kingdom* (the rule and reign) *of God*. God’s rule extends beyond the Church. Today the term “*church*” is often used to refer to a human organization or a building, but a true local church is *a community of believers* who have accepted the rule of God and the blessings of His reign.

*The Church of the Old Testament.* The people of God in the Old Testament served as a foundational phase of the Church of the New Testament. The Church existed within the spiritual life of the nation Israel (Acts 7:38).

*The Church of the New Testament.* Through Jesus Christ, the Church of the New Testament is under the *New Covenant*. The New Testament Church continues with the Old Testament Church as the ‘*people of God.*’ Under the New Covenant, the church is Composed of the new people of God who accept Jesus as the Messiah. The Church *expanded in new dimensions* at the coming of Jesus to earth and as the disciples and others believed in and followed Him.

Often, mistakenly, it is said that the Church began on the day of Pentecost—the occasion on which God poured out the Holy Spirit on 120 believers in Jerusalem during the Jewish Festival of Weeks (Hebrew: *Shavuot*, Greek: *Pentecost*; Acts 2:1-4). In contrast and in truth, the New Testament Church began *before Pentecost, as people believed in Jesus as their Savior*. The outpouring of the Spirit was *not a saving experience, but an empowering experience* of the Church *for mission and ministry*.

The most distinctive functions of the Spirit-empowered Church are *mission* and *ministry*. Identifying a main function of the Church as “*mission*” means that the purpose of the Church, is *missionary* in nature. The gospel and the Holy Spirit have empowered the Pentecostal Movement from its very beginning *to be missional*. The book of Acts places special emphasis on the view that every person has the need to hear the gospel. In harmony with the mission of the church are revivals, evangelism, regular worship, group Bible studies, discipleship efforts, and compassionate ministries. As the body of Christ on earth, the Church shares the mission of God (*missio Dei*) to seek and save the lost.

The mission of the Church includes facilitating salvation in its fullest dimensions—past, present, and future. Local church members join together in ministering *to one another* and *to others in their communities*. The ministry of believers includes (1) having the Lord’s gracious attitude toward those who are experiencing poverty or other needs (Matt. 25:34-36; Acts 2:44; 4:34-35; 9:36); (2) sharing the gospel in every way possible; as well as (3) sharing in the pastoral task of discipling and strengthening fellow believers (Luke 22:32; Acts 18:23). Such practices establish a model for us to minister to others in their times of need.

**Chapter 8 is on the doctrine of divine healing.** The official position of the Assemblies of God on divine healing is as follows:

“Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the atonement and is the privilege of all believers (Isa. 53:4-5; Matt. 8:16-17; James 5:14-16).”<sup>2</sup>

This statement of faith has a wide influence in the Pentecostal Movement and is in accord with the teaching of the Scriptures.

Chapter eight of this course is a masterful treatment of the biblical doctrine of *divine healing*. The prophet Isaiah predicted that Christ would bear our griefs and carry our sorrows (Isa. 53:4). These prophetic words spoken by Isaiah are interpreted in an inspired, enlightening way in Matthew 8:17: “*that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: ‘He Himself [Jesus Christ] took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.’*” Through Jesus, individuals have received blessings in their bodies that flow from His atoning sacrifice on the Cross.

In addition, this chapter challenges the reader to consider the entire biblical witness about sin, sickness, and healing. Many people have been confused and hurt when they or their loved ones prayed and were not healed. Drs. McGhee and Lund offer eight biblical principles on healing that affirm God’s healing disposition and power while avoiding errors such as positive confession and blaming demons for all sickness. Further, with four reasons why sickness and disease continue on this earth today, they point out that while some are not healed because of personal sin or lack of faith, others may experience trials for God’s glory (Job 1:20-22; John 9:1-3) and the refining of our faith (James 1:2-4; 1 Pet. 1:3-7). In closing, the chapter presents five practical ways we can show love to people who are hurting.

**Chapter 9** concludes the course by exploring **Last Things**. While nine chapters of this book are packed with biblical wisdom, the last chapter of the guide reaches a wise climax by the authors, recommending that students focus on the “big picture” of Last Things—including *two phases of the Second Coming* (the Rapture and Revelation of Christ), *the Millennium*, *the Final Judgment*, and *the new heavens and earth*. In focusing on the eternal truth of God’s love reflected in Last Things, students can avoid trying to predict the dates of events or speculating about Last Day details. They will instead be inspired to live and reflect the love of Jesus in ways that place hope and trust in God’s wisdom and His eternal love, grace, and healing for all people and the world.

FRENCH L. ARRINGTON, PhD, DD

*Professor of New Testament Greek and Exegesis  
and of the Niko Njotorahardjo Chair of the Restoration of the  
Tabernacle of David at the Pentecostal Theological Seminary.*

# Table of Contents

Scholarly Review by Dr. French L. Arrington . . . . .	5
List of Figures . . . . .	11
<i>Faith &amp; Action Series</i> Overview . . . . .	13
Course Plans and Schedules . . . . .	14
<i>Faith &amp; Action</i> 3 Year Online Non-College Diploma in Practical Ministry. . . . .	14
<i>Faith &amp; Action</i> 5 Year U.S. Credentialing/Bachelor’s Degree in Practical Ministry . . . . .	15
<i>Faith &amp; Action College</i> 4 Year International Bachelor’s Degree in Practical Ministry . . . . .	16
About This Book . . . . .	17
Dedication . . . . .	22

## Chapter

Lesson

Page

### Unit 1: Bible Doctrines 1–8

<b>1 The Scriptures . . . . .</b>	<b>24</b>
1 Our Beliefs About the Bible Shape Our Theology—Part 1 . . . . .	25
2 Our Beliefs About the Bible Shape Our Theology—Part 2 . . . . .	32
3 Our Beliefs About the Bible Shape Our Theology—Part 3 . . . . .	38
<b>2 The One True God . . . . .</b>	<b>48</b>
4 The Trinity in Theology—Part 1. . . . .	49
5 The Trinity in Theology—Part 2. . . . .	53
6 The Trinity in Theology—Part 3. . . . .	57
<b>3 The Fall and Salvation of Humans . . . . .</b>	<b>66</b>
7 The Fall of Humans . . . . .	67
8 Three Phases of Salvation . . . . .	72
9 Six Aspects of How the Missionary God Saves Us . . . . .	77
10 Six Aspects of How the Missionary God Saves Us—Cont. . . . .	82
<b>4 The Ordinances of the Church . . . . .</b>	<b>88</b>
11 The Church’s Ordinances: Water Baptism. . . . .	89
12 The Church’s Ordinances: The Lord’s Supper. . . . .	94
<b>5 The Baptism in the Holy Spirit . . . . .</b>	<b>102</b>
13 The Gift of the Holy Spirit Whom our Father Promised (Acts 1:1-5). . . . .	104
14 The Work of the Church (Acts 1:6-11). . . . .	111
15 Steps to Pentecost (Acts 1:12-26) . . . . .	116

16	The Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4)	120
17	The Value of Speaking in Tongues (Acts 2:4)	125
18	Ten Questions Related to Being Filled With the Spirit (Acts 2:4)	128
19	Peter’s Message to the Crowd (Acts 2:5-41)	133
20	The Promise Is for You (Acts 2:38-39)	137

## Unit 2: Bible Doctrines 9–16

<b>6</b>	<b>Sanctification</b>	<b>144</b>
21	The Meaning of Sanctification—God Is Holy	145
22	The Meaning of Sanctification—We Are Holy	148
23	Keys to Right Living: Sanctification—Part 1 (Rom. 6:1-11)	155
24	Keys to Right Living: Sanctification—Part 2 (Rom. 6:12-14)	159
25	Keys to Right Living: Sanctification—Part 3 (Rom. 6:15-23)	163
26	Freedom From the Guilt and Power of Sin—Part 1 (Rom. 8:1-4)	169
27	Freedom From the Guilt and Power of Sin—Part 2 (Rom. 8:1-4)	175
28	In the Flesh or in the Spirit?—Part 1 (Rom. 8:5-17)	179
29	In the Flesh or in the Spirit?—Part 2 (Rom. 8:5-17)	184
30	In the Flesh or in the Spirit?—Part 3 (Gal. 5:13–6:10)	189
<b>7</b>	<b>The Church, Her Mission and Ministry</b>	<b>200</b>
31	The Church’s Characteristics—Who Is the Church?	200
32	The Church’s Mission and Ministry	209
<b>8</b>	<b>Divine Healing</b>	<b>218</b>
33	Eight Principles on divine healing (Principles 1–3)	219
34	Eight Principles on divine healing (Principle 4)	225
35	Eight Principles on divine healing (Principle 5)	229
36	Eight Principles on divine healing (Principle 6)	234
37	Eight Principles on divine healing (Principles 7–8)	238
<b>9</b>	<b>Last Things</b>	<b>244</b>
38	The Blessed Hope—the Second Coming of our Lord (Doctrine 13) <sup>3</sup> (Part 1)	245
39	The Blessed Hope—the Second Coming of our Lord (Doctrine 13) <sup>4</sup> (Part 2)	252
40	The Reign of Christ: Millennium, Final Judgment, New Heavens and Earth (Doctrines 14–16)	258
	Definitions	268
	Scripture List	272
	Bibliography	278
	Endnotes	284
	God’s Full Plan of Salvation	289

# List of Figures

Figure 1.2	Some types of theology that relate to interpreting Scripture. . . . .	26
Figure 1.3	The descent of the liberal theologians. . . . .	27
Figure 1.4	Five beliefs of conservative followers of Christ (A–E). . . . .	28
Figure 1.7	John tells us that the writing on the cross was in three languages . . . . .	30
Figure 1.8	Ten possible mistakes of critics who claim that the Bible contains errors. . . . .	30
Figure 1.10	Five beliefs of conservative followers of Christ (A–E). . . . .	32
Figure 1.12	Jerome’s list of books in the Apocrypha. . . . .	36
Figure 1.13	Books of the Pseudepigrapha . . . . .	37
Figure 1.14	Five beliefs of conservative followers of Christ (A–E). . . . .	38
Figure 1.22	Map of the Greek kingdom that spread over 2 million square miles. . . . .	42
Figure 2.1	This type of <i>Shield of the Trinity</i> is a famous diagram of the Church . . . . .	48
Figure 2.2	Overview of Chapter 2: God Reveals Himself as a Trinity . . . . .	49
Figure 2.3	The Egyptians worshiped many false gods. . . . .	49
Figure 2.4	The nations of Canaan worshiped many gods, such as Baal, Asherah, and Molech. . . . .	49
Figure 2.9	Overview of Chapter 2: God Reveals Himself as a Trinity . . . . .	53
Figure 2.14	Overview of Chapter 2: God Reveals Himself as a Trinity . . . . .	57
Figure 2.15	Definitions and illustrations of some of the <i>unique</i> attributes and qualities of God alone. . . . .	58
Figure 2.17	More than 50 of the moral characteristics of the Trinity. . . . .	59
Figure 2.18	Throughout church history, believers have battled two errors in relation to the Trinity. . . . .	61
Figure 2.20	The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share the same values, mission, and vision. . . . .	62
Figure 3.1	Scriptures on Doctrine 4: The Fall of Humans . . . . .	66
Figure 3.2	Many stories have five parts in the plot. . . . .	67
Figure 3.4	Genesis 3:15, Numbers 21:8, John 3:14-15, and Romans 16:20 all refer to the victory of Jesus Christ and His Church over Satan. . . . .	70
Figure 3.8	The Biblical story of Adam and Eve introduces the fall of humans in the big story of the whole Bible. . . . .	72
Figure 3.9	Scriptures on Doctrine 5: The Salvation of Humans . . . . .	72
Figure 3.10	Definition, explanation, and visualization of Three Phases of God’s Salvation . . . . .	73
Figure 3.13	Five warnings in the book of Hebrews . . . . .	75
Figure 3.15	God’s law has always pointed in the right direction. . . . .	76
Figure 3.17	The Missionary God’s six-fold Starlight of Salvation: from Cross to Crown. . . . .	78
Figure 3.18	The Gospels proclaim that Missionary Jesus saves us from the <i>penalty</i> of our sin by dying on the cross as a sacrifice and substitute for us. . . . .	80
Figure 3.19	The prophets emphasized that salvation under the New Covenant features a new heart. . . . .	80
Figure 3.20	The Gospels proclaim that as Missionary Jesus saves us, He gives us a new heart—a spiritual desire within to love and please God. . . . .	81
Figure 3.28	A few verses in the Gospels on what the Missionary God wants His people to <i>be</i> and <i>do</i> . . . . .	86
Figure 4.1	Scriptures on Doctrine 6: The Ordinances of the Church . . . . .	88
Figure 4.2	A contrast between Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestants on water baptism and the Lord’s Supper . . . . .	89
Figure 4.3	Scripture mentions at least five types of baptism. . . . .	91
Figure 4.6	Literal drawing based on Song of Solomon, ( <a href="#">Solomon’s Bride » linear concepts</a> ) . . . . .	95
Figure 5.1	At Pentecost, Jews came from 15 different places. . . . .	102
Figure 5.2	People in Acts who were not apostles, but who were used by the Holy Spirit . . . . .	105
Figure 5.3	References to the Holy Spirit in Acts . . . . .	108
Figure 5.4	The Spirit’s ministry, according to Luke, John, and Paul . . . . .	111
Figure 5.5	The Church spread from Jerusalem to Rome in six stages. . . . .	113

Figure 5.6	Acts records that the Church expanded in six waves . . . . .	114
Figure 5.11	The Old and New Testaments emphasize three themes about the Holy Spirit . . . . .	121
Figure 5.12	Three themes linked to the Spirit in the Old and New Testaments . . . . .	122
Figure 5.13	The five places in Acts where believers were first filled with the Holy Spirit . . . . .	123
Figure 5.14	Five different types of baptism in the New Testament. . . . .	130
Figure 5.15	First Corinthians 13 and 15 contrast the present with the future. . . . .	131
Figure 6.3	Forms of the word <i>holy</i> appear about 300 times in the New Testament and 23 times in Romans. . . . .	146
Figure 6.4	Holiness (sanctification) includes three aspects: our position, our actions, and our condition. . . . .	149
Figure 6.9	Six keys to right living in Romans 6 . . . . .	155
Figure 6.14	Paul answers two questions in Romans 6. . . . .	163
Figure 6.16	There are only two types of people on earth: slaves of sin and slaves of righteousness. . . . .	164
Figure 6.17	Paul’s gospel spans from God’s decision to save us to eternity in heaven or hell. . . . .	165
Figure 6.21	Guided practice relating law in the Old Testament to law in the New Testament . . . . .	177
Figure 6.22	The Spirit’s ministry, according to Luke, John, and Paul . . . . .	178
Figure 6.24	Paul emphasizes the contrast between the <u>flesh</u> and the <u>Spirit</u> . . . . .	182
Figure 6.25	Paul lists 15 fruits of the flesh—a harvest of destruction (Gal. 5:19-21). . . . .	192
Figure 6.27	The law of harvest: A man reaps what he sows (Gal. 6:7-8). . . . .	194
Figure 6.30	God is holy in 3 ways . . . . .	196
Figure 7.2	God calls people out of sin to be members of His Church—His family . . . . .	202
Figure 7.5	The Church’s values summarize what we believe and how we behave. . . . .	204
Figure 7.9	To reach her eternal vision (destiny), the Church must share and practice God’s values . . . . .	209
Figure 7.13	Four lists of gifts in the New Testament . . . . .	212
Figure 7.14	Some churches have as many as 200 different ministries that church members are doing! . . . . .	213
Figure 7.16	The Bible mentions many types of ministries that are gifts in the body of Christ. . . . .	214
Figure 8.1	Key passages on divine healing. . . . .	218
Figure 8.2	Our Heavenly Father wants us to live holy and healthy. . . . .	223
Figure 8.3	Matthew’s main goal is to show who Jesus is . . . . .	225
Figure 8.4	Salvation in the kingdom of God includes <u>present benefits</u> and <u>future benefits</u> . . . . .	229
Figure 8.5	There are three phases in the story of God’s relationship with humanity. . . . .	229
Figure 9.2	Scriptures on Doctrine 13: The Blessed Hope—The Second Coming of Christ . . . . .	246
Figure 9.4	Good eschatology focuses on BIG final outcomes . . . . .	249
Figure 9.7	Three views on the time of the Rapture . . . . .	253
Figure 9.9	The Revelation and Millennial Reign of Christ . . . . .	258
Figure 9.10	Comparisons and contrasts of earlier writers and John’s topics in Revelation . . . . .	258
Figure 9.15	Timeline of three judgments and resurrections . . . . .	262
Figure 9.16	Three different resurrections and judgments . . . . .	262
Figure 9.19	Genesis 1–2 give us the Introduction to the story of God as Creator. . . . .	264
Figure 9.20	Contrasts in Genesis 1–3 and Revelation 21–22 . . . . .	265

## Faith & Action Series Overview

Bible	Theology	Church Ministries	General Education
Pentateuch	Theology: 16 Bible Doctrines	Evangelism, Discipleship, & Church Planting	Survey of the Old Testament
Historical Books	Theology: the Bible, God, & Angels	Children's Ministry	Survey of the New Testament
Major Prophets	Theology: The Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)	Pastoral Ministry	Wisdom Books (Introduction to Philosophy)
Minor Prophets	Unlocking the Treasures of Your Fire Bible 1	Leadership 1: Loving God & People	Homiletics
Synoptic Gospels: Life & Teachings of Christ	Unlocking the Treasures of Your Fire Bible 2	Leadership 2: God's Love Crossing Human Boundaries (Conflict Resolution)	Principles of Teaching
Gospel of John: The Word Became Flesh		Introduction to Missions	Marriage & Family
Acts of the Holy Spirit		Youth Ministry	Cross-Cultural Communications 1
Romans & Galatians: The Gospel According to Paul		Practicum 1: Preaching	Cross-Cultural Communications 2
First and Second Corinthians		Practicum 2: Evangelism, Discipleship, & Church Planting	The Bible & Science
Prison Epistles: Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, & Philemon		Practicum 3: Pastoral Ministry	World Literature (Comparing the Holy Scriptures of Judaism, Christianity, & Islam)
Paul's Eschatological & Pastoral Epistles: 1 & 2 Thess., 1 & 2 Tim., Titus		Practicum 4: Children's Ministry	Financial Management
Hebrews		Practicum 5: Youth Ministry	Hermeneutics 1: General Principles for Interpreting Scripture
General Epistles: James—Jude			Hermeneutics 2: Interpreting Genres of Scripture
Revelation & Daniel (Eschatology)			Biblical Counseling 1
			Biblical Counseling 2
			Read the Light: Teaching Literacy

## Course Plans & Schedules

For updates on Course Plans, Course Schedule options, and the College Catalog, visit:  
[www.FaithAndActionCollege.org](http://www.FaithAndActionCollege.org)

### Faith & Action 3 Year Online Non-College Diploma in Practical Ministry (72 Credits) (8 courses per year including 3 internships/practicums)

#### First Year (Certified Level)

First Semester			Second Semester		
Course #	Course Title	Credits	Course #	Course Title	Credits
BI 1013	Life & Teachings of Christ (Syn. Gospels)	3	GE 1023	Old Testament Survey	3
TH 1013	Intro to Theology: 16 Bible Doctrines; AG History, Mission & Government.	3	GE 1033	Hermeneutics 1: General Principles for Interp. Scripture	3
BI 1023	Acts	3	BI 1033	Prison Epistles; Relationships & Ethics in Ministry	3
GE 1013	New Testament Survey	3	MI 1013	Practicum 1: Spirit-Empowered Church, Acts 2; or "Better Churches"	3
		<b>12</b>			<b>12</b>

#### Second Year (Licensed Level)

First Semester			Second Semester		
Course #	Course Title	Credits	Course #	Course Title	Credits
MI 2023	Evan., Disc., & Church Planting	3	BI 2053	Revelation & Daniel (Eschatology)	3
GE 2043	Homiletics; Contemporary Preaching	3	MI 2043	Leadership 2 (Conflict Res.): Church Admin., Law & Fin.	3
MI 2033	Leadership 1	3	MI 2053	Intro to Missions	3
BI 2043	Romans & Galatians	3	MI 2063	Practicum 2: Teach 16 Bible Doctrines or Complete CEPI (months 1-6)	3
		<b>12</b>			<b>12</b>

#### Third Year (Ordained Level)

First Semester			Second Semester		
Course #	Course Title	Credits	Course #	Course Title	Credits
MI 2073	Pastoral Min.; Prayer & Worship	3	GE 3053	*Marriage & Family	3
BI 3063	1 & 2 Corinthians	3	TH 3033	Theology: The Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)	3
TH 3023	Theology: the Bible, God, Angels, etc.	3	BI 3083	Poetic Books (Intro. to Philosophy)	3
BI 3073	Pentateuch	3	MI 2083	Practicum 3: Pastoral Ministry; or CEPI (months 7-12)	3
		<b>12</b>			<b>12</b>

\* Required TRACS course. Proposed electives may be pre-approved case by case.

The 24 courses in this Diploma Program meet the academic standards for ordination through U.S. AG Districts/Networks.

#### Summary of Diploma Course Requirements (Except Practicums)

- ✓ Students watch 10.5 hours of video in a cohort or individually, on their own schedules.
- ✓ Teacher and students in cohorts discuss questions in the text, other questions from students, and ministry testimonies for at least 10.5 actual hours.
- ✓ Students upload to their Populi portals, (at the end of each discussion day), the answers they have written to content and application questions of the course textbook.
- ✓ Students have access to regular, substantive, interactive hours with the course professor.
- ✓ Students complete a minimum of 16.5 practical ministry hours with this course. At the end of the course, students complete and upload to their Populi portals the form signed by their local pastor (or presbyter, if the student is a senior pastor) to document their practical ministry.



# Faith & Action 5 Year U.S. Credentialing/Bachelor's Degree in Practical Ministry (120 Credits)

(8 courses per year including 5 internships/practicums)

**37.5 contact hours in each course include:**

- ✓ 10.5 hours of teaching by a qualified professor with at least 18 MA accredited hours related to the subject being taught;
- ✓ 10.5 hours of discussion taught or supervised by a qualified professor
- ✓ 16.5 hours supervised, documented ministry outside of class;
- ✓ Regular, substantive, interactive hours between the professor and students

Gray shaded courses required for AG US credentialing; 3 credit internships/practicums for 37.5 hours each

### First Year

#### (Certified Level)

First Semester			Second Semester		
Course #	Course Title	Credits	Course #	Course Title	Credits
BI 1013	Life & Teachings of Christ (Syn. Gospels)	3	GE 1023	Old Testament Survey	3
TH 1013	Intro to Theology: 16 Bible Doctrines; AG History, Mission & Government.	3	GE 1033	Hermeneutics 1: General Principles for Interp. Scripture	3
BI 1023	Acts	3	BI 1033	Prison Epistles; Relationships & Ethics in Ministry	3
GE 1013	New Testament Survey	3	MI 1013	Practicum 1: Spirit-Empowered Church, Acts 2; <i>or</i> "Better Churches"	3
		<b>12</b>			<b>12</b>

### Second Year

#### (Licensed Level)

First Semester			Second Semester		
Course #	Course Title	Credits	Course #	Course Title	Credits
MI 2023	Evan., Disc., & Church Planting	3	BI 2053	Revelation & Daniel (Eschatology)	3
GE 2043	Homiletics; Contemporary Preaching	3	MI 2043	Leadership 2 (Conflict Res.): Church Admin., Law & Fin.	3
MI 2033	Leadership 1	3	MI 2053	Intro to Missions	3
BI 2043	Romans & Galatians	3	MI 2063	Practicum 2: Teach 16 Bible Doctrines <i>or</i> Complete CEPI (months 1–6)	3
		<b>12</b>			<b>12</b>

### Third Year

#### (Ordained Level)

First Semester			Second Semester		
Course #	Course Title	Credits	Course #	Course Title	Credits
MI 2073	Pastoral Min.; Prayer & Worship	3	GE 3053	*Marriage & Family	3
BI 3063	1 & 2 Corinthians	3	TH 3033	Theology: The Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)	3
TH 3023	Theology: the Bible, God, Angels, etc.	3	BI 3083	Poetic Books (Intro. to Philosophy)	3
BI 3073	Pentateuch	3	MI 2083	Practicum 3: Pastoral Ministry; <i>or</i> CEPI (months 7–12)	3
		<b>12</b>			<b>12</b>

### Fourth Year

#### (Degree Level)

First Semester			Second Semester		
Course #	Course Title	Credits	Course #	Course Title	Credits
BI 4093	Gospel of John	3	MI 4093	Children's Ministry	3
GE 4063	Cross-Cultural Communications	3	BI 4123	Historical Books	3
BI 4103	Hebrews	3	GE 4073	Biblical Counseling	3
BI 4113	General Epistles	3	MI 4103	Practicum 4: Children's Min.	3
		<b>12</b>			<b>12</b>

### Fifth Year

#### (Degree Completion Level)

First Semester			Second Semester		
Course #	Course Title	Credits	Course #	Course Title	Credits
GE 5083	Herm. 2: Interp. Genres of Scripture	3	MI 5113	Youth Ministry	3
BI 5133	Paul's Eschatological & Pastoral Epistles	3	BI 5153	Minor Prophets	3
GE 5093	*The Bible & Science <i>or</i>	3	GE 5113	*World Lit.: Comparing Scriptures of Judaism, Christianity & Islam	3
GE 5103	Financial Management Principles	3	MI 5123	Practicum 5: Youth Ministry	3
BI 5143	Major Prophets	3			<b>12</b>
		<b>12</b>			<b>12</b>

\* Required TRACS course. Proposed electives may be pre-approved case by case.

# Faith & Action College 4 Year International Bachelor's Degree in Practical Ministry (120 Credits)

All courses are 3 credits each. There are 15 credits per semester.

There are 37.5 contact hours in each course including:

- ✓ 10.5 hours of teaching by a qualified professor with at least 18 MA accredited hours related to the subject being taught;
- ✓ 10.5 hours of discussion taught or supervised by a qualified professor
- ✓ 16.5 hours supervised, documented ministry outside of class;
- ✓ Regular, substantive, interactive hours between the professor and students

## First Year

### First Semester

Course #	Course Title
BI 1013	Life & Teachings of Christ (Synoptic Gospels)
TH 1013	Intro to Theology: 16 Bible Doctrines
MI 1013	Evangelism, Discipleship, & Church Planting
GE 1013	New Testament Survey
MI 1023	Leadership 1

### Second Semester

Course #	Course Title
MI 1033 MI 1043	Practicum 1A: Evan., Disc., & Church Plant; or Practicum 1B: Complete CEPI, 1st half
GE 1023	Old Testament Survey
GE 1033	Homiletics
BI 1023	Gospel of John
BI 1033	Acts

## Second Year

### First Semester

Course #	Course Title
MI 2053	Pastoral Ministry
MI 2063 MI 2073	Practicum 2A: Pastoral Min.; or Practicum 2B: CEPI, 2nd half
GE 2043	Herm. 1: General Principles for Interp. Scripture
BI 2043	Romans & Galatians
TH 2023	Theology: the Bible, God, & Angels, etc.

### Second Semester

Course #	Course Title
MI 2083	Children's Ministry
MI 2093	Practicum 3: Children's Ministry
BI 2053	1 & 2 Corinthians
MI 2103	Intro to Missions
TH 2033	Theology: The Holy Spirit (Pneumatology)

## Third Year

### First Semester

Course #	Course Title
BI 3063	Prison Epistles
MI 3113	Youth Ministry
MI 3123	Practicum 4: Youth Ministry
BI 3073	Pentateuch
BI 3083	Hebrews

### Second Semester

Course #	Course Title
MI 3133 MI 3143	Practicum 5A: Teach 16 Bible Doctrines. or Practicum 5B: Teach Evangelism & Discipleship
BI 3093	Historical Books
GE 3053	*Marriage & Family
MI 3153	Leadership 2 (Conflict Resolution)
BI 3103	Revelation & Daniel (Eschatology)

## Fourth Year or Years 4 & 5

### First Semester

Course #	Course Title
BI 4113	Poetic Books (Intro. to Philosophy)
GE 4063	Cross-Cultural Communications
BI 4123	Paul's Eschatological & Pastoral Epistles
GE 4073	Biblical Counseling
GE 4083	Hermeneutics 2: Interp. Genres of Scripture

### Second Semester

Course #	Course Title
BI 4133	Major Prophets
BI 4143	Minor Prophets
BI 4153	General Epistles
GE 4093 GE 4103	*The Bible & Science or *Financial Management Principles
GE 4113	*World Lit.: Comparing Scriptures of Judaism, Christianity & Islam

\* TRACS required Gen. Ed. course.

Note: Proposed electives may be pre-approved on a case-by-case basis.

Schools in various nations may prefer to change the sequence of some courses in this plan.



# About This Book


1. **The Lesson Headings** divide each chapter into several parts. Each of these lessons focuses on principles related to one theme. We number the lessons consecutively throughout the book.
2. **The Lesson Goals** are listed at the beginning of each chapter. Also, when a lesson begins, the goal for that lesson is printed there. You will find that there is at least one goal for each lesson.
3. **Key Words** are defined in a section called “Definitions” at the end of the book. The symbol \* comes before all words that are defined. To help some students, we have also defined a few words that are not key words.
4. **Teaching Method:** These courses are designed for the *guided discovery* method of learning. This method focuses on the student, rather than the teacher. When this course is used in a classroom, lectures are not intended. Rather, most of the class time should be used for students to discuss the questions in the margins and related questions from the teacher and other students. At least 25 percent of the student’s grade should be on how faithfully the student has tried to answer questions *before* class.




It is VERY important for each student to own his or her book. We encourage Bible schools to require students to buy their texts at the time they pay tuition. It is a shame for students to leave school without their books, because they need them for a lifetime of ministry. Owning the book enables a student to write notes in it and underline important ideas. Also, when students own their books, they do not waste class time by copying things that are already written in the text. Rather, they spend their time discussing questions related to the Bible and ministry.

In a classroom the teacher and students should discuss key questions together. The best teachers never answer their own questions. Some students will complain at first when the teacher requires them to think, read, and search for answers. But a good teacher knows that children who are always carried never learn to walk. And students who are always told the answer learn to memorize, but not to think and solve problems. In many ways, a good teacher is like a coach—guiding others to succeed.


The questions in this course are like a path that leads straight to the goal. If the questions are too hard for a student, the teacher can ask easier questions that are like stairs toward harder questions. Also, the teacher should ask questions that guide students to apply the text to local issues. Often, a good teacher will add a story or illustration that emphasizes a truth for students.

5. **Schedule:** Most *Faith & Action Series* courses have up to 40 lessons. For a Bible School course, it is good to plan 40 contact hours (50 minutes each). This allows 1 hour for each lesson.
6. **The Questions:** Most questions in the margins are identified by the hammer  and nail  symbols. Questions are steps toward a goal. As a student answers the questions, he or she is sure to reach the goals. The hammer introduces *content questions* and the nail precedes *application questions*. Our logo for this book includes the hammer hitting the nail. A student must grasp content before being able to apply it. The answers to all content questions are in the text, near the question. We encourage students to answer nail or application questions from their local settings.

In some books there is the symbol of a shovel  before certain questions. Questions beside the shovel symbol are *inductive questions*. The word *induce* means “to lead.” These questions lead students to discover truth for themselves.

7. **Sabio** is a Spanish word that means “wise man.” This symbol  in the margin signifies a proverb or wise saying.
8. **The Illustrations**, such as stories and examples, are preceded by the candle symbol .
9. **Figures** include pictures, photos, charts, and maps. We number the figures in order throughout the chapter. For example, the first three figures in chapter one are numbered 1.1, 1.2, and 1.3. There is a list of significant figures near the front of the book.
10. **The Test Yourself** questions come at the end of each chapter and are indicated by the balance symbol . There are always ten of these questions. As a rule, there are two test questions for each goal in the chapter. If students

miss any of these questions, they need to understand why they missed them. Knowing why an answer is right is as important as knowing the right answer.

11. **Essay Test Topics** are at the end of each chapter, indicated by the pencil symbol . Note that these essay topics are the lesson goals of the chapter. A student should be able to summarize these goals, writing 50-100 words on each one. These essay topics test students at a much higher level than the multiple choice, Test Yourself questions.
12. **Sample Answers** to the hammer questions, some comments on the nail questions, and answers for the Test Yourself questions and Essay Topics are in the Teacher’s Guide. Students should answer questions so they will grow and become strong in their mental skills.
13. **Bible quotations** are usually from the New International Version (NIV). We also use the New American Standard Bible (NASB) and the King James Version (KJV). We encourage students to compare biblical passages in several versions of the Bible.
14. **The Scripture List** includes key Scripture references in this course. It is located near the back of the book.
15. **The Bibliography** is near the endnotes page. It is a complete list of books to which the authors refer in this course. Some students will want to do further research in these books.
16. **Endnotes** identify the sources of thoughts and quotes. They are listed by chapter at the end of the book.
17. **The Unit Exams and Final Exam** are in the Teacher’s Guide. In the Teacher’s Guide there are also other useful items for the teacher and potential projects for the students.
18. **Course Description (TH 1013)**: An introductory study of 16 life-guiding, biblical teachings. This course combines the strengths of systematic, biblical and narrative theologies. For example, systematic theology focuses on topics or doctrines, such as the *baptism in the Holy Spirit* (Doctrines 7 & 8). But when we study the Spirit-baptism *in Acts through the eyes of Luke*, we are practicing biblical theology –which pays special attention to the main concerns of a particular writer. Also, when we study in Romans about *sanctification* (Doctrine 9), we are practicing biblical theology, focusing on Paul’s frequent and thorough teachings about righteous and holy living. Likewise, when we study eschatological teachings (Doctrines 13–16), we use the helpful methodology of comparing the unique perspectives of Matthew, Paul, Peter and John. Although each of these four writers has a different group of readers, they all practice narrative theology, which focuses on the big story of the Bible.

Throughout this course we enable students to *understand* the 16 biblical doctrines. In addition to this knowledge, this course connects the *what* with the *so what* and the *now what*. So we also urge students to examine, discuss, embrace, cherish, believe, experience and live in harmony with these teachings. These 16 biblical doctrines invite us to a life of fellowship on earth with God, and a membership forever in His heavenly family. As we receive these biblical truths He has given us, we share His values –which must affect both our beliefs and our behavior.

**19. Global Goals:**

Chapters	Global Goals
<b>1:</b> The Scriptures	Define: theology, revealed, inspired, inerrant, and infallible. Illustrate how our assumptions about Scripture shape our theology. Define <i>canon</i> and explain how books of both Testaments were chosen.
<b>2:</b> The One True God	Define Trinity, and give evidence in both Testaments of only one God who exists as three persons. Summarize key verses showing members of the Trinity share the same attributes, values, mission and vision.
<b>3:</b> The Fall and Salvation of Humans	Sketch and explain the 5 parts in the story of Adam and Eve in Eden. Explain how Adam and Eve’s fall affects human relationships to the Creator. Summarize how the Missionary God saves us in 3 phases. Sketch the star diagram and explain 6 aspects of <i>how</i> God saves us.
<b>4:</b> The Ordinances of the Church	Answer the 7 questions we studied on the ordinance of water baptism. Contrast 4 views on the Lord’s Supper. Summarize 4 directions believers should look, when celebrating the Lord’s Supper.
<b>5:</b> The Baptism in the Holy Spirit	Evaluate 5 reasons speaking in an unknown tongue is valuable. Answer 10 questions people ask related to being filled with the Spirit. Summarize the command, gift, Baptizer, purpose and evidence of being baptized in the Spirit. Explain and follow 4 steps to receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

<p><b>6: Sanctification</b></p>	<p>Explain and illustrate three ways in which God and believers are holy. Explain, illustrate, and apply six keys to victorious living. Contrast values, characteristics, and destinies of those led by flesh versus led by the Spirit.</p>
<p><b>7: The Church, Her Mission &amp; Ministry</b></p>	<p>Explain: Church, church, called out. Illustrate God's values the Church shares –that affect beliefs and behavior. Explain 10 biblical metaphors or descriptions of the Church. Draw a diagram on the relationship of values, mission and vision Explain and illustrate 4 dimensions of the Church's mission. Illustrate how being baptized in the Spirit and living filled with the Spirit empower all believers to participate in the Church's mission. Contrast the ministry of all believers with the ministry of church leaders.</p>
<p><b>8: Divine Healing</b></p>	<p>Define sickness and illustrate three different types of it. Summarize biblical evidence from both testaments that it is God's nature and will to heal. Give examples of blessings that flow through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Summarize and illustrate 3 purposes of Divine healing. Explain 4 reasons sickness and disease continue on earth today. State and illustrate 7 keys to help us pray with faith to receive healings. State and illustrate 4 unbiblical teachings to avoid on the topic of healing. Explain and illustrate 5 ways to love those who are not yet healed.</p>
<p><b>9: Last Things</b></p>	<p>Define the Blessed Hope and explain two aspects of it. Summarize reasons to study and discuss eschatology with humility. Illustrate how Matthew, John, Paul and Peter emphasize final outcomes in eschatology, rather than small details. Answer 5 key questions on the Second Coming –the Blessed Hope. Define Millennium and evaluate 3 views on it. Summarize the final judgment– its purpose, results, and how to avoid it. Draw a diagram and use it to explain how Revelation 21-22 completes the biblical story of God is Creator.</p>

## 20. Authors



**Dr. Quentin McGhee** is the founder, senior author, instructional designer, and an editor of the *Faith & Action Series*, a curriculum of 40 books at completion. He earned a B.A. in Biblical Studies from Southwestern College in Oklahoma City, and a B.S. in Math from Oral Roberts University (ORU). Later he completed his M.Div. at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, where he taught beginning Greek and was selected by the faculty for Who's Who Among Students. He earned a D.Min. from ORU in 1987 and in 2015 was inducted into the ORU Hall of Fame in the College of Science and Engineering.

Dr. McGhee and his wife, Elizabeth, pioneered a church in Oklahoma. They served as missionaries in Kenya for 15 years where they helped start many churches, developed an extension Bible school for full-time ministers, and assisted in curriculum development. Since 2005, Quentin and Elizabeth have served as Assemblies of God missionaries with the Latin America/Caribbean region. Dr. McGhee is developer and director of the *Faith & Action Series*, while Elizabeth assists with graphic design, desktop publishing, translations, and sales.



**Dr. Faith Elizabeth Lund** has a B.S. in Biblical Studies from Southwestern Assemblies of God University, an M.Div. (concentration in Biblical Languages) from the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary (AGTS), and a Ph.D. in Biblical Interpretation and Theology from AGTS/Evangel University. Faith taught in Honduras for a year before joining the *Faith & Action* team, first as an editor and later as a Missionary Associate. Faith with her husband Danny and their two children, Caleb and Viola, served in Northern Asia 4 years. They currently serve in Latin America. She authored the book *Out of Egypt: The Exodus Motif in the Biblical Tradition*, and co-authored the *Faith & Action* course *Theology: the Bible, God, & Angels*. Faith is the daughter of Dr. Quentin and Elizabeth McGhee.

## 21. Reviewers and Contributors



**Dr. French L. Arrington** reviewed this course and wrote the scholarly overview near the front of the book. Also, his three-volume work *Christian Doctrine: a Pentecostal Perspective*, provided many helpful insights. Dr. Arrington has ministered in Evangelical and Pentecostal circles around the world. He has served as a pastor and for 17 years at Lee University, where he was chairman of the Bible and Theology Department, Professor of New Testament Greek, and Pauline Studies, and received the Excellence in Teaching Award. He has lectured in seminaries in Korea, Puerto Rico, Guatemala, the Philippines, Indonesia, Ecuador, the Virgin Islands, China, and Russia. He also ministers at seminars, conferences, and local churches.

Dr. Arrington is an ordained bishop in the Church of God and served as Professor of New Testament Greek and Exegesis at the Pentecostal Theological Seminary from 1981-2002, where he became Professor Emeritus. In 2017 he was asked to serve full time again at the Church of God Pentecostal Theological Seminary, as Professor of New Testament Greek and Exegesis, continuing to teach, and being first Chair of the Niko Njotorahardjo for the Restoration of the Tabernacle of David.

His education includes B.A. degrees from Lee College and the University of Chattanooga; an M.Div. and a Th.M. from Columbia Theological Seminary; and a Ph.D in biblical languages from St. Louis University. He has authored and edited too many books to list here. Pathway Press published his three-volume work *Christian Doctrine: a Pentecostal Perspective*. His latest commentary is: *The Greatest Letter Ever Written: A Study of Romans*. He was a general editor of the *Life in the Spirit New Testament Commentary*.

In the courses on *Theology: the Bible, God, & Angels*, Dr. Arrington wrote the scholarly review near the front, and also contributed Supplemental Commentary at the end of each of the 5 Units. His comments add clarity, depth, breadth, and perspective from seven decades of teaching Bible and theology. We are extremely grateful for his gracious participation on several *Faith & Action* courses!



**Dr. James Hernando** reviewed this course on *Bible Doctrines* and provided many helpful insights. Concerning this course Dr. Hernando writes: “This course is excellent! Chapter 6 on Sanctification is some of the best writing I’ve read. This course is comprehensive, yet so practical. I love the built-in illustrations. They drive home the truth in a way people can relate to. This is a strength of the *Faith & Action* curriculum as a whole.”

Dr. Hernando has earned the following degrees: a B.S. in Education from State University of New York; a B.A. in Bible from Northeast Bible College, an M.S. in Education from State University of New York, an M.Div. from Assemblies of God Theological Seminary, M.Phil. and Ph.D. from Drew University, 1990.

Jim taught at Trinity Bible College and served as Chair of Biblical Studies (1980–1986). He has been Associate Professor of New Testament at AGTS from 1990–2014 and chaired the Biblical Theology Department. Jim has preached and taught Hermeneutics and New Testament Theology in Ukraine and Costa Rica, and currently teaches in Nicaragua. Jim and his wife, Moira, have three sons: Matthew, Eric, and Daniel.

His recent publications are: 2 Corinthians in *Full Life Bible Commentary to the New Testament* (Zondervan), *Dictionary of Hermeneutics: A Concise Guide to Terms, Names, Methods and Expressions* (GPH), *Studies in the Letters of Paul* (Global University), and *First and Second Corinthians* (*Faith & Action Series*).

Jim has been awarded many honors, such as: Who’s Who in American High Schools, Who’s Who in American Colleges and University, FTE Hispanic Doctoral Scholarship, Outstanding Alumnus of Valley Forge Christian College, Member of the Advisory Board for the Foundation of Pentecostal Scholarship, and Assemblies of God Distinguished Educator’s Award for 25 years of service.

**22. Special Recognition:** The following three persons have already finished their race on earth and been promoted to heaven. However, they deserve to be honored for books they authored which have provided abundant insights incorporated and footnoted in this course on *Bible Doctrines*.



**Dr. Stanley M. Horton** earned a B.S. from the University of California, an M.Div. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, an S.T.M. from Harvard University, and a Th.D. from Central Baptist Theological Seminary. He was Distinguished Professor of Bible and Theology Emeritus at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary in Springfield, Missouri. Dr. Horton wrote 400 articles and book reviews and authored 46 books on topics such as Bible Doctrines, Genesis, Amos, Matthew, John, Acts, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Revelation, and the Holy Spirit.



**Dr. William W. Menzies** earned a B.A. from Central Bible College (CBC), a B.A. and an M.A. from Wheaton College, and a Ph.D. from the University of Iowa. He did additional graduate work at New York Theological Seminary, Golden Gate Theological Seminary, and Pacific School of Religion. He pastored for 7 years. His teaching and administrative experience include: 12 years at CBC; Chairman of the Biblical Studies Department at Evangel University from its beginning in 1970 to 1980; teaching at the Assemblies of God Theological Seminary from 1974-1983; Vice President for Academic Affairs and Professor of Biblical and Historical Theology at California Theological Seminary, 1985-1987;

President and Professor of Bible, Theology, and History at Asia Pacific Theological Seminary (APTS) from 1989-1996. In addition, he taught and lectured numerous times in the USA, Asia Pacific, Southern Asia, and Eurasia. Dr. Menzies served as the co-founder and first president of the Society for Pentecostal Studies (SPS), the first editor of SPS's journal, *Pneuma*, and consulting editor of *Christianity Today*. He served as co-chairman of the Editorial Committee for *The Full Life Study Bible*, and served as Chancellor for APTS. Among the many books he has written are *Bible Doctrines: A Pentecostal Perspective*, Gospel Publishing House, 1993, and *Spirit and Power*, (co-authored with Dr. Robert P. Menzies), Zondervan, 2000.



**Rev. Donald C. Stamps** wrote all of the articles and all of the study notes in the original *Full Life Study Bible*. He earned his B.A. and M.A. from Southern Nazarene University (Bethany, Oklahoma), and his M.Div. from Nazarene Theological Seminary (Kansas City, Missouri). Don and his wife, Linda, pastored a church in Kansas for 2 years before they went to Brazil as missionaries. During his years as an Assemblies of God missionary in Brazil, Don wrote the notes and articles in the FLSB to provide a resource for pastors that would give them direction in their thinking and preaching. He and his wife, Linda, served as a missionary for 13 years until his death in 1991. Their three children all serve the Lord.

## Dedication



This book—*Introduction to Theology: 16 Bible Doctrines*—was made possible by a generous donation from Dr. Daniel T. and Bonnie Sheaffer.

Daniel Thomas Sheaffer was born November 29, 1929 to Reverend Gerald and Jeanette Sheaffer. Dan was named after his uncle, Daniel Thomas Muse, a bishop of the Pentecostal Holiness Church.

Dan first began preaching at the age of 17. Like many Pentecostal pioneers, when he didn't have a church to speak in, he preached on street corners, or used schools to hold revivals.

In 1950, at the age of 21, Dan married Bonnie Rose Benson, who became his faithful companion for the next 60 years. They conducted evangelistic meetings for several years, and Dan was ordained by the AG Oklahoma District in 1958.

Dan and Bonnie pastored First Assembly of God in Miami, Oklahoma from 1961–1969. Then they accepted the pastorate of a small AG church in Oklahoma City. This proved to be a step of destiny into a ministry that would impact multitudes of people in many nations of the world. In the first 3 years, from 1969 to 1971, the small church grew from 42 to 1250 members, in a new building. Then in 1979 the Sheaffers led the congregation to build Crossroads Cathedral, located on two major highways. This was one of the first and largest mega-churches in the Assemblies of God. It seated about 6,000 people each Sunday morning, contained more than 200,000 square feet, and was built debt free—partly because the Sheaffers founded a successful business to build homes and do general contracting to expand their ministry.

Thousands of people came to Christ in this strategic megacity church at the crossroads. But as Assemblies of God General Superintendent, Dr. George O. Wood noted, Dan and Bonnie Sheaffer had a heart for Oklahoma City and the world. Their generosity is a legend. Here are a few of the projects made possible by their ministry and the millions of dollars they gave:

- The *Faith & Action* books: *Romans & Galatians*, *1 & 2 Corinthians*, *General Epistles*, *Gospel of John*, and *Theology: the Bible, God, & Angels* which more than 3 million students will study worldwide;
- Churches they founded and built in Liberia, Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa, Paraguay, Colombia, Jamaica, Chile, and Burundi;
- 1,000 churches they funded in Malawi, and sponsorships that helped the Malawi AG Church grow from 200 to 4,000 churches with 800,000 members;
- Malawi Assemblies of God School of Theology that trains students from across Africa;
- The Sheaffer Full Life Center at Southwestern Assemblies of God University in Waxahachie Texas. This building has 111,000 square feet, and contains a cafeteria, classrooms, offices, an athletic center, two gymnasiums, and a chapel;
- Participation in the construction of Bridges and Teeter Hall on the SAGU campus;
- The financial undergirding of the Doctor of Ministry program at Assemblies of God Theological Seminary in Springfield, Missouri;
- The Assemblies of God Center for Holy Land Studies, funded during their final pastorate at Harvest Assembly of God Church, Oklahoma City;
- Initial funding for the Daniel T. Sheaffer Chair of Practical Ministry at AGTS.



Dan held degrees from Oklahoma City Southwestern College, Oklahoma City University, East Central State University, Tulsa University, Luther Rice Seminary, and Southwestern Assemblies of God University. Pastor Sheaffer and Bonnie hosted the popular Trinity Broadcasting Network program, *The Answer* for 17 years, and were frequent hosts and guests of TBN's "Praise the Lord" program. Dan authored two books of Bible questions and answers and a church growth book entitled, *Together We Grow*.

To Dan and Bonnie Sheaffer, we gratefully dedicate this book. Their legacy endures forever. And we express our thankfulness to their daughter, Terri, and her husband, Gary King; and their son, Mike, and his wife, Starla, who continue to fulfill the Great Commission as Dan and Bonnie cheer from heaven.

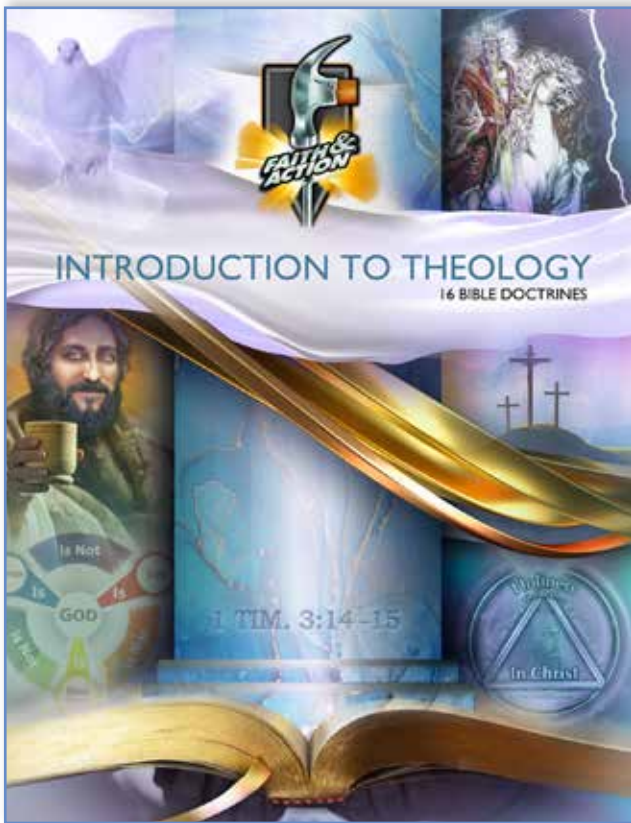


## Unit 1: Bible Doctrines 1–8

Chapters	Doctrines	Lessons
1: The Scriptures	1	1–3
2: The One True God	2 & 3	4–6
3: The Fall and Salvation of Humans	4 & 5	7–10
4: The Ordinances of the Church	6	11–12
5: The Baptism in the Holy Spirit	7 & 8	13–20




# Chapter 1: The Scriptures



**Figure 1.1**  
Bible Doctrines is often the first course in the study of theology. Theology is the study of God in relation to all He has created, revealed, and planned.

The Bible is our main textbook for the 16 doctrines we will study in this theology course.

**Q 1**  What is our main textbook for this course on Bible Doctrines?

## Doctrine 1: The Scriptures Inspired

*The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and are the revelation of God to man - the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (2 Tim. 3:15-17; 1 Thess. 2:13; 2 Pet. 1:21).<sup>1</sup>*

### Lessons:

#### Our Beliefs About the Bible Shape Our Theology—Part 1

1

**Goal A:** Define “theology.”

**Goal B:** Explain how our assumptions/initial beliefs about Scripture shape our theology.

**Goal C:** In relation to Scripture, define “revealed,” “inspired,” “inerrant,” and “infallible.”

#### Our Beliefs About the Bible Shape Our Theology—Part 2

2

**Goal A:** Explain how evidence on each of these topics points to God as the author of the Bible: unity, relevance, morality, prophecy, society, accuracy, extraordinary signs, and durability.

**Goal B:** Define “canon.” Analyze the process of how books in the Old and New Testaments were chosen.

**Goal C:** Summarize why Protestant Bibles do not include the books of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha.

#### Our Beliefs About the Bible Shape Our Theology—Part 3

3

**Goal A:** Explain and illustrate why we believe God guided the process of copying and translating the Bible.

**Goal B:** Contrast the weakness of human thinking, charisma, and tradition with the strength of God’s Word.



## Key Words



**theology**—the study of God

**revealed**—revealed truth is truth we can only know as God shows it to us.

**inspired**—inspired Scripture means that the Bible is God-breathed. His Spirit carried along the writers so that they wrote what He desired.

**illumination**—spiritual insight or wisdom

**inerrant**—truth without error. God is the author of the Bible, and He cannot lie.

**infallible**—cannot be wrong; God’s Word is totally trustworthy and will not lead us astray.

**canon**—a set of books that the whole Church recognized as inspired because of certain high standards

**Apocrypha**—a collection of 7 books with errors that early Christians rejected, but Catholics later added to the Catholic Bible around A.D. 1550

**Deutero-canonical books**—a second set of books, including 7 apocryphal books, that Catholics added to the canon after A.D. 1500

**Pseudepigrapha**—“false writings,” especially Jewish, that claim to be written by patriarchs or prophets but were composed within about 200 years of the birth of Jesus Christ

### Lesson

1

## Our Beliefs About the Bible Shape Our Theology—Part 1

**Goal A:** Define “theology.”

**Goal B:** Explain how our assumptions/initial beliefs about Scripture shape our theology.

**Goal C:** In relation to Scripture, define “revealed,” “inspired,” “inerrant,” and “infallible.”

**Definition:** *Theology* is “the study of God.” The word *theology* comes from two Greek words, *Theos* (God), and *logos* (word). *Theology* is “a word or study” about God. It is good to remember that *theology* focuses on **God**—it is God-centered. Although God is the center of theology, some misuse the word. For example, one beloved teacher made the common error of calling his course “*A theology of missions*,” which is confusing. *Theology* is the study of God. We can guess what the teacher meant by “*Theology of missions*.” But it would have been better for the teacher to call his course “*Missiology*,” which is “the study of missions.” In our courses on *theology*, beginning with this theology course on Bible Doctrines, we want to focus on *God* and make Him the center of our study in relation to all He has created, revealed, and planned.

**Q 5** ⚡ Are those who believe in the Trinity orthodox? Explain.

**Q 6** ⚡ Are those who deny the deity of Christ orthodox? Explain.

**Q 7** ⚡ Give an example of an ancient creed and also a modern one.

**Q 8** ⚡ Why do we say that Bultmann was not an orthodox theologian?

**Q 2** ↗ What is theology?

**Q 3** ↖ Why is “Missiology” a better title than “Theology of Missions”?

**Q 4** ↗ What does “orthodox” mean?

Theologies	Beliefs About Scripture	Theologians
<b>Orthodox</b>	The Scriptures are true and mean what they say. We should interpret them as a whole and in line with what the Church has believed for 2,000 years. Orthodox theology reflects the *creeds on major doctrines of the Bible. A <i>creed</i> (Latin, meaning “I believe”) is a summary and standard of what one or more groups believe. Memorizing a creed, such as the Nicene Creed of A.D. 325 or the Apostles’ Creed of A.D. 340, can help believers discern truth from error. Many denominations or fellowships have their own creeds. For example, the Assemblies of God statement of 16 basic beliefs is a creed.	Jesus, the apostles, church fathers like Irenaeus and Tertullian, Luther, Wesley, and many others


Figure 1.2


continued on next page

Continued from previous page

<b>Heretical</b>	As <i>true</i> is the opposite of <i>false</i> , <i>orthodox</i> is the opposite of <i>heretical</i> . Heretical teachings are not faithful to Scripture or how the Church has interpreted the Bible for 2,000 years. In church history, there were many heretical teachings. For example, many heretics have taught that human tradition or prophetic messages at church are equal in authority to Scripture. Other heretics have taught that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are one person instead of three or that Jesus was not divine.	Montanus, Arius, Pelagius, Sabellius, any churches with these teachings
<b>Antiochene</b>	Refers to theologians and their teachings that came from the ancient Church at Antioch (Syria). Antiochenes emphasized the literal interpretation of Scripture, rather than interpretation that was symbolic. <sup>2</sup> However, they did recognize that the Old Testament contains prophetic pictures (types) of Christ.	John Chrysostom, Theodore of Mopsuestia
<b>Alexandrian</b>	All Scripture is symbolic or allegorical. We must search for the hidden meaning.	Philo, Clement, Origen
<b>Conservative</b>	Refers to followers of Christ who believe that the Bible is the inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of God.	Horton, Menzies, most Evangelicals and Pentecostals
<b>Liberal</b>	Refers to those who believe that Scripture gives insights but is not accurate about history or facts, such as Jesus' life and teachings, His deity, the Resurrection, or the Second Coming. Some teach that the Gospels are not historical accounts. They claim we must *demythologize the Bible—look behind the accounts of the supernatural to find the “deeper meaning.” <sup>†</sup>	Schleiermacher, Bultmann, Ritschl
<b>Neo-orthodox</b>	Refers to theologians who claim to recapture the true teachings of the Church. Nevertheless, they err by thinking the Bible was not a factual or objective revelation of truth from God. Rather, they say the Bible is a witness to past religious experiences of its authors that can lead us to a genuine experience with God. Karl Barth believed in the deity of Christ, but Reinhold Niebuhr did not.	Barth, Brunner, Niebuhr
<b>Postmodern</b>	Refers to those who believe there are no absolutes; and language does not accurately convey meaning. Postmoderns believe there is more than one correct interpretation of Scripture. Some may also teach that the Bible is only one of many sources of insight, along with the Qur'an, Hindu writings, etc.	John Milbanks, Stanley Grenz, David Ray Griffin, Mark C. Taylor, Catherine Pickstock, Paul Ricoeur, Jean-Luc Marion, Mary Jane Rubenstein

**Figure 1.2** Some types of theology that relate to interpreting Scripture. Note that some of these overlap. For example, someone might be both liberal and postmodern or both orthodox and conservative.

**Q 9**  How did the Pharisees and Sadducees approach the Bible in different ways? Illustrate.

**Q 10**  Why is it important to let the Bible shape our beliefs rather than interpreting the Bible to prove what we already believe? Illustrate.

Our beliefs/assumptions about the Bible shape our theology. *Beliefs* are the starting point of theology. They are the thoughts and opinions we begin with. Beliefs are what we understand and think is true as we study, pray, meditate, and worship God. Our beliefs (present views) either distort our theology or guide us to truth. All interpreters of the Bible have beliefs—points of view that we come to the Bible with. Our beliefs are like lenses that affect our study of theology. \*Liberals approach the Bible through skeptical, critical eyes—doubting and disbelieving what they read. They *assume* that we cannot trust the Bible. So, at the end of their theological studies, their initial beliefs hinder their understanding of God. Those who wear dark lenses see a dark world. In contrast, \*conservatives accept the Bible as the inspired Word of God. We come to the Bible with trust, seeking to know God better and receive instruction from the Holy Spirit. In the days of Christ, the Sadducees were the liberals. They did not believe in miracles, angels, or the Resurrection that the Old Testament Scriptures reveal (Matt. 22:23-33). In contrast, the Pharisees had a *conservative* attitude toward Scripture. They believed *everything* that was in the 39 books we refer to as the Old Testament (Matt. 22:34-46; Acts 23:6-8). Many of them lacked faith, had proud hearts, and cared more about the traditions of men than about God's Word. But their official beliefs were orthodox. Paul is an example of a Pharisee whose initial beliefs helped lead him to understand God

<sup>†</sup> For an excellent analysis of Bultmann's theology, read *Historical Criticism of the Bible* by Eta Linnemann (Kregel Publications, 2001). Dr. Linnemann was a student of Professor Rudolph Bultmann. Years after receiving her doctorate and becoming one of the top scholars in Germany, she met Jesus Christ and began exposing the errors and dangers of Bultmann's methodology.

more and more. Our beliefs can change and become more accurate as we come to the Bible with an open mind and allow the Bible itself to shape what we believe.

A young child looked with doubt and suspicion at a bowl of banana pudding. She had never seen anything like it. It smelled strange to her. The yellow color caused her to think it was spoiled. The more she looked at the dessert, the surer she was that it would taste bad. She had not tasted it, but she was convinced that it tasted terrible. Her mother encouraged her to take a bite of the pudding. The child shook her head, “No!” She held her lips tightly together and made a terrible face. The mother insisted that the child taste the dessert. But the child continued to refuse. She assumed that the dessert was bad. Finally, the mother forced the child to eat a small bite of the pudding. The child screamed, cried tears, and spit the dessert out on the table. Because of her outlook, the sweet, delicious dessert tasted terrible to her.

The authors of this course believe that our beliefs either hinder or help us interpret the Bible. Bad beliefs of distrust, doubt, or bias look at the Bible through a lens that distorts it. Good beliefs guide us to the meaning God intends us to receive.

Liberal scholars assume that the Gospels do not give an accurate account of Jesus. So, these scholars cannot interpret the Gospels in the way that the biblical writers intended. Liberals, like Bultmann, insist that we must look *behind* and *beyond* the words of the Gospels to discover what the truth was *before* the Gospels twisted it. They might also teach that the Gospels only have something to teach us about our existence, not about history. In contrast, we conservative scholars accept the Gospels as accurate and reliable. We believe that the God who made us has given us an accurate book to guide us. So as we read the Gospels, we are able to accept the plain truth that the biblical writers wrote.

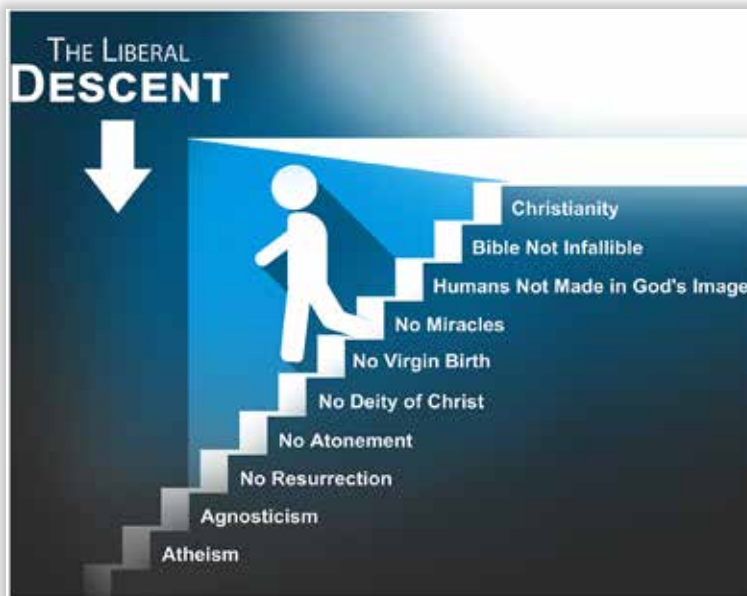


Figure 1.3 The descent of the liberal theologians

**Application and Affirmation.** In this course, we will use little time to debate with liberals and unbelievers. We believe that the Bible is true, accurate, and dependable. We cherish it above all books and believe it is the Word of God to us. As we read the Bible, we open our hearts to understand and know God. And we invite Him to cleanse, perfect, and guide our lives with biblical truth.

EVERY BELIEVER SHOULD LEARN TO EXPLAIN OUR BELIEFS ABOUT THE BIBLE.

Every believer should learn to explain our beliefs about the Bible. In Lessons 1–3, let’s examine five **beliefs** (A–E) of conservative followers of Christ about the Bible. We will study the first belief (Point A) in this lesson, Points B & C in Lesson 2, and Points D & E in Lesson 3.



**Q 11** ➤ How did the young child’s assumption and belief affect the way banana pudding tasted to her?

**Q 12** ➤ How does doubting and distrusting the Bible affect our understanding of it? Illustrate.

**Q 13** ➤ How do liberals and conservatives approach the Bible differently? Illustrate.



**Q 14** ➤ If people assume that spiritual gifts have ceased, how will this affect their interpretation of Scriptures like 1 Corinthians 1:7 and 1 Corinthians 12–14?

**Q 15** ➤ If people believe that we cannot fall away from Christ, how does this belief affect their interpretation of verses like Galatians 5:4, 1 Timothy 4:1, or 1 Timothy 5:8?

Lesson	Five Beliefs of Conservative Followers of Christ
1	A. We believe that God revealed the Bible to humans as His inspired, inerrant, infallible Word.
2	B. We believe that the Bible is God's Word because of the evidence.
	C. We believe that God guided the selection of the canon—the 66 books of the Bible.
3	D. We believe that God watched over the process of copying and translating the Bible.
	E. We believe that God gave the Bible as the main authority over our faith and actions.

Figure 1.4 Five beliefs of conservative followers of Christ (A–E)

**A. We believe that God revealed the Bible to humans as His inspired, inerrant, infallible Word.**

**Q 16** ↗ What are some ways God reveals Himself?

As we study theology, accepting the Bible as God's Word is a basic belief. Look closely at **four** key words in Point A.

- **\*Revealed.** Through the Bible, God *reveals* Himself—He *shows* Himself, His will, and His plan. What God *reveals in Scripture* is necessary for us to know Him. Faith comes through the Word of God—whether written or spoken. There is some spiritual truth that we cannot know unless God *reveals* it to us. As our Creator and Father, God delights to *reveal* Himself to us. God reveals some things about Himself through creation, godly examples, visions, dreams, miracles, and personal encounters with God. He reveals Himself through Jesus Christ, but it is the Scriptures that tell us about Jesus! Oral accounts often change as they pass from one person to another. In contrast, a written account tends to be more accurate. Throughout the history of humanity, the Bible is the most complete and accurate way we know God. This is why we affirm that the Bible is our standard for faith and practice. Scripture is the primary way God reveals Himself to humans across the centuries and



Figure 1.5 God's Word to us: revealed, inspired, inerrant, and infallible

**Q 17** ↗ Why does Christianity affirm that the Bible is our main source of spiritual revelation from God?

around the world. Jesus told the Sadducees that they erred because they did not know the Scriptures nor the power of God (Matt. 22:29). Knowing God's power is important. But notice that Jesus mentioned that the Sadducees did not know the Scriptures *before* He mentioned that they did not know the power of God. As we study the *Scriptures*, they give us a clear path to knowing God and His power.

**Q 18** ↗ Which 2 passages of Scripture are the clearest statements on the inspiration of Scripture? (PLEASE memorize these two passages.)


- **\*Inspired.** The Bible is *God-breathed*. His Spirit *carried along* the writers so that they wrote what He wanted them to write (quote 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21). As Biblical Theology and the cover of this book emphasize, each writer of Scripture had a unique orientation, but God was in charge. He oversaw and superintended what all writers of the Bible wrote.

**Q 19** ↗ In what sense is the Bible "the breath of God"?

**Q 20** ↗ "All Scripture is \_\_\_\_\_ and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17).

**Q 21** ↗ "Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were \_\_\_\_\_" (2 Pet. 1:20-21).

We have Scripture because the Holy Spirit breathed into God's messengers and carried them along (2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21). The Holy Spirit empowered and enabled writers of Scripture in different ways. Read the references in Figure 1.6 and summarize what happened *before* these writers wrote Scripture.

**Q 22**  Complete Figure 1.6 on how the Spirit empowered and inspired writers in different ways.


Verses	Your Summaries of How the Holy Spirit Empowered and Inspired Writers of Scripture in Various Ways
Exod. 17:14	
Jer. 30:1-2	
Eccles. 12:9-10	
Luke 1:1-4	
1 Thess. 2:13	
Rev. 1:9-11	

**Figure 1.6** Practice summarizing ways the Holy Spirit empowered and inspired writers of Scripture.

God *inspired* the apostles and others to write Scripture. Sometimes the Spirit led them to interpret passages in ways that surprise us. For example, Matthew applies to Christ the words, “*Out of Egypt I called my son*” (Matt. 2:15; Hos. 11:1). If we study these words in Hosea without Matthew’s comment, we would think these words refer only to the Exodus. Through *inspiration*, Matthew sees a parallel meaning. Israel went into Egypt as a small nation. Later, God led the nation out of Egypt. Likewise, Jesus, God’s Son and Israel’s Messiah, went to Egypt as an infant. Later, after King Herod died, God led Jesus out of Egypt. We believe the Spirit *inspired* Matthew to interpret and apply Hosea’s passage to Christ. Matthew sees portions of the history of Israel reflected and elevated in Jesus, the Messiah. Twelve times in his Gospel, Matthew speaks of how Jesus *fulfilled* Old Testament Scriptures. Jesus fulfilled Scripture in the sense that He filled it full of the highest meaning it could have. All of the Prophets and the Law looked forward to Jesus, the Messiah. He fulfilled the highest hopes, promises, and prophecies of all who expected Him. The Spirit showed this to Matthew. But today, the canon of Scripture is closed. And we do not claim the same authority of inspiration for believers that we recognize in the apostles, prophets, or teachers. It is an error for anyone to claim by *\*illumination* an insight contrary to what biblical writers wrote by *inspiration*. The Spirit does indeed guide preachers and teachers today. But let us turn away from any teachings that contradict the *inspired* words of the prophets and apostles.<sup>3</sup> It is well for us to be guided by Paul’s words, “*Do not go beyond what is written*” in Scripture (1 Cor. 4:6).




- **\*Inerrant.** The Bible is *truth without error*: God is the author of the Bible and God cannot lie (Num. 23:19; Ps. 92:15; Titus 1:2; Heb. 6:18). “*God is light; in Him there is no darkness at all*” (1 John 1:5).

**Q 23**  What is your favorite Scripture that affirms that the Bible is inerrant—truth without error?

Because of unbelief, arrogance, and lack of knowledge, humans have often accused the Bible of containing errors. The arguments of demons and humans against God’s book are not new. Jesus rebuked the Sadducees because they *did not believe* the Scriptures or know God’s power (Matt. 22:29). Another time, our Lord said to doubters, <sup>46</sup> “*If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me.*” <sup>47</sup> *But since you do not believe what he wrote, how are you going to believe what I say?*” (John 5:46-47). Ancient church leaders like Paul, Peter, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Augustine had to defend Scripture against its critics. The reformers Zwingli, Calvin, and Luther accepted the *full reliability of the Scriptures* and defended them against God’s enemies. And the battle for the Bible continues to the present day.

The four Gospels describe in different ways the writing above Christ on the cross. Critics of the Bible say the Gospel writers made a mistake. But a possible explanation follows.



	<b>Summary of All 3 Translations:</b> <i>The King of the Jews</i>	<b>Mark 15:26</b>
	→ <b>Hebrew Translation:</b> <i>This is Jesus, the King of the Jews</i>	Matt. 27:37
	→ <b>Greek Translation:</b> <i>This is the King of the Jews</i>	Luke 23:38
	→ <b>Latin Translation:</b> <i>Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews</i>	John 19:19

**Figure 1.7** John tells us that the writing on the cross was in three languages: Latin, Greek, and Hebrew (likely Jewish Aramaic.) Some see the different descriptions in the Gospels as proof that the Gospel writers contradict one another. However, there are other explanations. All of the Gospels have the most important phrase in common (“King of the Jews”), which Mark quotes. It was usual for him to summarize or shorten things. One author even suggests that Matthew, Luke, and John were basing what they wrote off the three different languages on the sign.<sup>4</sup>



**Sabio says**, “Don’t worry over what critics say about God’s Word! The Bible is like an iron anvil that wears out every hammer that slams against it.”


Drs. Menzies and Horton note 10 reasons why critics attack the Bible and claim it contains errors (Figure 1.8).

**Q 24**  What are some mistakes of critics who attack the Bible and claim it has errors?

#	Ten Possible Mistakes of Critics Who Attack the Bible and Claim It Contains Errors
1	Failure to read exactly what the Bible says
2	False interpretation of the Bible from overlooking ancient historical, cultural, and literary contexts
3	Wrong ideas about the Bible as a whole. Scripture accurately records the record of what some said, even when they were wrong. See quotes of Satan, “ <i>Skin for skin...</i> ” (Job 2:4) and Peter, “ <i>Even if all...</i> ” (Matt. 26:33).
4	Failure to discern that some biblical accounts condense what is said elsewhere or report matters from a perspective that the Spirit wants to emphasize. For example, the Spirit led Matthew to write mainly to Jews, so he emphasizes a Jewish perspective.
5	Chronological challenges due to various systems of measuring time by the Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans. Even Israel and Judah sometimes differed in methods of counting years in kings’ reigns.
6	Surface conflicts in numbers because some passages use round numbers and others are more exact due to the purpose of the writer
7	Errors made in copying some ancient manuscripts. Comparing manuscripts has corrected most of these copyist errors. (We do <i>not</i> claim that every person who copied the Bible did so perfectly! But we believe that God carried along the original writers of Scripture.)
8	Failure to recognize that a Hebrew or Greek word can have more than one meaning
9	Failure to discern that the Bible uses common, everyday language, not scientific language. For example, the Bible speaks of sunrise and sunset, just as people speak of these events all over the world today. This is not an error, even though God (author of the Bible) and people today know that the earth is moving in relation to the sun. It just represents how we speak.
10	Jumping to a conclusion too soon. Dr. Horton heard a professor at Harvard University say the Bible was wrong when it claimed sevenfold lamps existed in the time of Moses (Exod. 37:23-24). Later, Dr. Horton watched an archaeologist at Dothan dig up a sevenfold lampstand dated 1400 B.C., around the time of Moses!

**Figure 1.8** Ten possible mistakes of critics who claim that the Bible contains errors



**Q 25**  Why is it wise to avoid criticizing the Bible?

Studying math at a university, Quentin thought he had discovered a mistake in the textbook. He was proud and eager to announce in class that he had caught the author in an error. Before class, he was telling Doug about the error. Doug smiled and said, “I think the author is correct.” Then Doug helped Quentin understand the text. That was over 50 years ago. But Quentin has always been thankful that he did not criticize that human author in public and humiliate himself.



**Sabio says** that wise people do not criticize the author of the Bible. If we have questions about the truthfulness of Scripture, it is better to seek help from friends or wait until we see God in heaven and let Him explain things we did not see clearly on earth. Paul asks, “*Who are you, O man, to talk back to God?*” (Rom. 9:20).

Humility is a great virtue when we study the Bible, the revelation of God Almighty to humans on earth. It is good for us to practice humility, for now we see but a poor reflection (1 Cor. 13:12). Let us imitate the humility of earth’s most brilliant people, like Einstein, who said that we do not know 1/1000<sup>th</sup> of 1% about what has been revealed to us. Likewise, let us strive for the humility Job learned after accusing God of making mistakes:

<sup>1</sup>*The LORD said to Job: <sup>2</sup>“Will the one who contends with the Almighty correct him? Let him who accuses God answer him!” <sup>3</sup>Then Job answered the LORD: <sup>4</sup>‘I am unworthy—how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. <sup>5</sup>I spoke once, but I have no answer—twice, but I will say no more’* (Job 40:1-5).

- **\*Infallible.** The Bible *cannot be wrong*. God’s Word is totally *trustworthy* and will not lead us astray (2 Sam. 7:28; Ps. 119:43, 160; John 17:17, 19; Col. 1:5). So let us pay attention to the Scriptures as to a bright light shining in the night (2 Pet. 1:19-21). The Bible will not lead us astray. It will lead us to heaven. The whole Bible shows that God delights to be Revealer, Creator, Father, Missionary, and King. The nature of God guarantees that He has given us a book we can trust.



**Q 26** What lesson should we learn from Job and Einstein?

**Q 27** What is the difference between inerrant and infallible?

**Q 28** Why do you think we can trust the Bible?

**Q 29** Please answer the questions in Figure 1.9.

Reference	Questions to Answer on How God’s Words Affect Us (Gen.–Rev.)
Gen. 1:3; 2 Cor. 4:6	In which 2 ways did God create light in the darkness?
Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4	How is our daily need for bread like our daily spiritual need?
Deut. 28:1-68	How does our response to God’s Word shape our destiny?
Ps. 107:1-20	How does God uplift, comfort, restore, encourage, and heal His people?
Ps. 119:105-111	Which blessings come to us from loving the Creator’s words?
Isa. 55:10-11	What promise does God give about His Word’s effectiveness?
Matt. 7:24-27 Luke 11:28	What contrast does God make among hearers of God’s Word?
Matt. 8:8-9	What insight did a centurion have about faith in the words of Jesus?
Matt. 8:23-27	What amazed the disciples about the words of Jesus?
Matt. 15:1-9	Why did Jesus call some Pharisees hypocrites?
John 1:12-14	What effect does receiving the Incarnate Word of God have?
John 5:28-29	How and why will Jesus resurrect all the dead?
John 6:63	What effect do Christ’s words have on those who submit to them?
John 8:31, 47	How can we identify true followers of Jesus?
John 12:48	What effect will the words of Jesus have on those who reject them?
Eph. 6:17	How does the Holy Spirit use God’s Word to help believers overcome the world?
Rom. 10:8-17	What are some ways God’s Word enables salvation?
2 Tim. 3:16	How is the Word of God vital to God’s workers?
1 Thess. 2:13	What great contrast does Paul make about words?
Heb. 1:2	How has God spoken to the world in these last days?
Heb. 4:12-13	How does Hebrews personify God’s Word? In what sense is the Word alive?

Figure 1.9 continued on next page

Continued from previous page

James 1:18-22	Through His Word how did God use early believers as a type of firstfruits?
1 Pet. 2:2	What benefit does Peter identify for desiring and loving the Word of God?
2 Pet. 1:19-21	How does Peter’s reference to God’s Word remind us of Genesis 1:3?
Rev. 19:15, 21	Near the end of the biblical story of creation, how does God destroy His enemies?
Rev. 21:1-5	How do you think God will create the new heaven and new earth?

**Figure 1.9 Practice answering questions on key Scriptures that guide us to love, desire, honor, and submit to the powerful Word of God.**

### Our Beliefs About the Bible Shape Our Theology—Part 2

Lesson

2

- Goal A:** Explain how evidence on each of these topics points to God as the author of the Bible: unity, relevance, morality, prophecy, society, accuracy, extraordinary signs, and durability.
- Goal B:** Define “canon.” Analyze the process of how books in the Old and New Testaments were chosen.
- Goal C:** Summarize why Protestant Bibles do not include the books of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha.

Lesson	Five Beliefs of Conservative Followers of Christ
1	<b>A.</b> We believe that God revealed the Bible to humans as His inspired, inerrant, infallible Word.
2	<b>B.</b> We believe that the Bible is God’s Word because of the evidence.
	<b>C.</b> We believe that God guided the selection of the canon—the 66 books of the Bible.
3	<b>D.</b> We believe that God watched over the process of copying and translating the Bible.
	<b>E.</b> We believe that God Gave the Bible as the main authority over our faith and actions.

**Figure 1.10 Five beliefs of conservative followers of Christ (A–E)**

#### B. We believe that the Bible is God’s Word because of the evidence.

Let’s consider *eight types of evidence that point to God* as the author of the Bible.

**Q 30** How does the unity of the Bible reveal the breath of God from Genesis to Revelation?

**1. Unity.** The Bible displays *unity* and *harmony*, despite a diversity of authors and circumstances. Scripture comes to us from 40 writers, spanning a period of 1500 years! Consider the diversity in their times and backgrounds. This group of 40 writers includes a politician, a fisherman, a farmer, a doctor, kings, a soldier, a rabbi, a shepherd—and many others. They wrote in different places, such as the wilderness, the palace, and the prison. They wrote in various circumstances—in peace and in war, in prosperity and in famine, at home and in exile. The genres or types of literature they wrote include history, law, poetry, prophecy, allegory, biography, personal letters, and revelations. Each writer had a different background; his own experiences; and his own personality, perspectives, strengths, and weaknesses. The 40 authors wrote on different continents in three different languages and covered hundreds of topics! Yet together, the writings of these inspired authors give us a *unified* story of God’s relationship with humanity. Their unity is not shallow but binds the whole together. The more deeply we study the Bible, the more profound we discover its unity to be. In contrast, we recognize

**EIGHT TYPES OF  
EVIDENCE THAT POINT  
TO GOD  
AS THE AUTHOR OF  
THE BIBLE.**


false teachings because they conflict with the unity of Scripture. Unlike all other books, the Bible with its unity reveals the breath and fingerprints of God from beginning to end.


**2. Relevance.** The Bible shines light on human life in every generation and in every nation. Through the Bible, the voice of God speaks to the soul of every person. As people read the Bible, the Bible reads them, searching the heart (Heb. 4:12-13). God's Word directs the reader upward, toward the Creator, who alone can answer our questions. The Scriptures give us purpose and meaning for living. The Bible transforms those who embrace its message. Truly, the Bible is the power of God unto salvation (Rom. 1:16). It creates faith in the heart and leads readers to a dynamic encounter with the living God (Rom. 10:17).


**3. Morality.** Scripture calls us to standards of behavior that are higher than those of common men and women. The Bible calls us to love, truth, faithfulness, righteousness, mercy, and holiness. In each of the books of the Bible we find ethical standards that are above those of the world. The standards of the Bible still lead believers on paths that are kind, fair, and best for humanity. The moral standards of the Bible deal with common aspects of life. The Bible is frank about human failure and sin. Even so, obeying external standards falls short of the righteousness that Scripture requires. So the Bible relates both our failures and our salvation to our relationship with the holy God who loves us. Through Scripture, God does not call us to be reformed by written standards. Rather, He calls us to be transformed through the blood of Christ, a new heart, a new creation in Christ, and a living relationship with the Spirit who dwells within believers. As evidence of this transformation, His Spirit bears witness within us that we are the children of God (Rom. 8:16). And as we are filled with the Spirit and walk in the Spirit, the righteous requirements of God's law are fully met in us (Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 36:26-27; Rom. 8:4; Rom. 13:8-10; Gal. 5:16-25; 1 Jn. 5:3).


**4. Prophecy.** The authors of Scripture foretold many events centuries before the events occurred. The accuracy of these biblical prophecies is amazing. Many of these prophecies relate to Israel and the nations around them. For example, Isaiah prophesied, long before destruction came, that the Jews would rebuild Jerusalem and its temple (Isa. 44:28). Isaiah and Jeremiah prophesied that although God would rescue Judah from the Assyrians, Judah would fall to the Babylonians (Isa. 39:6; Jer. 25:9-12). And Isaiah names Cyrus, more than 100 years before Cyrus's birth, as the leader God would use to restore Judah. Likewise, the Bible contains many prophecies about Christ that were made hundreds of years *before* their fulfillment. These look forward to His virgin birth (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:23), the place of His birth (Micah 5:2-5; Matt. 2:6), the manner of His death (Ps. 22:16; John 19:36), the place of His burial (Isa. 53:9; Matt. 27:57-60), His resurrection from the grave (Ps. 16:10; Acts 2:27), and His Second Coming (Dan. 7:13; Rev. 1:7). We recognize that a prophecy is false if it does not happen, but the prophecy is from God if it comes to pass (Deut. 18:20-22; Jer. 28:9; Ezek. 33:33). The accurate predictions of Scripture, given hundreds of years before their fulfillment, are strong evidence that the God over history revealed these truths to human writers.


**5. Society.** The influence of the Bible on people is powerful evidence for us to believe the Scriptures. The Bible is so loved and respected that it has been printed in over 3500<sup>5</sup> languages! More people have read the Bible than any other book in history. The principles of the Bible have served as the foundations for the laws of many nations. Great changes happen as people read, preach, and obey the Bible. Individuals, families, groups, and nations testify and acknowledge their debt to the Bible for the light it has shined on the paths they have walked. Wherever people read and obey the Bible, it makes the world a better place to live and lifts the dignity of men, women, and children. The impact of the Bible on society is powerful evidence that Scripture is the Word of God. More than 30% of the world (more than 2 billion people) believe that the Bible is the Word of God to us.


**Q 31**  How does the Bible, more than all other books, reveal purpose and meaning for living?


**Q 32**  Explain: The Bible does not call us to be reformed by written laws but to be transformed.


**Q 33**  What are some examples of how prophecy in Scripture points to God as the author of the Bible?

**Q 34**  How is the influence of the Bible on society powerful evidence that God inspired the Scriptures?

**Q 35**  What is an example of how history or archaeology shows that the Bible came from God?

**Q 36**  In the Bible, how did God use signs and wonders to turn people's hearts upward? Illustrate.

**Q 37**  What are some signs and wonders you have seen that point to God as the author of Scripture?

**Q 38**  How does the story about Voltaire illustrate the Bible's durability?

**6. Accuracy.** History and archaeology (scientific digging and research to uncover historical facts) verify that the Bible is truthful and reliable in what it says about people, places, customs, events, and science. At times, people have accused the Bible of error. For example, some scholars thought there was no writing until after the time of Moses (about 1400–1500 B.C.). But archaeology and science have proven that writing goes back as far as 3000 B.C. Likewise, critics of the Bible denied that the Hittites ever existed, although the Bible mentions them 22 times. But as the years passed, archaeologists kept digging and proved that the Hittites were once a major power in the Middle East. Arguing with the critics of the Bible is like standing on the sea shore and arguing with the waves that come in. But time proves that all critics of the Bible are in error and the Bible is truthful. People make mistakes, but God is perfect. His promise to you is that those who put their trust in Him and His Word will never be ashamed (Rom. 10:11).<sup>6</sup>

**7. Extraordinary signs.** We include *signs and wonders* as a form of evidence with caution. But they are worth mentioning, especially for us Pentecostals! Signs and wonders alone can be dangerous guides. False christs and the final antichrist will lead many astray with signs and wonders (Matt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:9; Rev. 12:9). Jesus said that an evil and adulterous generation sought a sign. Even so, Jesus gave His evil generation the glorious sign of the Resurrection, comparing himself to Jonah (Matt. 12:39-40). Signs by themselves can lead us the wrong way. But together with the other 7 types of evidence in this section, signs and wonders are valid evidence that God is speaking. We do not have time to mention all the verses that illustrate signs and wonders as evidence for the true Word of God. Throughout the Old Testament, the prophets did signs and wonders to give evidence that they spoke the words of God. In the New Testament, we see signs and wonders as evidence that the words of Christ are the words of God (John 10:37-38; 14:6). The miracles of Jesus accredited His message (Acts 2:22). His first sign, turning water into wine, helped many believe in Him (John 2:1-11). Likewise, after the day of Pentecost, as the disciples preached and witnessed, God confirmed His Word with signs and wonders (Mark 16:20-21; 1 Cor. 2:4-5; Heb. 2:3-4). Throughout the New Testament, we see that God confirmed His Word with signs and wonders. There are too many illustrations in Acts for us to explore here. But the pattern is clear. Signs and wonders are often evidence that God's Word has been shared or is about to be shared (Acts 2:4; 3:6-10; 4:4; 5:12-16; 8:5-7, 9, 13; 9:32-35; 19:11-12; 28:7-10). Throughout the history of the Church, signs and wonders have often followed when believers have preached the full message of God's Word. This is powerful evidence that the Bible is the Word of God.

**8. Durability.** The Bible overcomes its enemies in every generation. Few books survive time. How many books do you have in your home or your city that were written more than 1000 years ago? Many books are not even 100 years old. But there are thousands of ancient biblical manuscripts. What makes the survival of the Bible even more amazing is that many have tried to destroy it. In A.D. 303, the Roman Emperor Diocletian commanded people to destroy every copy of the Bible. The Bible has received more persecution than any other book. Yet it remains and has been read more and loved more than any other book! One French unbeliever named Voltaire said that within 100 years, the Bible and Christianity would fade away. But 50 years after his death in 1778, a Bible Society used his house and press to produce stacks of Bibles!

<sup>24</sup> "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field; the grass withers and the flowers fall, <sup>25</sup>but the word of the Lord stands forever. And this is the word that was preached to you" (1 Pet. 1:24-25).

"Heaven and earth will pass away, but God's Word will never pass away" (Matt. 24:35).

**C. We believe that God guided the selection of the canon—the 66 books of the Bible.**

Figure 1.11 shows you the four main parts of Point C. As you read each part, fill in Figure 1.11 by writing a sentence that summarizes the main point of each part.

**Q 39** ✎ Summarize each of the 4 main points about God’s guiding the canon—the 66 books in the Bible.

Four Main Points on the Canon	Your Summaries on God’s Guiding the Canon—the 66 Books in the Bible
1. Books in the Old Testament	
2. Books in the New Testament	
3. Books in the Apocrypha	
4. Books in the Pseudepigrapha	

**Figure 1.11 Practice summarizing the four main topics related to God’s guiding the canon—the list of books in our Bible.**

The word *Bible* means “book” in Latin. It is good to think of the Bible as the book above all other books. But it is also important to recognize that the Bible contains 66 books. What were the *standards* for choosing the 66 books in the Bible? We refer to the *list* of 66 books in our Bible as the *\*canon*. Long ago, the word *canon* meant *standard*. Today, the *canon* refers to the *list* of books in our Bible.

**1. Books in the Old Testament.** The 39 books of our Old Testament are the same writings that the Jews accepted as Scripture at the time of Jesus.<sup>7</sup> In those days the Jews referred to their Scriptures as a fixed, well-known group of books—what they call the *Tanakh*. Jesus, the apostles, and other biblical authors show in many ways that they saw these writings as God’s very words (Heb. 3:7). Quotes like “*It is written*” show that the Jewish Scriptures had the authority of God Himself (Matt. 4:10).

The list of books in the Old Testament was an example for making a list of books in the New Testament. Under the Old Covenant, God’s people referred to a list of inspired books. Therefore, we would expect God’s people under the New Covenant to refer to a list of inspired books.

**2. Books in the New Testament.** The first believers did not have New Testament Scriptures. They depended on the Jewish Scriptures, the oral teachings of Jesus, the teachings of the apostles, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Even after the New Testament authors finished their writings, it took years for the whole Church to put them all together.

We consider these books to be inspired by God. The 27 books in the New Testament were chosen because they met *three* standards:

- The authors were apostles or those who worked closely with an apostle. (These books showed signs that they came from the first century.)
- The message was the orthodox, gospel truth of the apostles.<sup>8</sup>
- The whole Church accepted and recognized these ancient 27 writings were old enough to have come from the time of the apostles. There was no doubt or controversy about any of their content.

Jesus promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit would remind them of everything He said (John 14:26). We believe that the Spirit guided the biblical writers to remember and record God’s truth for us (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21).

The list of our 27 books of the New Testament was formed over a period of three centuries. During those years, church leaders discussed the list many times. But they did not force the list on church members. Rather, the books that were really from God testified

**Q 40** ✎ What does the word “*canon*” mean?

**Q 41** ✎ How did we get the 39 books in the Old Testament?

**Q 42** ✎ Which 3 standards did each book of the New Testament meet to be included in the canon?

**Q 43** ✎ How did the Holy Spirit help believers identify biblical writers (John 14:26)?

for themselves. The Spirit of God in believers testified about which writings were from God.<sup>9</sup> The list of our 27 books as we know it today was approved by A.D. 367.<sup>10</sup> But even before this, believers had already approved the books. The church councils merely stamped what the Church already believed. It is a matter of faith to believe that God guided the early church in choosing the books in our Bible.<sup>11</sup>

**Q 44** ➤ Define the words “*canon*” and “*Apocrypha*.”

**Q 45** ➤ Why do we reject the books of the *Apocrypha*?

**Q 46** ➤ When did the Catholic Church decide to accept the 7 books of the *Apocrypha*?

**3. Books in the Apocrypha, but NOT in the Protestant Bible.** The Catholic Bible and some Eastern Orthodox Bibles contain some books that were not a part of the Hebrew Scriptures.<sup>12</sup> We group these books into a class called the \*Apocrypha. The word *Apocrypha* first meant “hidden books.” Later, it came to mean “not in the canon, or *list* of inspired books.”<sup>13</sup> The books in the Apocrypha contain some truth. But they also contain error. Therefore, they are not worthy to be in the Bible, because God is not the author of lies.

The books in the Apocrypha did not meet the standards set for Scripture. The Catholics did not officially accept them until 1546, at the Council of Trent, a city in Northern Italy. Back then, during the time of Martin Luther, the Catholics accepted seven apocryphal books: Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and 1 and 2 Maccabees. Also, they included minor additions to the books of Esther and Daniel.<sup>14</sup> These seven apocryphal books were in the Septuagint.<sup>15</sup> But all of these books were rejected from the Hebrew Scriptures during Christ’s time. Neither Jesus nor the apostles quote any of the apocryphal books.<sup>16</sup>

Books of the Apocrypha related to the Old Testament. (Some of these books are in the Catholic Bible.)

Books of the Apocrypha Related to the Old Testament		
1. 1 Esdras (Ezra)	6. Wisdom of Solomon	11. Susanna
2. 2 Esdras (Apocalypse of Ezra)	7. Ecclesiasticus (Sirach)	12. Bel and the Dragon
3. Tobit	8. 1 Baruch	13. Prayer of Manasseh
4. Judith	9. Letter of Jeremiah	14. 1 Maccabees
5. Additions to Esther	10. Prayer of Azariah & Song of the Three Young Men <sup>17</sup>	15. 2 Maccabees

Figure 1.12 Jerome’s list of books in the Apocrypha<sup>18</sup>

**Q 47** ➤ How would you explain to a friend why we reject the doctrine of purgatory?

**Illustration/Application.** The doctrine of purgatory is based on a reference in the Apocrypha. *Purgatory* comes from the Latin word *purgare*, which means “to make clean, to purify.” Roman Catholics believe that purgatory is a place where we go after death to be cleansed and purified from our minor sins—before God allows us to enter heaven. The clearest reference in support of purgatory is from 2 Maccabees. If this book does not sound familiar to you, perhaps it is because 2 Maccabees is one of the books of the *Apocrypha* (known to Roman Catholics as the \**Deuterocanonical Books* (second canon books.) The apocryphal books were *not* part of Jewish Scripture and are *not* part of the Protestant Bible. The Jewish scribes excluded the Apocrypha from Scripture because of the many historical errors in it. Since God is not the author of error, He is not the author of the Apocrypha. The same issues caused Jerome (who translated the Bible into Latin for the Roman Catholics) to object to putting the apocryphal books in the Bible. But the Catholic Council of Nicea overruled him. The errors in the apocryphal books are the reason why leaders excluded the Apocrypha from Protestant Bibles during the Reformation.<sup>19</sup> Those who teach the apocryphal doctrine of purgatory do not fully appreciate the book of Hebrews. It teaches that Jesus came to die for our sins *once and for all* (Heb. 7:27; 9:12; 10:9-10). Likewise, Hebrews assures us that through Christ’s blood and the New Covenant, God

will remember our sins no more (Heb. 8:12). Those who teach that believers must be cleansed from sin by suffering in purgatory underestimate the power and the value of the blood Jesus shed to wash away our sins. *We are saved by faith in Jesus Christ and His suffering for us*, not by faith in our own sufferings!

Books of the Pseudepigrapha		
1. 1 Enoch	7. Testament of Job	13. Life of Adam and Eve
2. 2 Enoch	8. Lives of the Prophets	14. Psalms of Solomon
3. 2 Baruch	9. Assumption of Moses	15. Letter of Aristeas
4. 3 Baruch	10. Martyrdom of Isaiah	16. 3 Maccabees
5. Sibylline Oracles	11. Paralipomena (Chronicles) of Jeremiah	17. 4 Maccabees
6. Testaments of the 12 Patriarchs	12. Jubilees	


Figure 1.13 Books of the Pseudepigrapha<sup>20</sup>

**4. Books of the Pseudepigrapha.** The word *\*Pseudepigrapha* means “false writings.” Authors who used false names wrote the books in the Pseudepigrapha. For example, the Enoch of Genesis did not write the book of Enoch, though many of the thoughts in the book may be Enoch’s thoughts. But it is false to say that Enoch wrote the book. Books in the Pseudepigrapha contain some truth. But they also contain false statements. Therefore, they are not worthy to include in the Bible.


Jude 14-15 refers to a prophecy made by Enoch. How did Jude know about this prophecy? Perhaps by oral tradition handed down from parents to their children. Much truth is passed on this way from one generation to the next. The prophecy Jude quotes is also found in the book of Enoch. This book claims that the Enoch of Genesis 5:18-24 was its author. But the book of Enoch did not appear until the first century. We do not know if it was written before or after the book of Jude, but it is clear that the Enoch of Genesis did not write the book of Enoch. However, it may be that Jude and the writer of Enoch referred to the same oral source.<sup>21</sup> Enoch was the seventh generation if we count Adam as the first (Gen. 5:18-24). Jude wrote,

*<sup>14</sup>Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men: “See, the Lord is coming with thousands upon thousands of his holy ones <sup>15</sup>to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against Him” (Jude 14-15).*

The book of Enoch is not in any Bible. It is part of a group of books called the Pseudepigrapha (Figure 1.13). Why did biblical writers sometimes quote from a book that was not completely true? All truth is God’s truth. Paul quoted Greek poets three times to illustrate his points (Acts 17:28; 1 Cor. 15:33; Titus 1:12).<sup>22</sup> This does not mean that everything those poets wrote was true. Using the poet’s words fulfilled Paul’s purposes. Likewise, Jesus referred to a local saying about the weather (Matt. 16:2-3). Another time He quoted a local proverb about a doctor (Luke 4:23). Again, the Lord referred to a tower that fell in Siloam and killed 18 people (Luke 13:4). There are thousands of sayings and events that are true. The Bible refers to some of these, whether they are found in local histories, poets, or other books. Similarly, not all illustrations in sermons come from the Bible. Preachers refer to various truths and events outside of Scripture. Therefore, do not stumble if a biblical writer quotes from a book that is not in the Bible. All truth is God’s truth.

**Q 48**  Did the Enoch of Genesis write the book of Enoch? Explain.



**Q 49**  Why is it acceptable for Jesus and biblical writers to quote sayings outside of the Bible?

So biblical writers felt free to refer to truth wherever the Spirit led them. However, finding truth in some books is like eating fish. You must separate the meat from the bones. Many books contain some truth and some error. In contrast, the Bible contains no errors (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21).

**Lesson 3**

**Our Beliefs About the Bible Shape Our Theology—Part 3**

**Goal A:** Explain and illustrate why we believe God guided the process of copying and translating the Bible.

**Goal B:** Contrast the weakness of human thinking, charisma, and tradition with the strength of God’s Word.

Lesson	Five Beliefs of Conservative Followers of Christ
1	<b>A.</b> We believe that God revealed the Bible to humans as His inspired, inerrant, infallible Word.
2	<b>B.</b> We believe that the Bible is God’s Word because of the evidence.
	<b>C.</b> We believe that God guided the selection of the canon—the 66 books of the Bible.
3	<b>D.</b> We believe that God watched over the process of copying and translating the Bible.
	<b>E.</b> We believe that God gave the Bible as the main authority over our faith and actions.

**Figure 1.14**  
**Five beliefs of conservative followers of Christ (A–E)**

**D. We believe that God watched over the process of copying and translating the Bible.**

**1. Copying** the Scriptures word-for-word was an early method of passing them from place to place—before people had photocopiers, printing, and internet! The scribes who copied Scripture were extremely careful and reliable. However, our beliefs about inspiration and inerrancy refer *only* to the *autographs*—the original writings of Scripture. We realize that it was possible for scribes to make human mistakes. Even so, evaluation has shown that Hebrew copies of the Old Testament and Greek copies of the New Testament are VERY accurate.

**Copies of the Old Testament.** The Old Testament was first written almost entirely in Hebrew, except for small portions of Daniel and Ezra that were written in Aramaic. When the Babylonians destroyed the temple in 586 B.C., some scrolls of the Hebrew Bible (the Tanakh) were burned. Nevertheless, when the Jews returned to Jerusalem, Ezra read from the Law of Moses (Neh. 8:1-6). Soon afterward, Jews began to make copies of what we call the Old Testament again. Copying the Hebrew Scriptures continued from 500 to 100 B.C. Later, in A.D. 70, the Romans burned the temple in Jerusalem and destroyed many copies of the Old Testament Scriptures. Copying the Hebrew Scriptures rose again from A.D. 200 to 500. Scribes followed strict rules. These

GOD WATCHED OVER  
THE PROCESS OF  
COPYING AND TRANSLATING  
THE BIBLE.

included copying only onto a parchment/scroll made from clean animals, using only black ink, making lines on the page before copying letters, and establishing a set column width and spacing (the space of a hair between each letter and the space of a letter between each word.) Also, the scribe had to bathe and be in full Jewish dress

**Q 50** ➤ What is the difference between an autograph and a copy of Scripture?

**Q 51** ➤ In what language was the Old Testament first written?



before beginning to copy the scroll. Finally, about the 8th century A.D., a group of Jewish scribes called the Masoretes began a diligent effort of copying the Scriptures, from Moses to Malachi. Since many Jewish people spoke other languages and were not as familiar with Hebrew, the Masoretes even added vowels to the ancient Hebrew language to assist with proper pronunciation when reading the Scriptures.




**Figure 1.15** Caves where shepherds found some of the Qumran Scrolls in 1946. These were near the Dead Sea in the West Bank (which was then part of Jordan.) These famous scrolls are called the *Dead Sea Scrolls*.



**Figure 1.16** Qumran cave 4, where 90% of the scrolls were found

In 1946, there was a great discovery of Old Testament Scriptures. Some shepherds found some scrolls in caves that had been hidden there in jars for centuries. In the next few years, they found scrolls in 11 caves.<sup>23</sup> These precious scrolls contained manuscripts of all or part of every Old Testament book except Esther. They come from as early as 250 B.C., which is 1000 years earlier than our previous manuscripts of the Hebrew Bible. Their age is based on the scientific method of radio-carbon dating and confirmed by ancient coins in the cave. Comparing these scrolls to the ones we have from A. D. 750, we find that our manuscripts of the Old Testament are unchanged and are extremely accurate. Today we have more than 300 Hebrew manuscripts of Old Testament books to compare with one another. Books written by mere humans come and go, but the Word of God endures forever!

**Q 52**  What are the Dead Sea Scrolls? How was discovering them helpful?



**Figure 1.17**  
A model of a jar used for the Dead Sea scrolls against a blurred background of the Isaiah scroll



**Figure 1.18**  
Manuscripts found in the Qumran Caves near the Dead Sea in Israel

**Q 53** ↗ How is the Word of God different from earthly rulers and kingdoms?



Through more than 2000 years, world empires have come and gone. But God has miraculously protected the Hebrew Old Testament across cities, nations, and continents. Wars have destroyed countries. Cities have crumbled. Rulers have come and gone. Empires have risen, died, and disappeared into history. Yet supernaturally, God has preserved the Hebrew Old Testament through 20 centuries, keeping it free from corruption and variation.

**Q 54** ↗ What is the main point of the illustration on the meter bar?



Scientists conceived of the idea of a meter in 1791. They defined a *meter* as one ten-millionth of the shortest distance from the North Pole to the equator, passing through Paris, France. For practical purposes, they made one platinum bar that was the length of a meter and kept this original meter bar in Paris. Then they made 30 copies of the original meter bar and distributed them to key locations on the earth. As time passed, people produced thousands of *meter sticks* that were copies of the 30 copies. These copies were made from metal or sometimes wood. In 1983, the length of a meter was updated and defined as a certain distance traveled at the speed of light. Even this definition of the length of a meter was reworded in 2019! Today, you would need to be a scientist and study many years to understand how to calculate the official, original length of a meter. But for common people, using a wooden meter stick is accurate enough to measure whatever is desired! Likewise, we do not need the original Hebrew and Greek manuscripts of the Bible or the copies of these originals. There are many accurate versions of the Bible in various languages that allow us to study theology and understand what God wants us to know about Him!



**Figure 1.19** An original platinum bar in Paris, France showed the official length of a meter.<sup>24</sup>

**Q 55** ↗ How many hand-written ancient copies of the Greek New Testament do we have today?

**Copies of the New Testament.** Today we have more than 5,600 ancient, hand-written copies (Greek manuscripts) of the New Testament. Amazing! Some of these copies come from the third and fourth centuries. One fragment (partial copy) of the Gospel of John comes from about A.D. 125—just 30 years after the original was written. In contrast to other ancient writings, God has preserved for us thousands of copies of the books of the New Testament.

THERE ARE MANY  
ACCURATE VERSIONS OF  
THE BIBLE IN VARIOUS  
LANGUAGES.

**Q 56** ↗ Why do some top scholars believe that John 7:53–8:11 belongs in our Bible?

**Application.** There are some variations or very small differences in the copies of the books of the Bible. (We call these variations in Hebrew or Greek manuscripts *textual variants*.) For example, John 7:53–8:11 is in some copies of John but not in others. This raises the question, “Should the story of the woman caught in adultery be in our Bibles?” John 7:53–8:11 is *not* in some of the most trusted Greek manuscripts. But it is in *many* Greek manuscripts. A large segment of the early church believed that this passage belongs in Scripture. Many scholars, such as F. F. Bruce, agree that John 7:53–8:11 is a part of Scripture.<sup>25</sup> Some church leaders, like Augustine, think that strict Jewish scribes could have deleted this passage because it showed too much grace to those who committed adultery.<sup>26</sup> Like the great scholar Bruce Metzger, we believe that this passage belongs in the Bible because no scribe would have invented a story that forgives adultery.<sup>27</sup> It is also possible that even if John did not include this story in the original manuscript, the story is true and another scribe thought it should be included. One thing is certain: John 7:53–8:11 agrees with the way Jesus acted and taught in

similar situations. In John 4, He knew all the secret sins of the woman at the well, yet He offered her forgiveness and the water of eternal life. And when a woman known for her many sins anointed Jesus and washed His feet with tears of repentance, He forgave her at once (Luke 7:36-50). So this story of John 7:53–8:11 tells us nothing new about Jesus; it just confirms what we already know about His love and compassion for sinners.

**2. Translations** of the Bible are versions of the Bible translated into languages such as English, Spanish, and Chinese—languages in which the Bible was not first written. God has always loved all people. Biblical authors wrote the first Scriptures in Hebrew, the language of the Israelites. But recall God’s purpose for choosing Abraham and raising up the Jewish nation. God promised to bless all the nations of the earth through Abraham (Gen. 12:3; 22:18). And God called the nation of Israel to be a kingdom of priests to the other nations (Exod. 19:6). On the whole, Israel failed to be a light to the nations. But God did give us the Messiah and the Hebrew Scriptures through Israel. Over the centuries, the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament have been translated into many languages.

As you read the next few paragraphs, describe each of these translations: Septuagint, Vulgate, Wycliffe, Tyndale. Write your explanations in Figure 1.20.

**Q 57** ↪ Give a brief explanation of each translation in Figure 1.20.

Translations	Your Summaries of Four Key Translations of Scripture
Septuagint	
Vulgate	
Wycliffe	
Tyndale	

**Figure 1.20 Practice explaining four key translations of Scripture.**

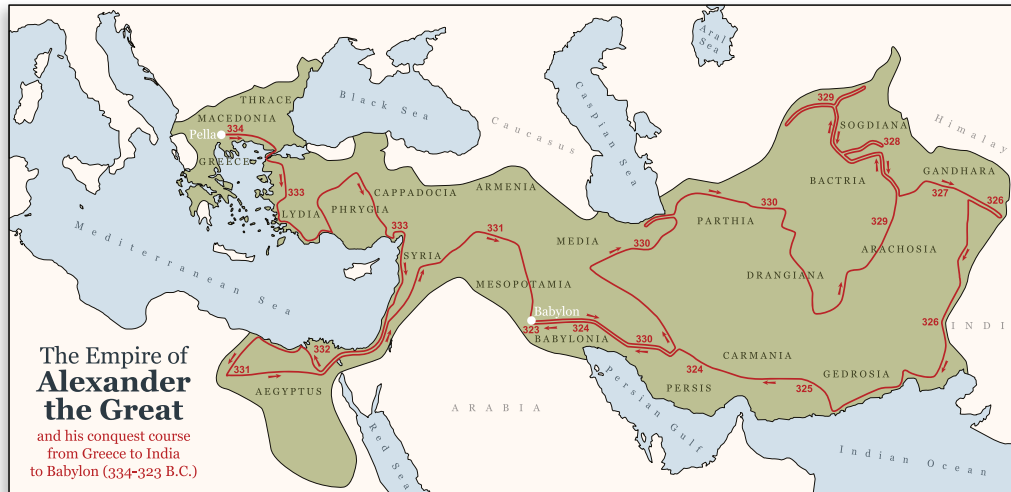
**The Septuagint translation.** The story of Bible versions (translations) began before the birth of Jesus. It is inspiring to see how God used a Greek ruler to prepare the world for the Scriptures. Alexander the Great lived from 356–323 B.C. Before he died of a fever at the age of 33, he raised up more than 70 cities and created an empire that stretched across three continents and covered around two million square miles. The entire kingdom stretched from Greece in the west to the Danube in the north to Egypt in the south and as far as the Indian Punjab to the east. This huge Greek kingdom linked with a large network of trade and businesses that were united by the Greek language and culture. Wherever Alexander’s rule and influence spread, the masses learned to speak and read Greek. The city of Alexandria in Egypt became the center of Greek language, education, and culture. Jews living in Alexandria wanted the Hebrew Scriptures in Greek. Over the period of 250–150 B.C., Jewish scholars gave the world the wonderful gift of the *Septuagint*, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures from Genesis to Malachi. After Pentecost, believers often quoted from the Septuagint translation as they preached Christ, since so much of the world spoke Greek! Likewise, the Holy Spirit directed writers of the New Testament to write in *Koine* Greek—the Greek that common people spoke. It is amazing to see how God used Greek pagans to prepare the world to receive the good news of His Son, written in a language much of the world understood.

**Q 58** ↪ How did God use the pagan conqueror Alexander the Great to help expand the kingdom of God?

**Q 59** ↪ What is the Septuagint?



**Figure 1.21 Statue of Alexander the Great in battle (left)**



**Figure 1.22** Map of the Greek kingdom that spread over 2 million square miles. As the Greek kingdom spread, people learned to speak and read Greek. This united much of the world with the Greek language and prepared the world to read the whole Bible in Greek!

**Q 60** ↗ What is the *Vulgate*?

**Q 61** ↖ Why do you think Catholic leaders discouraged people from reading the Bible?

**Q 62** ↗ When did Wycliffe live? What did he translate?

**Q 63** ↖ Why did the Catholic Church persecute followers of Wycliffe, dig up his bones, and burn them?

**Q 64** ↗ How did the invention of the printing press help the Church?

**Q 65** ↖ What huge contribution did William Tyndale give to the Church?

**Q 66** ↗ In Tyndale's day, why were common people angry with Catholic monks?

**Q 67** ↖ Why did leaders burn Tyndale's English Bibles, strangle him, and burn him in public?

**The Vulgate translation.** Four centuries after Christ, people in the Western Roman empire did not speak Greek anymore. So a scholar named Jerome translated the Bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin, which many common people spoke. This Latin version of the Bible is called *the Vulgate* (based on the Latin words *editio vulgata*, “common version”). The *Vulgate* became the official Latin Bible version of the Catholic Church, Western Europe, and England. In time, common people did not speak Latin at all. Then most of them did not have a Bible they could read and understand. Even so, leaders of the church discouraged new attempts to translate the Bible into a language people could read and understand.

**Wycliffe's translation.** Around A.D. 1380, John Wycliffe translated the *Vulgate* into English, and large numbers of people were converted to Christ. But after his death just 4 years later, persecution of his followers arose because they rejected some of the Catholic doctrines. And in 1415, a general council of the Roman Catholic Church condemned Wycliffe's teachings. In 1428, Bishop Richard Flemming had Wycliffe's bones dug up and burned and his ashes thrown into a stream. They also burned most of the handwritten copies of Wycliffe's English Bible!

**The Tyndale translation.** God was working, despite resistance to giving common people a Bible to read and study. In A.D. 1440, Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press in Germany. Between 1462 and 1522, at least 17 versions of the Bible appeared in German. This helped prepare the way for Martin Luther, who led the Reformation. Printing the Bible in a common language made it possible for people to gain a scriptural understanding of salvation by grace through faith. Luther himself made a new translation of the Bible in German from Hebrew and Greek texts.

Before the work of William Tyndale, scholars had translated large parts of the Bible into English. And John Wycliffe and others had translated all or parts of the Latin Vulgate into English. But Luther influenced William Tyndale, whom many honor for making the first translation of the Bible into English *directly from Hebrew and Greek versions*. Miles Coverdale completed and supplemented Tyndale's work. Tyndale's English New Testament version was printed in 1525. Leaders burned many copies, but thousands of Bibles survived. When leaders could not burn all the Bibles, they strangled Tyndale and burned him at the stake in public (Figure 1.23). In those days, the official church in England was part of the Roman Catholic Church. Afterward, King Henry VIII (the 8th) separated England from the Roman Catholic Church in 1534 because it disapproved of his divorce. (Henry wanted a divorce from his wife because she was barren.) Common people in England approved of King Henry's separating from the Roman Catholic Church and starting the Protestant Church of

England. Why? The common people were poor and angry with Catholic monks. The monks taught that to reach heaven, people had to pay the church for official marriages, baptisms, and burials. As a result, Catholic monks and the Catholic Church were very wealthy. After King Henry started the Protestant Church, there were many new translations of the Bible. Thousands of Bibles were printed and distributed.

**Various translations.** Many English leaders recognized the need for a better translation of the Bible. So King James I appointed scholars to produce a new version, which they completed in 1611. This new Bible became known as the King James Version.



In this course, there is not time to trace the history of all the translations of the Bible. There are histories of Bible translations in many languages. For example, two famous Spanish versions deserve mentioning. Millions of believers have appreciated the 1960 Reina-Valera Bible in Spanish. Likewise, in 1990, the committee on Bible translation headed by Drs. René Padilla and Luciano Jaramillo conducted a translation of both testaments from the ancient manuscripts directly into Spanish. They produced a complete Spanish NVI (Nueva Versión Internacional) Bible in 1999. This Bible continues to grow in popularity.

Today, there are translations of the whole Bible in 717 languages and translations of the New Testament in an additional 1,582 languages. There are also portions of the Bible in 1,196 more languages. So at least part of the Bible is translated into 3,495 languages.<sup>28</sup> Surely these thousands of translations reflect the love of God for all people. It is God’s great desire for all people to be able to read about Him in a language they know well.

Note that *translations* are accurate *versions* of what the Bible *says*, translating the words and meaning accurately from one language into another. In contrast, *paraphrases*, which may be easier to understand, are less accurate—because they include much *interpretation* about what the Bible *means*, rather than presenting what it *says*. Many of us prefer to know exactly what the Bible *says* and come to our own conclusions about what the Bible *means*.

**E. We believe that God gave the Bible as the main authority over our faith and actions. (2 Pet. 1:19-21).**

What we believe about the Bible shapes our theology. In Lessons 1–3, we are studying five of our beliefs about the Scriptures (A–E). The fifth truth, Point E, answers the question: “What is the authority over our theology and our actions?” Over the centuries, we can identify several authorities that affect what people believe and how they behave. Let’s consider *four* of these sources of authority—three that are weak, and one that is strong.<sup>29</sup>



**Figure 1.23** Martin Luther influenced William Tyndale, whom many honor for making the first translation of the Bible into English from Hebrew and Greek versions. Tyndale’s English New Testament version was printed in 1525. Leaders did not want common people to be able to read the Bible. So they burned many copies, but thousands of Bibles survived. When leaders could not burn all the Bibles, they strangled Tyndale and burned him at the stake in public.

**Q 68** ➤ What are 2 famous Spanish translations of the Bible that millions have read?

**Q 69** ➤ How many translations of the New Testament exist today?

**Q 70** ➤ What question are we answering in Point E?

**Q 71** ➤ Give a brief explanation of each source of authority in Figure 1.24.

Sources of Authority	Your Summaries of the Strengths and Weaknesses of Four Sources of Authority
Human thinking	
Human charisma	

Figure 1.24 continued on next page

Continued from previous page

Human tradition	
God's Word	

Figure 1.24 Practice summarizing the strengths and weaknesses of four sources of authority.

- **Human thinking** is valuable and vital. God gave us brains to use. Thank you for using human thinking to read and study this course. We appreciate your being logical and rational. Human thinking is one of the important privileges and blessings of life. But some people elevate human thinking too high. It is an error to exalt human thinking to the level of God or His Word. Some err by calling human thinking the main authority over faith and actions. We call this humanism: it teaches that people are smart enough to solve every problem. In contrast, the Bible teaches that only God is wise enough to rule the world and judge what is right or wrong. We are thankful for the blessings God enables through the human thinking of scientists, psychologists, sociologists, and medical doctors. We are thankful for good teachers. But above all of these, we recognize the Bible as the main authority over our faith and actions. People may lead us astray and depend too much on themselves. The wisest humans make mistakes. The best human thinking is weak compared to the wisdom of Almighty God. Ask Job (Job 40:1-4). But those who trust in God will never be ashamed (Ps. 25:3; Rom. 10:11). He is omniscient, altogether wise, and perfect in understanding.
- **Human charisma** is a second weak source of authority. Charisma refers to the gifts, charm, talents, and abilities of people. It comes from a Greek word that means “spiritual gifts” and is related to the word for grace. Thus Paul refers to the charismata (plural)—the supernatural gifts that God gives believers by grace (1 Cor. 12:4, 9, 28, 30-31). Human leaders with outstanding charisma may have thousands or millions of followers. But even the most gifted charismatic leaders are not worthy of our complete trust and dependence. The best human charismatic leaders may make mistakes and lead people astray. God and God alone is worthy of our absolute trust. So let us trust in God’s Word as the highest authority over our faith and actions. In the last days, the antichrist will lead multitudes astray.

*<sup>9</sup>The coming of the lawless one [antichrist] will be in accordance with the work of Satan displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, signs and wonders, <sup>10</sup>and in every sort of evil that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved (2 Thess. 2:9-10).*

Those who refuse to recognize biblical truth as the highest authority are in danger of being deceived by human charisma gone astray, or human charisma empowered by Satan and demonic forces.

- **Human tradition** may be helpful or harmful. In every nation, there are many traditions—holidays, values, and celebrations that are good. In addition, as we interpret the Bible in line with church teachings based on the Bible, such as the Apostles’ Creed, we keep our theology orthodox. In contrast, Jesus rebuked those who set aside the authority of God’s Word to follow human tradition (Matt. 15:1-20). The Roman Catholic Church errs by exalting church tradition and the teaching of popes to the same level as the Word of God Almighty. Over the centuries, Catholic popes have allowed tradition to add doctrines that contradict Scripture (see Figure 1.25). Likewise, Mormons dishonor God by placing other books on the level of the Bible. To please God, we must exalt His Word as the authority over all human traditions. Scripture, not tradition or worldly thinking,

must be the standard and the judge of what we believe and what we practice. The place for worldly wisdom is beneath the feet of the wisdom of God on His throne.

Led by the Spirit, Luke wrote *so that we may know the certainty of what we have been taught* (Luke 1:4). As we trust the Scriptures, we can be **absolutely certain** that our beliefs are based on God’s Word to us.

**Q 72**  Fill in the middle column of Figure 1.25 based on the Scriptures beside it.

False Catholic Doctrines of Tradition That Contradict the Word of God	Your Summaries on What Scripture Teaches	Reference
Perpetual Virginity of Mary		Matt. 1:25 Matt. 12:47-49 John 7:3-5
Sinlessness of Mary		Luke 1:47 Rom. 3:23 1 John 1:8
Resurrection of Mary to heaven (Made official in 1950)		1 Thess. 4:15-16
Prayer to Mary and the Saints		John 14:14
Purgatory and paying the Catholic Church to release people from it		Heb. 9:27

**Figure 1.25 Practice refuting doctrines based on tradition with doctrines based on Scripture.**

- **God’s Word** is the authority of God Himself. Those who trust in humans trust in a spider’s web (Job 8:14). In contrast, Jesus taught us to depend on Scripture as our main authority. Three times our Savior overcame error with “*it is written*” (Matt. 4). Our Lord taught us to overcome temptations and false teachings with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Eph. 6:17). Paul reminded Timothy:

<sup>15</sup>*From infancy you have known **the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.*** <sup>16</sup>***All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness*** (2 Tim. 3:15-16).

Likewise, Peter urged us:

<sup>19</sup>*And we have the word of the prophets made more certain, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.* <sup>20</sup>*Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation.* <sup>21</sup>*For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit* (2 Pet. 1:19-21).

Those who submit to God’s Word trust in the authority of God Himself.



**Test Yourself:** Circle the letter by the **best** completion to each question or statement.

1. *Theology* is
  - a) the doctrine of the *Trinity*.
  - b) the study of God.
  - c) the Word of God.
  - d) the attributes of God.
2. Whose initial beliefs helped him/her know God better?
  - a) Paul
  - b) Caiaphas
  - c) Tamar
  - d) Simon the Sorcerer
3. A major verse on inspiration is
  - a) John 3:16.
  - b) 2 Timothy 3:16.
  - c) 1 Peter 1:21.
  - d) Hebrews 10:12.
4. *Infallible* means
  - a) “inspired by God.”
  - b) “traditional.”
  - c) “incapable of error.”
  - d) “full of mistakes.”
5. Which of these is proof of the Bible’s divine origin?
  - a) Biblical interpretation
  - b) Biblical debate
  - c) Biblical investigation
  - d) Biblical prophecy
6. In theology, *canon* refers to
  - a) a biblical gun
  - b) a book of the Bible
  - c) a set of inspired books
  - d) a status of believers
7. Who believed the Apocrypha?
  - a) Jews at the time of Jesus
  - b) Jesus and the apostles
  - c) Greek philosophers
  - d) Catholics in Luther’s time
8. A doctrine based on the Apocrypha is
  - a) the inspiration of Scripture.
  - b) the Second Coming.
  - c) purgatory.
  - d) infant Baptism.
9. The Septuagint is
  - a) the Greek translation of the Old Testament.
  - b) the Latin translation of the Apocrypha.
  - c) the same as the Pseudepigrapha.
  - d) the Jewish religious court.
10. Which has no weaknesses?
  - a) Human thinking
  - b) Angelic charisma
  - c) Human tradition
  - d) God’s Word





**Essay Test Topics:** Write 50–100 words on each of these goals that you studied in this chapter (6 points each.) Try to complete your writing in 2 hours.

- Define *theology*.
- Explain how our assumptions/initial beliefs about Scripture shape our theology.
- In relation to Scripture, define *revealed*, *inspired*, *inerrant*, and *infallible*.
- Explain how evidence of any two of these topics points to God as the author of the Bible: unity, relevance, morality, prophecy, society, accuracy, extraordinary signs, and durability.
- Define *canon*. Analyze the process of how books in the Old and New Testaments were chosen.
- Summarize why Protestant Bibles do not include the books of the Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha.
- Explain and illustrate why we believe God guided the process of copying and translating the Bible.
- Contrast the *weakness* of human thinking, charisma, and tradition with the *strength* of God's Word.

## Chapter 2: The One True God

Figure 2.1 This type of *Shield of the Trinity* is a famous diagram of the Church, dating from as early as A.D. 1208 and widely used in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>1</sup> It illustrates our belief that there is one God who exists as three divine persons.



### Lessons:

#### 4 The Trinity in Theology—Part 1

**Goal A:** Define “Trinity” and give evidence from both testaments that there is only one God.

**Goal B:** Give evidence from both testaments that there is only one God who exists as three persons.

#### 5 The Trinity in Theology—Part 2

**Goal:** Summarize key verses from both testaments showing that each person of the Trinity is God.

#### 6 The Trinity in Theology—Part 3

**Goal A:** Give examples of the unique and moral attributes that members of the Trinity share.

**Goal B:** Explain and refute the errors of Modalism and Arianism.

**Goal C:** Illustrate that members of the Trinity are united in values, mission, and vision—yet have separate roles.



### Key Words



**Trinity**—the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; three persons who exist as one God

**monotheism**—believing in one and only one God

**Shema**—a Hebrew word meaning “to hear.” Deuteronomy 6:4-5 calls Israel to love and worship *only one God*. It is called “the Shema” because it starts with “*Hear, O Israel*”—emphasizing *pay attention to what follows*.

**polytheism**—believing in many gods

**progressive revelation**—emphasizes that God reveals truth little by little over time; biblical teachings become clearer as revelations increase, like the light of the sun increases from dawn to noon. The whole Bible gives us a better understanding of truth than its parts give us.

**essence**—referring to God, *essence* means divine nature, God’s spiritual DNA, attributes and qualities.

**attributes**—qualities or characteristics of God, such as love and omnipotence

**Modalism**—the false belief that God is one person who wears three masks or appears in three modes

**Arianism**—the false belief that God the Father created the Son and the Holy Spirit

## The Trinity in Theology—Part 1

4

**Goal A:** Define “Trinity” and give evidence from both testaments that there is only one God.

**Goal B:** Give evidence from both testaments that there is only one God who exists as three persons.

### Doctrine 2: The One True God

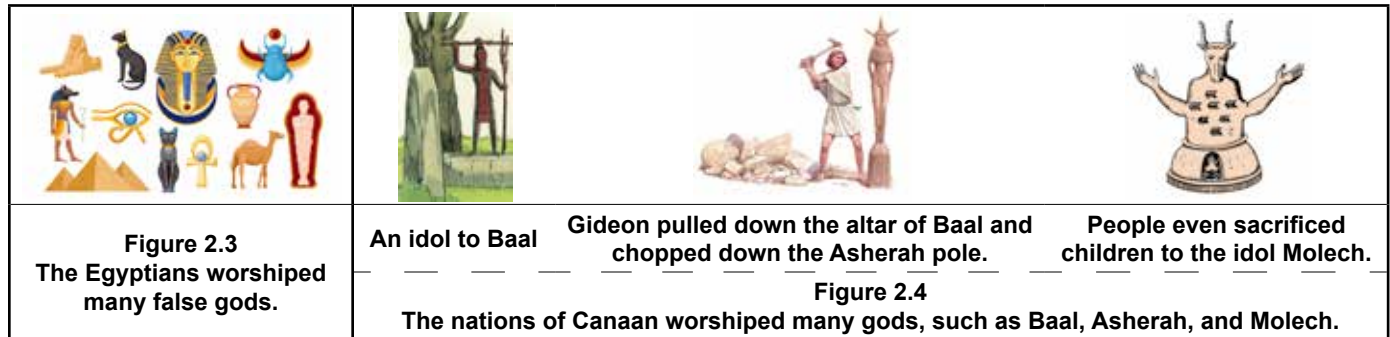
*The one true God has revealed Himself as the eternally self-existent “I AM”, the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. (Deut. 6:4; Isa. 43:10, 11; Matt. 28:19).*

The doctrine of the **Trinity** is fundamental in our study of theology. The word *trinity* means “threefold.” This word, *Trinity*, does not occur in Scripture. Yet the Scriptures reveal that the *one* true God exists as *three* persons. The blessed \*Trinity includes the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. For many centuries, the church has used the expression “*three persons in one Godhead*.” The doctrine of the *Trinity* is a mystery that we do not fully understand. But let us now search the Scriptures, the basis of our faith, to consider four truths they reveal about the profound mystery of the one God who exists as three persons. Here is an overview of the four truths we will study in Chapter 2:

#### A. There is only one God.<sup>2</sup>

The Bible teaches in *both testaments* that there is only one true *God*. Both Judaism and Christianity are \**monotheistic*—that is, believing in one and only one God.

The **Old Testament** declares that there is *only one God*. Nations around Israel worshiped many gods. Egypt worshiped hundreds of gods and goddesses (Figure 2.3). Likewise, the nations of Canaan worshiped many gods and made idols to represent them (Figure 2.3).



**Q 4** ↪ In your own words, what does each passage of Figure 2.5 say? Write your answers in the chart.

Reference	Summarize, in Your Own Words, These Three Passages On Loving the One and Only God
Exod. 20:2-3	
Deut. 4:34-35	
Deut. 6:4-5	

**Figure 2.5** Practice summarizing three Old Testament passages emphasizing that there is only one God.

**Q 1** ↪ What does the word “Trinity” mean?

**Q 2** ↪ How many main truths about the Trinity will we study in this chapter?

Overview of Chapter 2: God Reveals Himself as a Trinity	
3 Lessons	Four Truths About the Trinity
4	<b>A.</b> There is only one God. <b>B.</b> The one God exists as three persons.
5	<b>C.</b> Each of the three persons of the Trinity Is God.
6	<b>D.</b> The three persons of the Trinity are united.

**Figure 2.2** Overview of Chapter 2: God Reveals Himself as a Trinity

**Q 3** ↪ What was a major contrast between the religion of Israel and the religion of nations around them?

The Egyptians and Canaanites worshiped many gods, but God revealed Himself to Israel as the **one, true God**. God told Moses to write these words to the Israelites:

<sup>2</sup>**“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. <sup>3</sup>You shall have no other gods before me”** (Exod. 20:2-3).

Again Moses writes,

<sup>34</sup>*Has any god ever tried to take for himself one nation out of another nation, by testings, by miraculous signs and wonders, by war, by a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, or by great and awesome deeds, like all the things the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your very eyes?* <sup>35</sup>*You were shown these things so that you might know that **the LORD is God; besides Him there is no other*** (Deut. 4:34-35).

Likewise, the first of the Ten Commandments God gave Moses states this:

<sup>4</sup>**Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one.** <sup>5</sup>*Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength* (Deut. 6:4-5).

**Q 5** ↗ What does the Hebrew word “shema” mean?

**Q 6** ↖ What contrast is there between the Shema and polytheism?

**Q 7** ↗ How did Hezekiah’s prayer echo the Shema?

The famous words of Deuteronomy 6:4-5 are known as the \**Shema*, which means “to hear.” (Recall that the name *Samuel* means “God heard”). Above all else, God wanted Israel to *hear* the truth that there is *one God whom we should love with our whole being*. The *Shema*, Deuteronomy 6:4-5, stands against \**polytheism*, which teaches that there are *many gods*. Likewise, the *Shema* opposes *syncretism*, which falsely claims that Yahweh can be worshiped as *one God among many*. No way! Deuteronomy 6:4-5 boldly proclaims that **God is the one and only God**—the absolute ruler of the universe. The false gods that humans create are nothing compared to *the one and only true God*.<sup>3</sup>

Hezekiah’s prayer echoes the Shema:

*And Hezekiah prayed to the LORD: “O LORD, God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, **you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth**. You have made heaven and earth”* (2 Kings 19:15).



**Q 8** ↖ What worthless trade did Israel make?

Jeremiah speaks for God, complaining against the idolatry of Israel *for turning away from the one God* to false gods. The weeping prophet writes:

<sup>11</sup>*“Has a nation ever changed its gods? (Yet they are not gods at all.) But my people have exchanged their Glory for worthless idols. <sup>12</sup>Be appalled at this, O heavens, and shudder with great horror;” declares the LORD. <sup>13</sup>“My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water”* (Jer. 2:11-13).

**Q 9** ↖ One of the strongest themes of the Old Testament is: There is \_\_\_\_\_.

*“I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God”* (Isa. 45:5). There is no God but Yahweh! This is a strong theme of the Old Testament.

**Q 10** ↖ Answer the questions in Figure 2.6 as you read the seven passages below in the chart.

(English speakers worship with Judy Jacobs as she celebrates the theme: *There’s no God like Jehovah!* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vL8PcnyRytg>)

The **New Testament** is just as loud as the Old on the truth that *there is only one God*. Let’s look at **7 witnesses** who testify that there is *only one God*.

7 Witnesses	Questions to Answer About God
Mark 12:29-30	What two truths does the <i>Shema</i> affirm?
John 17:3	How does John describe eternal life?
Rom. 3:29-30	Is there one God for the Jews and a separate God for the Gentiles?
1 Cor. 8:4	Are idols really gods? Explain.
Eph. 4:4-6	What are seven examples of “one” that Paul gives? Name them.

Figure 2.6 continued on next page

Continued from previous page

1 Tim. 2:5-6	Who became the only mediator between the one God and humans?
Jude 25	Why does Jude guide us to ascribe to the only God glory, majesty, power, and authority through Jesus Christ?

**Figure 2.6 Practice answering questions about the seven witnesses who testify that there is only one God.**

**First Witness.** A teacher of the law asked Jesus, “‘Of all the commandments, which is the most important?’” (Mark 12:28).

<sup>29</sup> “The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this:” ‘Hear, O Israel, **the LORD our God, the LORD is one.** <sup>30</sup>Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength’” (Mark 12:29-30).

Like Moses, Jesus said that the *Shema* is the greatest truth God wants us to hear, believe, and obey (Matt. 22:34-40). The *Shema* became the Jewish confession of faith. Pious Jews recite the *Shema* morning and evening. To this day, every service in a Jewish synagogue begins with quoting the *Shema*.<sup>4</sup>

**Second Witness.** “‘Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, **the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent**’” (John 17:3).

**Third Witness.** <sup>29</sup> “Is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles too? Yes, of Gentiles too, <sup>30</sup>since **there is only one God**, who will justify the circumcised by faith and the uncircumcised through that same faith” (Rom. 3:29-30).

**Fourth Witness.** “So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is **no God but one**” (1 Cor. 8:4).

**Fifth Witness.** <sup>4</sup> “There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called— <sup>5</sup>one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup>**one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all**” (Eph. 4:4-6).

**Sixth Witness.** <sup>5</sup> “**For there is one God** and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup>who gave Himself as a ransom for all men—the testimony given in its proper time” (1 Tim. 2:5-6).


**Seventh Witness.** “**To the only God our Savior** be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen” (Jude 25).


Like the Old Testament verses, these seven passages of the New Testament testify to the fact that there is *only one God*. Some of these verses raise questions about the relationship of the Father to Jesus Christ. We will discuss relationships within the Trinity as we continue this lesson.

## B. The one God exists as three persons.

The Bible teaches that there is only one God. Yet Scripture also teaches that the one God exists as three persons. Later, in Point C, we will explore verses that show that each person of the Trinity is God. But here in Point B, let’s look at verses that emphasize that there are three persons in the Trinity.

The **Old Testament** does not clearly reveal the Trinity. Nevertheless, there are verses in the Old Testament that *may* point toward the truth that the one true God exists as three persons. God’s revelation of Himself and His plan is *\*progressive*. In the beginning of the story of salvation, we do not understand God or His plan well. The Israelites did not realize that the Passover Lamb pointed to Christ. And they did not understand that the earthly land of Canaan was just an illustration of heaven. Many things in the Old Testament, such as the Law, feasts, priests, sacrifices, and Sabbaths, were just *hints*, types, and shadows of future realities in the full story of God’s plan (Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 10:1). By the time we reach the end of the story, we see clearly the three

**Q 11**  How were many things in the Old Testament **hints** of future revelations? Illustrate.

**Q 12**  How is the New Testament like a lens that enables us to discern deeper meanings in the Old Testament?

persons of the Trinity. But looking back at the Old Testament *through the lens* of the New Testament, we see verses that *suggest* the Trinity. A wise teacher said, “*The Old Testament contains the New, and the New Testament explains the Old.*” It is much easier to interpret the beginning of a story when you know how the story ends. Let’s look at **two** Old Testament *hints of the Trinity* that become clear in New Testament times.

**Q 13** ↗ How does the Hebrew name for God, “Elohim,” suggest that the Godhead includes more than one person?

**Hint 1:** The plural name of God, **Elohim**, suggests that God is more than one person.

“*In the beginning God (Elohim) created...*” (Gen. 1:1). Although this verse does not mention the Trinity, the name of God is plural. In contrast to a singular name, we use plural nouns to refer to more than one person. The singular noun *king* refers to one ruler, whereas the plural noun *kings* refers to more than one. Likewise, the plural noun *Elohim* causes us to think that God is more than one person.

**Q 14** ↗ What are some pronouns referring to God that suggest God exists as more than one person?

**Hint 2:** The plural pronouns that refer to God **suggest** that God exists as more than one person.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>26</sup>Then God said, “Let **us** make man in **our** image, in **our** likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air; over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” <sup>27</sup>So God created man in **His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them** (Gen. 1:26-27).

**Q 15** ↗ In Genesis 1:26, why can the word “our” not refer to angels?

Some say that the pronouns *us* and *our* in Genesis 1:26 suggest that God was talking to the angels. It is possible that angels were listening when God spoke Genesis 1:26. But Genesis 1:27 plainly states that God created humans **in His own image**. So the plural pronouns *us* and *our* that refer to God in Genesis 1:26 suggest that God is more than one person. Did the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit discuss creation and decide, “Let’s make humans like us?” Looking through the lens of the New Testament, we think this is what Genesis 1:26-27 means. When humans fell into sin, the image of God in us was marred. In Chapter 4 of this course, we will study the story of *God As Creator*. In that chapter, we will explore several verses that state we are being restored in the image of God, *not* the image of angels (see Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 3:18; Eph. 4:23-24; Col. 3:10; 1 John 3:2).

**Q 16** ↗ Looking through the lens of the New Testament, what do we think Genesis 1:26-27 means?



**Q 17** ↗ How do Isaiah 6:3 and Revelation 4 & 5 suggest that God is a Trinity?

At the time of his call and commission, Isaiah saw a vision of God, who was high and exalted. Above God, angelic beings cried, “*Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty*” (Isa. 6:3). This verse is the theme of a famous hymn, “**Holy, Holy, Holy**,” which believers sing to celebrate and worship the Trinity. Isaiah’s threefold holy, together with Revelation 4–5 (which ascribe worship to the Father and the Lamb), cause us to wonder if he saw the Father, Son, and Spirit in his vision, as they asked each other, “*Who will go for us?*” (Isa. 6:8). The melody for this hymn is called *Nicea*. It was written in 1861 in memory of the first Council of Nicea, A.D. 325. (Nicea was an ancient Greek city in Bythnia, Asia, known today as Iznik, Turkey.) At the first Council of Nicea, the Church formalized the doctrine of the Trinity. The first and last verses of this famous hymn close with these words:

*Holy, Holy, Holy! Merciful and Mighty!  
God in Three Persons, blessed Trinity!*<sup>6</sup>

**Q 18** ↗ In Figure 2.7, answer the questions on New Testament passages that reveal that God is a Trinity.

The **New Testament** clarifies that the one God exists as three persons. There are many verses that refer to the three persons of the Trinity.

Reference	Your Answers to Question on New Testament Verses Revealing Three Persons of the Trinity
Matt. 3:16-17	How does the baptism of Jesus reveal the Trinity?
Matt. 28:19	How does the Great Commission reveal the Trinity?
John 16:13-15	How does the promise of the Spirit reveal the Trinity?
Acts 2:1-33	How does Acts 2 reveal the Trinity?

Figure 2.7 continued on next page

Continued from previous page

Acts 7:55	How does this description of Stephen's death refer to the Trinity?
2 Cor. 1:21-22	Does this passage refer to all three members of the Trinity?
2 Cor. 13:14	How does Paul's apostolic blessing reveal the Trinity?
Eph. 2:18	Who does "him" refer to in this verse?
Jude 20-21	How does Jude reveal the Trinity?

**Figure 2.7 Practice answering questions on verses that refer to the three persons of the Trinity.**

**Application.** In the *Faith & Action Series*, we have three Theology courses. Since the members of the Trinity always work together, our theology courses always refer to the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.



**Introduction to Theology:  
16 Bible Doctrines**

**Theology:  
The Bible, God, & Angels**  
Humans, Sin, Christ,  
Salvation, Last Things  
(5 Roles of God)

**Theology:  
The Holy Spirit  
(Pneumatology)**

**Figure 2.8 In the Faith & Action Series, we have three books on Theology.**

Lesson

5

## The Trinity in Theology—Part 2

**Goal:** Summarize key verses from both testaments showing that each person of the Trinity is God.

Overview of Chapter 2: God Reveals Himself as a Trinity	
3 Lessons	4 Truths About the Trinity
4	<b>A.</b> There is only one God. <b>B.</b> The one God exists as three persons.
5	<b>C.</b> Each of the three persons of the Trinity is God.
6	<b>D.</b> The three persons of the Trinity are united.

**Figure 2.9 Overview of Chapter 2: God Reveals Himself as a Trinity**

### C. Each of the three persons of the Trinity is God.

Verses referring to the Father, Son, and Spirit *together* (such as Matt. 28:19) *do not* establish the truth that *each* member of the Trinity is divine. So let us take a closer look at verses that reveal that *each person* of the Trinity is God.

**1. The Father is God.** The Old Testament affirms that the **Father is God**. A primary reason for calling God *Father* is that He is the Creator of all people. Figure 2.10 refers to some of the key verses in the **Old Testament** that refer to God as *Father*.<sup>7</sup> Read each verse in Figure 2.10 and answer the short question under it.

**Q 19** Please answer the questions on Old Testament verses referring to God as *Father* (Figure 2.10).

Reference	Questions to Answer on Key Old Testament Verses Revealing That the Father is God
<b>Pentateuch:</b> Deut. 32:6	<i>“Is this the way you repay the LORD, O foolish and unwise people? Is He not your Father, your Creator, who made you and formed you?”</i> <b>Question:</b> On what basis does Moses appeal to Israel to honor God? <b>Answer:</b>
<b>Wisdom Books:</b> Ps. 103:13	<i>“As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him;”</i> <b>Question:</b> What synonym for God does David use, referring to God as Father? <b>Answer:</b> <b>Question:</b> What illustration does David use to emphasize God’s compassion? <b>Answer:</b>
<b>Prophets:</b> Jer. 31:9	<i>“They will come with weeping; they will pray as I bring them back. I will lead them beside streams of water on a level path where they will not stumble, because I am Israel’s father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son.”</i> <b>Question:</b> How does Jeremiah describe the relationship of God to Israel (Ephraim)? <b>Answer:</b>
<b>Prophets:</b> Mal. 2:10	<i>“Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our fathers by breaking faith with one another?”</i> <b>Question:</b> On what basis does Malachi appeal to Israelites to treat one another righteously? <b>Answer:</b>

Figure 2.10 Practice analyzing verses from Moses to Malachi that refer to the Father as God.

**Q 20** ➤ How many times did Jesus refer to God as “Father”?

**Q 21** ➤ Why was it difficult for Jewish followers of Christ to call God “Father”?

**Q 22** ⚡ Please answer the questions on New Testament verses referring to God as Father (Figure 2.11).

Thank you for studying verses in the Old Testament that affirm that the Father is God. Now let’s look at key verses in the New Testament that refer to the Father as *God*.

The **New Testament** emphasizes God as our Father in a more personal way than the Old Testament. Over and over, Jesus referred to God as *Father*. At first, it was awkward for Jewish followers of Jesus to call God *Father*. The word *Father* is so personal and so intimate! But in the Gospels, Jesus refers to God as *Father* more than 150 times!<sup>8</sup> So as time passed and Jesus revealed the love of God the Father for His children, believers learned to know and love God as their Father. Let’s review a few favorite verses that reveal the Father is God (Figure 2.11).

Reference	Questions to Answer on Key New Testament Verses Revealing the Father is God
<b>Gospels:</b> Matt. 6:9	<i>“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name....”</i> <b>Question:</b> To whom does Jesus teach us to pray? <b>Answer:</b>
<b>Gospels:</b> Luke 11:11-13	<sup>11</sup> <i>“Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? <sup>12</sup>Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup>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!”</i> <b>Question:</b> What contrast does Jesus make in Luke 11:11-13? <b>Answer:</b>
<b>Gospels:</b> John 14:6	<i>“No one comes to the Father except through me.”</i> <b>Question:</b> Who is the only door to the Heavenly Father? <b>Answer:</b>
<b>General Epistles:</b> 1 Pet. 1:3-4	<sup>3</sup> <i>“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In His great mercy He has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup>and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade—kept in heaven...”</i> <b>Question:</b> Peter praises God the Father for giving us which 2 things? <b>Answer:</b>

Figure 2.11 continued on next page




Continued from previous page

<p><b>General Epistles:</b> Heb. 12:9</p>	<p>“Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!” <b>Question:</b> What contrast is the writer of Hebrews making? <b>Answer:</b></p>
<p><b>General Epistles:</b> James 1:17-18</p>	<p><sup>17</sup>“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. <sup>18</sup>He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of all He created.” <b>Question:</b> What are 5 things James tells us about our Father? <b>Answer:</b></p>
<p><b>General Epistles:</b> 1 John 3:1</p>	<p>“How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” <b>Question:</b> Which quality or attribute of the Father does 1 John 3:1 emphasize? <b>Answer:</b></p>

Figure 2.11 Practice analyzing verses in the New Testament that refer to the Father as God.

We are emphasizing that all three persons of the Trinity are God. We have looked at verses in the Old Testament and the New Testament revealing that the Father is God. These verses help us realize that *Father* is not just a title for God. Rather, God reveals Himself as *Father* to describe the loving relationship He desires with His children.<sup>9</sup>

**Q 23**  Please answer the questions on Old Testament and New Testament verses referring to the Son as God (Figure 2.12).

2. The Son is God.

*Doctrine 3: The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ*

*The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:*

- (a) *His virgin birth (Matt. 1:23; Luke 1:31, 35)*
- (b) *His sinless life (Heb. 7:26; 1 Pet. 2:22)*
- (c) *His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38)*
- (d) *His substitutionary work on the cross (1 Cor. 15:3; 2 Cor. 5:21)*
- (e) *His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matt. 28:6; Luke 24:39; 1 Cor. 15:4)*
- (f) *His exaltation to the right hand of God*  
*(Acts 1:9, 11; 2:33; Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 1:3)*

Let us look at seven famous passages that emphasize the deity of Christ.


Reference	Questions to Answer on Key New Testament Verses Revealing That Jesus, the Son, Is God
<p><b>Prophets:</b> Isa. 9:6</p>	<p>“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on His shoulders. And He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” <b>Question:</b> How does Isaiah 9 reveal the deity of Christ? <b>Answer:</b></p>
<p><b>Gospels:</b> Matt. 1:23</p>	<p>“The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call Him Immanuel”—which means, ‘God with us.’” <b>Question:</b> Why was Jesus called Immanuel? <b>Answer:</b></p>

Figure 2.12 continued on next page

Continued from previous page


<p><b>Gospels:</b> John 1:1</p>	<p><i>"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."</i> <b>Question:</b> To which 2 persons of the Trinity does John 1:1 refer? <b>Answer:</b></p>
<p><b>Gospels:</b> John 20:28-29</p>	<p><sup>28</sup><i>"Thomas said to Him, 'My Lord and my God!'"</i> <sup>29</sup><i>"Then Jesus told him, 'Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.'"</i> <b>Question:</b> Are you among the blessed who believe that Jesus is God? <b>Answer:</b></p>
<p><b>Epistles:</b> Rom. 9:5</p>	<p><i>"Theirs [the Israelites] are the patriarchs, and from them is traced the human ancestry of Christ, who is God over all, forever praised! Amen."</i> <b>Question:</b> Which of the 8 blessings of Israel in Romans 9:4-5 is the greatest? <b>Answer:</b></p>
<p><b>Epistles:</b> Phil. 2:5-7</p>	<p><sup>5</sup><i>"Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup>Who, <b>being in very nature God</b>, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, <sup>7</sup>but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness."</i> <b>Question:</b> Before the Incarnation, was the Son divine? Explain. <b>Answer:</b></p>
<p><b>Epistles:</b> Col. 2:9</p>	<p><i>"For in Christ <b>all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form...</b>"</i> <b>Question:</b> What truth do Colossians 1:15 and 2:9 proclaim? <b>Answer:</b></p>

Figure 2.12 Practice analyzing verses that refer to the Son as God.

**Q 24**  How do some err in referring to the Spirit? Why is this wrong?


**3. The Holy Spirit is God.** We have looked at verses showing that the Father is God and the Son is God. Likewise, the **Holy Spirit**, the third person of the Trinity, **is God**. As we noted earlier, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are often mentioned together as equal members of the Trinity. It is important to recognize and honor the Holy Spirit as a divine person like the Father and the Son and not to think of the Spirit as a mere force or power. We should never refer to the Holy Spirit with the pronoun *it*. Rather, when we use pronouns to refer to the Holy Spirit, we should use the personal pronouns *He* or *Him*.

LIKE THE FATHER  
AND THE SON, THE HOLY  
SPIRIT HAS ALL THE  
CHARACTERISTICS OF  
A PERSON.

**Q 25**  What are some characteristics of the Holy Spirit that show He is a person?

Throughout the New Testament, Scripture refers to the Holy Spirit as a person. Like the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit has all the characteristics of a person. As a person, the Holy Spirit *speaks* (Acts 13:2); He *thinks* (Rom. 8:27); He *grieves* (Eph. 4:30); He *rejoices* (Luke 1:41; 10:21); He *wills* (1 Cor. 12:11); He *helps and counsels believers*; and *testifies about Christ* (John 15:26); He *guides into all truth* (John 16:13); He *loves* (Rom. 15:30); and He *enjoys fellowship* (2 Cor. 13:14). The Holy Spirit came to earth to continue the ministry of a person, Jesus Christ. As the Son came to reveal and bring us the presence of the Father, the Holy Spirit comes to reveal and fill us with the presence of Jesus. So the Savior said, *"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you"* (John 14:18). The divine person of the Holy Spirit brings the divine presence of Jesus. Scriptures sometimes refer to the Holy Spirit as *the Spirit of the LORD* (Isa. 11:2; Luke 4:18; 2 Cor. 3:17), *the Spirit of God* (Rom. 8:9), *the Spirit of Christ* (Rom. 8:9; 1 Pet. 1:11), and *the Spirit of His Son* (Gal. 4:6).

In this lesson on *The Trinity in Theology*, let's look at *four key verses* that show that the Holy Spirit is God.


**Q 26**  Please answer the questions on New Testament verses referring to the Spirit as God (Figure 2.13).

Reference	Questions to Answer on Key New Testament Verses Revealing That the Holy Spirit Is God
<b>Gospels:</b> Luke 1:35	<p><i>"The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.'"</i></p> <p><b>Question:</b> How does the birth of the Son of God reveal that the Holy Spirit is God?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b></p>
<b>Gospels:</b> John 14:18	<p><i>"I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you."</i></p> <p><b>Question:</b> How does the promise of John 14:18 reveal the Holy Spirit's deity?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b></p>
<b>History:</b> Acts 5:3-4	<p><sup>3</sup><i>"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? <sup>4</sup>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 to men but to God.'"</i></p> <p><b>Question:</b> In what sense did Ananias lie to God?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b></p>
<b>Epistles:</b> 2 Cor. 3:17-18	<p><sup>17</sup><i>"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. <sup>18</sup>And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into His likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit."</i></p> <p><b>Question:</b> How does 2 Corinthians 3:17-18 show that the Lord and the Holy Spirit are equal?</p> <p><b>Answer:</b></p>

**Figure 2.13 Practice analyzing verses that reveal the Holy Spirit Is God.**

Thank you for studying verses which show that each of the three persons in the Trinity is God. The Scriptures teach that the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. The one, true God exists as three equal persons. In our next point, we emphasize that although the Trinity is three divine persons, they are 100% united.

**Lesson** **The Trinity in Theology—Part 3**

 **Goal A:** Give examples of the unique and moral attributes that members of the Trinity share.

**Goal B:** Explain and refute the errors of Modalism and Arianism.

**Goal C:** Illustrate that members of the Trinity are united in values, mission, and vision—yet have separate roles.

Congratulations! You have reached Lesson 6, the final lesson of Chapter 2. Thank you for studying *Faith & Action!*

**D. The three persons of the Trinity Are united.**

**Q 27**  Why is it difficult for us to understand that members of the Trinity are totally united?

The Scriptures teach that there is one God who exists as three completely united persons. This is a mystery to us humans because no two humans are completely united on anything! God is difficult for us to understand because He is above us. As the heavens are high above the earth, God, His nature, and His ways are high above us. We search the Scriptures and declare what God has revealed to us. But how can a human fully understand the infinite, eternal God? Impossible! Job could not answer *any* of the questions the Almighty asked him. In the end, Job put his hand

Overview of Chapter 2: God Reveals Himself as a Trinity	
3 Lessons	4 Truths About the Trinity
4	<b>A.</b> There is only one God.
5	<b>B.</b> The one God exists as three persons.
6	<b>C.</b> Each of the three persons of the Trinity Is God.
	<b>D.</b> The three persons of the Trinity are united.

**Figure 2.14 Overview of Chapter 2: God Reveals Himself as a Trinity**

THE SCRIPTURES  
TEACH THAT THERE IS  
ONE GOD WHO EXISTS  
AS THREE COMPLETELY  
UNITED PERSONS.

over his mouth and said that trying to understand God was too wonderful for him. For humans, trying to fully comprehend the God who fills the universe is like trying to put the ocean in a teacup. Our minds are too small to understand God fully. Nevertheless, studying the amazing unity of the Godhead helps us understand how three equal persons can be one God—three in one. So let us worship as we ponder **two ways** that the Father, Son, and Spirit are completely united as one God.

**Q 28** ↖ Give examples of the unique and moral attributes that members of the Trinity share.

**Q 29** ↗ Into which 2 groups does theology divide the attributes/qualities of God?

**Q 30** ↖ What are 5 unique attributes that belong to God alone?

**1. The three persons of the Trinity are united in \*essence, sharing the same divine nature, the same spiritual DNA, and the same \*attributes and qualities.** *What does the essence and nature of the Trinity look like? Which qualities and characteristics do the three persons of the Trinity share?* Theology groups the attributes or qualities of the Trinity into *two groups*—qualities that are unique to God and qualities that God shares in part with His children. Let’s look first at qualities and attributes that God alone has and does not share:

- **Members of the Trinity share unique attributes.** These are qualities that belong to God alone. He does not share them with anyone else. (Theologians call these unique qualities of God *non-communicative* because God does not share them with anyone.) Figure 2.15 lists some of the unique qualities of the Trinity that neither angels, demons, nor humans are able to possess. [Note, however, that God does share a measure of some of these qualities. For example, He alone is eternal, yet He shares eternal life with us from the moment we receive Jesus and forever after (John 17:1-2). Likewise, God alone is sovereign, but He grants to overcomers to rule with Him (Rev. 3:21).]

Unique Attributes of God Alone	Definitions	Scriptures
Infinite	God is unbounded, without limits or restrictions on anything He desires.	2 Chron. 2:5-6; Job 11:7-9; Ps. 145:3; 147:5; Isa. 40:12; Jer. 23:24; Eph. 3:8
Incomprehensible	God is beyond our ability to fully understand.	Rom. 11:33-35; 1 Cor. 2:11
Transcendent	God is above and beyond all powers and people; He is the only one worthy of worship, praise, glory, and honor.	Gen. 1:1; Exod. 24:9-18; 1 Kings 8:27; Isa. 6:1-3; Col. 1:1-20
Self-Existent	God is self-sufficient, without any needs.	Isa. 40:13-14; John 5:26; Acts 17:25; Rev. 4:11
Eternal	God is without beginning and without end.	Deut. 33:27; Ps. 90; Isa. 57:15; Hab. 1:12
Unchanging	God is immutable; He is forever the same in His being, character, purposes, and promises.	Num. 23:19; Ps. 102:27; Mal. 3:6; Heb. 13:8
Omnipresent	God is unlimited by distance; He is present everywhere He desires to be at the same time.	Ps. 139:7-12; Matt. 28:20; Eph. 4:19; Heb. 13:5
Omniscient	God is perfect in knowledge. He knows everything He desires to know.	Col. 2:3; Heb. 4:13; Job 37:10; Prov. 15:3
Omnipotent	God is Almighty and all powerful.	Gen. 17:1; Isa. 43:13; Jer. 32:17; Dan. 4:35; Matt. 28:18; Mark 10:27; Rom. 1:20; Eph. 1:18-23; Heb. 1:3
Sovereign	God is Ruler over all powers and things in total freedom, doing all He pleases.	1 Chron. 29:10-14; Job 23:13; Ps. 33:10-11; 115:3; Isa. 14:24; 46:9-10; Dan. 4:34-35; Rom. 11:33-36; Eph. 1:11; 2 Tim. 1:9; Rev. 4:11
Triune	God is the one true God, and He exists as three persons.	John 1:1; Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19-20; 2 Cor. 13:14

**Figure 2.15** Definitions and illustrations of some of the *unique* attributes and qualities of God alone.<sup>10</sup> **God does not share these qualities with angels or humans. However, God shares even some of these unique qualities of God alone with His children. For example, we will never be omniscient, knowing everything as God knows. But God shares part of His knowledge with us. Likewise, we are not eternal, since our life had a beginning. But God shares eternal life with us, so our life has no end.**

**Q 31** ↖ In column 1 of Figure 2.16, write the attribute that matches each definition. (Try first to complete this chart without looking at the answers above. Then, check your answers and see which definitions you need to study more.)

Unique Attributes of God Alone	Definitions
	God is immutable; He is forever the same in His being, character, purposes, and promises.
	God is above and beyond all powers and people; He is the only one worthy of worship, praise, glory, and honor.
	God is self-sufficient, without any needs.
	God is the one true God, and He exists as three persons.
	God is unbounded, without limits or restrictions on anything He desires.
	God is Almighty and all powerful.
	God is Ruler over all powers and things in total freedom, doing all He pleases.
	God is beyond our ability to fully understand.
	God is perfect in knowledge. He knows everything He desires to know.
	God is without beginning and without end.
	God is unlimited by distance; present everywhere He desires to be at the same time

**Figure 2.16** Practice matching definitions with the unique attributes of God alone.

- **Members of the Trinity share moral attributes.** These are qualities and characteristics of the Triune God that *God shares in part with His children.* Figure 2.17 shows some of the moral qualities of God.

**Q 32** ↗ From the 50 qualities in Figure 2.17, which 10 mean the most to you? Circle these 10.

Take time to worship as you consider some of the qualities of our glorious God. Wow! What a wonderful and amazing God. He has so many beautiful qualities! And all of these qualities in Figure 2.17, God desires to share in part with us—the children He is transforming into His image, from glory to glory!

**Q 33** ↖ Add a few qualities of God to Figure 2.17.


Some Moral Attributes/Qualities of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is:						
Holy	Love	Perfect in all His ways	Perfect in His essence/being	Purposeful	Creative	Our example
Righteous & just	Patient	Wonderful & worthy	Without fault	Self-controlled	Understanding & empathetic	Liberating & uplifting
Truth & Light	Merciful	Faithful	Without equal	Good	Listening & attentive	Inspiring
Life	Gracious & generous	Glorious & worthy of worship	Satisfying, fulfilling, & delightful	Persistent	Comforting & personal	Affirming & rewarding
Wise	Forgiving	Clothed in majesty & robed in splendor	Amazing	Triumphant & victorious	Concerned & compassionate	Optimistic & empowering

**Figure 2.17** More than 50 of the moral characteristics of the Trinity.


We may share these same qualities with God because we are created in His image and we are partakers of His divine nature to escape the corruption that is in the world through evil desires (2 Pet. 1:4). So as His Spirit fills us, we are like Him and are being transformed into the image of His Son (Dan. 12:3; Matt. 14:23; Rom. 8:18, 29; 1 Cor. 15:35-58; 2 Cor. 3:18; 5:17; Gal. 5:22-23; 6:15; Eph. 2:10; 4:24; Col. 3:9-10; 1 John 3:2). Worship through this list of God’s characteristics. We left some empty boxes for you to add more of His qualities to the list. Could you ask or dream for anyone more glorious than the God who loves us?

**“O for a thousand tongues to sing, my great Redeemer’s praise;  
the glories of my God and King, the triumphs of His grace!”**




**Q 34**  What is your favorite song that exalts God for some of His attributes?

The song entitled, “I Stand in Awe” exalts the Triune God with these words:<sup>11</sup>  
*You are beautiful beyond description, too marvelous for words;  
 Too wonderful for comprehension; like nothing ever seen or heard.  
 Who can grasp Your infinite wisdom? Who can fathom the depth of Your love?  
 You are beautiful beyond description, Majesty, enthroned above.  
 And I stand, I stand in awe of You; I stand, I stand in awe of You.  
 Holy God, to whom all praise is due; I stand in awe of You;  
 I stand in awe of You.*

**Q 35**  When you think of God as Father, which of His qualities stand out?


In Chapter 2, we only have three lessons on *The Trinity in Theology*. In this lesson, we are emphasizing the truth that *the three persons of the Trinity all share the same attributes and qualities*. It is inspiring to study lists or charts on the qualities of God, as you have done in Figures 2.15 and 2.17. Even so, listing God’s qualities in a chart is shallow because we do not see these qualities in context. However, as you study the three *Faith & Action* courses on theology, your heart will overflow with praise as you see God’s qualities within His roles. For example, in the second Theology course, we will study the biblical story of *God As Father*. We will trace this story of the Fatherhood of God from Genesis to Revelation. And as we do, we will behold the wonderful qualities of Father God as He relates to His children. We will study God the Father as He creates His children, loves them, cares for them, sustains them, and watches over them. We will see the Father’s love as He gives His own Son to redeem them. We see the Father’s generous heart as He shares Himself and His entire kingdom with His children. Wow! The qualities of God shine like the sun as we study them in the five roles of Revealer, Creator, Father, Missionary, and King. Studying the attributes of God in the small and big stories of the Bible will enable you to know and love Him more than ever before.




**Q 36**  Riddle: What are 2 reasons why the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit do not have more power together than each has alone?

The Father is omnipotent or *all-powerful*. He has all the power. Likewise, the Son is omnipotent. He has all the power. Also, the Holy Spirit is omnipotent. He has all the power. The question arises: “Do the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have more power together than each one has *as a person*?” The answer is “No,” because the Father, Son, and Spirit *share the same power*. As Jesus said, “*Everything that belongs to the Father is mine*” (John 16:15). Likewise, Jesus said, “*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me*” (Matt. 28:18). The members of the Trinity share the same essence, qualities, values, mission, and vision. They agree on everything 100%. Whoever is filled with the Spirit is filled with the presence of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Another reason why members of the Trinity do not have more power alone than together is because they are never alone—they are always together—*omnipresent!*



**Q 37**  How do relationships within the Trinity differ from the relationships of the Greek gods?

The gods of most world religions are in conflict. There was greed and competition among the gods the Greeks and Romans invented. Hindus imagine millions of gods who are each very different. In contrast, the three persons of the Christian Godhead are in perfect harmony in every way. They are 100% united. There is not a hint of dissension among them. They are completely united in essence, attributes, values, mission, and vision. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are absolutely one, undivided, and in total agreement.

**Q 38**  In relation to the Trinity, which 2 errors appear throughout church history?

**Application: Two Recurring Errors About God.** We have emphasized the truth that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share the same nature and qualities. But throughout church history, two theological errors appear from time to time. These two errors, \*Modalism and \*Arianism, seek to rob Christ and the Holy Spirit of the honor they deserve as equals with God the Father. Every student of theology should guard against modern forms of these two theological heresies (false teachings.) So let us briefly summarize them (Figure 2.18).

Two Theological Errors to Avoid About the Trinity		
Error	Explanation of the Error	Supporters of the Error
<b>Modalism:</b> <b>One God who wears three masks</b>	There is one God who is only one person but wears three masks. He may reveal Himself as the Father, the Son, or the Spirit.	Oneness Pentecostals; “Jesus only” believers
<b>Arianism:</b> <b>One God who created the Son and Spirit</b>	Only the Father is eternal. He created the Son and the Spirit, so they are not fully God. <sup>12</sup>	Muslims; Mormons; Jehovah’s Witnesses

**Figure 2.18** Throughout church history, believers have battled two errors in relation to the Trinity.

**First Error (Modalism): There is one God who appears in various modes.** The roots of this false teaching are as old as the Church. But a main speaker for *Modalism* was Sabellius, a priest who opposed the doctrine of the Trinity. About A.D. 215, he wanted to avoid the teaching that there were three Gods. Sabellius used the illustration that the one sun is like the one God. He said the one sun has form, light, and heat. Likewise, Sabellius said these three aspects of the sun correspond to the Father (form), the Son (light), and the Spirit (warmth.) In this way Sabellius taught the heresy that God is only one person who wears three masks. Sabellius said that the one person of God reveals Himself as three faces—the Father in creation, the Son in redemption, and the Spirit in regeneration.<sup>13</sup> Through this teaching, Sabellius robbed the Son and the Spirit of being persons. The sun is not a good illustration of God because the sun was created by God. Also note that it would have been difficult for Sabellius to explain how at Jesus’ baptism, the Father in heaven praised Him and the Spirit descended on Him. Likewise, followers of Sabellius today, such as the *Jesus Only* movement and *Oneness Pentecostals*, have unacceptable explanations for the Son’s praying to the Father!

**Q 39** ↗ Who believes the error of Modalism today?

**Q 40** ↖ In your own words, what is the error of Modalism?

**Second Error (Arianism): There is one God who created the Son and the Spirit.** There have been many forms of this second error. A false teacher named Arius increased its popularity by A.D. 325. Arius taught that because Scripture refers to the Son as *begotten*, this means the Son had a *beginning*. This error of Arius is based on an *earthly*, Father–Son understanding. In contrast, defenders of the Trinity realize that we must understand the Father–Son relationship from a *heavenly* point of view. Many verses in Scripture teach that God the Son is eternal (Mic. 5:2; John 8:58; Heb. 1:8).

**Q 41** ↗ What does Arianism teach?

**Q 42** ↖ Does anyone you know believe the error of Arianism? Explain.

Another error of Arius was overlooking the truth that the Bible uses *begotten* in various ways. We have noted that *begotten* may refer to an eternal relationship between the Father and Son. *Begotten* does not mean that God the Son had a beginning. Likewise, *begotten* does not mean that God the Father had sex with Mary (as the Mormons teach.) In Scripture, we must understand *begotten* in the context of the eternal relationship between the Father and the Son. As the Father has always been the Father, the Son has always been the *begotten* Son.<sup>14</sup> Another meaning of *begotten* (Greek, *monogenes*) is “unique or one-of-a-kind” (John 1:14; 3:16).<sup>15</sup> Likewise, *begotten* can mean “exalted”—as Jesus was *begotten* to be our High Priest (Heb. 1:5; 5:5); and as Jesus was *begotten* at the resurrection (Acts 13:33).<sup>16</sup> These verses and many others show that *begotten* often means *unique* or *exalted* rather than *born*. We are sorry that Arius stumbled over the word *begotten* and even sorrier that he caused many others to stumble over his false teachings about the eternal Son. As we have shown earlier in this lesson, many verses in Scripture prove that Jesus Christ is fully God and is equal to the Father. Likewise, we have seen that the Holy Spirit is God. Even so, some followers of Arius continue to deny that the Son and the Spirit are divine persons. Today, supporters of a form of Arianism include Muslims,<sup>17</sup> Mormons,<sup>18</sup> and Jehovah’s Witnesses.<sup>19</sup>

Here in Point D, we are emphasizing that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are united. First, we have seen that members of the Trinity are united in essence. They share the same attributes (Figures 2.15 & 2.17). In Point 2, we see that the Father, Son, and Spirit share the same values, mission, and vision.

**2. The three persons of the Trinity are united in values, mission, and vision.** Let's look briefly at each of these.

**Q 43** ➤ In Figure 2.19, explain and illustrate the values, mission, and vision that the Trinity shares.

Topic	Your Explanations and Illustrations of Values, Mission, and Vision That the Trinity Shares
Values	
Mission	
Vision	

Figure 2.19

Practice explaining how the Father, Son, and Spirit are united in values, mission, and vision.

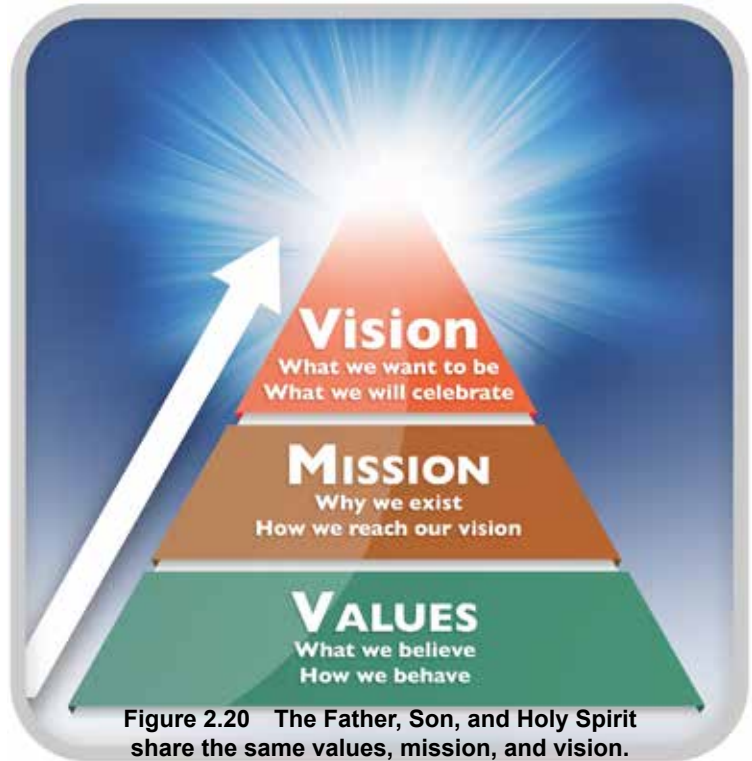


Figure 2.20 The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share the same values, mission, and vision.

**Q 44** ➤ What are some values that members of the Trinity share?

**VALUES**  
ARE THE FOUNDATION OF  
WHAT WE BELIEVE AND  
HOW WE BEHAVE.

**Values** are the foundation of what we believe and how we behave. The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit share the same values. They love and hate the same things. They love truth and hate lies. They love holiness and hate sinfulness. They love righteousness and hate sin. They love fellowship, peace, joy, generosity, and cheerful giving. They

hate discord, turmoil, sorrow, and stinginess. The three persons of the Trinity agree 100% on what is right and wrong, good and bad, wise and foolish, valuable and worthless, just and unfair. They are completely united in their values. And since the members of the Trinity share the same values, they behave and act in the same way; values guide actions.

**Q 45** ➤ How is mission different from vision?

**MISSION**  
IS THE PATH TO VISION.

**Mission** is the path to vision. Mission includes the purpose and plan of action that a group shares to reach a destination. Look below at the vision that the Trinity shares. To reach this vision, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit must work together.

To reach their vision, they must create humans, redeem them, shepherd them, provide for them, guide them, and transform them into the likeness of God.

**Q 47** ➤ What is the vision that members of the Trinity share?

**VISION**  
IS THE DESTINATION—  
THE GOAL AT THE END OF  
THE JOURNEY.

**Vision** is the destination—the goal at the end of the journey. The vision of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is to live forever in a heavenly kingdom with a family of glorified believers who share their essence, character, values, mission, and vision.

**Application.** The Father, Son, and Spirit are united in *values, mission, and vision*. The Trinity shares the same plan for humanity. The



Godhead is united in attitudes and actions. The Father, Son, and Spirit cooperate and do everything together. But they have *separate roles*.

The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have different roles in salvation. **God the Father** creates the *plan of salvation*. The Father’s plan to save us includes the timing of the plan—from beginning to completion. Galatians 4:4-5 refers to the *beginning* of God’s plan.


<sup>4</sup>“But when the **time** had fully come, **God sent His Son**, born of a woman, born under law, <sup>5</sup>to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons” (Gal. 4:4-5). Other Scriptures show that the Father sent the Son (John 3:16; Rom. 8:32).

God the Son *fulfills* the Father’s plan—the Son dies to redeem us. This is voluntary; He gave Himself for us (2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:6-7; Gal. 2:20). Also note the Spirit’s role as the Trinity works together in the divine plan of salvation. “Because you are sons, **God sent the Spirit** of His Son into our hearts, the **Spirit** who calls out, ‘Abba, Father’” (Gal. 4:6). When the time was right, the Father sent His Son. Through the Son, we receive the Spirit. And the Spirit, not the Son, is the agent of the new birth. But as we receive the Son, He gives us the *legal right and authority* to become children of God the Father (John 1:12). And at the time the Father has planned, the Son will return to gather all the children of God (Matt. 24:36). Meanwhile, the Father and Son send the Holy Spirit to fill us with power to witness about the Son and the salvation He makes possible (John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7; Acts 2:33).

<sup>7</sup>He said to them: “It is not for you to know the **times or dates the Father has set by his own authority**. <sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be **my witnesses** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:7-8).


As you study the three *Faith & Action* courses on theology (see Figure 2.8), you will learn more about the roles of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The second theology course focuses mainly on the Father and the Son, although members of the Trinity are always working together. The third theology course emphasizes the role of the Spirit, whom the Father has sent through Jesus to exalt the Son.


**Q 49**  In what sense did Jesus come to us after He returned to heaven?


**Q 50**  Is the presence of the Father or the Son different from the presence of the Spirit?

**Attention all students. Please read this small section at least once a week.** As we close Chapter 2, we want to acknowledge the special role of the Holy Spirit in believers’ lives today. We will return to this glorious theme in *Theology: The Holy Spirit*. But our study of theology is enriched along the way as we discern the importance of depending on the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit, there would be no Old Testament (2 Pet. 1:21), no New Testament (John 14:26; 15:26-27; 1 Cor. 2:10-14), and no power to proclaim the gospel (Acts 1:8). Without the Holy Spirit, there would be no faith, no new birth, no holiness, and no children of God. As we close Chapter 2, let’s consider four vital ministries of God the Holy Spirit.<sup>20</sup>



**Q 48**  How do the roles of the Father, Son, and Spirit differ and complement one another in the mission and vision they share?

**Q 51**  Do you commit to read this section at least once each week as you study this course?

**Q 52**  Illustrate each of the 4 ministries of the Holy Spirit (Figure 2.21).

4 Ministries of the Holy Spirit	Your Illustrations of the Spirit’s 4 Ministries
He is the agent of salvation.	
He produces the characteristics of God in believers.	
He empowers believers to serve and witness.	
He oversees the Church.	

**Figure 2.21** Practice illustrating four ministries of the Holy Spirit.

- *The Holy Spirit is the agent of salvation.* He convicts us of guilt (John 16:8-11), reveals to us the truth about Jesus (John 14:16, 26), gives us new birth (John 3:3-6), and brings us into the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). At conversion, we receive the Spirit (John 3:3-6; 20:22) and become participants in the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4). Also see article REGENERATION, John 3:3, *Life in the Spirit Study Bible*.
- *The Holy Spirit produces the characteristics of God in believers as we submit to His sanctifying influence* (Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 6:19). Notice some of the things the Spirit does as He lives in us. He sanctifies us, cleanses us, leads and motivates us into holy lives, and delivers us from sin's bondage (Rom. 8:2-4; Gal. 5:16-17; Eph. 5:18-19; 2 Thess. 2:13). He assures us that we are children of God (Rom. 8:16), helps us in our worship of God (Acts 10:46), and assists in our prayer lives. He intercedes for us as we cry out to God (Rom. 8:26-27). He produces Christlike graces of character that glorify Christ (Gal. 5:22-23; 1 Pet. 1:2). He is our divine teacher, guiding us into all truth (John 16:13; 14:26; 1 Cor. 2:9-16), disclosing Jesus to us, and guiding us into close fellowship and oneness with Jesus (John 14:16-18; 16:14). He continually imparts God's love to us (Rom. 5:5) and gives us joy, comfort, and help (John 14:16; 1 Thess. 1:6).
- *The Holy Spirit empowers believers to serve and witness.* The baptism in the Spirit and fullness of the Spirit enable this ministry of the Holy Spirit. When we are baptized in the Spirit, we receive power to witness for Christ and be the light of the world (Acts 1:8). The Spirit gives us the same divine anointing He gave Jesus Christ (John 1:32-33) and the disciples (Acts 1:5; 2:4). The Spirit enables us to proclaim God's Word (Acts 1:8; 4:31) and work miracles (Acts 2:43; 3:2-8; 5:15; 6:8; 10:38). It is God's purpose that all Christians experience the baptism in the Holy Spirit and live filled with the Spirit until Jesus Christ returns (Acts 2:39; 1 Cor. 1:7). In the area of service, the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to members of the Church to edify or strengthen the Church (1 Cor. 12-14). These gifts are a manifestation of the Spirit through individuals by which Christ's presence, love, truth, and righteous standards are made real to the fellowship of believers for the common good (1 Cor. 12:7-11).
- *The Holy Spirit oversees the Church.* He unites believers into one body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13); lives in the Church (1 Cor. 3:16); builds the Church (Eph. 2:22); inspires her worship (Phil. 3:3); directs her mission (Acts 13:2, 4); appoints her workers (Acts 20:28); gives gifts to her leaders (1 Cor. 12:1-11; Eph. 4:11-12); anoints her preachers (Acts 2:4; 1 Cor 2:4); guards the gospel (2 Tim. 1:14); and promotes her righteousness (John 16:8; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:18-20).



**Test Yourself:** Circle the letter by the **best** completion to each question or statement.

1. The most famous Old Testament verse on monotheism is
  - a) Deuteronomy 6:4.
  - b) Exodus 20:20.
  - c) John 3:16.
  - d) Genesis 1:1.
2. The doctrine of the Trinity is
  - a) three equal Gods in one form.
  - b) one God who appears in 3 ways.
  - c) one God in 3 equal persons.
  - d) God the Father ruling over the Son and Spirit.
3. Which account suggests that God is more than one person?
  - a) The Creation
  - b) The fall of humans
  - c) The flood
  - d) The call of Abraham
4. Which passage refers to God as 3 persons?
  - a) Isaiah's prophecy of Immanuel
  - b) Peter's confession of Christ
  - c) Daniel's vision
  - d) The Great Commission
5. Which proves 3 divine persons?
  - a) The Great Commission
  - b) Genesis 1:26-27
  - c) Revelation 4
  - d) Various passages together
6. Which is a unique attribute of God?
  - a) Mercy
  - b) Righteousness
  - c) Omniscience
  - d) Benevolence
7. A moral quality of God is that
  - a) God is infinite.
  - b) God is holy.
  - c) God is omnipotent.
  - d) God is eternal.
8. Which of these support Arianism?
  - a) "Jesus Only" Pentecostals
  - b) Jehovah's Witnesses
  - c) Modalists
  - d) Postmodernists
9. What do all members of the Trinity share?
  - a) The same roles
  - b) The same quotations
  - c) The same names
  - d) The same vision
10. Which describes God's goal?
  - a) Divine values
  - b) Divine mission
  - c) Divine vision
  - d) Divine function



**Essay Test Topics:** Write 50-100 words on each of the goals we studied (16 points each and 4 points for correct grammar).

- Define *Trinity* and give evidence from both testaments that there is only one God.
- Give evidence from both Testaments that there is only one God, who exists as three persons.
- Summarize key verses from both testaments showing that each person of the Trinity is God.
- Give examples of the unique and moral attributes that members of the Trinity share.
- Explain and refute the errors of Modalism and Arianism.
- Illustrate that members of the Trinity are united in *values, mission and vision*—yet have separate roles.

## Chapter 3: The Fall and Salvation of Humans

### Doctrine 4: The Fall of Man

*Man was created good and upright; for God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death but also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Gen. 1:26-27; 2:17; 3:6; Rom. 5:12-19).*

Ref.	Scriptures on Doctrine 4: The Fall of Humans
Gen. 1:26-27	<sup>26</sup> Then God said, “Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.” <sup>27</sup> So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.
Gen. 2:16-17	<sup>16</sup> And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; <sup>17</sup> but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.”
Gen. 3:6	When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.
Rom. 5:12-19	<b>(Death through Adam, life through Christ).</b> <sup>12</sup> Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned— <sup>13</sup> for before the law was given, sin was in the world. But sin is not taken into account when there is no law. <sup>14</sup> Nevertheless, death reigned from the time of Adam to the time of Moses, even over those who did not sin by breaking a command, as did Adam, who was a pattern of the one to come.  <sup>15</sup> But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many! <sup>16</sup> Again, the gift of God is not like the result of the one man’s sin: The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation, but the gift followed many trespasses and brought justification. <sup>17</sup> For if, by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and of the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ.  <sup>18</sup> Consequently, just as the result of one trespass was condemnation for all men, so also the result of one act of righteousness was justification that brings life for all men. <sup>19</sup> 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.

Figure 3.1 Scriptures on Doctrine 4: The Fall of Humans

### Lessons:

#### The Fall of Humans

7

**Goal A:** Sketch and explain the 5 parts in the story of Adam and Eve in Eden.

**Goal B:** Explain how Adam and Eve’s fall affects the relationship of the Creator to humans (Gen. 3–Rev. 20).

8

#### Three Phases of Salvation

**Goal:** Summarize how the Missionary God saves us in 3 phases.

9

#### Six Aspects of How the Missionary God Saves Us

**Goal A:** Sketch the star diagram that illustrates 6 aspects of how God saves us.

**Goal B:** Explain and illustrate aspects A–C of how the Missionary God saves us (Figure 3.17).

10

#### Six Aspects of How the Missionary God Saves Us—Cont.

**Goal A:** Explain and illustrate aspects D–F of how the Missionary God saves us (Gospels, Figure 3.17)

**Goal B:** From the Gospels, summarize what the Missionary God wants us to be and do.



## Key Words



**missionary**—a person *sent* by God on a religious *mission*, across cultural barriers. The *mission* includes such things as: sharing the gospel, making disciples, establishing local churches, and helping train ministers. The *Missionary* God and His people have the *mission* of saving people from every nation—to become members of His family who love Him, reflect His image, and share His values and mission.

**gospel**—the story of Jesus; the *whole good news* of His life, ministry, teachings, death, resurrection, ascension, and Second Coming

**salvation**—God delivering us from the guilt and grip of sin, and transforming us into His image to live with Him forever. The salvation God provides is a process—with a beginning, middle, and completion. Salvation begins with God rescuing us at the new birth from sin and spiritual death and bringing us into His family; salvation at this beginning includes forgiveness, new life, and *justification*. The middle phase of salvation continues with *sanctification* from the cross to the crown. Salvation is complete with *glorification* at the Second Coming of Christ.

**new birth**—the moment of receiving Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, as the Holy Spirit enters a person and imparts spiritual life

**sanctification**—the process of growing in holiness and becoming more like Jesus—from justification to glorification—by trusting in Christ, submitting to God’s Word, and walking in the Spirit

**justification**—being declared guiltless and credited with the righteousness of Christ at the moment of the new birth

**glorification**—being transformed into the likeness of Christ when He returns and clothes us with a new body and immortality

**ransom**—in biblical times, the price paid to free a slave; a payment to satisfy God’s justice—the price Jesus paid on the cross to God satisfying the divine demands of justice for our sins

Lesson

### The Fall of Humans

7

**Goal A:** Sketch and explain the 5 parts in the story of Adam and Eve in Eden.

**Goal B:** Explain how Adam and Eve’s fall affects the relationship of the Creator to humans (Gen. 3–Rev. 20).

The small story of Adam and Eve helps introduce the big story of God As Creator and Savior. The story of God As Creator/Savior is woven into the whole Bible. In Genesis, we see the beginning of the story of God As Creator. And in Revelation, we see God completing the creation He started in Genesis. Between Genesis and Revelation, there are more than 1000 chapters that span at least 6000 years. Often, it is hard to relate these 1000 *middle* chapters to the big story of God creating humans in His image. Figure 3.2 is a diagram to help you recall the big story of the whole Bible.

**Q 1** In Figure 3.2, which 2 parts of the story do Adam and Eve relate to? Explain.

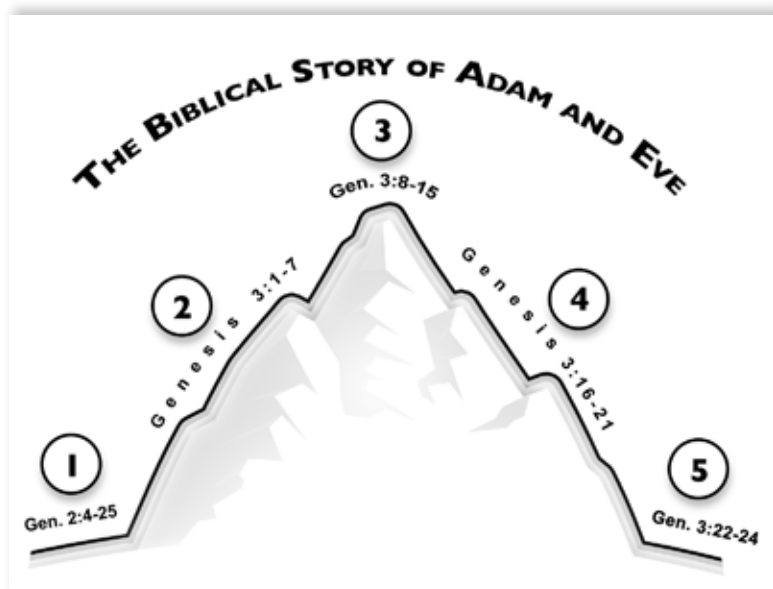


Figure 3.2 Many stories have five parts in the plot.

To understand a biblical story, we must examine the plot—the storyline (Figure 3.2) the structure of a story—the flow of its action and events. The plot of a story includes all the parts: the beginning, middle, and end. Stories have a *storyline* or *line of action*, like a climb up a mountain, a *Turning Point*, and then the journey down the mountain. Before we look at the big story of God As Creator & Savior (Gen. 1–Rev. 22), let’s look at the small story of Adam and Eve. We can plot this small story in five parts (Figure 3.2).

**Q 2** ↗ In what sense was Eden a garden/temple?

Let’s take a closer look at the five parts of the story of Adam and Eve.

**1. The Introduction** of the story of Adam and Eve describes a perfect world and perfect harmony between the Creator and His creation (Gen. 2:4-25). God creates the first human pair, male and female, “in His own image” (Gen. 1:26-27). Genesis 2:4-25 gives us details about the creation of Adam from dust and Eve from Adam’s rib. These verses also describe the setting and the guidelines for living in Eden. The Garden of Eden was the most special place on earth. It was a beautiful paradise. Imagine a garden of trees, flowers, birds, and a beautiful river—a garden that God Himself created. The purpose of Eden was awesome. Eden was a home and headquarters for Adam and Eve to rule over the earth. But most of all, Eden was a garden/temple—a perfect place where God could fellowship with the children He created in His image.



**Figure 3.3**  
Nebuchadnezzar II (605–562 B.C.) built the hanging gardens in Babylon to make his bride happy. This garden was among the seven wonders of the ancient world.<sup>1</sup> But comparing Babylon’s hanging gardens to the Garden of Eden is like comparing the earthly Jerusalem to the New Jerusalem.

**Q 3** ↗ Which 2 choices did Adam and Eve have?

Adam and Eve were *not* immortal. It was possible for them to live forever in harmony and fellowship with God and creation in the shady paradise of Eden. But God made it clear that they could choose to disobey Him and die at once (Gen. 2:15-17). Moses tells us all of this and more in the *Introduction* to the story of Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:4-25).

**Q 4** ↗ In the biblical story of ‘God As Creator,’ when does the Conflict begin?

**2. The Conflict begins and rises as Satan tempts Adam and Eve to disobey God’s Word (Gen. 3:1-7).** The conflict of Genesis 3:1-7 is the *same conflict* that continues *throughout the Bible* in the story of God As Creator. The conflict that begins in Genesis 3 is the conflict that ends in Revelation 20 in the lake of fire. So, it is important to see clearly **the conflict** that starts in Eden. The *conflict* begins when Satan, God’s greatest enemy, tempts Adam and Eve to doubt the goodness and the Word of God. Notice that this is *a conflict in the relationship between God and humans*. Satan is seeking to bring division between the Creator and those He created in *His image*. Speaking through the serpent, Satan introduces temptation. He plants a seed of doubt. **He casts a shadow of suspicion on God’s Word and God’s goodness.** Satan says that God is withholding something good, keeping it just for Himself. <sup>4</sup> “‘You will not surely die,’ the serpent said to the woman. <sup>5</sup> ‘For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil’” (Gen. 3:4-5). The tempter seduced Adam and Eve to think, “Me first and God second.” For a brief moment, Adam and Eve lost sight of the truth that God is our loving Creator, and we are His blessed creation. This type of deception is what Satan used in Eden and what he has used ever since. He has shot this same arrow at humans so many times, it is a wonder there are any feathers left on it. Satan’s goal was to destroy the relationship between God and the first human

**Q 5** ↗ How did Satan cast a shadow on God’s goodness and God’s Word?

pair—and to shatter the image of God in them. Conflict rises in the story as Adam and Eve listen to the devil and enter into temptation.

**The conflict rises as Adam and Eve disobey God (Gen. 3:6-7).** <sup>6</sup>“When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. <sup>7</sup>Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves” (Gen. 3:6-7).

In Genesis 3:6-7 conflict rises as high as the serpent’s head in the biblical story of Adam and Eve. They could have honored God, resisted the temptation, and chased Satan and the serpent from Eden. But instead, they ate the bait. As a door turns on a hinge, human history turns on the sin of eating the forbidden fruit in Eden.

Satan had said, with a hidden smile, that the eyes of Adam and Eve would be opened when they ate the fruit that God forbade. In one sense, they became *like* God, knowing good and evil as they had never known it before (see Gen. 3:22). And yet Satan used this *half-truth* to hide the whole truth.

Adam and Eve’s eyes were opened, but what did they see? They saw the end of paradise. They saw sin, sorrow, and death enter a perfect world. They saw the fall of the human race. They saw the glorious image of God shattered in them. With the fruit still in their mouths, they saw how wonderful good was and how horrible *evil was*. They became *the opposite* of what Satan promised. Through terrible, personal experience, they became **less like** God. *For we can never become more like God by choosing evil instead of good!* A drug addict knows more about heroin, cocaine, or opium after choosing it. People who choose such drugs learn lessons they wish they had never learned. They learn what it means to be a slave and a fool. The Apostle Paul, like every good parent, did not want his spiritual children to learn the evils of sin. *Many types of knowledge* are a source of shame, pain, and destruction. Paul wanted believers to be *simple* (innocent) about *evil*, but *wise* about what is *good* (Rom. 16:19). Likewise, God wanted to spare Adam and Eve from *knowing* the curse of disobedience. But Adam and Eve chose to be the first human rebels and idolaters. Idolatry is exalting anyone or anything above or beside God. This couple in paradise were the first humans to exalt their desires above what God wanted for them. And as we will see, the *attitude* of Adam and Eve in Eden is the same problem of rebellion that we find in the story of God As Creator, *from Genesis to Revelation*.

**3. The Turning Point (Gen. 3:8-15).** After Adam and Eve sin and hide, God comes calling and looking for them—just like He does for us, when we sin and try to hide from Him).

<sup>8</sup>Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. <sup>9</sup>But the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?” <sup>10</sup>He answered, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.” <sup>11</sup>And he said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?” <sup>12</sup>The man said, “The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.” <sup>13</sup>Then the Lord God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?”

The woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” <sup>14</sup>So the Lord God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this, “Cursed are you above all the livestock and all the wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life. <sup>15</sup>And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel” (Gen. 3:8-15).

**Q 6** ↗ What did Adam and Eve see when their eyes were opened?

**Q 7** ↗ How does Romans 16:19 relate to Adam and Eve?

**Q 8** ↗ What is the Turning Point in the story of Adam and Eve?

**Q 9** ↩️ *What are some ways today a husband fulfills his role as a spiritual leader?*

**Q 10** ↩️ *To whom does the promise of Genesis 3:15 refer?*

**Q 11** ↩️ *In the story of 'God As Creator,' for about how many years does the conflict continue?*

**Q 12** ↩️ *What are the 5 parts in the story of Adam and Eve?*

**Q 13** ↩️ *After the Turning Point, how does God resolve the conflict in Eden?*

**Q 14** ↩️ *What was the greatest loss of Adam and Eve in Eden?*

Justice fell swiftly on the problem of disobedience in Eden, like night settles on a glorious day. Adam and Eve both tried to pass the blame along (Gen. 3:12-13). Perhaps each was as guilty as the other. But some of us think that the greatest blame belongs to Adam, who neglected his role as a leader—when Eve needed him the most.

When the excuses stopped, God was looking straight at the crooked snake. The Creator sentenced the serpent to travel as low as it could go—on its belly (Gen. 3:14-15). Dust became a part of its daily diet. God put hatred between the serpent and humans. This hatred was passed forward for all generations. And whenever we see a snake, it reminds many of us of the low-down spiritual enemy we have in Satan.



**Figure 3.4** Genesis 3:15, Numbers 21:8, John 3:14-15, and Romans 16:20 all refer to the victory of Jesus Christ and His Church over Satan.

Note the *prophecy* of good spiritual news that God gives about the future *before* He declares the bad news. The foot of humans will crush the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). We like to emphasize Genesis 3:15 in the Turning Point, because it makes God the Hero of the story—as He should always be! In Numbers, when poisonous snakes were again attacking humans, God gave the sign of the lifeless, harmless snake on a pole (Num. 21:8). Jesus compared this wilderness deliverance to His future victory at Calvary that would save us from spiritual death. <sup>14</sup> “*Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up,* <sup>15</sup>*that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life*” (John 3:14-15). Likewise, Paul was surely thinking of Genesis 3:15 when he wrote, “*The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you*” (Rom. 16:20).

Genesis 3:15 looks forward to John 3:14. The dead serpent lifted up on a pole is a sign that the serpent was conquered. Dead snakes don't bite! We will come to this conquest of the serpent later in the big story of God As Creator.

**4. Resolving the Conflict in Eden happens as the Creator judges the disobedient creatures (Gen. 3:16-21).** This fourth part of a storyline, *Resolving Conflict*, continues the *solution* that the *Turning Point* begins. Part 4 in the storyline often includes deliverance for the righteous and punishment for the wicked.

The party in paradise was over. After a merciful prophecy of future victory over Satan, God told the bad news to Adam and Eve. The death the Creator had warned about began at once. God punished the man and the woman in their primary roles of marriage. As the companion of Adam, Eve was the mother of all future humans. But instead of fulfilling this role with pure joy, childbirth was mixed with pain. Likewise, Adam would no longer walk in the shade and pick fruit from trees that volunteered it. Instead, he would sweat for every bite. And he would till soil that was reluctant to give him anything except thorns, thistles, and blisters. Because Adam had exalted himself above the Creator of the heavens, man would labor one day at a time on a journey back to the dirt from which God created him. Dirt was a constant reminder of his destiny with death (Gen. 3:19). Ouch! That was one day Adam and Eve would have liked to erase. That day of erasing would come, when God Himself took their sins on His own shoulders, after they had a long sleep in death.

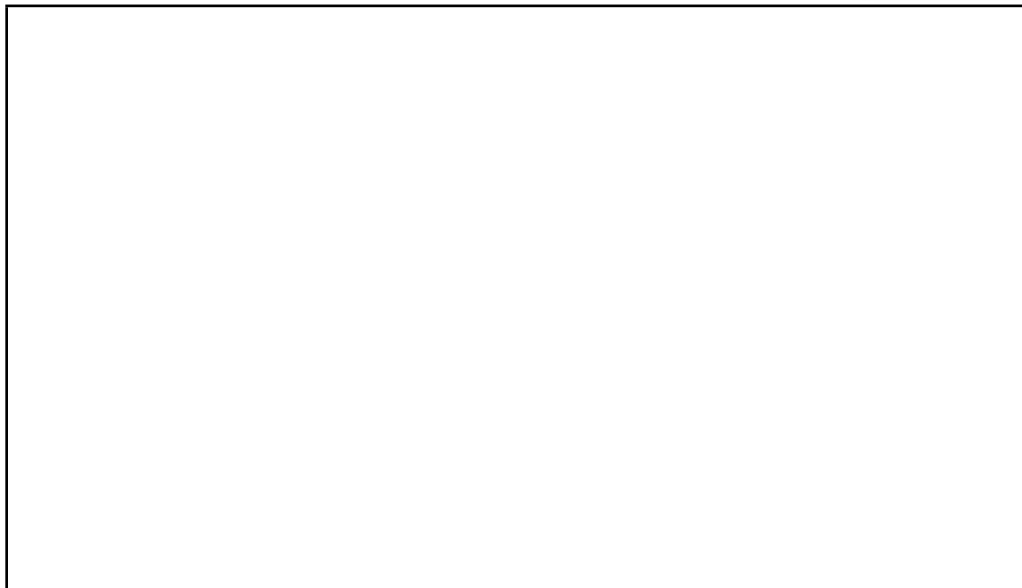
**5. The Conclusion comes as Adam and Eve lose many blessings and privileges (Gen. 3:22-24).** The sin of Adam and Eve began a terrible *conflict* between humans and their Creator. Consider what they lost. Sin separated them from their Creator and the privilege of fellowship with Him in paradise. Sin and death gained dominion over



them. Satan stole their right to rule and, instead, made them his slaves. **Sin shattered the Creator’s image in them. They exchanged the glorious image of God for the shame of disobedience.**

What a fall! Their eyes were *opened* to sorrow *ahead* of them, but the door to paradise was *shut* behind them. They had already known how good *good* could be; but now they knew how bad *evil* could be. Even so, in Genesis 3:15 we have the promise of future victory over Satan and the serpent.

**Figure 3.5** When Adam and Eve disobeyed God, sin and death entered God’s creation on earth. They lost their high position over creation, and God expelled them from His garden/temple, from their home, and from their headquarters. They lost their privilege of close fellowship with the Creator. They destroyed the harmony of creation and the harmony between body and soul. They lost the peace between God and humans. The earth was cursed with thorns and unfruitfulness. They traded sweet for sweat, privilege for pain, righteousness for guilt, and glory for shame—all for a bite of fruit whose memory became forever like ashes in their mouths. *Sin damaged the glorious image of God in them. This glorious inner image of God once shone like the sun through their faces, as they stood tall like their Creator. But sin made them slump in disgrace and shame. Sin reduced the shining image of God in them to a dim likeness deep within that flickered now and then like a fading candle in the wind.*



**Q 15** ✎ Draw a sketch like Figure 3.6 to show the biblical story of Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:4–3:24).

**Figure 3.6** Draw a sketch showing the five parts of the story of Adam and Eve. (See Figure 3.2)

**Q 16** ✎ Complete Figure 3.7 on the story of Adam and Eve (Gen. 2:4–3:24). Then, using your sketch, tell this Bible story to a friend or family member. (Your teacher may ask you to share a testimony about this.)

Five Parts of the Story	Your Summaries	Genesis
1. Introduction		2:4-25
2. Rising Conflict		3:1-7
3. Turning Point		3:8-15
4. Resolving Conflict		3:16-21
5. Conclusion		3:22-24

**Figure 3.7** Practice identifying the five parts of the biblical story of Adam and Eve.

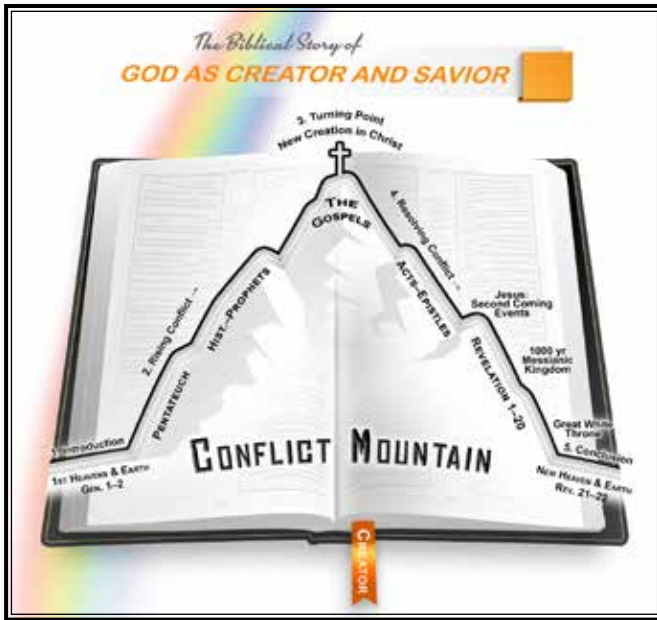


Figure 3.8

The Biblical story of Adam and Eve introduces the fall of humans in the big story of the whole Bible.

Q 17 ↗ In which 2 ways does the small story of Adam and Eve (Gen. 1–3) relate to the big story of ‘God As Creator’ (Gen. 1–Rev. 22)?

Q 18 ↗ What is the main theme in the story of ‘God As Creator’ (Gen. 1 to Rev. 22)?

Looking ahead at the big story of the whole Bible. The small story of Adam and Eve’s fall in Eden introduces how God created humans in His image, and it reveals the *Rising Conflict* in the biblical story of *God As Creator & Savior*. In the rest of the story of *God As Creator and Savior*, He seeks to save His people from sin, recreate His image in humans, and complete the plan He started in Eden. The first heaven and earth of Genesis 1–2 are the Introduction of the biblical story of *God As Creator/Savior* and the new heaven and earth of Revelation 21–22 are the *Conclusion*. But the main theme of this story is God recreating us in His image and transforming us to be like Him so we can live, worship, and fellowship with Him forever on a level high above Eden. “Second Adam from above, recreate us in your love.”

Lesson



Three Phases of Salvation

Goal: Summarize how the Missionary God saves us in 3 phases.

Doctrine 5: The Salvation of Man

The only hope of redemption for man is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

- a) Conditions of Salvation. Salvation is received through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ. By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, being justified by grace through faith, man becomes an heir of God according to the hope of eternal life (Luke 24:47; John 3:3; Rom. 10:13-15; Eph. 2:8; Tit. 2:11; 3:5-7).
- b) Evidence of Salvation. The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Rom. 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:24; Tit. 2:12).

Ref.	Scriptures on Doctrine 5: The Salvation of Humans
Luke 24:47	and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.
John 3:3	In reply Jesus declared, “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.
Rom. 10:13-15	<sup>13</sup> for, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” <sup>14</sup> How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? <sup>15</sup> And how can they preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”
Eph. 2:8-9	<sup>8</sup> For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— <sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast.
Tit. 2:11	For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.
Tit. 3:5-7	<sup>5</sup> 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, <sup>6</sup> whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, <sup>7</sup> so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Figure 3.9 Scriptures on Doctrine 5: The Salvation of Humans

**Overview.** Saving humans is NOT a new thought God had after Malachi died. In Eden, God foretold that Christ, the seed of the woman, would one day crush the head of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). And as early as Genesis 12 God announced that a Savior through the lineage of Abraham would bless all the nations of the earth (Gen. 12:1-3). Years later, Jeremiah and Ezekiel prophesied that God would provide a New Covenant, in which He writes His laws on our hearts, rather than on tablets of stone. As Luke records, Moses and all of the prophets foretold the Messiah—the Christ who would suffer and die to save us (Luke 24:25-27). Before the beginning of time, God knew the price it would cost to create humans with a free will. But the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit desired a human family so much that They felt we were worth dying for. The big story of the Bible, from Genesis 1 through Revelation 22, is about God creating a family in His image to share His love forever.

**Paul states:** <sup>8</sup>So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, <sup>9</sup>who 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,** <sup>10</sup>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 (2 Tim. 1:8-10).

**Peter writes:** <sup>15</sup>But just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; <sup>16</sup>for it is written: “Be holy, because I am holy.” <sup>17</sup>Since you call on a Father who judges each man’s work impartially, live your lives as strangers here in reverent fear. <sup>18</sup>For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, <sup>19</sup>but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. <sup>20</sup>**He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake** (1 Pet. 1:15-20).

**John worships Jesus as: “the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world”** (Rev. 13:8).

The Father sent His Son as a missionary to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:9-10)! But what does salvation include?

Let’s look briefly at **the 3 phases of salvation**—which God planned before the first sunrise on earth (Figure 3.10).

\*Salvation is God rescuing us from the guilt and grip of sin, and transforming us into His image to live with Him forever. The salvation God provides is a process—with a beginning, middle, and completion. Salvation begins with God rescuing us from sin and spiritual death at the new birth into His family; salvation at this beginning includes forgiveness, new life, and justification. The middle phase of salvation continues with sanctification from the cross to the crown. Salvation is complete with glorification at the Second Coming of Christ. (See definitions in Key Words at the beginning of this chapter, and explanations below.)

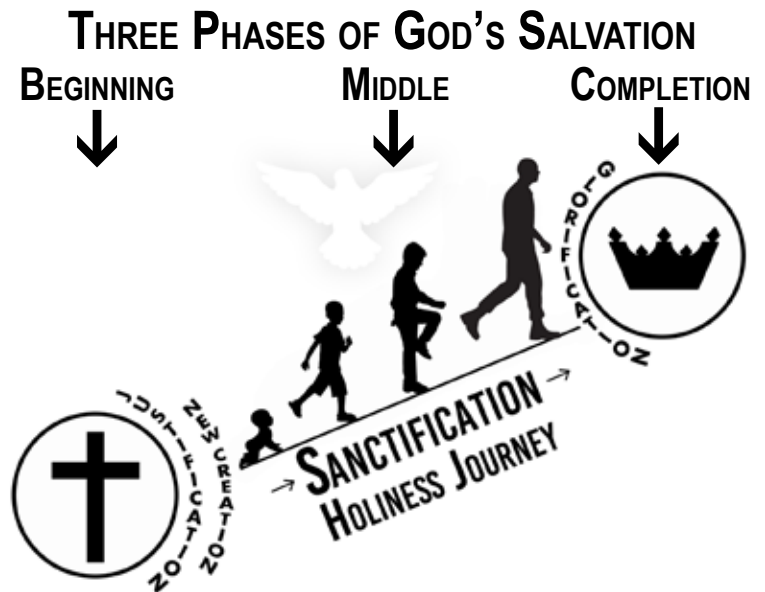
**Three phases of salvation.** John Wesley reminds us that salvation includes three phases: a beginning, a middle, and an end.<sup>2</sup> So we say, “I was saved; I am being saved; I will be saved.” Good theology understands and embraces the three phases of salvation God provides. Let’s look briefly at each of these phases.

**Q 19** ↗ Is salvation through Jesus Christ a thought God discovered after Israel rebelled from Moses to Malachi? Explain.

**Q 20** ↗ Which 3 passages reveal God’s plan to save humanity before He created us?



**Q 21** ↗ What are the 3 phases of salvation?



**Figure 3.10** Definition, explanation, and visualization of Three Phases of God’s Salvation

Q 22 How and when does salvation begin?

**A. The Beginning Phase of Salvation: The New Birth by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.**

Q 23 Please fill in the blanks in Figure 3.11 on the Beginning Phase of salvation.

Ref.	Passages on the Beginning Phase of Salvation: The New Birth
Jer. 31:31-33	Jeremiah prophesied that God would give His people a new _____ .
Matt. 18:3	He said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like _____ , you will never enter _____ ."
Lk. 18:10-14	The parable of the proud Pharisee and the humble publican reminds us that <i>justification</i> is a _____ from heaven, not merit we earn through our good _____ ,
Jn. 3:3	Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is _____ ."
Jn. 5:24	We escape from spiritual _____ and cross over to spiritual _____ as we trust in Jesus.
Eph. 2:1-5	When we were dead in our _____ , God made us alive in _____ , and saved us by _____ .
Col. 1:13-14	<sup>13</sup> God rescued us from _____ and brought us into _____ , <sup>14</sup> in whom we have _____ , the forgiveness of sins.
2 Pet. 1:4	At the moment of the _____ , God shares His divine _____ with us.
Jam. 1:17-18	The Father of the heavenly lights...chose to give us _____ through the word of truth.

Figure 3.11 Practice reviewing verses on the beginning phase of salvation.

The \*new birth is the *beginning* of each person’s salvation. The apostles argued about which of them was the greatest in the kingdom of the King. Jesus taught that a vital conversion is necessary for us to even enter the kingdom of heaven. In this vital change, we humble ourselves, turn from trusting in ourselves, and depend, like little children, on God, our Father and King. Matthew writes:<sup>2</sup> “He called a little child and had him stand among them. <sup>3</sup>And He said: ‘I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup>Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Matt. 18:2-4).<sup>3</sup> Likewise, Luke reminds us in the parable of the proud Pharisee and the humble tax collector (Luke 18:10-14) that *justification* is a gift that comes down to us from heaven, not merit that we earn through our good deeds and boast about looking up.



Figure 3.12 Luke reminds us in the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector (Luke 18:10-14) that *justification* is a gift that we humbly receive as it comes down to us from heaven, not merit that we earn through our good deeds and boast about looking up with hubris (pride and arrogance).

Also, John writes: “Jesus declared, ‘I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again’” (John 3:3). When a person hears the gospel, understands it, repents of sin, and by faith invites Jesus to be Savior and Lord, a spiritual birth occurs within. With the new birth, God justifies us. At **justification**, the blood of Christ cleanses us from sin and erases our guilt. In this beginning of salvation, we are clothed with the righteousness of Christ—who died as our substitute. At justification, God credits us with the righteousness of Christ. When you hear a person say, “I was saved,” he or she is referring to the *beginning phase* of salvation—the moment of

God’s rescue, forgiveness, the new birth, and justification. This is the day God wrote that person’s name in the Book of Life—the day that person became a child of God. The

rescue, forgiveness, the new birth, and justification are the *beginning* of each person’s salvation—the moment we escape from spiritual death and *cross over* to spiritual life (John 5:24).

Paul refers to this beginning of salvation as the moment God rescues us from spiritual death in the kingdom of darkness. God makes us spiritually alive in Christ Jesus, forgives our sins, bringing us as His children into the kingdom of His Son (Col. 1:13-14; Eph. 2:1-10). In a similar way, Peter teaches that at the moment of the new birth, God shares His divine nature with us (2 Pet. 1:4).

**B. The Middle Phase of Salvation: Growing in Grace & Holiness: From the Inside Out—Cross to Crown (see Figure 3.17)**

The middle phase of salvation refers to the life-long process of **\*sanctification**. Sanctification is discipleship—following Jesus, growing in holiness, and becoming more like Jesus. When we are born spiritually, we are like babies that need to grow in Christ. Those who cut off the gospel talk about *being born* spiritually without talking about *growing up*. But God’s plan is not for believers to remain babies. Babies who do not grow are in danger of dying. As the biblical book of Hebrews teaches, spiritual babies must grow to live!

Warning: Danger!	Hebrews
1. The danger of neglect	2:1-4
2. The danger of unbelief	3:7-19
3. The danger of immaturity	5:11–6:12
4. The danger of not persevering to the end	10:26-31
5. The danger of refusing God	12:25-29

**Figure 3.13 Five warnings in the book of Hebrews**

The Epistles teach that to be holy, we must receive holiness from God. Holiness begins with forgiveness, the new birth, and justification. Then, *what God declares we are* at justification, He *transforms us into* through the process of sanctification. As one writer said, “The *gift* of justification becomes the lifelong *task* of sanctification, by the power of the Spirit.”<sup>4</sup> It takes years for babies to grow into adults. Likewise, it takes time to grow from infants in Christ to mature believers. The writers of Hebrews and 2 Corinthians reveal disappointment in believers who remained babies, needing milk, when they should have grown and been able to eat meat (Heb. 5:12; 1 Cor. 3:2). Peter encourages his readers to desire the milk of the Word, so they will grow up (1 Pet. 2:2 KJV). A year in Christ does not guarantee a year of spiritual growth. Sadly, some believers are still tiny babies in Christ after a year or more! To grow in grace, we must do more than bow our heads and invite Jesus into our lives.

In the sanctification process we grow in grace as we seek to be filled with the Spirit day by day, study and obey the Bible, attend Church, pray, fellowship with other believers, and practice hating what is wrong and loving what is right. Through growing in holiness, God frees us *from* the *power* of sin and transforms us from glory to glory *into* the image of Christ—throughout life on earth, by the power of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 3:18). Paul is referring to the sanctification process when he says we are ***being renewed in the image of the Creator*** (Col. 3:10; Eph. 4:24). In the sanctification process, God is perfecting His image in us. Thank God, we are not what we used to be. Even so, we are not yet what God has planned for us to be in this life. The process of sanctification affects holiness of heart, attitudes, and actions. Sanctification—holy living—is a life of discipleship. We grow in holiness as we practice obeying the teachings and example of Jesus—not in our own strength, but by the power of God’s Spirit within us.

**Q 24** ↖ Why do you think some talk about what God did for us, but ignore what God does in us?

**Q 25** ↖ Why is growing in holiness essential?

**Q 26** ↗ How does justification overlap with sanctification?

**Q 27** ↖ What happens in sanctification, the vital middle phase of salvation?

**Q 28** Please answer the question in Figure 3.14 on the Middle Phase of salvation.

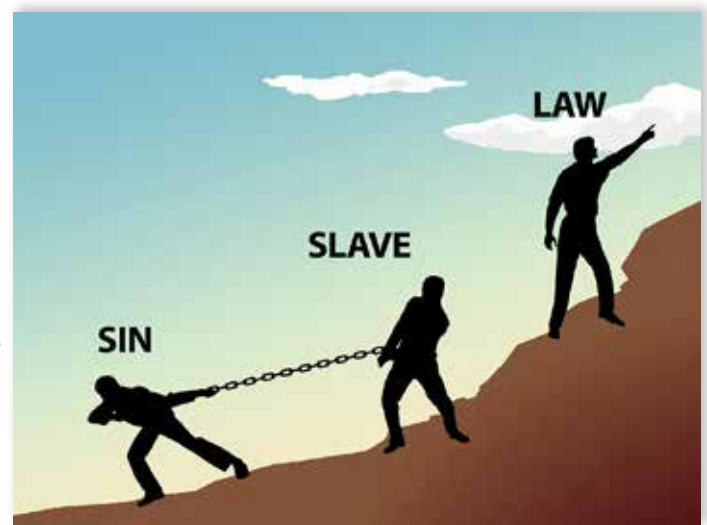
Ref.	Questions on the Middle Phase of Salvation: Growing in Grace & Holiness—from the Inside Out
Matt. 7:21 28:19-20	After we lead people to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord, how important is it to teach them to obey the teachings of Jesus, by the power of the Holy Spirit? Explain.
Jn. 15:5-10	Under the OT, the law pointed to righteous, but did not empower. How does the illustration of Christ, the Vine, reveal a new approach to righteous living?
Eph. 4:17-5:7	How is Eph. 5:18b the key to <i>being renewed in the image of the Creator</i> ?
Col. 3:1-14	How does Paul expect believers to get rid of old sinful ways, and “put on new, clean clothes”?
Rom. 8:5-14	What is the key to overcoming sinful desires, and becoming more like Jesus?
1 Cor. 6:7-11	What lifestyle changes did Paul insist on in the middle phase of salvation?
Gal. 5:16-25	How does Paul expect us to avoid sinful acts of the flesh, and produce the fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control?
Matt. 24:12 1 Tim. 4:1	Concerning the middle phase of salvation, what warning do Jesus and Paul give?
2 Pet. 1:5-11	Peter tells born-again believers to <i>make every effort</i> to add to our faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness and love –so we will be fruitful and not fall away from Christ. What source in 2 Pet. 1:4 empowers us to add the godly qualities Peter identifies?
Heb. 12:14-17	In the middle phase of salvation, how would you respond to someone who said their holiness was none of their responsibility?

**Figure 3.14** Practice answering questions on growing in grace in the middle phase of salvation.

The Gospels teach that sanctification occurs as we abide in Christ, in a relationship with Him, as a branch draws its life and strength from a vine.

<sup>5</sup> “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. <sup>8</sup> This is to my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. <sup>9</sup> As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. <sup>10</sup> If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in His love (John 15:5-10). See also: Matthew 7:21-27; 25:1-46.

**Figure 3.15** God’s law has always pointed in the right direction. And some in every generation have desired to obey God’s law and please Him. But without Christ, all people are slaves of sin. Because the flesh is weak with sinful desires, sin is able to capture people and pull them in the wrong direction, away from God. So God sent a Savior to help us. When we repent and put our faith in Jesus, God forgives our sins, and we become His children. God writes His moral laws in our hearts, and imparts His Spirit to strengthen us, guiding us to fulfill the Law through love, from the inside out. As God’s children, we are no longer slaves of sin. All God’s children are led by the Spirit and are slaves (servants) of doing what is right and pleasing to God (Rom. 6–8, 12–13).



- **Reminder:** It is important to remember that God is our Savior. It is He who saves us, and not we ourselves. By faith, we must depend on God for salvation—beginning, middle, and end. As the branch depends on the vine, we draw strength from Christ for every aspect of our salvation. Apart from Him we can do nothing (John 15:5). We trust in God to save us in the process of salvation—womb to tomb.<sup>5</sup>

When a person says, “I am being saved,” he or she is referring to the process of sanctification as we grow in grace, are led by the Spirit, and become *more* like Jesus and *less* like those led by the flesh (Rom. 8:1-17; Gal. 5:16-26). Sanctification, being led to live in holiness by the Holy Spirit, is the vital middle of salvation. Those who are born again must **“Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord”** (Heb. 12:14). Father commands us to be holy as He is holy (1 Pet. 1:16). God will give us all the grace we need to grow in holiness, but we must cooperate with Him in the process. Holiness includes what God did *for* us, and what He does *in* us. \*Justification is what Jesus does *for* us, through His death on the cross. *Sanctification* begins at justification, and expands in what God does *in* us, as we live in the Word and walk in the Spirit. *Sanctification*, becoming more like Jesus, is the *vital middle* of salvation.

**Sabio says:** “Don’t deceive yourself by planning for heaven if you don’t practice holy living! Justification without sanctification is fiction.”

**C. The Completion Phase of Salvation –Our Glorious Transformation at Christ’s Second Coming.**

The completion of salvation occurs at \***glorification**. Paul says we will be changed in a moment, at the Rapture, when Jesus returns to gather His own. In the twinkling of an eye we will receive our new bodies and be transformed into the likeness of Christ. We will be clothed with immortality and free *from* all sin and temptations when Christ returns for believers, both dead and alive (1 Cor. 15:50-54). We will be like Him. Jesus prophesied: <sup>12</sup>“*Because of the increase of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold,* <sup>13</sup>**but he who stands firm to the end will be saved**” (Matt. 24:12-13). We will dig deeper into the three phases of salvation in the next lesson when we study the Epistles, since they interpret and apply the gospel. Paul refers to future salvation when he says, “...*our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed*” (Rom. 13:11). Truly we are saved, even now, but not yet completely. The best is yet to come! When you hear a person say, “I will be saved completely,” she or he is referring to that moment when we meet Jesus in the air at the *Parousia*—Greek for the Second Coming of Christ (pronounced pa-ru-SI-a). (We cover the topic of sanctification more thoroughly in the *Faith & Action* course: *Romans & Galatians*.)

**Q 32** ↩ Please answer the question in Figure 3.16 on the Completion Phase of salvation.

Ref.	Verses on the Completion Phase of Salvation: Our Glorious Transformation
Matt. 24:12-13	Which phase of salvation was Jesus referring to in Matt. 24:12-13?
Rom. 13:11	Which phase of our salvation is nearer now than it was before?
1 Cor. 15:50-54	What are some glorious aspects of the completion phase of salvation?

**Figure 3.16** Practice answering questions on the completion phase of salvation.

**Q 29** ↩ In the sanctification process, does depending on the Spirit replace “making every effort” (2 Pet. 1:5-8)? Explain.



**Q 30** ↩ Define: new birth, justification, sanctification, glorification, and parousia.

**Q 31** ↩ When will our salvation be complete? Explain.

Lesson



**Six Aspects of How the Missionary God Saves Us**

**Goal A:** Sketch the star diagram that illustrates 6 aspects of *how* God saves us.

**Goal B:** Explain and illustrate *aspects A–C* of how the Missionary God saves us (Figure 3.17).

The Missionary God desires to save everyone through 3 phases of salvation: the beginning, middle, and completion. Let’s explore in the Gospels six aspects of *how* the Missionary God saves—from the cross to the crown (Figure 3.17). Discern that the Gospels unite evangelism with discipleship, which is following Jesus during our years on earth.

Q 33 ↗ Which of the 6 aspects of salvation is first in the diagram? Which is last?

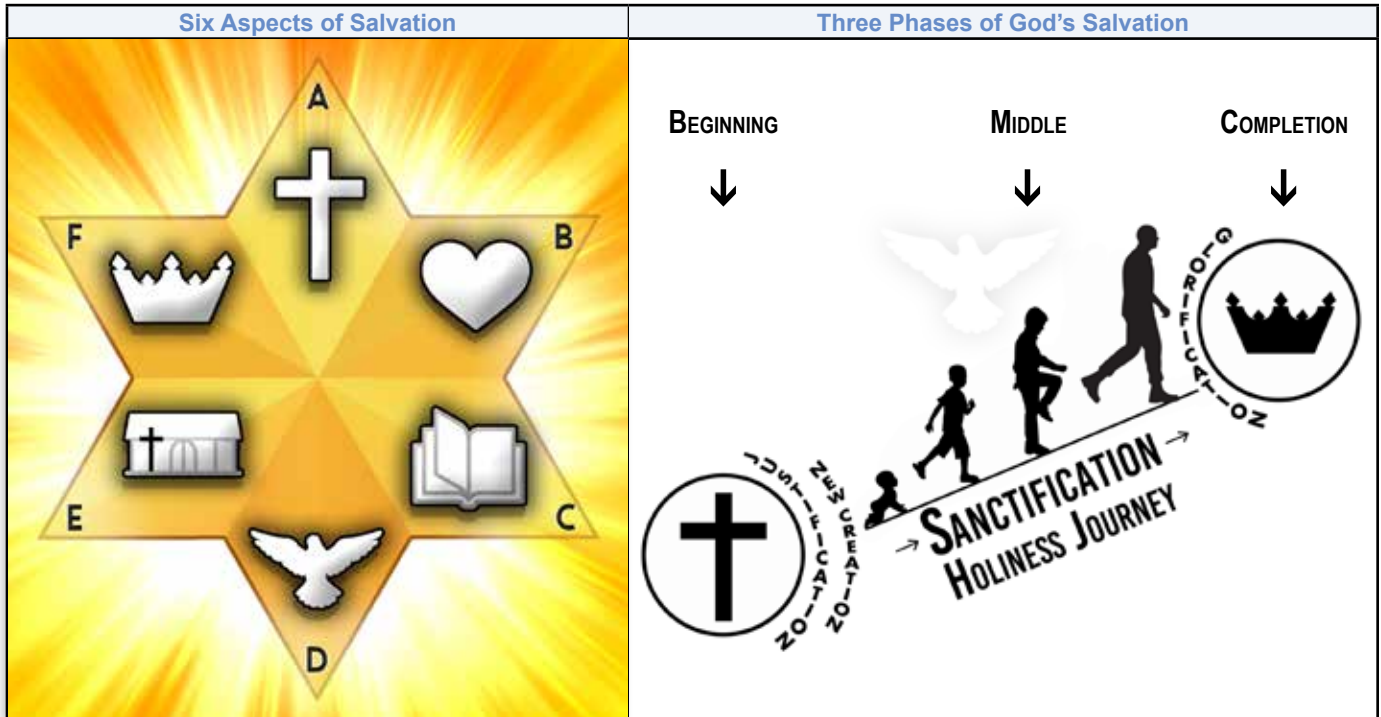


Figure 3.17 The Missionary God's six-fold Starlight of Salvation: from Cross to Crown

We represent each of the six aspects of salvation (A–F) with a symbol (Figure 3.17). In this lesson let's explore aspects A–C of the salvation God provides from cross to crown.

Q 34 ↗ Which aspects of God's salvation are based on the Christ of the cross? Explain.

Q 35 ↗ Why do we say that 'Jesus Christ crucified on the cross' is the cornerstone of salvation?

**A. The cross symbolizes the first of six aspects through which the Missionary God saves us.**



The cross reminds us of what the Missionary God did *for* us. God the Father *sent* His Son to earth as a missionary. Jesus was born to die as a sacrifice to reconcile God with humans. Jesus is heaven's Missionary to every sinner—the divine substitute to bear on His shoulders the penalty of sin for every person. As John the Baptist declared of Jesus: "Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). **The death of Jesus Christ crucified on the cross is the cornerstone of salvation. The basis of the New Covenant is the blood of Christ** (Matt. 26:26–28; Mark 14:22–24; Luke 22:19–20; John 1:29; 6:32–63). *All aspects of the salvation God provides flow through the Christ of the cross.*



Q 36 ↗ Why did God choose blood as the only sacrifice to cleanse from sin?

Scripture teaches that blood is the *only* sacrifice that God approves as the basis for our forgiveness. The human body produces two million blood cells per second in bone marrow. The heart pumps 1500–2000 gallons of blood per day. In the human body, each day blood cells circulate through 96,500 kilometers (60,000 miles) of arteries, veins, and capillaries.<sup>6</sup> Wow! Each day, the blood in us travels more than twice the distance around the whole earth! As it travels, blood supplies oxygen, nutrients, and food to the body. No wonder God says that blood is sacred, and represents the life within us. No wonder that God chose blood as the only sacrifice for sin, and "without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Heb. 9:22). Take time often to thank Jesus Christ for shedding His life's blood on the cross, to pay the penalty for God to forgive us. The blood of Jesus is the blood of the New Covenant, poured out for all, for the forgiveness of sin (Matt. 26:28; Luke 22:20; 1 John 2:2). His sacrifice on the cross pays our debt and provides the path to a relationship with Father, as children enjoying His love. Oh, the blood of Jesus, the payment to cancel and erase the sins of every person in the world!



**The Father sent Jesus to save us from the penalty of sin by dying as our substitute on the cross.**

**Q 37** ↗ What happens at justification?

Jesus Christ is the sacrifice that brings peace, making it possible for us to be at one with God. The blood sacrifice of Jesus on the cross provides a *pardon* from our sins. Life is possible because of the blood that flows within us. The heart pumps blood throughout the body, supplying oxygen and food to our cells. Throughout Scripture, the blood of a human represents a human life. Because Jesus was *a sacrifice and substitute* for our sins, God *forgives* us and says we are *justified*—declared righteous in Christ and no longer *guilty*. This forgiveness occurs for each of us as we repent of our sins and put our faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord. We praise the Lord for *saving* us from the *penalty* of sin—which was eternal condemnation and separation from God. Figure 3.18 shows some key passages in the Gospels on *how* the Missionary God saves us through the death of Jesus on the cross.

**Q 38** ↗ Please fill in the blanks and answer the questions in Figure 3.18 about the Gospels' emphasis on the death of Christ.

Gospel	Key Verses in the Gospels Showing That Christ's Sacrificial Death on the Cross Is the Cornerstone of Salvation and the New Covenant
Matt. 20:28	<p><b>Question:</b> To whom did Jesus pay the ransom of His life? _____</p> <p><b>Depend on the fact that Missionary Jesus came to give His life as a *ransom to free sinners from sin.</b> In biblical times, a ransom commonly referred to the price paid to free a slave.<sup>7</sup></p> <p>"...the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a _____ for many."</p>
Matt. 26:26-28	<p><b>Believe Jesus died as our Passover Lamb, so Father can forgive and free us from our sins.</b></p> <p><sup>26</sup>While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to His disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body."<sup>27</sup> Then He took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. <sup>28</sup>This is my _____ of the covenant, which is _____ for many for the forgiveness of sins."</p>
Mark 14:24	<p><b>Trust in the blood of Jesus as the basis for your relationship with the Father.</b></p> <p>"This is my blood of the _____, which is poured out for many," He said to them.</p>
Luke 22:19-20	<p><b>Believe Jesus is the One that Father sent to create the New Covenant</b> (Isa. 53; Jer. 31:31-33; Ezek. 34:24). All four Gospel writers emphasize that Jesus came to create the New Covenant in His blood. Jesus is our Passover Lamb of the new Exodus from slavery to sin.</p> <p><sup>19</sup>And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me."<sup>20</sup> In the same way, after the supper He took the cup, saying, "<b>This cup is the new covenant in my _____, which _____ for you.</b>"</p>
Luke 24:44-49	<p><b>Repent and accept the forgiveness Father offers you in the name of Jesus.</b></p> <p><sup>44</sup>He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."<sup>45</sup> Then He opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. <sup>46</sup>He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup>and _____ <b>will be preached in His name to _____</b>, beginning at Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup>You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup>I am going to send you what <b>my Father</b> has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."</p>
John 1:11-13	<p><b>To become children of God, we must receive Jesus as Savior and Lord.</b></p> <p><sup>11</sup>He came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive Him. <sup>12</sup><b>Yet to all who _____ Him, to those who believed in His name, He gave the right to become _____ of God—</b> <sup>13</sup><b>children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of _____.</b></p>
John 1:29	<p><b>Believe that Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for your sins and take them away forever.</b></p> <p>"Look, the Lamb of God who takes away the _____ of the world!"</p>
John 3:5-6	<p><b>As humans birth human children, the Spirit gives birth to spiritual children.</b></p> <p>... <sup>5</sup>"I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the _____. <sup>6</sup>Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the _____ gives birth to spirit."</p>
John 8:23-24	<p><b>To escape dying in our sins, we must accept Jesus as Savior and Lord.</b></p> <p><sup>23</sup>But He continued, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. <sup>24</sup>I told you that you would die in your _____; if you do not _____ that I am [the one I claim to be], you will indeed die in your sins."</p>

Figure 3.18 continued on next page

Continued from previous page

John 10:10	<b>Believe that Jesus is both the Lamb of God and the Good Shepherd, who came to give us abundant spiritual life.</b> <i>The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have _____, and have it to the _____.</i>
John 12:32-33	<b>Question:</b> In what sense was Jesus lifted up? <b>Jesus promised that after He was lifted up (on the cross) He would draw all people to Himself.</b> <sup>32</sup> <i>“But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself.”</i> <sup>33</sup> <i>He said this to show the kind of _____ He was going to die.</i>
John 14:6	<b>Depend on Jesus as the way to the Father.</b> <i>Jesus answered, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the _____ except through me.”</i> (See the chart on the 10 “I am” statement of Jesus, in the <i>Faith &amp; Action Series</i> , course on <i>John</i> , Figure 1.11)
John 19:30	As He died, Jesus said, <b>“It is finished.”</b> These words reveal that as a missionary, Jesus completed His mission of saving us from the <i>penalty of our sins</i> . As the blood of the animal sacrifices under the Old Covenant *atoned temporarily for Israel’s sins, the blood of Jesus, our sacrifice, permanently cleanses our sins. (See Hebrews 10:1-18, which comes later in the story.) At the moment of Christ’s death, the veil in the temple was split from top to bottom (Matt. 27:50-51). This showed that believers now have direct access into the presence of God, through Jesus, our Missionary, High Priest, and permanent sacrifice (Heb. 9:6-10; 10:19-22). <b>Question:</b> Why is the doctrine of purgatory an insult to Jesus and His mission?

**Figure 3.18** The Gospels proclaim that Missionary Jesus saves us from the *penalty* of our sin by dying on the cross as a sacrifice and substitute for us.

**Q 39** ↗ *How does our belief in Jesus affect our heart spiritually?*

**Q 40** ↖ *What inner evidence shows that a person has become a child of God?*

**Q 41** ↖ *Before the Turning Point, which 2 prophets promised a change within?*

**B. The heart is the symbol for the second of the six aspects of God’s salvation.**



The heart reminds us of what the Missionary God does *for* us and *in us*. Beware of salvation that does not include a new heart and new attitudes toward God. Hundreds of years before Father sent His Son to be our Missionary, the prophets predicted a New Covenant and a new heart (Figure 3.19). In Scripture, the heart often represents the source of our desires.

Reference	Key Verses in the Prophets Showing That God’s Salvation Under the New Covenant Comes With a New Heart—a New, Powerful Desire to Please God
Jer. 31:31-33	<sup>31</sup> <i>“The time is coming,” declares the Lord, “when I will make a <b>new covenant</b> with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. <sup>32</sup>It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them,” declares the Lord. <sup>33</sup>“This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time,” declares the Lord. “I will put my law in their minds and write it <b>on their hearts</b>. I will be their God, and they will be my people.”</i>
Ezek. 36:26-27	<sup>26</sup> <i>“I will give you a <b>new heart</b> and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a <b>heart of flesh</b>. <sup>27</sup>And I will put my Spirit in you and <b>move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.</b>”</i>

**Figure 3.19**  
The prophets emphasized that salvation under the New Covenant features a new heart.

The Gospels proclaim that Jesus shed His blood to begin a New Covenant. A new *heart* is a vital aspect of salvation under the New Covenant Jesus provides. This is clear in the Gospels, and even more clear in the Epistles, which interpret the Gospels. Figure 3.20 lists verses in the Gospels that show the heart is the source of our desires. In the Gospels, God is telling us that He gives us *a new heart to love and please Him*. Later in the story, the Epistles make this point even clearer.

**Q 42** Please fill in the blanks of Figure 3.20 on the new heart that comes with the New Covenant.

Matthew	Key Verses in Matthew Revealing That the Need for Salvation Brings a New Heart That Loves God
5:8	"Blessed are the _____ in heart, for they will see God."
5:28	"But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his _____."
15:8-9	<sup>8</sup> "These people honor me with their _____, but their _____ are far from me. <sup>9</sup> They worship me _____; their teachings are but rules taught by _____."
15:18	"But the things that come out of the mouth come from the _____, and these make a man 'unclean.'"
18:34-35	<sup>34</sup> "In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. <sup>35</sup> This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you _____ your brother from your heart."
22:36-40	<sup>36</sup> "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" <sup>37</sup> Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your _____ and with all your _____ and with all your _____." <sup>38</sup> This is the first and greatest commandment. <sup>39</sup> And the second is like it: 'Love your _____ as yourself.' <sup>40</sup> All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two _____."

**Figure 3.20** The Gospels proclaim that as Missionary Jesus saves us, He gives us a new heart—a spiritual desire within to love and please God.

Scripture refers to both Daniel and the Apostle John as men who were loved by God—esteemed and precious to Him. Likewise, Jesus assures us that the Father loves us, even as He loves the Son (John 17:23, 26). Wow! Surely the way God loves us inspires us to love Him with a whole heart. ❤️

**Q 43** What are some reasons why the Bible is a vital aspect of salvation?

**C. The Bible is the symbol for the third of the six aspects of God's salvation.**



The Word of God is a major part of how the Missionary God saves people. The Bible reminds us of what the Missionary God did for us. The Bible gives us the gospel! It is the *one and only book* God gave that records the life and teachings of Jesus. The Word of God is our *map* from earth to heaven. Whether oral or written, the Word of God teaches us how to be saved—how to live in relation to God and people. The Bible reveals God's guidelines for *faith* and *practice*. The Word of God governs *what we believe* and *how we live*. Without the Word of God, whether spoken or written, salvation is not possible. Faith comes from the Word of God. Figure 3.22 lists key verses in the Gospels showing that the Scriptures are a vital aspect of salvation.



**Figure 3.21** Daniel experienced God's love through protection from death.

**Q 44** Please fill in the blanks of Figure 3.22 on the vital role of Scripture in salvation.

Gospels	Key Verses in the Gospels on the Role of Scripture in Salvation
Matt. 4:4	<b>Through Scripture, we overcome _____, Satan, and the world. There is no spiritual _____ without the Word of God.</b> Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man does not _____ on bread alone, but on every _____ that comes from the mouth of God.'"
Matt. 13:19-23 Luke 8:11-15	The gospel that brings salvation comes to us through the _____ of _____, which is like seed sown.

Continued from previous page

Mark 13:31	"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my _____ will never pass away."
Luke 1:1-4	<sup>3</sup> Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to _____ an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, <sup>4</sup> so that you may know the _____ of the things you have been taught.
Luke 11:28	He replied, "_____ rather are those who hear the word of God and _____ it."
John 5:24	"I tell you the truth, whoever hears my _____ and believes Him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from _____ to life."
John 8:31-32	<sup>31</sup> To the Jews who had believed Him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my _____, you are really my disciples. <sup>32</sup> Then you will know the _____, and the _____ will set you free."
John 14:23-24	<sup>23</sup> Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will _____. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. <sup>24</sup> He who does not love me will not _____. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me."
John 15:3	<b>The Word of God cleanses us as we receive it and submit to it.</b> "You are already clean because of the _____ I have spoken to you."
John 15:7	<b>Submitting to the Word of God enables us to remain in and abide in Christ.</b> "If you remain in me and my _____ remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you."
John 17:6-8	<b>The Word of God is the main way God reveals Himself and His will to us.</b> <sup>6</sup> "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your _____. <sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. <sup>8</sup> For I gave them the _____ you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with _____ that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me."
John 17:17	<b>God's Word sanctifies us—it makes and keeps us holy as we receive it and submit to it.</b> "Sanctify them by the truth; your _____ is truth."

Figure 3.22 Practice interacting with Scriptures that emphasize the vital role of Scripture in salvation.

Lesson

**Six Aspects of How the Missionary God Saves Us—Cont.**

10

**Goal A:** Explain and illustrate aspects D–F of how the Missionary God saves us (Gospels, Figure 3.17)

**Goal B:** From the Gospels, summarize what the Missionary God wants us to be and do.

**Q 45** ↖ Is the death of Christ on the cross the only aspect of salvation? Explain.

Jesus' death on the cross is the cornerstone of salvation, and His blood is the basis of the New Covenant. But we want to have a theology about God that is *balanced*. We want to believe and emphasize ALL that the Gospels proclaim about *how* the Missionary God saves us! The Gospels reveal six aspects of salvation that the Missionary God provides. In each of the four Gospels, there are only 2–3 chapters on Christ's death on the cross. For example, Matthew 26–27 are about Christ's death on the cross. These are favorite chapters! But we also love Matthew 1–25 and Matthew 28! So besides Christ's death on the cross, we are appreciating five other aspects of salvation that all four Gospels teach.

**Q 46** ↗ As the cross represents what God did \_\_\_\_\_ us, the dove represents what God does \_\_\_\_\_ us.

**D. The dove represents the Holy Spirit's role in a relationship with the Missionary God.**



The dove reminds us of what the Missionary God does for us and in us. Since God is omnipresent, He is and has always been present wherever and whenever He desires. Even so, the Holy Spirit is the member of the Trinity who represents God on earth between the First and Second Comings of Christ. In the season of the Church on earth, salvation is possible only through the presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit. Figure 3.23 lists key Scriptures on the vital role of the Holy Spirit in the salvation that the Missionary God provides.

**Q 47** Please fill in the blanks of Figure 3.23 on the important role of the Holy Spirit in salvation.

Gospel	Key Verses in the Gospels on the Role of the Holy Spirit in Salvation
Matt. 1:20 Luke 1:35	The Holy Spirit enabled the _____ to conceive the Savior, the Son of God in her womb.
Luke 1–3	The Holy Spirit enabled prophecy about the Savior—through _____, _____, Zacharias, Simeon, _____, and John the Baptist.
Matt. 3:11 Mark 1:8 Luke 3:16 John 1:33	Looking forward to Pentecost, all four Gospels prophesy that Jesus will baptize believers in the _____ —a baptism that is distinct from water baptism. <sup>8</sup> Luke emphasizes that this baptism in the Spirit gives us power to _____, sharing salvation with others (Luke 24:48-49; Acts 1:8). Later in the story, Paul emphasizes that the Spirit empowers us to overcome fleshly desires to reach the end of our salvation journey, and to display spiritual fruit in our character (Rom. 8:2, 4-6, 9; Gal. 5:16-23).
Matt. 3:16-17; 12:15-18 Luke 4:18-21	The Holy Spirit anointed _____ to preach, teach, do signs and wonders, and fulfill His mission. The Holy Spirit led Jesus, our Savior and example.
Matt. 4:1 Luke 4:1	_____, our example, was led by the Holy Spirit.
Matt. 7:7-11 Luke 11:9-13	Jesus recognized the Spirit as God’s _____ —the key to all God has for us. <sup>9</sup> For a song on Luke 11 by Dr. McGhee see: <a href="http://www.faithandactionseries.org/singing-thru-the-new-testament">http://www.faithandactionseries.org/singing-thru-the-new-testament</a>
Matt. 10:16-20 Luke 12:11-12; 21:14-15	Jesus promised that _____ would help us testify about Him.
Matt. 12:22-37 Mark 3:22-30 Luke 11:14-20; 12:10	Recognizing the Holy Spirit as the power by which Jesus (and His followers) do supernatural ministry is a key to receiving _____. In contrast, crediting the ministry of Jesus (and His followers) to Satan is blasphemy against the _____ —and this blindness closes forever the door to forgiveness and salvation. <sup>10</sup>
John 1:12-13	These verses give a strong contrast in being born of the _____ and of the _____. <sup>11</sup>
John 3:4-8	_____ trusted in his <i>physical</i> birth of being born a Jew, but Jesus teaches that entering God’s kingdom requires a _____ birth by the Spirit.
John 4:10,14; 7:37-39	As water quenches our physical thirst, _____ satisfies our spiritual thirst.
John 4:23-24; 14:13-17, 26; 15:26; 16:13	The _____ is the _____ Jesus sends—to guide us into all truth, including truth about how to worship God, avoid error, and walk in the light of the teachings of Jesus.
John 16:7-8	The Spirit convicts the world of guilt in regard to _____, _____, and _____.
John 20:21-23	In the age of the Church, it is the Holy Spirit who brings us spiritual _____ and the presence of _____. As God breathed the breath of _____ into Adam (Gen. 2:7), Jesus, after the resurrection, breathed spiritual _____ into the disciples, saying, “Receive the _____.”
Matt. 28:19	Jesus commanded us to baptize disciples in the name of _____.

**Figure 3.23** The ministry of the Holy Spirit is a vital part of the salvation the Missionary God provides.

The Gospels of Matthew and Luke record that the presence of the Holy Spirit came over Mary, when she was a virgin, before she married Joseph. Afterward, for about 9 months, her body was the temporary temple of Jesus. Then He was born. This was God’s plan for Mary. In contrast, later in the story of God As Missionary, we see God’s plan for the bodies of all believers to be the permanent temples of God the Holy Spirit from the new birth onward (John 20:22; Luke 24:49; Rom. 8:15-16; 1 Cor. 6:19). It is good to honor Mary for the *temporary* months that baby Jesus was in her. But how much greater is the honor of believers, as we are filled with **God the Holy Spirit** for a lifetime!



**Figure 3.24** The body of the virgin Mary was the temporary temple of Jesus.

**Q 48** How does each believer have greater honor than Mary, a temporary temple?

**Q 49** ↖ Complete the diagram on the Missionary God's six-fold Starlight of Salvation.

**E. The symbol of a church represents the fifth aspect of salvation—the place God's people meet each week.**



In the New Testament, believers often met in homes to worship, learn, and share fellowship.

**Q 50** ↖ Please fill in the blanks of Figure 3.25 on the important role of the church in salvation.

Gospels	Verses in the Gospels on the Role of the Church in Salvation
Matt. 16:18	"...I will build my _____ and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."
Matt. 18:15-17	<sup>15</sup> "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. <sup>16</sup> But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.' <sup>17</sup> If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the _____; and if he refuses to listen even to the _____, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector."

**Figure 3.25 Practice interacting with Scriptures that emphasize the role of the church in salvation.**

The word *church* appears only twice in the Gospels, both in Matthew. Matthew 16 refers to the Church Universal, the whole Church, worldwide, consisting of believers throughout the centuries. Matthew 18 refers to the local church. Later in the story of God As Missionary, we see the word church many times.

**Q 51** ↗ What word in John's Gospel gives us the picture of a church?

John's Gospel does not mention the word church. However, John 10:16 gives us the illustration of God bringing believers together into *one flock* with *one Shepherd*. Jesus said, "I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd" (John 10:16).

**Q 52** ↗ How many times does the word "church" appear in Luke's second volume?

Luke's Gospel does not mention the word *church*, although it ends with Jesus telling believers to wait together for the gift of the Spirit in Jerusalem. And in Luke's second volume, Acts, he uses the word *church* more than 20 times. So the Gospels introduce the concept of God's global Church and His local *churches*. Then, as the story of the Missionary God continues, *Acts* identifies many *local churches* as one of the five aspects of *how* the Missionary God *saves* people in all nations.

**F. The crown symbolizes the sixth aspect of salvation—the glory surrounding the Second Coming of Christ.**



At His Second Coming, He comes in the clouds, like the lightning shines from the east to the west, in great glory and wearing many crowns (Rev. 19:12)! Jesus promised the apostles they would sit on *thrones* at His glorious Second Coming (Matt. 19:28). Likewise, He promises to those who overcome that they will rule over the nations and sit with Him on His throne (Rev. 2:26; 3:21). It humbles and amazes us that Jesus will share His glory with us (John 17:22; 2 Cor. 3:18). Crown Him with many crowns! [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuMh\\_ept-Js](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YuMh_ept-Js) Lily&River.

**Q 53** ↖ Please answer the questions of Figure 3.26 related to the crown of salvation that the Missionary God provides. We left space for your answers.

**Q 54** ↗ Which aspect of salvation does the crown represent?

**Q 55** ↖ Is the gospel complete without the Second Coming? Explain.

Scriptures	Questions Related to the Crown of Salvation the Missionary God Provides For Us
Matt. 27:29	What crown did Jesus wear for us, when He died to provide our salvation?
1 Cor. 9:24-25	Which 2 types of crowns does Paul contrast?
2 Tim. 4:7-8	What conditions must we fulfill to receive the crown God awards after life on earth?
James 1:12	What conditions and promise does James write about a crown?
Rev. 2:10	What promise does Jesus give those who are faithful to follow Him unto death?

Figure 3.26 continued on next page

Continued from previous page

Rev. 3:11	What warning does Jesus give to believers whom He wants to give a crown?
Rev. 4:4, 10	How will you feel at the end of this life, when you lay your crown in worship at the feet of Jesus?
Rev. 19:12	When Christ returns, what do the many crowns on His head represent?

**Figure 3.26 Questions to answer on Scriptures related to the crown that the Missionary God provides**

The crown is the symbol of the *glory* God promises at the completion of our salvation. Recall that the gospel spans from the First Coming of Jesus to His Second Coming. The only *crown* for Jesus on earth in the Gospels is the *crown of thorns* He wore for us—so we can wear the *crown of life* in heaven. The Epistles and Revelation reveal the crown Jesus made possible for each of us (1 Cor. 9:25; 1 Thess. 2:19; 2 Tim. 4:8; James 1:12; Rev. 2:10; 3:11). When Jesus returns, we will enjoy the crown of life Jesus gives each believer when we are caught up to meet Him in the air and are clothed with our glorious resurrection bodies. We *look forward* to receiving our crowns at the completion of our salvation, so with the 24 elders we can cast them before the throne of the Missionary God who saves us (Rev. 4:4, 10). As we see the signs of the end of the age, we *look up*, because *our redemption is near* (Luke 21:28).

**Q 56** ↖ Which events are the beginning and conclusion of the gospel?

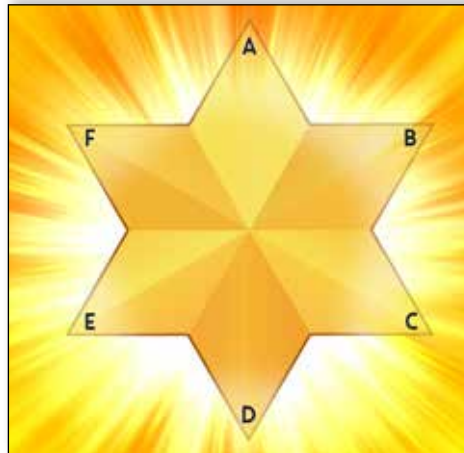
**Q 57** ↖ Complete the diagram on the Missionary God’s six-fold Starlight of Salvation.

**Q 58** ↖ How did Missionary Jesus succeed in the mission Israel failed to fulfill?

**Q 59** ↖ Please fill in the blanks of Figure 3.28 about what the Missionary God wants us to be and do.

**Figure 3.27**

**Practice completing the diagram on six aspects of how the Gospels tell us God saves.**



**Application:** Jesus redeemed Israel to be a kingdom of priests—to represent Him to the world (Exod. 19:4-6). But they would not cooperate. So God sent His Son to earth as a missionary. Jesus succeeded in God’s mission to save people from all nations. He trained 12 missionaries to succeed in what the 12 tribes of Israel failed to do. As we participate in God’s missionary plan, we rejoice to see Him fulfilling what He began in Eden.

Gospels	A Few Verses in the Gospels on What the Missionary God Wants Us to Be and Do
Overview	He wants us to turn from _____, believe in Jesus, follow Him, and obey His _____. He wants us to be His _____, reflect His _____, and share His values and _____!
Matt. 5:13-16, 47-48	<b>God wants us to be like Him. He wants us to reflect His image and likeness to the world.</b> <sup>13</sup> “ <b>You are the _____ of the earth.</b> But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. <sup>14</sup> <b>You are the _____ of the world.</b> A city on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup> Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. <sup>16</sup> In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven” (Matt. 5:13-16). <sup>47</sup> “And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? <sup>48</sup> Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is _____” [mature in righteousness] (Matt. 5:47-48).
Matt. 7:21 12:48-50	<b>He wants us to receive Him as Lord, and _____ the teachings of Jesus. This is God’s will for us—through the _____ of the Holy Spirit.</b> “ <b>Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who _____ of my Father who is in heaven</b> ” (Matt. 7:21). “ <b>For whoever does the _____ of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother</b> ” (Matt. 12:50).

Continued from previous page

John 13:12-17	<p><b>He wants us to follow the example of Jesus.</b></p> <p><sup>12</sup>When He had finished washing their feet, He put on His clothes and returned to His place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” He asked them. <sup>13</sup>“You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. <sup>14</sup>Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. <sup>15</sup><b>I have set you an example that you should</b> _____ . <sup>16</sup>I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. <sup>17</sup>Now that you <b>know these things</b>, you will be blessed if you _____ .”</p>
Luke 24:45-49	<p><b>He wants us to be filled with the Spirit and share His _____ to save the lost in all nations.</b></p> <p><sup>45</sup>Then He opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. <sup>46</sup>He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup><b>and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations</b>, beginning at Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup>You are witnesses of these things. <sup>49</sup><b>I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high.</b>”</p>

Figure 3.28 A few verses in the Gospels on what the Missionary God wants His people to be and do





**Test Yourself:** Circle the letter by the **best** completion to each question or statement.

1. The third part in the story of Adam and Eve is
  - a) the Rising Conflict.
  - b) the Turning Point.
  - c) the Resolving Conflict.
  - d) Conflict Mountain.
2. How did Adam and Eve's fall affect humanity?
  - a) It made all humans guilty for Adam and Eve's sin.
  - b) It passed on sin in human DNA.
  - c) It weakened God's image in future humans.
  - d) It did not affect each human personally.
3. Which verse refers to the middle phase of salvation?
  - a) John 3:16
  - b) Hebrews 12:14
  - c) 1 Corinthians 15:54
  - d) 1 Thessalonians 4:17
4. Which phase of salvation does 1 Corinthians 15:50-54 refer to?
  - a) Prevenient grace
  - b) Beginning
  - c) Middle
  - d) Completion
5. How many phases of salvation did we study?
  - a) 1
  - b) 2
  - c) 3
  - d) 6
6. Which aspect of salvation takes the longest?
  - a) Justification
  - b) Glorification
  - c) Sanctification
  - d) Emancipation
7. Justification emphasizes we are saved from
  - a) past, present and future sins.
  - b) the penalty of sin.
  - c) the power of sin.
  - d) the temptations of sin.
8. Which is not in the star diagram?
  - a) The manger
  - b) The cross
  - c) The new birth
  - d) The local church
9. Point 6 of the star diagram is a
  - a) cross.
  - b) dove.
  - c) crown.
  - d) church.
10. The Missionary God's greatest desire is for us to
  - a) evangelize.
  - b) be like Him.
  - c) rebuke false teachers.
  - d) heal the sick.



**Essay Test Topics:** Write 50-100 words on each of the goals we studied (14 points each; 2 points for good topic sentences). Try to complete your writing in 2 hours.

- Sketch and explain the 5 parts in the story of Adam and Eve in Eden.
- Explain how Adam and Eve's fall affects the relationship of the Creator to humans (Gen. 3–Rev. 20).
- Summarize how the Missionary God saves us in 3 phases.
- Sketch the star diagram that illustrates 6 aspects of how God saves us.
- Explain and illustrate aspects A–C of how the Missionary God saves us (Figure 3.17).
- Explain and illustrate aspects D–F of how the Missionary God saves us (Gospels, Figure 3.17)
- From the Gospels, summarize what the Missionary God wants us to be and do.

## Chapter 4: The Ordinances of the Church

### Doctrine 6: The Ordinances of the Church

a) *Baptism in Water: The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Saviour and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life. (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47-48; Rom. 6:4).*

b) *Holy Communion: The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements—bread, and the fruit of the vine—are the symbols expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (2 Pet. 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (1 Cor. 11:26); and a prophecy of His Second Coming (1 Cor. 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers "till He come!"*

Reference	Scriptures on Doctrine 6: The Ordinances of the Church
	<b>Baptism in Water</b>
Matt. 28:19	<i>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,</i>
Acts 10:46b-48	<i>Then Peter said, <sup>47</sup>"Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have."<sup>48</sup>So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.</i>
Rom. 6:4	<i>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.</i>
	<b>The Lord's Supper</b>
Luke 22:19-20	<sup>19</sup> <i>And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."</i> <sup>20</sup> <i>In the same way, after the supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.</i>
1 Cor. 11:23-26	<sup>23</sup> <i>For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night He was betrayed, took bread, <sup>24</sup>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."<sup>25</sup>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."<sup>26</sup>For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes."</i>

Figure 4.1 Scriptures on Doctrine 6: The Ordinances of the Church

#### Lessons:

11

#### The Church's Ordinances: Water Baptism

**Goal:** Answer 7 questions (A–G) on the ordinance of water baptism.

12

#### The Church's Ordinances: The Lord's Supper

**Goal A:** Contrast 4 views on the Lord's Supper.

**Goal B:** Explore 4 directions believers should look when celebrating the Lord's Supper.



#### Key Words



**Protestants**—Denominations and fellowships of followers of Christ who emerged from the 16 century Reformation, and embraced its principles. In contrast to Catholics and Eastern Orthodox church members, Protestants believe in such things as: Scripture alone as the only totally reliable source of authority in religion; justification by faith *alone*, resulting in the fruit of good works; the priesthood of all believers; the direct access to God of every believer through Jesus Christ *alone*.<sup>1</sup>



## Key Words (continued)



**ordinances**—the two symbolic practices of water baptism and the Lord’s supper that Jesus ordained in the Church  
**figuratively**—in contrast to literally; teaching spiritual truths through earthly *illustrations*, such as “*I am the vine.*”

Lesson

11

### The Church’s Ordinances: Water Baptism

**Goal:** Answer 7 questions (A–G) on the ordinance of water baptism.

**Introduction.** Christianity includes at least three large groups: Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestants.

All of these groups view water baptism and the Lord’s Supper (Communion, Eucharist) to be holy rites (ceremonies, practices, and biblical traditions). Nevertheless, each of these three groups has different beliefs about baptism and Communion. In this lesson, we will answer 7 questions (A–G) on water baptism.

#### A. In Christianity, what is the difference between a sacrament and an ordinance?

- Catholics believe in *\*sacraments*—sacred rites through which God infuses and imparts grace to His people. For example, Catholics believe that infants are transformed and become members of the Church through baptism. Catholics believe that at baptism, God’s saving grace, His very presence, enters into the human soul. For Catholics, baptism is the sacrament of salvation and the door to all other sacraments.<sup>2</sup>
- Protestants, to avoid confusion and association with Catholic beliefs about sacraments, chose to refer to the holy rites of water baptism and the Lord’s Supper as *\*ordinances*—because the Lord *ordained* (ordered, established) these practices. For example, Jesus *ordained* water baptism. He commissioned us to go and make disciples in all nations, teaching them to obey His teachings and *baptizing* them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:18-20). For most Protestants, water baptism is a public testimony of an inner spiritual work the Spirit has already done. For these Protestants, the rite of baptism must come after repentance, a commitment of faith, and obedience to Christ. Likewise, for most Protestants, water baptism must follow the *new birth*—the moment at which the Holy Spirit transforms a sinner by grace from being spiritually dead and separated from God to being a new creation in Christ (John 1:12; 3:3-8; 2 Cor. 5:17).

**Q 1** ↗ How do Catholics use the term sacrament? Illustrate.

**Q 2** ↗ What do Catholics believe happens when a baby, a child, or an adult is baptized?

**Q 3** ↗ Why do we refer to water baptism as an “ordinance”?


**Q 4** ↖ How do Protestants and Catholics understand the purpose of water baptism differently?

Topics	Views in Christianity on water baptism and the Lord’s Supper <sup>3</sup>		
Groups:	Catholics	Eastern Orthodox	Protestants
Number	Have 7 <b>*sacraments</b> (religious rites by which God imparts life-changing grace): baptism, Eucharist, confirmation, penance, anointing of the sick, holy orders and marriage.	Have more than 7 <b>sacraments</b> : baptism, Eucharist, confirmation, penance, anointing of the sick, holy orders, and marriage; <i>plus</i> blessings, service, prayers, songs, etc. The Holy Spirit draws us closer to God through the sacraments, to receive God’s gifts. <sup>4</sup>	Have 2 <b>ordinances</b> : water baptism and the Lord’s Supper
Nature	God imparts life-changing grace to His people as an earthly priest administers the sacraments.	God does not infuse grace through the sacraments but He <i>confers</i> (declares grace) as people participate by faith (See Num. 6:24-26).	The ordinances of the Church are outward signs that <i>remind us</i> of our inner union, life, and blessings through and in Christ our Savior (1 Cor. 11:23-25).


**Figure 4.2** A contrast between Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestants on water baptism and the Lord’s Supper

**In summary:** *Sacraments* are rites through which Catholics believe God imparts grace to people, whether infants or adults, as priests minister. Most Protestants reject the belief in sacraments as channels of grace. Rather, Protestants believe in ordinances—outward signs that remind us of the inward grace God gives directly to us at the new birth and afterward (John 1:12). Likewise, baptism and the Lord’s Supper remind us of our union with Jesus Christ, our High Priest, who continues to daily impart grace directly into our lives through the Holy Spirit in us, from the cross to the crown—as members of His body, the Church. Catholics expect grace once a week, through a priest who administers the Lord’s Supper. In contrast, Paul writes to believers, “*To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints; grace and peace to you (directly) from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ*”—all day, every day—forever! (Rom. 1:7). Catholics participate in the sacraments as their sources of grace. In contrast, for Protestants, our source of grace lives within us! Catholics receive the sacraments hoping to receive grace through them. Protestants celebrate the ordinances because we already have grace within us.



**Q 5**  What are some ways Protestants experience grace day by day?

Most Protestants do not believe grace is infused or conferred through the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper. However, most Protestants can testify to often experiencing a special awareness of the Lord’s presence in times of prayer, singing, praise and worship, Scripture reading, meditation, Communion, quietly watching a sunrise, marveling at a rainbow, or listening to the beautiful song of a bird. God is so generous in giving us grace through Jesus Christ. Many Protestants have been healed during a celebration of the Lord’s Supper as they focused on the sacrifice that Christ, our High Priest, offered on the cross. As Father’s children, let us often give thanks for God’s overflowing grace that provides one blessing after another (John 1:16-17) as we live close to Him through the blood of the New Covenant.

**Q 6**  In Figure 4.3, which 5 of the types of baptism are biblical?

**B. What are six different types of “baptism”?**

6 Examples	Explanations	Scriptures
1. Infant baptism	Catholics baptize babies, claiming this cleanses them from sin, regenerates them, and makes them members of God’s Church. <sup>5</sup> This teaching is NOT biblical!	0
2. Baptism of fire	A baptism of judgment. John the Baptist said Christ would burn barren fruit trees and chaff. Revelation warns of the lake of fire for those who do not receive and follow Christ.	Matt. 3:10-12 Rev. 20:10,14,15
3. Baptism of suffering	Speaking of the cross, Jesus said: “ <i>I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed!</i> ”  Likewise, after predicting His death, He asked: “ <i>Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?</i> ”	Luke 12:50  Mark 10:38-39
4. Baptism by the Spirit into the body of Christ at the new birth	<sup>12</sup> <i>The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.</i> <sup>13</sup> <i>For we were all <b>baptized by one Spirit into one body</b>—</i>  <sup>4</sup> <i>There is <b>one body</b> and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called—<sup>5</sup>one Lord, one faith, <b>one baptism</b>; <sup>6</sup>one God and Father of all, who is over all...</i>	1 Cor. 12:12-13  Eph. 2:4-6
5. Baptism in the Holy Spirit by Jesus, usually after the new birth	“ <i>I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. <b>He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit...</b></i> ”  <sup>4</sup> <i>“Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. <sup>5</sup>For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. ...<sup>8</sup>But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”</i>	Matt. 3:11  Acts 1:4-5, 8  2:3-4

Figure 4.3 continued on next page

Continued from previous page

<p><b>6. Baptism in water</b> for believers, showing our union with Christ. He went into the grave with our sins and rose without them. Likewise, we died with Him to our old way of sinful living and now live a new life in Christ.</p>	<p><sup>19</sup>“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, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.”</p> <p><i>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.”</i></p> <p><sup>1</sup>What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? <sup>2</sup>By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? <sup>3</sup>Or don’t you know <b>that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?</b> <sup>4</sup>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.</p>	<p>Matt. 28:19-20</p> <p>Acts. 2:38 See also 16:29-34</p> <p>Rom. 6:1-4</p>
---	---	---


Figure 4.3 Scripture mentions at least five types of baptism.

### C. What is the purpose of water baptism?

Let us begin answering this question by stating **what baptism is not**. Water baptism is NOT a source of forgiveness, new life, becoming a member of God’s Church, or salvation. If a dry sinner goes into the water, he or she will come up out of the water a wet sinner. Water cannot wash away sin. Only the blood of Jesus washes away our sin. The water of baptism is not a source of regeneration, new birth, or a new heart. Rather, forgiveness comes as we repent of sin and trust in Jesus Christ’s death on the cross. “*He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by His wounds you have been healed*” (1 Pet. 2:24). As we repent, turn away from sin, and trust in Christ, the Father forgives our sins and we are *justified*—counted righteous in Christ. At the same time, we are born anew into God’s family. The Holy Spirit creates new, spiritual life in us and testifies within us that we are God’s children (Rom. 8:16).


Michael had been baptized and told he was saved. One night he had a dream. In the dream Michael was walking in torment in a lake of fire. An angel walked beside Michael. Together they were looking for someone. The angel would find a man and turn him toward Michael. Time after time, Michael shook his head from side to side and said, “No this is not him.” Then Michael awoke from the dream, terrified. The flames in the dream were so real. Michael knelt beside his bed and asked God, “Who was the angel trying to help me find?” The Lord answered, “You were looking for the person who told you that you were saved when you were baptized in water! You need to understand that water does NOT save anyone!”

**Purpose.** Water baptism is an outward sign of an inner work of the Spirit. It is an early act of obedience by those who have been born again by the Spirit (Matt. 28:19; Rom. 6:4). It is a public testimony to a new way of life—a life of practicing obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ, as He enables us by the power of the Holy Spirit. Water baptism does not save us. However, Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize those who become His followers. So all who are born again and commit to following Jesus should be baptized.


 Nogo claimed to be a follower of Jesus, but refused to be baptized at an early opportunity. This act of disobedience cast a shadow upon the sincerity of Nogo. A friend named Igo asked Nogo, “What will you answer when Jesus asks you, ‘Why do you call me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I say?’ ” (Luke 6:46).


**Q 11**  Can true followers of Christ continue to practice sin?


 **Baptism shows we died with Christ to our old sinful ways and live a new, holy life in Christ.**


**Q 7**  What are 3 things that water baptism is not?



**Q 8**  For whom was Michael searching in his dream?

**Q 9**  If water baptism is not a means of salvation, what is its purpose?

**Q 10**  To what did Jesus compare those who claim Him as Lord but refuse to obey Him?

**Q 12**  How is water baptism like a message without words? What does it illustrate?

<sup>1</sup>What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? <sup>2</sup>By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? <sup>3</sup>Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? <sup>4</sup>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.


<sup>5</sup>If we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection. <sup>6</sup>For we know that our old self was crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin— <sup>7</sup>because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.


<sup>8</sup>Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him. <sup>9</sup>For we know that since Christ was raised from the dead, He cannot die again; death no longer has mastery over Him. <sup>10</sup>The death He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life He lives, He lives to God.

<sup>11</sup>**In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.**

<sup>12</sup>**Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires.** <sup>13</sup>Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to Him as instruments of righteousness.

<sup>14</sup>For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace (Rom. 6:1-14).

**Q 13**  Are true followers of Christ still slaves of sin, obeying evil desires?

**Q 14**  Complete Figure 4.4 on signs that show a person is ready for baptism.

**D. Who should be baptized?**


Signs	Your summaries of signs that show a person is ready to be baptized
Understand	
Repent and turn from	
Believe and turn to	
Invite	
Submit	
Experience	

**Figure 4.4 Practice summarizing six signs that show a person is ready to be baptized.**

Here are six scriptural signs that show a person is ready for water baptism:

- A person must **understand** that Jesus died on the cross to reconcile lost sinners to God.
- A person must **repent** and **turn away from** sins, as the Holy Spirit convicts.
- A person must **turn toward** the cross, **believing** that Jesus paid the full price for each of us to be forgiven, restored, and renewed (Acts 8:12; 16:31, 34).
- A person must **invite** Jesus to become a permanent resident in his or her heart.
- A person must **submit** and surrender his or her life to Jesus, as personal Lord and King.
- A person must **experience** the new birth that occurs as we come to God in faith and submission.

The Bible teaches that water baptism is only for born-again believers committed to following Jesus. Galatians 6:14-15 does not say that water baptism is the basis of our salvation. Rather, the verses say: <sup>14</sup>May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord

**Q 15**  How can a person be saved from the guilt and power of sin?

Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

<sup>15</sup>Neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything; **what counts is a new creation** (Gal. 6:14-15; see 2 Cor. 5:17). The ceremony of water baptism is a public testimony that a person is a new creation in Christ, burying the old way of life and rising from the water to a new way of living.

## E. Does water baptism wash away our sins and save us?

Let's study 3 difficult passages.

- **Difficult passage 1**—Acts 2:38: Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ **for the forgiveness of your sins.**”

**Explanation:** Water is never the *means* of forgiveness. The New Testament shows that cleansing and forgiveness of sins come *only* through the blood of Christ (Rom. 5:9; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:18-19). In Acts 2:38, baptism *in the name of Jesus* does not contradict baptism *in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit* (Matt. 28:19). Rather, the short form of Acts 2:38 contrasts the baptism John preached with the superior baptism that follows believing in Jesus.<sup>6</sup> Peter is saying that baptism shows that forgiveness comes because of Jesus. Baptism is a powerful picture of our union with Christ. Baptism symbolizes that we died with Christ. Going down into the water symbolizes going down into the grave with Christ, who bore our sins. Coming up out of the water pictures our rising with Christ—victorious over spiritual death and free from past sins (review Romans 6:1-14 several times).

- **Difficult passage 2**—Acts 22:16: Ananias said to Saul: “*And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on His name.*”

**Explanation:** Again, this poetic passage, like Acts 2:38, teaches that baptism celebrates victory over sin in the name of Jesus. As we repent and call on Jesus to save us, His blood washes away our sins. Going down into the water and coming up out of it celebrates that Jesus was our substitute. We go down with Christ into the water (which symbolizes the grave) and then rise up with Christ—cleansed from sin and to live a new life in Christ.

- **Difficult passage 3**—1 Peter 3:20-22: <sup>20</sup>...God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water; <sup>21</sup>and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—**not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,** <sup>22</sup>who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to Him.


**Explanation:** Baptism symbolizes spiritual cleansing in contrast to washing dirt from the body. Believers are spiritually cleansed and saved because Jesus died for us. He carried our sins, went down into the grave, and rose without them. When we are baptized, it is a picture of how we identify with Jesus. We go down into the water as He went down into the grave. Rising up from the water, we proclaim freedom from sin through His resurrection and victory over the grave and our sins. As the water of Noah's day was the grave of sinful people, the water of baptism represents the grave of our sins.


## F. What is the mode of water baptism—sprinkling or immersion?


The Greek verb *baptizo* means to immerse, dip, or submerge.<sup>7</sup>


Several passages of the New Testament illustrate that the biblical method of water baptism is by immersion.

- *As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went **up out of the water*** (Matt. 3:16).
- *John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, **because there was plenty of water,** and people were constantly coming to be baptized* (John 3:23).


**Q 16**  Does Acts 2:38 teach that baptism provides forgiveness? Explain.

**Q 17**  Does the common water of baptism wash away sin? Explain.

**Q 18**  In 1 Peter 3:20-21, what does water baptism symbolize? Explain.

**Q 19**  What does the Greek verb “baptizo” mean?



**Q 20**  What are some passages that clarify water baptism by immersion?

- <sup>38</sup>Then both Philip and the eunuch **went down into the water** and Philip baptized him. <sup>39</sup>When they **came up out of the water**, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away (Acts 8:38-39).
- 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 (Rom. 6:4).

### G. Should believers be baptized in the name of Jesus or in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

Let's examine two difficult passages on this question.

- **Difficult passage 1**—Acts 2:38: Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, **in the name of Jesus Christ** for the forgiveness of your sins."

**Explanation:** This passage is not a contradiction to the baptismal formula of Matthew 28:19. Rather, in this passage of Acts, Peter is contrasting the new Christian baptism *in the name of Jesus* with the old baptism of John, that all Jews in Jerusalem were familiar with. John's baptism was for repentance and *was not connected* to anyone's name.<sup>8</sup> Repentance must always precede the water baptism that celebrates the salvation that comes only in the name of Jesus. "Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

- **Difficult passage 2**—Matthew 28:18-20: <sup>18</sup>"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. <sup>19</sup>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, <sup>20</sup>and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you."

**Explanation:** Baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit celebrates our union with the Triune God and the way members of the Trinity work together to save us.

- The **Father** adopts us into His divine family, giving us the rights and privileges of the children of God.
- Through the **Son**, our sins are forgiven and we share in the saving benefits of His death and resurrection.
- Through the **Holy Spirit**, we are born again and receive spiritual life. He empowers us to overcome temptations and serve Christ.
- Being baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, we worship the Triune God and celebrate our glorious union with the one God who exists as three persons.

**Q 21** ⚡ What contrast is Peter making in Acts 2:38?

**Q 22** ⚡ How does Matthew 28:19-20 remind us of how members of the Trinity work together to save us?

Lesson

12

## The Church's Ordinances: The Lord's Supper

**Goal A:** Contrast 4 views on the Lord's Supper.

**Goal B:** Explore 4 directions believers should look when celebrating the Lord's Supper.

**Review.** In Lesson 11 we saw that Christianity includes at least three large groups: Catholics, Eastern Orthodox, and Protestants. All of these groups view water baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion, Eucharist) to be holy rites (ceremonies, practices, and biblical traditions). Nevertheless, each of these three groups has different beliefs about baptism and Communion. In this lesson, we briefly survey four views on the nature of the Lord's Supper. Then we explore four directions believers should look when celebrating the Lord's Supper.

### A. Four views on the Lord's Supper<sup>9</sup>

**1. Transubstantiation comes from *trans* (change) of *substance*.** This is the Catholic view of the Lord's Supper, which was officially proclaimed in A.D. 1215. Catholics

**Q 23** ⚡ How do you think a Catholic would respond to the question: "Can the wine that has become Christ's blood be used in a hospital to save someone's life?"



believe that when a priest administers the sacrament of the *Eucharist* (Lord’s Supper, Communion), the bread is *changed* into the *body* of Christ, and the wine is *changed* into the *blood* of Christ. Even though the bread still looks, smells, feels, and tastes like bread—it is no longer bread, but has been *changed* into the body of Christ. Likewise, even though the wine still looks, smells, and tastes like wine—it is not wine, but has been *changed* into the blood of Christ. All Protestants reject this view of *transubstantiation*.

**2. Consubstantiation comes from con (with) the substance.** This is the *Lutheran* view, developed by Martin Luther (A.D. 1483–1546). Lutherans believe that at the celebration of the Lord’s Supper, Jesus Christ is present *with, in, and under* the bread and wine. Lutherans believe that the body and blood of Christ are *united* with the bread and wine, although no physical change in the bread and wine occurs. Lutherans interpret literally the words of Christ, *“This is my body”* (Matt. 26:26). Martin Luther believed this so strongly that once in a debate he took a knife and carved into the conference table: *“Hoc est corpus meum,”* which is Latin for *“This is my body!”*<sup>10</sup>

**3. Spiritual presence is the view of John Calvin and Presbyterian church members.** Calvin taught that the bread and wine are symbols of Christ’s body and blood. Even so, Calvin said they are not *empty symbols*. Rather, Christ is present at the Lord’s Supper and imparts Himself and His saving benefits *through* the bread and the wine. Benefits of the Lord’s Supper include participation with Christ, church unity, and growth toward holiness.<sup>11</sup>

**Q 25** ↩ Why is it important to discern whether we should interpret a biblical passage literally or figuratively (Figure 4.6)?

**Q 26** ↗ What does it mean to interpret a verse figuratively? Give an example.

**Q 27** ↗ Besides *“This is my body”* (Matt. 26:26), what are 2 other passages about Jesus that we interpret figuratively rather than literally?

**Q 28** ↩ What are some times we can enjoy the presence of Jesus in addition to His presence at the Lord’s Supper?

**4. Remembrance is the view of most Protestants.** This view is that the Lord’s Supper is a **memorial** of Christ’s death until He returns. Those with this view interpret Matthew 26:26 *figuratively*, not literally. Likewise, Jesus was speaking *\*figuratively*, teaching spiritual truths through earthly *illustrations*, when He said things like, *“I am the gate”* and *“I am the vine”* (John 10:7-8; 15:5). Most importantly, Jesus commanded, *“Do this in remembrance of me”* (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24). Yet whether we remember or not, Jesus is present at the Lord’s Supper—as He is always present. Our bodies are His temple, and He lives within us (1 Cor. 6:19). Jesus taught that wherever two or three gather in His name, He is there, in the midst of them (Matt. 18:20). He taught that He is *always* with us. (Matt. 28:20b). He promised that He will *never* leave or forsake us (Heb. 13:5). As we study the Scriptures, we recognize that believers may enjoy and

**Q 24** ↩ How do you think a Lutheran would respond to the question: *“Since Jesus said, ‘I am the vine,’ do we believers turn into actual branches as we abide in Him (John 15:5)?”*



**Figure 4.5** Marburg Castle in Hesse, Germany, where Martin Luther, during a debate with Zwingli, carved the Latin words *“Hoc est corpus meum”* into a table!


**Figure 4.6** Literal drawing based on Song of Solomon, Chapters 4 & 7 ([Solomon’s Bride](#) > [linear concepts](#))<sup>12</sup>



celebrate the presence of Jesus at the ordinances, and during times of singing, praise, prayer and worship, meditation and Bible Study. Jesus is with us walking on the road to Emmaus and anywhere else the path of holiness takes us. So let us not limit the presence of Jesus to baptism and the Lord's Supper!

**Transition.** For sure, believers in many denominations can testify that the Lord's Supper is one of the most precious times for us. We often sense a special presence of the Lord when we celebrate the Lord's Supper.

In Point B that follows, we take a closer look at why the Lord's Supper is so special. Now let's enjoy considering four directions believers should look when celebrating the Lord's Supper.

**Q 29**  As we look back at the Lord's Supper, what are 3 things we should remember?

## B. Believers should look four directions when celebrating the Lord's Supper.

**1. Let us look back at the Lord's Supper.** Jesus commanded, "*Do this in remembrance of me*" (Luke 22:19; 1 Cor. 11:24). At the Lord's Supper, let us look back with grateful hearts and remember three things.

- Let us remember that Jesus died to show us God's loves for us. *This is how God showed His love among us: <sup>9</sup>He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. <sup>10</sup>This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins* (1 John 4:9-10).
- Let us remember that Jesus died as a sacrifice to create the New Covenant in His blood. "*This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you*" (Luke 22:20).
- Let us remember that Jesus died to free us **from** slavery to sin and Satan and to redeem us **to be** a kingdom and priests (Rev. 1:5-6). <sup>24</sup>*"He himself bore our sins in His body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by His wounds you have been healed. <sup>25</sup>For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls"* (1 Pet. 2:24-25). The death of the **first** Passover lamb freed the Israelites **from** slavery to Egypt and redeemed them **to be** a kingdom of priests for God (Exod. 19:4-6). The death of the **final** Passover Lamb frees us from the *slavery* to sin to live as servants of God (Rom. 8:2).




One writer notes three things about looking back. We should remember **that He died**. We should remember **why He died**. We should remember **how He died**.<sup>13</sup> Look back to Calvary, and behold "*the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!*" (John 1:29). Look back to Calvary and behold your substitute—the One who died on a rugged cross to take our place. Darkness covered the earth, and the Father turned away, as "*God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God,*" (2 Cor. 5:21). At the Lord's Supper, we look **back** to the cross and give thanks. The bread reminds us of His body, broken for us. And the juice helps us recall His blood, which He shed to initiate the New Covenant. "The world drinks to forget, but we drink to remember."<sup>14</sup>


As we celebrate Communion we look **back and give thanks—remembering that Jesus died on the cross for us. As one song states, "When He was on the cross, I was on His mind."**

<sup>5</sup>*To Him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by His blood, <sup>6</sup>and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve His God and Father—to Him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen* (Rev. 1:5-6).

**Riddle:** *In the Old Testament, Yom Kippur (the Day of Atonement), not Passover, was the national day of atonement for sin. So if Jesus came to take away the sin of the world (John 1:29), why did He die on Passover instead of Yom Kippur (Lev. 23:26-32)?*


**Q 30**  *Why did Jesus die on Passover instead of on the Day of Atonement?*

**Answer:** Jesus fulfilled the symbolism of both Passover and Yom Kippur. Jesus died at Passover as our Passover Lamb (John 1:29; 1 Cor. 5:7). Also, Jesus bore our sins in His own body (1 Pet. 2:24) and tasted death for everyone (Heb. 2:9). He offered a better sacrifice than those of Yom Kippur because His sacrifice was permanent and was the blood of God. Animal sacrifices at Yom Kippur covered sin year by year, but Christ's sacrifice removed it forever (Heb. 9:8-14).<sup>15</sup>

**Q 31**  *What errors were believers making at Communion in Corinth?*

**2. Let us look around at the Lord's Supper.** Let us look around and discern that all believers are part of the *spiritual body* of Christ (1 Cor. 11:17-22; 33-34).


Paul heard that there were divisions in the Communion service at Corinth (1 Cor. 11:18). Communion at Corinth was unspiritual—worldly! Early in First Corinthians, Paul wrote to correct divisions over leaders—Paul, Apollos, Cephas, and Christ (1 Cor. 1–4). Later, in 1 Corinthians 11, Paul writes about the division between the rich and the poor at the Lord's Supper.

**Q 32**  *Who are some various types of people receiving Communion in your church?*

A wise person once said that the ground is level at the foot of the cross. In Christ, the rich and the poor celebrate new life together. Communion is not just an individual, personal party. Communion is not just about what Christ did for *me*. It is a group activity—a celebration of what God has done for us. Believers at Corinth did not recognize that the *spiritual body* of Christ is made up of *all* believers—rich and poor, young and old, educated and uneducated, and God's children from every ethnic group!


**Application:** When we gather to receive the Lord's Supper, let us discern the presence of Christ in our brothers and sisters. As we wait for each other, until all have been served, let us give thanks for what Jesus has done for all of us. And let us remember that our brothers and sisters, though different from us in many ways, are beside us, not below us.



**Q 33**  *Should your church practice open or closed Communion? Explain.*

A pastor who was traveling attended a church of another denomination. At the close of the service, they refused to let the pastor take Communion. A deacon explained, "We practice closed Communion, that is, only the members of this denomination may receive Communion." In contrast, at another church, a pastor announced, "We practice open Communion here. That is, all who love and obey the Lord Jesus Christ may receive Communion. This is not the table of First Assembly; rather, it is the Table of the Lord!"<sup>16</sup>

Recall that the Jews celebrated the first Passover as slaves in Egypt (1 Cor. 5:7). They killed the Passover lamb and put the blood on their door posts so the death angel would pass by (Exod. 12). Throughout their history, every year for about 1500 years, the Jews celebrated the Passover. This great event reminded them that through the death of the Passover lamb, God freed them from the bondage of Egypt. On the night of the Passover, God sent the tenth and final plague and delivered the Israelites from slavery. Jesus chose the night of the Passover to begin the Lord's Supper. Why? Because He came to fulfill the prophetic event of the Passover in Egypt. For the first Passover in Egypt was only a shadow of the final Passover in Jerusalem.

**Q 34**  *In what way did Jesus change Passover? How?*

Jesus changed the meaning of Passover—He became our Passover Lamb. As Paul wrote "*Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed*" (1 Cor. 5:7).

**3. Let us look ahead at the Lord's Supper.** *For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death **until He comes*** (1 Cor 11:26).

**Q 35** ↗ *What sermon do we proclaim at Communion?*

Communion is a proclamation (1 Cor. 11:26). When we celebrate the Lord's Supper, we are making a declaration of faith.

Most believers have never preached a sermon from behind a pulpit. But whenever we take the bread and the cup, we are preaching—proclaiming our faith in Christ. Communion at Corinth did not preach Jesus. For their practice was self-centered rather than Christ-centered. But when we take Communion in a biblical way, we preach Christ. Partaking of the bread and the cup, we declare: “Jesus pardons. Jesus died in my place. Jesus bore my sins. His new creation is taking place in us. This bread represents His body. This cup represents the blood of His covenant.” We are preaching when we receive the Lord's Supper. Communion is a sermon that we act out.

**Q 36** ↗ *To whom do we preach at the Lord's Supper?*

To whom are we preaching at Communion? When we take the Lord's Supper, we are declaring to the Lord that we are His. We are reminding ourselves that He bought us. We are proclaiming to those around us that we participate in the death of Christ. We are announcing to principalities, powers, and the forces of evil that we belong to Jesus Christ. We proclaim to angels who are present that we are God's children through Jesus Christ.

Although we look back at Communion, we also look forward. For as Paul says, at this celebration we proclaim His death *until He comes* (1 Cor. 11:26). So at Communion, we look forward and upward, for the completion of our salvation is near. Jesus promises: “Yes, I am coming soon.” We respond: “Amen. Come, Lord Jesus” (Rev. 22:20).

**4. Finally, let us look within at the Lord's Supper.** Let us repent of any attitudes that are uncaring, selfish, or unholy (1 Cor. 11:26-32).

*<sup>26</sup>For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes. <sup>27</sup>Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. <sup>28</sup>A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. <sup>29</sup>For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. <sup>30</sup>That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep. <sup>31</sup>But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. <sup>32</sup>When we are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be condemned with the world.* (1 Cor. 11:26-32).

**Q 37** ↗ *At Corinth, what happened because believers did not judge themselves at Communion?*

Paul concludes by warning the Corinthians not to take Communion in an “*unworthy manner*” (1 Cor. 11:27). By this Paul means that believers should have the right attitude as we approach the Lord's Supper. We should recognize the body of Christ in two ways. The believers around us are holy, for they are a part of the Lord's body. Likewise, the bread and wine are not common. Rather, they represent the holy, physical body and blood of Jesus Christ.<sup>17</sup> To take Communion in an unworthy, unholy, undiscerning manner invites the discipline and judgment of God (1 Cor. 11:28-32). To avoid this judgment, we believers should examine ourselves—our attitudes toward God and others—as we approach the Lord's Table. We should discern if there is any need to repent.




When we get up in the morning, we need a mirror to prepare ourselves for the day. Without using a mirror, our hair might look funny. In a similar way, Communion is like a mirror to examine our relationship with the Lord and with others. If we are mistreating other believers, as the Corinthians were doing, Paul says we are sinning against the body and blood of Christ—sinning against the Lord and His people.

At the first Lord's Supper, Jesus corrected relationships at the table. He took a towel and washed the disciples' feet because they were arguing about which of them was the greatest. That same problem, which Jesus corrected at the first Lord's Supper, Paul

corrected at Corinth. And we must correct the problem again, wherever it occurs in our own lives. So God calls us to *look within*—to examine ourselves—lest we fall into judgment. Paul says that this is why many in the Corinthian church had fallen sick and some had even died (1 Cor. 11:30) Failure to examine ourselves leads to God’s judgment and even early death.

Jacob refused to take Communion in church. Later, the pastor asked why. Jacob said that he did not take Communion because he had a bitter attitude toward another person in the church. The pastor explained that Communion is a good time to repent, receive forgiveness, and celebrate a right relationship with God. Later, the pastor rejoiced when Jacob received Communion at the next opportunity. The apostle Peter once made a mistake like Jacob. He told the Lord, “*Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!*” (Luke 5:8). God’s will is not to go away from sinners, nor for sinners to go away from Him. The solution for sin in our lives is not to avoid Communion. Many verses of Scripture teach that when believers sin, God will discipline us—whether we take Communion or not. The Father disciplines every one of His children so that we may partake of His holiness (Heb. 12:10). When we become aware of our sins, we should move *toward* God, not away from Him. The Table of the Lord is God’s invitation for us to repent, receive forgiveness, and celebrate the love God offers us in Jesus Christ. Whenever there is Communion, let us never miss the opportunity to repent of any known sin and embrace anew the Savior who died to save us from our sins. Communion teaches us to look four directions: back, around, forward, and inward.



**Q 38**  *What should a sinning believer do instead of avoiding Communion? Why?*



**Test Yourself:** Circle the letter by the **best** completion to each question or statement.

1. Catholics believe that at the sacrament of water baptism,
  - a) a believer celebrates previous new life.
  - b) time in purgatory is reduced.
  - c) God enters the human soul.
  - d) a person becomes a saint.
2. In biblical terminology, an ordinance is
  - a) something ordinary.
  - b) something extraordinary.
  - c) something orthodox.
  - d) something God-ordained.
3. How many Scriptures support infant baptism?
  - a) 0
  - b) 1
  - c) 2
  - d) more than 5
4. Water baptism is
  - a) a source of forgiveness.
  - b) the door to new life.
  - c) an outward sign.
  - d) the key to church membership.
5. What shows that a person is ready for baptism?
  - a) A person believes the Bible is true.
  - b) A person joins a local church.
  - c) A person desires to be baptized.
  - d) A person experiences the new birth.
6. The biblical mode of water baptism is
  - a) sprinkling.
  - b) immersion.
  - c) wading in the Jordan River.
  - d) kneeling under the national flag.
7. Baptism in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit celebrates
  - a) the Trinity's working together to save us.
  - b) the Apostolic benediction in 2 Corinthians 13:12.
  - c) the Incarnation and Second Coming.
  - d) the Great Commission of Matthew 28:19-20.
8. For Protestants, the Lord's Supper is mainly:
  - a) transubstantiation.
  - b) consubstantiation.
  - c) celebrating the Lord's presence.
  - d) a remembrance.
9. Catholics interpret Matthew 26:26:
  - a) hermeneutically.
  - b) metaphorically.
  - c) literally.
  - d) figuratively.
10. Which direction does the Lord's Supper teach us to look?
  - a) Behind
  - b) Between
  - c) Up
  - d) Down



**Essay Test Topics:** Write 50-100 words on each of these goals that you studied in this chapter (11 points each, and one point for correct spelling).

- In Christianity, what is the difference between a sacrament and an ordinance?
- What are 6 different types of “baptism”?
- What is the purpose of water baptism?
- Who should be baptized?
- Does water baptism wash away our sins and save us?
- What is the mode of water baptism—sprinkling or immersion?
- Should believers be baptized in the name of Jesus, or in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
- Contrast 4 views on the Lord’s Supper.
- Summarize 4 directions believers should look when celebrating the Lord’s Supper.

## Chapter 5: The Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 2)

### *Doctrine 7: The Baptism in the Holy Spirit*

*All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the Baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian Church. With it comes the enduement of power for life and service, the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4, 8; 1 Cor. 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 11:14-16; 15:7-9). With the Baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit (John 7:37-39; Acts 4:8), a deepened reverence for God (Acts 2:43; Heb. 12:28), an intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).*

### *Doctrine 8: The Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit*

*The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:4). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (1 Cor. 12:4-10, 28), but different in purpose and use.*

### Introduction

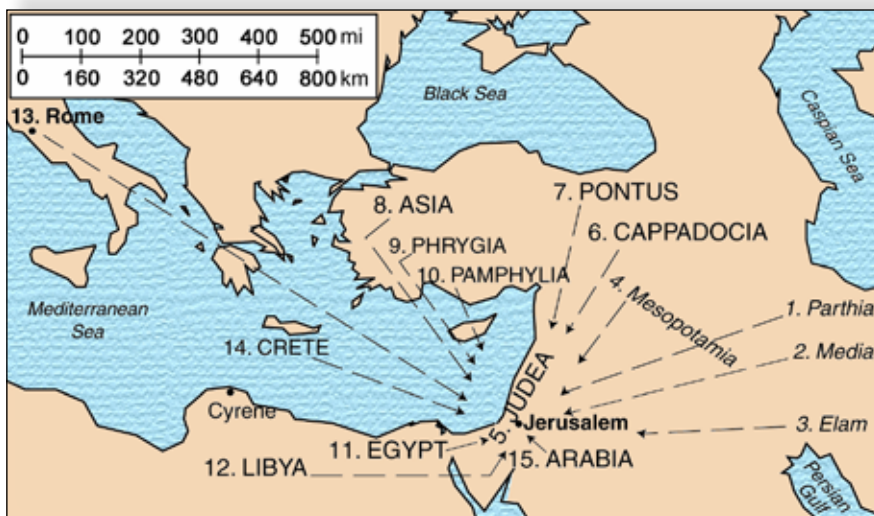


Figure 5.1 At Pentecost, Jews came from 15 different places.

Pastor Jack Hayford found his seat on the airplane. He was on his way home. A man we will call Bill sat down beside him in a business suit. They greeted each other. Soon the plane rose into the clouds. As they talked, Bill shared that his mother was a Native American. She was of the Kiowa tribe in Oklahoma. Suddenly, the Holy Spirit impressed a message on Pastor Jack's heart: "Speak to Bill in tongues" was the message from the Spirit. Jack was shocked. Praying in tongues was a private matter. And Bill was a stranger. Questions raced through Jack's mind. Would Bill think the pastor was crazy? Why would God ask such a strange thing? Jack wrestled with these

and other questions. He and Bill talked for about an hour. But still Pastor Jack was struggling with the message from the Spirit. Bill was not a believer. He politely refused two free books Jack offered to send him. Speaking in tongues to an unbelieving stranger felt very awkward. Jack struggled with a way to obey this clear message from the Spirit. As he prayed, the idea came to relate tongues to Bill's Native American background. Finally,



Pastor Jack asked to speak a few words. Bill agreed to tell Jack if the words were a part of the Kiowa language. Pastor Jack spoke about 60–80 words in the unknown language the Spirit gave him. Bill recognized many of the words. He said it was a pre-Kiowan language. Bill told Jack that the message was about the light coming from above. Jack explained that this was a language the Spirit gave him. This incident opened Bill’s heart. He changed his mind and asked Pastor Jack to send him the two books about Jesus.<sup>1</sup>

### Lessons:

13

#### The Gift of the Holy Spirit Whom our Father Promised (Acts 1:1-5)

**Goal:** Concerning the Holy Spirit in Acts, analyze: the purpose, the command, the Gift, and the Baptizer.

14

#### The Work of the Church (Acts 1:6-11)

**Goal:** Explain the plan, the place, the power, and the purpose of witnessing. Relate these to self and others.

15

#### Steps to Pentecost (Acts 1:12-26)

**Goal:** Identify and do 3 things that precede being filled with the Spirit.

16

#### The Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4)

**Goal:** Analyze the purpose and the evidence of being baptized in the Spirit.

17

#### The Value of Speaking in Tongues (Acts 2:4)

**Goal:** Evaluate at least 5 reasons why speaking in an unknown tongue is valuable.

18

#### Ten Questions Related to Being Filled With the Spirit (Acts 2:4)

**Goal:** Answer 10 questions people ask related to being filled with the Spirit.

19

#### Peter’s Message to the Crowd (Acts 2:5-41)

**Goal:** Explain what happened at Pentecost, why it happened, and how it can happen to each believer.

20

#### The Promise Is for You (Acts 2:38-39)

**Goal:** Explain and follow 4 steps to receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit.



### Key Words



**Theophilus**—a Greek name meaning “one who loves God”

**tongues**—a supernatural, verbal sign that the Holy Spirit has filled a believer. Tongues refers to a language the Spirit inspires that the believer has never learned. It may be a language known or unknown on earth.<sup>2</sup>

**gift (promise) of the Holy Spirit**—the baptism in the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4); the full measure of the Spirit we receive, often after the new birth (Figure 5.13)

**baptism in the Spirit**—the event in which a believer is first filled with the Holy Spirit. This normally occurs after conversion. The outward, biblical evidence of this experience is speaking in a new language.

**Ascension**—the *going up* of Jesus to heaven, 40 days after His resurrection

**Pentecost**—means “fiftieth.” It was a Jewish feast celebrating the barley harvest, 50 days after the Passover Feast. *Pentecost* has also come to refer to being baptized in the Spirit. This is because the disciples were first filled with the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

**Parousia**—a Greek word referring to the coming of Christ at the end of this age

**Pentecostals**—believers who emphasize and practice being filled with the Spirit, like the 120 on the Day of Pentecost, with the outward sign of speaking in tongues. Pentecostals believe that the baptism in the Spirit is a spiritual experience that comes after the new birth and empowers a believer for service. Pentecostals emphasize evangelism and missions.



## Key Words (continued)



**Charismatics**—a term that became popular in the 1960s. Then, it referred to believers in various denominations who were filled with the Spirit. Many charismatics have remained in their denominations. But some have left their denominations and started or joined charismatic churches. Charismatics emphasize the *charismata* (Greek for “gifts of the Spirit”). However, unlike Pentecostals, they do not always emphasize the Pentecostal experience or the initial, outward sign of tongues.

**hyperbole**—a method in which a writer or speaker exaggerates or overstates a truth to emphasize a point

**last days**—the period that began with the First Coming of Christ and ends with his Second Coming

Lesson

13

**The Gift of the Holy Spirit Whom our Father Promised (Acts 1:1-5)****Goal:** Concerning the Holy Spirit in Acts, analyze: the purpose, the command, the Gift, and the Baptizer.

**Q 1** What does the name Theophilus mean?

**Setting**

Luke and Acts are both written to Theophilus, a friend of Luke. The name *Theophilus* is a combination of two Greek words. *Theo* means “God,” and *philo* means “love.” Thus, Theophilus means “one who loves God.” This was a common name in New Testament times.<sup>3</sup> Since Acts is written to *the one who loves God*, each believer feels included.

Recall that Acts is the second book of history Luke wrote to Theophilus. In Luke 1:3 the word *excellent* describes Theophilus. This suggests that he was an official or wealthy person of high position.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps the Spirit used Theophilus to spread copies of Luke and Acts.

**Q 2** Should Acts be used as a basis for doctrine? Explain.

**Acts serves as a guide for faith and practice.**

Acts gives us guidance in what the Church should believe and do. Some argue that we should not use Acts as a guide because it is history. But recall that Luke did not write a complete history. He wrote a selective history. Paul used history for the purpose of teaching.<sup>5</sup> He referred to the historical book of Genesis. He reviewed the history of Abraham to teach that we are justified by faith (Rom. 4).<sup>6</sup> Likewise, Luke used history to teach certain themes.<sup>7</sup> He chose a few stories and events for special purposes. One of his purposes was to emphasize what the Early Church believed. Why is it helpful to know what the early church believed? Because the first believers were under the same covenant we are under! The Church in Acts teaches us to believe in the following:


- The Scriptures, prayer, sharing, and fellowship;
- The work of the Holy Spirit in glorifying Christ;
- Knowing and worshiping God;
- Witnessing, signs and wonders, being filled with the Spirit;
- Speaking in tongues, prophesying, and other spiritual gifts;
- Solving church growth problems, evangelizing, and teaching new believers;
- God’s power—He is working during persecution; He loves those in all nations.

Luke did not know how long the Church would remain on earth. But one of his purposes was to teach future believers. The power and principles of Acts are for the Church until Christ returns.<sup>8</sup>

**In this lesson we will consider 4 things Luke emphasizes about the Holy Spirit.****A. Acts emphasizes that the Holy Spirit is the key to being witnesses for Jesus.**


The Gospel of Luke tells what Jesus began to do on earth, in a physical body. Acts tells us what Jesus continued to do from heaven. He did this through His spiritual body, the Church, by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:1).<sup>9</sup>

Acts teaches that the Spirit uses both apostles and laypeople (Acts 2:17-18). For every apostle in the upper room, there were nine laypeople. On the one hand, Luke organizes Acts around the ministry of two apostles. Acts 1–12 is mostly about Peter. Acts 13–28 tells of Paul’s ministry. Still, Luke includes the ministries of many others (See Figure 5.2).

**Q 3**  Who are some of your favorite lay ministers in Acts? Explain.

Person(s)	Ministry	Acts
108 of the 120	Prayed and witnessed for Christ	1–2
Barnabas	Was generous; became a friend to Paul; ministered to and with Paul	4, 9, 11–15
The 7 deacons	Collected money and gave it to widows	6
Stephen	Served as a deacon; prayed for the sick; witnessed and taught for Jesus	6–7
Philip	Served as a deacon; took the gospel to Samaria	8, 21
Ananias	Prayed for and baptized Paul	9
Tabitha	Sewed clothes for widows	9
Simon the tanner	Provided housing for Peter	10
Cornelius	Gave alms; invited others to his home	10
Scattered believers	Told the gospel to Jews and Greeks	11
Mary, Mark’s mother	Had a prayer meeting in her home	12
Unnamed believers	Prayed for Peter’s release from prison	12
Silas	Traveled and ministered with Paul	15–18
John Mark	Traveled with and helped Paul and Barnabas	12, 15
Simeon, Lucius, Manaen	Prophesied and taught	13
Lydia	Provided housing for preachers	16
Philippian jailer	Fed apostles and washed their wounds	16
Timothy	Traveled with Paul and helped him	16–20
Jason	Provided housing for ministers	17
Unnamed believers	Escorted Paul to Athens	17
Priscilla and Aquila	Gave housing and support to Paul	18
Apollos	Testified for Jesus at Ephesus and Corinth	18–19
Unnamed brothers	Encouraged and recommended Apollos	18
Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, Trophimus	Traveled with Paul; sometimes carried messages for him or other believers	20–21
Unnamed disciples	Gave 7 days’ lodging to ministers	21
Unnamed disciples	Prophesied of trouble in Jerusalem	21
Philip’s 4 daughters	Prophesied of trouble in Jerusalem	21
Agabus	Prophesied of trouble in Jerusalem	21
Mnason	Provided housing for ministers	21
Paul’s nephew	Warned Paul of a plot to kill him	23
Aristarchus	Sailed with Paul from Caesarea toward Rome	27
Luke	Wrote Acts and traveled with Paul	1, 20, 21, 27, 28
Some brothers	Invited Paul and others to stay a week	28
The brothers	Walked out to meet Paul near Rome	28
Unnamed disciples	Paid for a rented house for Paul for 2 years	28


**Figure 5.2** People in Acts who were not apostles, but who were used by the Holy Spirit

**Q 4**  What is Luke's greatest purpose in Acts?

Luke's greatest purpose is to emphasize the ministry of the Holy Spirit through believers. In his Gospel, Luke stated that Jesus depended on the Spirit (Luke 4:1, 14, 18). Also, in his Gospel, Luke predicted that the Spirit would come to believers (Luke 11:13; 24:49). But in Acts, Luke emphasizes the Spirit 55 times! Take a few minutes to study Figure 5.3 below. It emphasizes that the Holy Spirit must be the source of all we do for Christ. Read this list every time you study this book.



The fastest-growing churches today emphasize the ministry of laypeople. Some of these growing churches have over 100 ministries that laypeople do. Laypeople visit the sick, feed the poor, and teach people to read. They teach students who have problems with their studies. Laypeople help widows, adopt orphans, and counsel troubled youth. They paint schools in the community. They build buildings for young churches. They sew and cook to raise funds for the church. Laypeople tell Bible stories to children in their neighborhoods. They have Bible studies in their homes. They meet with those who are divorced, pregnant outside of marriage, depressed, or out of work. They fix people's broken bicycles or cars. Some doctors set up clinics in local churches. One or two evenings each week they do dental or medical work free. Others pray with those in need. These are only a few of the things that laypeople can do. It is past time for laypeople to serve more. As we are filled with the Spirit, He can lead us into many ministries. Every member of the body of Christ should have a ministry. Each believer should answer the question, "What am I doing to serve God and others?"<sup>10</sup>

**Q 5**  What would be missing in your life and church without the ministry of the Spirit?

The Holy Spirit wants to work through all believers today. His fullness gives us the boldness to serve and witness for Jesus. The early church had few of the things we value today. But the Church spread like a fire across the world. Read through Figure 5.2 again. Note the events and stories that would be missing from Acts without the ministry of the Spirit. The Spirit is the key to helping each believer be a worker.

The ministry of the Holy Spirit is a major theme of Luke. In his Gospel, Luke mentions the Holy Spirit a few times more than Matthew or Mark mentions Him. But in Acts, Luke emphasizes the Spirit over 50 times! As believers, we must understand the importance of the Spirit's ministry in and through us. If we miss this in Acts, we have missed Luke's biggest theme. If we miss the daily filling of the Holy Spirit, we miss God's best plan for us.

In this lesson, Luke takes us back to some of the last words of Jesus. Let us study about the command, the gift, and the Baptizer.

Acts	Reference to the Holy Spirit
1:2	. . . after giving instructions through the <b>Holy Spirit</b> to the apostles he had chosen.
1:4-5	"For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the <b>Holy Spirit</b> ."
1:8	"But you will receive power when the <b>Holy Spirit</b> comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
1:16	"Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the <b>Holy Spirit</b> spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus—"
2:4	All of them were filled with the <b>Holy Spirit</b> and began to speak in other tongues as the <b>Spirit</b> enabled them.
2:17	"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my <b>Spirit</b> on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams."
2:18	"Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my <b>Spirit</b> in those days, and they will prophesy."

Figure 5.3 continued on next page

Continued from previous page

2:33	<i>"Exalted to the right hand of God, He has received from the Father the promised <b>Holy Spirit</b> and has poured out what you now see and hear."</i>
2:38	<i>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 <b>Holy Spirit</b>."</i>
4:8	<i>Then Peter, filled with the <b>Holy Spirit</b>, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people!"</i>
4:25	<i>"You spoke by the <b>Holy Spirit</b> through the mouth of your servant, our father David: 'Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?'"</i>
4:31	<i>After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the <b>Holy Spirit</b> and spoke the word of God boldly.</i>
5:3	<i>Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the <b>Holy Spirit</b> and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land?"</i>
5:9	<i>Peter said to her, "How could you agree to test the <b>Spirit</b> of the Lord?"</i>
5:32	<i>"We are witnesses of these things, and so is the <b>Holy Spirit</b>, whom God has given to those who obey Him."</i>
6:3	<i>"Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the <b>Spirit</b> and wisdom."</i>
6:5	<i>They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the <b>Holy Spirit</b>; also Philip, . . .</i>
6:10	<i>But they could not stand up against his wisdom or the <b>Spirit</b> by whom he spoke.</i>
7:51	<i>"You are just like your fathers: You always resist the <b>Holy Spirit</b>!"</i>
7:55	<i>But Stephen, full of the <b>Holy Spirit</b>, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus . . .</i>
8:15	<i>When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the <b>Holy Spirit</b> . . .</i>
8:16	<i>Because the <b>Holy Spirit</b> had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized . . .</i>
8:17	<i>Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the <b>Holy Spirit</b>.</i>
8:18	<i>When Simon saw that the <b>Spirit</b> was given at the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered . . .</i>
8:19	<i>"Give me also this ability so that everyone on whom I lay my hands may receive the <b>Holy Spirit</b>."</i>
8:29	<i>The <b>Spirit</b> told Philip, "Go to that chariot and stay near it."</i>
8:39	<i>When they came up out of the water, the <b>Spirit</b> of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and . . .</i>
9:17	<i>"the Lord Jesus . . . has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with the <b>Holy Spirit</b>."</i>
9:31	<i>It [the church] was strengthened; and encouraged by the <b>Holy Spirit</b>, it grew in numbers . . .</i>
10:19	<i>While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the <b>Spirit</b> said to him, "Simon, three men . . ."</i>
10:38	<i>"God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the <b>Holy Spirit</b> and power, and how He went around . . ."</i>
10:44	<i>While Peter was still speaking these words, the <b>Holy Spirit</b> came on all who heard the message.</i>
10:45	<i>The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the <b>Holy Spirit</b> had been poured out even on the Gentiles.</i>
10:47	<i>"Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the <b>Holy Spirit</b> just as we have."</i>
11:12	<i>"The <b>Spirit</b> told me to have no hesitation about going with them. These six brothers also went . . ."</i>
11:15	<i>"As I began to speak, the <b>Holy Spirit</b> came on them as He had come on us at the beginning."</i>
11:16	<i>"Then I remembered what the Lord had said: 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the <b>Holy Spirit</b>.'"</i>
11:24	<i>He was a good man, full of the <b>Holy Spirit</b> and faith, and a great number of people were brought . . .</i>
11:28	<i>One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the <b>Spirit</b> predicted that a severe famine would . . .</i>
13:2	<i>While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the <b>Holy Spirit</b> said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."</i>

Continued from previous page

13:4	<i>The two of them, sent on their way by the <b>Holy Spirit</b>, went down to Seleucia and sailed from . . .</i>
13:9	<i>Then Saul, who was also called Paul, filled with the <b>Holy Spirit</b>, looked straight at Elymas and said . . .</i>
13:52	<i>And the disciples were filled with joy and with the <b>Holy Spirit</b>.</i>
15:8	<i>“God, who knows the heart, showed that He accepted them by giving the <b>Holy Spirit</b> to them . . .”</i>
15:28	<i>It seemed good to the <b>Holy Spirit</b> and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following . . .</i>
16:6	<i>Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the <b>Holy Spirit</b> from preaching the word in the province of Asia.</i>
16:7	<i>When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the <b>Spirit</b> of Jesus would not . . .</i>
19:2	<i>“Did you receive the <b>Holy Spirit</b> when you believed?” They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a <b>Holy Spirit</b>.”</i>
19:6	<i>When Paul placed his hands on them, the <b>Holy Spirit</b> came on them, and they spoke in tongues . . .</i>
20:22	<i>“And now, compelled by the <b>Spirit</b>, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me.”</i>
20:23	<i>“I only know that in every city the <b>Holy Spirit</b> warns me that prison and hardships are facing me.”</i>
20:28	<i>“Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the <b>Holy Spirit</b> has made you overseers.”</i>
21:4	<i>Through the <b>Spirit</b> they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem.</i>
21:11	<i>. . . he took Paul’s belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, “The <b>Holy Spirit</b> says, ‘In this way . . .’”</i>
28:25	<i>“The <b>Holy Spirit</b> spoke the truth to your forefathers when He said through Isaiah the prophet: . . .”</i>

**Figure 5.3** References to the Holy Spirit in Acts

**B. The command**

**Q 6** ➤ According to Luke, what command did Jesus give His disciples before He left?

Look again at the command Jesus gave. Luke records it twice.

*“I am going to send you what my Father has promised; **but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high**” (Luke 24:49).*

*<sup>4</sup>On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: ‘Do not leave Jerusalem, **but wait for the gift** my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. <sup>5</sup>For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit’ (Acts 1:4-5).*

What was the command? He commanded them to stay in Jerusalem until they received the gift our Father promised. He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem without the Gift. This gift was the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

**Q 7** ➤ Summarize 3 reasons why Jesus commanded the disciples to receive the gift Father promised.

People like gifts. You do not usually need to command them to receive gifts. They want to receive them. You do not need to command people to eat free food. Just offer it and they will eat it all. You do not need to command people to accept free money. Just offer it and they will take it. So why did Jesus need to command His followers to wait for a gift from God? Let us consider three reasons why Jesus made waiting a command instead of a request.

**Q 8** ➤ In what way was the task to witness bigger than the disciples realized?

**First, they did not realize how big the task was.** They thought Jesus died for Jews only! In the beginning, the disciples were full of prejudice. It took years for them to begin sharing the good news with Gentiles. They did not realize it was God’s plan for them to tell strangers and outsiders. Jesus had already told them to tell everyone (Matt. 28:19-20). But the truth had not gotten past their prejudice. Perhaps they had enough power to tell their families and friends. But strangers and sinners are hard to talk to. So the disciples needed more of the Holy Spirit.

**Q 9** ➤ Do believers you know witness to those with different values and customs? Explain.

Likewise, all of us need to be filled with the Spirit. His love for the lost gives us the power to love those who are not like us. The Spirit enables us to witness to those who are a different color than we are. He enables us to witness to those who speak a different language, eat different food, dress differently, and think differently. If the task were not

so big, we could get by with less power. But God loves the whole world. Therefore, we must be filled with the Spirit to witness as God desires.

**Second, they did not realize how hard the task would be.** The disciples were filled with joy. Jesus had risen from the dead. They saw Him ascend into heaven. Their hearts were full of emotion. But emotion makes people blind to reality. Like a young couple in love, they were unaware of the problems ahead. Like children, they did not realize they had enemies. When they began to witness, their vision would clear. They would soon be called drunks, blasphemers, and liars. Some would be dragged to prison. Many of them would lose their lands, homes, and earthly possessions. Loved ones and fellow Jews would reject them. Many would be beaten. Some would die. The task would be harder than they thought. Spiritual warfare was ahead. They needed more of the Spirit's power to succeed!

When times are easy, we tend to feel less of our need for God. But persecution causes believers to seek more of the Spirit's power. In Ethiopia some think that there were less than 1 million believers in 1974. Then the Communists gained control of the nation. Most churches lost their buildings and properties. Persecution was severe. But by 1992 the number of believers had grown to over 6 million! There are several denominations. However, believers in most of these denominations have been baptized in the Holy Spirit. They are Pentecostal in practice. That is, they boldly witness for Jesus and pray in tongues often. The Evangelical Union of Ethiopia includes several denominations with millions of members. This Union invited a Pentecostal group to come and build a Bible school to train their pastors. Persecution and hard times cause believers today to be as Pentecostal as the early church was. The harder the task is, the more believers need the Spirit's power.<sup>11</sup> The steeper the mountain, the more power it takes to climb it.

**Third, they did not realize how long the task would take.** The disciples had enough knowledge and power to start witnessing. They knew for sure that Jesus had conquered death. They walked and talked with Him after His resurrection. But they needed more of the Spirit's power to finish the task. A little power is enough to begin a task. But people who lack power quit a job before they finish it.

The disciples thought Jesus was about to set up His earthly kingdom (Acts 1:6). He had conquered death. Surely it would not take long to conquer the Romans. The early believers expected Jesus to return any minute. They had no idea that they would witness and watch for a lifetime. The task took longer than they expected. Therefore, the Lord commanded them to get extra power.

It is wise to live ready to meet the Lord. But we should seek all the power God has for us while we are waiting and witnessing. We might wait and work longer than we expect. Like the five wise virgins, we should get extra oil. We might need it if the groom delays (Matt. 25:5). The demands of life may surprise us. It is good to take a lunch when starting on a long walk. It is smart to fill a car with gas before starting a journey. We should fill up with all the spiritual power God has for us.


Both humans and ants know the importance of harvest time (Prov. 6:8). They gather extra food when it is available. Later, when there is no grain in the fields, they have plenty to eat. Thus planning for physical power is wisdom common to humans and insects. But consider the timing of Pentecost. This was the time the Jews celebrated the harvest. At the end of the barley harvest they had the big Feast of Pentecost (Deut. 16:9-10).<sup>12</sup> They had filled all of their barns and grain bins. They had plenty of food for the flesh. At that exact time, God poured out the Holy Spirit. What a wonderful way to emphasize our need for a spiritual harvest. At Pentecost we reap the Spirit that God has for us. We fill up with the Spirit. Then we are spiritually ready for the future. Let us plan as much for the spiritual part of us as we do for the fleshly part. The task ahead may take longer than we think.



**Q 10** ➤ What is the key to witnessing in hard times?

**Q 11** ➤ How long do you think the disciples expected to witness? Explain.




**Q 12**  Are some people you know spiritual enough that they do not need the baptism in the Holy Spirit? Explain.

Some of the disciples were apostles. Think about it! These were Christian men who had walked with Jesus for over 3 years. They had preached Christ and baptized people. They already knew the Holy Spirit. It was the Spirit's power that had enabled them to minister. They healed the sick and cast out demons through a temporary anointing of the Spirit's power (Luke 9:1-2). Therefore, they could have thought they had enough of the Spirit. They could have thought that others needed the Gift, but that it was not necessary for them. But even the apostles needed the baptism in the Holy Spirit. They needed a deeper relationship with the Spirit they already knew. Therefore, Christ commanded even the apostles to wait for the promised gift.

Jesus did not just *suggest* that His disciples remain in Jerusalem. He did not tell them they *might* want to consider waiting. The Lord *commanded* His disciples to wait for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. He gave them a direct order to obey. Likewise, God's will is that each believer today be filled with the Spirit. Each person should be born again. Then each should seek until he or she is filled with the Spirit.

### C. The gift

**Q 13**  How does Luke most often refer to the baptism in the Holy Spirit?

It is easier for us to wait for something if we understand its value. One great writer said the most precious gift a person can receive after salvation is the gift of being filled with the Holy Spirit.<sup>13</sup> Luke refers to this promised gift in several ways. Notice some of the ways he describes this deeper relationship with God.

- *the promise of my Father* (Luke 24:49)
- *the promise of the Father* (Acts 1:4)
- *the promise of the Holy Spirit* (Acts 2:33)
- *the gift of the Holy Spirit* (Luke 11:13; Acts 1:4; 2:38-39; 8:20; 10:45; 11:17; 15:8)
- *baptized with the Holy Spirit* (Acts 1:5; 11:16)
- *filled with the Holy Spirit* (Acts 2:4)

Note that Luke most often refers to the baptism in the Spirit as a gift from our Father. There are at least seven references in Luke and Acts that refer to the baptism in the Spirit as something the Father gives us. The front cover of this book emphasizes this truth.



As a believer seeks to be filled with the Spirit, he or she should remember this is a gift. One Christian wanted to be filled. But he forgot that the filling is a gift. He got down on his knees and began to beg. With deep groans he began to plead with God. The man sounded sad. A visitor might have thought he was hurt or sick! This confused seeker thought he needed to convince God to give the Gift. Then a friend helped. He gently stopped the brother who was begging. He reminded him that we do not need to beg for a gift that someone offers us. We just need to receive it with thanks. The seeking Christian began to smile. The light of faith had entered his spirit. Now he was ready to receive. Within a few minutes the Holy Spirit filled him. Praise the Lord for the precious gift of being filled with the Spirit. We are not worthy, but we are thankful.

### D. The Baptizer

Recall that Luke sometimes refers to this inner filling as being baptized in the Spirit (Acts 1:5).<sup>†</sup> A person is baptized in water on the outside of his or her body. But the baptism in the Spirit happens inside a believer.

A pastor may baptize a believer in water. The person being baptized must understand what to do. To be baptized one must submit to the pastor. As the person submits, the

<sup>†</sup> Baptism *in* the Spirit is a better translation than *by* the Spirit. Likewise, baptism *in* water is a better translation than *by* water. Compare Acts 1:5 with Mark 1:8. There people went down into the water. The Greek word is *en*, and is commonly translated *in* throughout the New Testament.



pastor will lower him or her into the water. Then the pastor will help lift the person up. However, a pastor cannot baptize a person who does not submit. In other words, there are two parts to a baptism. There is the pastor’s part, and there is the believer’s part. Water baptism is possible only as two people work together.

Likewise, there are two parts to being baptized in the Spirit. To whom does a believer submit? Who baptizes a believer in the Spirit? John the Baptist gave us the answer to this question.

*“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Matt. 3:11).*

This verse tells us that Jesus is the One who baptizes a believer in the Holy Spirit. We come to Him to be filled with the Spirit. But how does a person submit to Jesus to be baptized in the Spirit? How does a believer cooperate with the Lord? The believer’s part is to come to Jesus, receive the Spirit, and speak in the new language the Spirit gives. We will study this in this chapter, Lesson 20, point B. But first, let us learn more about the reason Jesus wants us to be filled with the Spirit.

**Q 14** ➤ *Do pastors baptize believers in the Spirit? Explain.*

**Q 15** ➤ *What is a believer’s part in being baptized in the Spirit?*

**Lesson 14 The Work of the Church (Acts 1:6-11)**



**Goal:** *Explain the plan, the place, the power, and the purpose of witnessing. Relate these to self and others.*

**Setting**

This lesson is about the work of the Church. It is important to recognize that the Church existed before Pentecost. Luke’s Gospel ends with a convinced group of believers. Jesus had opened their eyes to the Scriptures (Luke 24:45). They were no longer a group of easily scattered disciples. Rather, they were a body of commissioned believers. Before Pentecost, the believers were united, worshiping and waiting to be clothed with God’s power from on high (Luke 24:49). “In other words they were already the Church.”<sup>14</sup> The purpose of Pentecost was not to create the Church. Pentecost was to empower the Church that already existed.

In his Gospel and in Acts, Luke emphasizes only one purpose of the Holy Spirit: power to serve. In Luke’s Gospel, the entire ministry of Jesus is because the Spirit is upon Him, anointing Him to serve (Luke 4:18-19). Likewise, Luke stresses that the Holy Spirit empowers believers to serve.<sup>15</sup> Specifically, Luke emphasizes that the Spirit empowers us to serve as witnesses of Jesus.

Luke, John, and Paul all emphasize that the Holy Spirit gives us power to serve. John adds the Spirit’s role in salvation. Paul includes what Luke and John teach. And he adds the Spirit’s role in helping us live a holy life. Thus, Luke emphasizes one role of the Spirit, John emphasizes two roles of the Spirit, and Paul tells of three.

**Q 16** ➤ *What one purpose of the Spirit do Luke, John, and Paul all emphasize?*

Writer	Ministry of the Holy Spirit	Selected Scriptures
Luke	1) Service (The Spirit enables us to witness to the lost and help believers.)	1) Luke 1:15-17, 39-56, 67-80; 2:25-38; 3:21-22; 4:18-19; 11:5-13; 24:45-49 (and all references to the Spirit in Acts)
John	1) Service 2) Salvation (The Spirit draws us to Christ and then helps us travel on the road to heaven.)	1) John 1:32; 7:37-39; 14:12-31; 15:26; 20:21-22 2) John 3:5-8; 16:8-1; 1 John 2:20
Paul	1) Service 2) Salvation 3) Sanctification (The Spirit enables us to live a holy life that pleases God.)	1) Rom. 15:19 2) Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 6:11; 12:13; 2 Cor. 1:22; Titus 3:5 3) Rom. 8:1-17; Gal. 5:22-23; 2 Thess. 2:13

**Figure 5.4** The Spirit’s ministry, according to Luke, John, and Paul

Luke emphasizes that the Holy Spirit enables us to serve.<sup>16</sup> In Acts, the focus of service is witnessing about Jesus. Let us look at four things about witnessing in Acts 1:6-11.

### A. The plan to witness (Acts 1:6-7)

**Q 17** ↗ Why did the disciples want the kingdom restored?

Notice the question the disciples asked Jesus in Acts 1:6: *“Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”* The Old Testament prophets promised a kingdom to Israel. This kingdom included land (Ezek. 36:24-27). The Gospels record that Jesus said a lot about the kingdom of God. The Lord promised the disciples a kingdom (Luke 12:32). Recall that James and John had tried to get top positions in the new kingdom (Matt. 20:20-28). We can understand why the disciples asked if it was time to restore the kingdom to Israel. The Romans were ruling over the Jews. Thus, the Jews were anxious for freedom. The disciples wanted to know if it was time for Israel to become the head instead of the tail.

Notice the answer of Jesus. He told them that it was not their business to know God’s specific time or plan for the earthly kingdom (Acts 1:7). The times and dates of the kingdom are God’s business, not ours. As Christians, we are often tempted to worry about things that are God’s business, not ours.

**Q 18** ↗ How is the word “But” like a hinge in Acts 1:8? Explain.

Jesus turned their thoughts from north to south. He turned their thoughts from God’s business to their business. Their business, and ours, is not to know the future. The business of believers is to receive power and be witnesses for Jesus. *“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”* (Acts 1:8). The word “But” in Acts 1:8 is like a hinge. In that one word, Jesus turns our thoughts from God’s business to our business.



What do witnesses do? Faithful witnesses tell what they know about something. They describe what they saw, heard, or felt. As Christians, we are witnesses that Jesus has risen from the dead. We are witnesses that He has saved us from sin. Our main business is to tell others about Jesus. God wants us to testify that Jesus saved us from sin and gave us eternal life. He wants us to tell the world the message of John 3:16.

**Q 19** ↗ Are believers you know fulfilling God’s plan to witness? Explain.

On the one hand, we witness through our holy lives and good deeds. Christians witness when they give food to the hungry. They show the love of God by visiting the sick or helping an orphan. On the other hand, the witness of deeds is not complete without words.

Imagine a silent witness in court. The witness is called to the front of the room. The lawyer asks the witness if he has seen something. The witness nods his head yes and smiles. Then the lawyer asks the witness to tell what he knows. The witness just smiles and remains silent. Each time the lawyer or judge asks a question, the witness only smiles. This would be foolish! How can we know what a witness knows if he does not tell it? To witness for Jesus, we must speak the right words for Him at the right times. Believers should not be afraid to witness for Jesus. Frog eyes in the river never keep a cow from drinking!<sup>17</sup>

There are many things that are God’s business, not ours. But witnessing about Jesus is our business, not God’s! The main work of the Church is to witness that Jesus is either the Savior or the Judge of each person.

### B. The place to witness (Acts 1:8)

**Q 20** ↗ Can you use a map to show someone the 6 stages of witnessing in Acts? Try it!

Throw a rock into a pond of water. The rock will cause a circle of waves to go out in all directions. These waves will continue, moving further away from where they started. So it is with the power of the Holy Spirit and witnessing. God “threw the rock into the pond” when God poured out the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost.

Acts 1:8 describes three waves of witnessing that expanded. *First*, the witnessing about Jesus began in Jerusalem (Acts 1–7). *Second*, the witnessing spread to the districts of Judea, Samaria and throughout Palestine (Acts 8–12). *Third*, the witnessing spread throughout the Roman world and to Rome itself (Acts 13–28).<sup>18</sup> So Acts 1:8 describes three waves or stages of witnessing. This is the simplest way to look at how witnessing expanded. Keep in mind that Luke wrote a selective history. No doubt the Church grew in many directions. But Luke chose to write about church growth in the direction of Rome. Acts also includes a more complex report of how witnessing expanded. Unlike Acts 1:8, this report emphasizes six stages of expanded witnessing (See Figure 5.5 and Figure 5.6).



Figure 5.5 The Church spread from Jerusalem to Rome in six stages.<sup>19</sup>

Wave of growth in geography, numbers, and unity (Church growth in BOLD)	The role of the baptism in the Holy Spirit (or filling of the Spirit)	Summary in Acts about growth in numbers and faith
<p><b>1. Jerusalem:</b> The Church expands with great growth. It struggles to include Jews who speak Greek (Acts 1:1–6:7).</p>	<p><b>Event:</b> Christ promises the baptism in the Spirit (Acts 1:5), and this gift is given at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-41).  <b>Sermon:</b> Peter explains that Joel’s prophecy is being fulfilled—God is pouring out His Spirit on all flesh (Acts 2:17, 18, 28, 39).</p>	<p><i>So the word of the Lord spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith (Acts 6:7).</i></p>
<p><b>2. Samaria:</b> The Church reaches the Samaritans, an African eunuch, and Saul (Acts 6:8–9:31).</p>	<p><b>Event:</b> Philip, a deacon, evangelizes the Samaritans. Peter and John pray and the Samaritans are baptized in the Holy Spirit. This helps the Samaritans be accepted as brothers (Acts 8:14-17).</p>	<p><i>Then the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria enjoyed a time of peace. It was strengthened; and encouraged by the Holy Spirit, it grew in numbers, living in the fear of the Lord (Acts 9:31).</i></p>
<p><b>3. Caesarea:</b> The Church extends to the Gentile part of Palestine up to Antioch (Acts 9:32–12:24).</p>	<p><b>Event:</b> The household of Cornelius receives the Holy Spirit and speaks in tongues (Acts 10:44–48).  <b>Sermon:</b> Peter explains that the miracle continues to fulfill Christ’s promise of Spirit baptism and shows that God accepts Gentiles (Acts 11:16-18).</p>	<p><i>But the word of God continued to increase and spread (Acts 12:24).</i></p>
<p><b>4. Antioch, Syria, and Galatia:</b> Jerusalem leaders accept Gentiles as equal believers—without keeping Jewish customs (Acts 13:1–16:5).</p>	<p><b>Sermon:</b> The Church council hears the reports of Peter, Paul, and Barnabas about the Gentiles. Peter recalls that because Gentiles had a like Pentecostal experience, they were accepted without circumcision (Acts 10:14-48; 11:16-18; 15:8-19). Note that this Council also applied to the churches of Galatia, which Paul had just planted on his first missionary trip, A.D. 46–48.</p>	<p><i>So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers” (Acts 16:5).</i></p>

Continued from previous page

<p><b>5. Ephesus:</b> Paul plants churches in Eastern Europe and Asia Minor. (Acts 16:6–19:20)</p>	<p><b>Event:</b> Another Pentecost takes place in Ephesus (Acts 19:1-7).</p>	<p><i>In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power (Acts 19:20).</i></p>
<p><b>6. Rome:</b> Paul meets with kings, and the Word of God reaches Rome. (Acts 19:21–28:31)</p>	<p><b>Events:</b> No Pentecost is reported in these chapters. But the result of previous fillings is seen, since Paul and others prophesied, and Paul healed many.</p>	<p><i>Boldly and without hindrance he preached the kingdom of God and taught about the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 28:31).</i></p>

**Figure 5.6 Acts records that the Church expanded in six waves, by the baptism in and power of the Holy Spirit.**



**Figure 5.7 Modern Jerusalem**

Acts also includes a more complex report of how witnessing expanded. Unlike Acts 1:8, this report emphasizes six waves of expanded witnessing (See Figure 5.5 and Figure 5.6). Note that throughout Acts, Luke links the expanding witness of the Church to the spiritual power of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. It is the power of the Spirit that strengthens believers to witness for Jesus (Acts 1:8). Even when Paul wrote to the Romans, he said, “*I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong*” (Rom. 1:11). The power of the Spirit gives us the strength we need to witness for our Lord. The fullness of the Holy Spirit was the source of the early church’s power to witness. And being filled with the Spirit is our greatest need today to be witnesses for Christ.



Each morning the sun rises to announce a new day. As this happens, we believers should ask God to help us be faithful witnesses that day. Then as the sun sets, each Christian should think back through the day. Ask yourself, “Was I a faithful witness for Christ today? Was I alert and praying as I met each person?” Each day a person should use this sunrise and sunset

method. Then we will become more aware of opportunities to witness.



All day we breathe in God’s free air. Let us shape some of the air into words about Jesus. We eat God’s food. Then let us use the strength from some of it to tell others about our Savior. We receive so much from God. Day by day we should look for opportunities to tell others about God’s love for them and us.

Once each month God puts the full moon in the sky. Each time you see it, ask yourself how many people you talked to about Jesus that month.

Witnessing does not stop in Jerusalem. As believers, we help witness in Judea, Samaria, and the whole earth. Our witness expands by helping missionaries through praying and giving. This is our business. It is the main thing we have to do in life.

**C. The power to witness (Acts 1:8)**

It takes more than desire to be a faithful witness for Christ. It takes more than a prayer at sunrise and a review at sunset. Witnessing for Jesus requires spiritual power.



All work requires some kind of power. It takes power to dig a hole or take a walk. A weak person without power cannot work well. Both people and machines need power to work. It takes power for cars, buses, trains, and airplanes to move. The best bus will not move without power. All work requires power.

Different kinds of work require different kinds of power. The power that enables a person to walk will not move a bus. The power that will move a bus will not help a person walk.

There is only one kind of power that will enable a Christian to be a faithful witness. This is the power that comes from the Holy Spirit. No other kind of power will work. We must depend on the power the Spirit gives. It is not enough to be born again. It is not enough to know Jesus as Savior and be baptized in water. We reach our highest ability to witness for Jesus by being filled with the power that came at Pentecost. In the next lesson, we will study more about this power God wants to give each believer.

**Q 21** ➤ What kind of power enables a believer to witness for Jesus?

Around the world, those baptized in the Spirit witness with zeal and power. The Spirit does signs and wonders through common believers. The Spirit raises up an army of witnesses. Many times these may not have formal education. They are like the fishermen who first followed the Lord.<sup>20</sup> And they have the same spiritual power those first disciples had.

#### D. The purpose of witnessing (Acts 1:9-11)

One of God's main purposes for us is to witness about Jesus. We introduced this thought before in Lesson 14, point A, *The plan to witness*. Still, we want to emphasize this point one more time. Why? Because we believers need to be reminded about God's plan and purpose for us. The disciples were amazed as Jesus ascended into the clouds. Suddenly, two messengers from heaven appeared. They asked the disciples, "*Why do you stand here looking into the sky?*" (Acts 1:11).

On the one hand, we can understand why the disciples were gazing at the clouds. Jesus had been with them for several years. Now He was gone. Also, it was most unusual to see a person rise into the sky! This was a strange and emotional time.

On the other hand, it was time to move on. It was not right for the disciples to stand gazing into heaven. Why? Jesus had sent them into all the earth. He called them to witness, not to gaze at the clouds! He did not command them to focus on heaven. He commanded them to share a message of hope with a lost world. Their focus was to be out, not up. Thus the angels asked them, "*Why do you stand here looking into the sky?*"<sup>21</sup>

Christian, beware! Do not spend too much time thinking about what is above you. Instead, spend your time helping those beside you. Your work is to witness to others about Jesus. Do not waste time asking too many questions about heaven, about prophecy, or about the times and dates (Acts 1:7). Do not let questions about what is above or ahead pull you away from helping those beside you. There is work to do in the power of the Spirit.<sup>22</sup> God's purpose for you is to witness!

**Q 22** ➤ Do believers you know spend too much time thinking about the future? Explain.

Remember the order of four events.

- *First*, Jesus rose up into heaven. This event is the *\*Ascension* (Acts 1:9).
- *Second*, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit down to give believers the power to witness. This event is *\*Pentecost* (Acts 1:8).
- *Third*, Jesus sends believers out to witness. This is the Church's *Mission* (Acts 1:8).
- *Fourth*, Jesus will come down to earth again. This is the *Second Coming*, or *\*Parousia* in Greek (Acts 1:11).

The angels gave the disciples an important message. "You have seen Jesus go up, and you will see Him come down. But between His comings, the Spirit must come down, and you must go out—into the world for Christ."<sup>23</sup>

A man dreamed he died and went to heaven. There, an angel took him to a beautiful temple. But the man noticed that one small stone block was missing in the wall of the temple. "Why is this small block missing from the temple?" the man asked. The angel replied, "That was the work God wanted you to do on earth. But you wanted to do bigger things instead." Then the man woke up from the dream. From that day forward he decided to do God's work day by day. Christian, part of the work God has for you today



is to be a witness. Be faithful to tell others what you know about Jesus, even if there is only one person to talk to.<sup>24</sup>



One church member was deeply troubled and came to the pastor. “I cannot understand what the third toe of the beast represents in Daniel 2:42,” said the worried believer. The pastor smiled and then asked two questions. “Do you understand that Jesus is coming back to earth some day?” “Yes,” replied the believer. “Do you understand that only those who receive the Savior will go to heaven?” “Oh, yes,” answered the believer. “Then let’s spend our time trying to witness to the lost instead of worrying about the toes of the beast,” said the pastor.

The purpose of witnessing is to get people ready to meet Jesus. Soon He will return just as He left. Blessed is that servant who is busy with the Master’s work when the Lord returns (Matt. 24:46).

## Lesson

## 15

**Steps to Pentecost (Acts 1:12-26)**

**Goal:** *Identify and do 3 things that precede being filled with the Spirit.*

**Setting**

We remember Pentecost as the day God blessed His waiting children. At Pentecost, the Spirit of God filled believers. They received the promise Jesus gave them. At Pentecost their lives overflowed with His praise and presence. Like a river, the Holy Spirit flowed out of their inner beings (John 7:37-39). They praised God in languages they had never learned. They boldly witnessed for Jesus. Surely this type of Pentecost is the desire of every believer. We can identify three actions of believers that guided them to be filled with the Spirit.

**A. They obeyed.**

**Explanation.** The journey to Pentecost begins with steps of obedience. The Lord commanded the disciples to remain in Jerusalem (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4). He commanded them to wait and receive the gift of the Spirit. Therefore, they did exactly what He said. They returned to the city and waited (Acts 1:12-13). Waiting might not have seemed like much to do. There was good news to tell. Jesus had risen from the dead. These disciples had talked with Him over a period of 40 days. No doubt they were ready to tell others. But waiting with an attitude of prayer was enough. It would have been wrong to do more. It is always enough to do what God says to do. We err if we try to do more or less than God commands.

Obedience is the birthmark of God’s children. It is the evidence that a person is born again. Those who love God obey His commands (John 15:9-17).



A man stood beside a dog. What he wanted most from the dog was obedience. He wanted the dog to do exactly what he said. The owner did not care how smart, strong, or fast the dog was. The thing he valued most in dogs was obedience. Now the time for the test had come. The dog stood beside the owner. Suddenly, the owner threw a bone about 50 feet from the dog. The eager dog watched the bone hit the ground. But the animal did not move. He had learned to wait for the master’s instructions. Then the owner commanded, “Go get it!” The dog ran to the bone and got it. “Bring it here,” commanded the owner. The faithful dog brought the bone back to the owner. The owner was proud of the dog because it obeyed.

Obedience is the opposite of *disobedience*. Obedience says yes. It is humble and bows to God. But disobedience says no to God. It is stubborn and stands with a stiff neck and folded arms. The Bible says we were disobedient before we came to Christ. At that time we were children of Satan and of disobedience (Eph. 2:1-2).

Look up the word *disobedience* in a concordance. It is a word linked to sin, shame, and judgment. Through disobedience, Adam brought sin into the world (Rom. 5:19). Because of disobedience, Moses could not enter the Promised Land (Num. 20:12). Disobedience caused King Saul to lose the kingdom (1 Sam. 13:11-14). Disobedience stained David's name with a sin that every generation has seen. Do not be deceived. God's wrath comes on those who disobey Him (Eph. 5:6).

**Illustration.** Obedience precedes blessing. Abraham was blessed after he obeyed. He left Ur and went to a new land. Then he became the father of many nations. Thus obedience came before the blessing. Moses was blessed after he obeyed. God told him to return to Egypt. First Moses obeyed God, then blessings followed.

The relationship between obedience and blessing is a big theme in Scripture. We could illustrate it a hundred times from the Bible. The widows were blessed by Elijah and Elisha because they obeyed (1 Kings 17; 2 Kings 4). The lepers were cleansed because they obeyed Jesus (Luke 17:11-14). Saul received his sight because he obeyed (Acts 9:1-19). The disobedient miss the good things God has planned for them (Matt. 22:1-14; 23:37-39; Acts 13:46). The wise obey God and receive of His goodness.

**Application.** Do you desire to be filled with the Spirit? Acts 5:32 says that God gives the Holy Spirit to those who obey Him. We can never earn the blessings God gives us. However, obedience is a key to receiving from God. Is there a blessing you desire from the heavenly Father? Search your heart. Has the Holy Spirit spoken to you about doing something? Mary's advice to the servants can help us all. "Do whatever he tells you" (John 2:5). The path of obedience always leads to the blessings of God.

An old song says, "Trust and obey, for there's no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey."<sup>25</sup>

## B. They prayed.

**Explanation.** A second step toward Pentecost is prayer. As the disciples obeyed, they prayed. Notice that Luke answers several questions for us.

- *Where did they pray?* In an upstairs room in Jerusalem.
- *Which apostles were there?* All of the twelve except Judas. Matthias replaced him (Acts 1:26). We will discuss this more in point C that follows. For now, notice that Peter is first on the list. John and James follow him. These three apostles were the closest to Jesus.
- *Who was praying with the apostles?* Jesus appeared to a group of more than 500 after His resurrection (1 Cor. 15:6). Perhaps the 120 in the upper room were a part of that group. These included the apostles, along with other men and women (Acts 1:13-14).

Luke gives Mary, the *mother* of Jesus, and His *brothers* special attention (Acts 1:14). Some falsely teach that Mary was always a virgin. These falsely teach that she did not have any children other than Jesus. These false teachings contradict the Scriptures. Matthew does not say that Joseph never had sexual relations with Mary. Matthew says Joseph did not know her (sexually) *until* she gave birth to Jesus (Matt. 1:25). This indicates that they had the normal sexual relationship of a man and wife after Jesus was born.

Mary was a better woman than the false teachers say she was. She was a good wife to Joseph. No healthy woman who continually refuses to have sex with her husband is a good wife. Those who say Mary never had sexual relations with Joseph dishonor her. She was a good wife to him. The Bible gives the names of several of her children. These were the brothers of Jesus (Mark 6:3). They did not believe in Him before His death on the cross (John 7:5). But later, they believed. Jesus appeared to His brother, James, after

**Q 23** ↗ *What did the disciples do in obedience before Pentecost?*

**Q 24** ↖ *Is there any area of your life in which you are not obeying God?*


**Q 25** ↗ *Why does it dishonor Mary to say she remained a virgin all her life?*

the Resurrection (1 Cor. 15:7). James and Jude, the Lord's brothers, both became leaders in the church at Jerusalem (See Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 2:9; James 1:1; Jude 1).<sup>26</sup> Each of these was as much the Lord's brother as Mary was His mother! What a joy to know they believed in Jesus after the Resurrection. They were in the prayer meeting that led to Pentecost!

How did they pray? Luke says they prayed constantly. That is, they were in an attitude of prayer. Paul refers to this as praying without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17). Their constant prayer included praying in the upper room and the temple (Luke 24:53).<sup>27</sup>



There is a funny story about a contest. It was to decide who could pray the Lord's prayer the best. Each person was to pray the Lord's prayer without stopping. The winner was to receive a horse. The first man started well. But in the middle of the prayer he asked, "Will you also give me the bridle?" He lost the contest because he stopped praying. Sometimes we get distracted from praying!

**Q 26**  *Is it possible to pray throughout the day? Explain.*

Praying constantly should be a way of life for believers. This type of prayer includes talking to and listening to God. It includes petitions with groaning (James 5:16; Rom. 8:26). But it also includes joyful praise. Prayer can be so intense that one's sweat is like great drops of blood (Luke 22:44). But prayer can also be quiet, peaceful, and relaxed. Praying means staying in touch with God. It is being aware of God and sensitive to Him throughout the day. Sometimes, like Adam or Enoch, we pray as we walk with God. One preacher liked to ask people, "Do I meet you praying?" God does not intend for us to go through every day groaning in prayer. But constant prayer is possible to those who learn that it includes passion and peace.

Did the prayers of the disciples cause God to send the Spirit more quickly? The Father had probably already chosen the Day of Pentecost to pour out the Spirit. But prayer caused the disciples to be aware and ready for what God wanted to do. Prayer keeps us in step with God. It enables us to be a part of what the Father is doing (John 5:19).



**Illustration.** One man was constant in prayer until it became a habit. He prayed always, even in doing small things like drinking a glass of water.



A prophet once told a story. He said a servant was told to guard a prisoner. But while the servant was busy here and there, the prisoner escaped (1 Kings 20:39-40). Likewise, you and I can be too busy. We should never be so busy with something that we cannot pray while we are doing it. The most important part of prayer is praying!<sup>28</sup>

**Application.** If we depend on education, we get what teachers can do. If we depend on finances, we get what money can do. If we depend on ability, we get what talent can do. If we depend on people, we get what humans can do. But if we depend on prayer, we get what God can do! Therefore, let us use things like education, money, and talent. Let us appreciate and honor people. But let us depend on prayer.<sup>29</sup>


Some have the attitude that God will do whatever He wants. These do not feel the need to pray. But the Bible teaches us to pray constantly. We must ask, seek, knock, and listen. Then God will do what He wants, when He wants.

### C. They based their beliefs on the Bible.

**Explanation.** The early disciples believed that the Scriptures are the words of God. Notice what Peter says when he stands in the upper room before Pentecost.

*"Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as guide for those who arrested Jesus—" (Acts 1:16).*

Peter says that the Holy Spirit spoke through David. As believers, we base our faith on the Bible. We place Scripture on a level above humans. The Bible is our guide to God and to heaven. Notice what the apostles said about the authority of Scripture.

**Q 27**  *Why do we honor Scripture above tradition and human opinions?*



All Scripture is **God-breathed** and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness (2 Tim. 3:16).

<sup>20</sup>Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation. <sup>21</sup>For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were **carried along by the Holy Spirit** (2 Pet. 1:20-21).

Paul tells us that God breathed Scripture to us. Peter says that the Holy Spirit carried the writers as they wrote. These great apostles affirm that the Bible is in a class by itself. The Scriptures are the words of God Almighty! We value them above the words of humans and angels (Gal. 1:8-9). Our lives must be guided by "It is written" (Matt. 4:4, 7, 10; 1 Cor. 3:19). Like a king, Scripture must rule over the servants of tradition and human opinion (Matt. 15:1-9).



Figure 5.8 Modern Jerusalem with Judean Hills in background

The Scriptures teach that someone needed to replace Judas. Judas was an apostle, chosen by Jesus. He had a part in the ministry (Acts 1:17). He even received the promise that the twelve apostles would sit on twelve thrones (Luke 22:29-30).<sup>30</sup> But like Esau, he lost his inheritance. Judas was a traitor and a spiritual deserter (Ps. 69:25; Acts 1:16, 20). He reminds us that it is necessary to continue in the faith. Even apostles can fall away. Paul knew this. He taught that only those who stay in the race win the prize of heaven (1 Cor. 9:24-27). Judas fell as far as a human can fall. He fell from being an apostle to being an eternally lost sinner. Therefore, someone needed to sit on the throne meant for Judas.

Judas killed himself. This proves he was sorry, yet he did not repent. But how did he die? Matthew tells us that Judas hanged himself (Matt. 27:1-10). Luke says that the intestines of Judas spilled out in a field. Together, Matthew and Luke give us a more complete picture. Many Bible teachers think that Judas hanged himself on the edge of a cliff.<sup>31</sup> Later, either the rope or the branch broke. Thus Judas fell and burst apart in the field below.<sup>32</sup> The field was bought in his name with the money he threw back into the temple (Matt. 27:5-7; Acts 1:18). Amazing, isn't it? Today a person wants something so much he could kill to get it. Tomorrow he could kill himself for the way he got it. The hot bread Satan sells will turn to ashes in your mouth. Ask Adam and Eve (Gen. 3), Balaam (Num. 22-24), Achan (Josh. 7), Samson (Judg. 16), Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5), or Judas (Matt. 27).

Was Matthias the right man to replace Judas? Two questions are common. *First*, did they use the right process (Acts 1:26)? Casting lots was a common way of making decisions in Old Testament times (1 Chron. 26:13-16; Neh. 11:1; Prov. 16:33; Jonah 1:7). The disciples used this method because the Spirit had not come in fullness yet. However, after Pentecost, we never hear of this method again. Throughout the New Testament, believers rely on the Holy Spirit for guidance.<sup>33</sup> *Second*, did they choose the right apostle? Some think that Paul was the apostle to fill the place of Judas. Paul was indeed a great apostle. But he was not the apostle to replace Judas. Paul was an apostle to the Gentiles (Acts 9:15). It would not seem right to put him on a throne judging Jews. Paul never considered himself a part of the twelve apostles (1 Cor. 15:7-8).<sup>34</sup> Luke wrote 30 years after Pentecost. He was a close friend of Paul. If Paul should have replaced Judas, Luke would have told us. Paul did not meet the qualifications to be one of the twelve. He was not an eyewitness of the ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus (Acts 1:21-22). In the Old Testament, God worked through twelve tribes. In the New Testament, Jesus

**Q 28** ↖ Do you think Matthias was the right person to replace Judas? Explain.

**Q 29** ↗ Does the Bible teach that each apostle should be replaced at death?

worked through twelve apostles. Luke was inspired by the Spirit to tell us how they replaced Judas. Matthias was the right apostle to replace Judas. He was still a part of the twelve in Acts 6:2. But as these twelve faithful men died, no one replaced them. The Bible does not teach that each apostle should be replaced when he dies. Judas was replaced only because he was a lost soul. When James, the brother of John, died, no one replaced him (Acts 12:2). He would rise again to sit on his throne.<sup>35</sup>



**Q 30** 🔑 *Do the Scriptures guide all that you believe about the Holy Spirit? Explain.*

**Illustration.** The Scriptures are our guide to Pentecost. An evangelist stood in front of a church. The pastor had called him to put out a fire (See 1 Thess. 5:19). This Pentecostal fire started in a home. Several of the church members had been praying together. They were hungry to receive more of God. Among them were the town leader, the church song leader, and the Sunday school leader. As they prayed and studied Acts, the Holy Spirit filled them. They overflowed with great joy. Some said they felt like they had been baptized in love. In the midst of this, they began praising God in new languages. These happy believers wanted everyone to have the blessing of Pentecost. The Scriptures had led them to a new relationship with God. But the evangelist spoke loudly with authority. He said, “You do not need to speak in tongues because I do not speak in tongues!”

**Application.** What will be our standard for Pentecost? Will we use the Scriptures as our standard, or some human leader? Acts 2 says that all of the 120 were filled and began to speak in tongues (Acts 2:4). It is important to allow the Scriptures to lead us. Why? Because leaders have limits. They can lead only to places they know. But the Scriptures are the Word of God. When we follow the Scriptures, God is leading us! We pray that all leaders will follow Scripture. We agree to give honor to whom honor is due (Rom. 13:7). But we ought to obey God rather than humans (Acts 4:19)! In Revelation we read that “*these are the words*” of God Almighty (Rev. 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14).



Figure 5.9 The “Cardo”—ruins of the main street in ancient Jerusalem



Figure 5.10 Western Wall in Jerusalem

Lesson

16

## The Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4)

**Goal:** Analyze the purpose and the evidence of being baptized in the Spirit.

### Setting

Recall that Jesus died on the Day of the Passover. After His resurrection, He ministered on earth 40 days. Then the 120 waited in the upper room for about 10 days. They waited until the Day of Pentecost.

The word *Pentecost* means “50th.” Pentecost was a harvest feast that took place 50 days after the Passover. In the Old Testament, Pentecost was also called the Feast of Weeks (Exod. 34:22; Deut. 16:16). Note that there was a week of weeks, that is, 7 weeks, between Passover and Pentecost. On the 50th day after the Passover they waved a sheaf of grain and two loaves of bread before the Lord (Lev. 23:15, 17).<sup>36</sup>

**A. What is the purpose of being baptized in the Spirit?**

The Feast of Pentecost was related to the wheat harvest. Likewise, the Day of Pentecost is related to spiritual harvest. Jesus said *“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field”* (Luke 10:2). Pentecost prepares harvesters for the fields.

The Holy Spirit filled the 120 believers on the Day of Pentecost. Then they began to speak in Gentile tongues. This was a sign that the Spirit enables believers to witness to all nations.<sup>37</sup>

Before Pentecost, Peter was not a faithful witness. He knew the Lord and traveled with him more than 3 years. He and the other disciples had baptized some believers in water (John 4:1-2). Jesus had given Peter and many other disciples a temporary measure of power (Luke 10:1-22). They used that power to witness and help people. But this temporary anointing was only a taste of the Spirit’s power. It did not last for long. Recall that Peter lacked the power to speak up for Christ. Because he lacked power, he denied that he knew the Lord. He refused to witness for Christ to a few men, or even to one woman (Luke 22:55-62).

But notice the change in Peter on the Day of Pentecost. The mouse has been changed into a lion! The man who denied Christ before a few now proclaims Him to a crowd. Filled with the Spirit, Peter is ready to witness. His spiritual battery has been charged. Now he has the power to witness. He stands up before the crowd and talks about Jesus. With great boldness he tells them that they, with the help of wicked men killed Jesus (Acts 2:23). Now, they need to repent! Truly, the Holy Spirit brings boldness to speak about Jesus. The purpose of being baptized in the Spirit is to give a believer power to witness.

We fully appreciate the Day of Pentecost when we understand the Old Testament Feast of Pentecost. That feast was to celebrate the harvest. Likewise, the Day of Pentecost is about harvest. God poured out His Spirit to enable believers to harvest people. Thus the Old Testament gives us the background to understand the New Testament.

Likewise, studying the Old Testament teaches us about the coming of the Spirit in the New Testament. Figure 5.12 compares the Old and New Testaments on three themes. It shows that the working of the Spirit under the Old Covenant was similar to His working under the New Covenant.<sup>38</sup>

**Q 31** ↗ *What theme do the Feast of Pentecost and the Day of Pentecost share?*

**Q 32** ↗ *How did the gift of the Spirit transform Peter?*

**Q 33** ↖ *What do you think is the purpose of the baptism in the Spirit?*



**Figure 5.11 The Old and New Testaments emphasize three themes about the Holy Spirit**

**Q 34** ↗ *How does Luke build upon an Old Testament model of the gift of the Spirit?*

	<b>Theme 1: TRANSFER of the Spirit (for the work of serving)</b>	<b>Theme 2: SIGN to confirm the Spirit’s presence and God’s call to serve</b>	<b>Theme 3: ABILITY from the Spirit to serve</b>
<b>Old Testament</b>	<p><b>a.</b> The Spirit was transferred from Moses to the 70 elders (Num. 11:10-30).</p> <p><b>b.</b> The Spirit was transferred from Moses to Joshua (Num. 27:16-20; Deut. 34:9).</p>	<p><b>a.</b> The Spirit enabled the 70 elders to help bear the burden of the people (Num. 11:17).</p> <p><b>b.</b> A sign is not recorded, but the people knew Joshua had been filled with the spirit of wisdom, so they listened to him (Deut. 34:9).</p>	<p><b>a.</b> They prophesied (Num. 11:25).</p> <p><b>b.</b> The Spirit filled Joshua with wisdom to lead (Deut. 34:9).</p>

Figure 5.12 continued on next page

Continued from previous page

<b>Old Testament</b>	<b>c.</b> The Spirit was transferred from Saul to David (1 Sam. 10:10; 16:13-14).	<b>c.</b> When the Spirit came upon Saul, he prophesied (1 Sam. 10:1-6; 9-10). David prophesied (2 Sam. 23:1-2).	<b>c.</b> The Spirit changed Saul into a different person, making him fit to lead (1 Sam. 10:6). Also, the Spirit gave David power to lead (1 Sam. 16:13).
	<b>d.</b> The Spirit was transferred from Elijah to Elisha (2 Kings 2:8-9,14-15).	<b>d.</b> Elisha was able to part the Jordan River as Elijah had done (2 Kings 2:8, 14).	<b>d.</b> The Spirit gave Elijah and Elisha power to prophesy and perform signs and wonders.
<b>New Testament</b>	<b>a.</b> The Spirit anointed Jesus to preach the good news, release the captives, heal, and set free (Isa. 11:2; 42:1; Luke 4:18-19). At Pentecost, the Spirit was transferred from Jesus to His disciples.	<b>a.</b> Luke records the sign of the dove coming upon Jesus (Luke 3:22). The 120 disciples of Jesus spoke in tongues when the Spirit came upon them for service. This was an outward sign that the Spirit had come (Acts 2:4).	<b>a.</b> The Spirit gave the disciples the ability or power to witness for Jesus (Acts 1:8).
	<b>b.</b> The Spirit was transferred from Jesus, through Peter and John, to Samaritan disciples (Acts 8:17).	<b>b.</b> Something happened that convinced Simon to offer money (Acts 8:18-19).	<b>b.</b> The Spirit gave Samaritan believers the power to do their part in spreading the good news of Jesus.
	<b>c.</b> The Spirit was transferred from Jesus, through Ananias, to Saul (Acts 9:17).	<b>c.</b> Saul's eyes were healed (Acts 9:18; See 1 Cor. 14:18).	<b>c.</b> The Spirit equipped Saul to carry the Lord's name to Gentiles and their kings (Acts 9:15).
	<b>d.</b> The Spirit was transferred from Jesus to Cornelius and other Gentiles (Acts 10:44-46).	<b>d.</b> Cornelius and those with him spoke in tongues (Acts 10:46).	<b>d.</b> The Spirit enabled these Gentiles to be witnesses for Jesus.
	<b>e.</b> The Spirit was transferred from Jesus, through Paul, to Ephesian believers (Acts 19:6).	<b>e.</b> They spoke in tongues and prophesied (Acts 19:6).	<b>e.</b> The Spirit gave them power to witness for Jesus.

**Figure 5.12 Three themes linked to the Spirit in the Old and New Testaments**

In the Old Testament, the Spirit did not come upon people to make them sons of Israel. Rather, the Spirit came to give the ability to serve. Figure 5.12 mentions that the Spirit came upon the 70, Joshua, Saul, and David, along with Elijah and Elisha. In all of these cases, the purpose of the Spirit was to give people the ability to serve. The Spirit enabled many to serve in the Old Testament. He gave special skills to those who made Aaron's priestly garments (Exod. 28:3). The Spirit gave different skills to the craftsmen who worked on the Tabernacle (Exod. 31:3; 35:31). The same Spirit gave the judges military insight and might (Judg. 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14). Likewise, the Spirit did not come upon the Messiah to make Him God's Son. Instead, He came upon Jesus to enable Him to serve (Luke 4:18-19). All of this background helps us understand Luke's writings. Luke never mentions the coming of the Spirit to make us children of God. Rather, Luke describes God's Spirit coming in the same way He came upon Old Testament believers. In Luke and Acts, the Spirit does not come to give spiritual birth to people or the Church. Luke always describes the Spirit coming on those who are already believers. Why? The purpose is clear. Luke emphasizes that the Spirit enables believers to witness and serve.<sup>39</sup>

## B. What is the first evidence of being baptized in the Spirit?

There are many places in Acts that mention the Holy Spirit. However, the chart that follows shows the places in Acts where believers were first filled with the Holy Spirit. Look over the chart. Then we will briefly study each part of it.

#	Acts	Setting	Outward Evidence of the Inner Filling
1.	2:1-4	The Day of Pentecost	All 120 spoke in new languages as soon as they were filled with the Holy Spirit.
2.	8:14-19	Believers at Samaria	Something happened that caused Simon to offer money.
3.	9:17-19	The conversion and filling of Saul	We know that Paul often spoke privately in unknown languages (1 Cor. 14:18).
4.	10:44-46	The home of Cornelius	They spoke in new languages.
5.	19:1-7	Believers at Ephesus	They spoke in new languages and prophesied.

**Figure 5.13** The five places in Acts where believers were first filled with the Holy Spirit

**Q 35** ➤ Which 5 chapters in Acts record the times believers were first filled with the Spirit?

### 1. Read Acts 2:1-4.

On the Day of Pentecost 120 believers prayed in an upper room. They were waiting to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. Suddenly, they heard a sound like a great wind. The sound of wind was a symbol of God’s presence. In Job 38:1 God spoke out of a great swirling wind. In 1 Kings 19:11 a great wind came before the presence of God. Likewise, fire is a symbol of God’s presence. God spoke to Moses from a flaming bush (Exod. 3:2). The Lord came down as a fire on Mount Sinai (Exod. 19:18). Thus the sound of wind and the sight of fire alerted the believers that God was near. He had once accepted Solomon’s temple (1 Kings 9). Now, He showed that He accepted the young Church and each believer as His new temple.<sup>40</sup> These two signs came *before* the baptism in the Spirit. But they were never repeated in Acts.

**Q 36** ➤ In Acts 2, what did each believer do when filled with the Spirit?

Each of the 120 believers was filled with the Holy Spirit. As soon as they were filled, they all began to speak in tongues.<sup>41</sup> The purpose of the baptism in the Spirit was to enable them to witness. Therefore, it is not surprising that the fullness of the Spirit affected their speech.

Today, there are over 520,000,000 Pentecostals and Charismatics.<sup>42</sup> These people are bold witnesses for Jesus. Also, they believe in speaking in new languages, just as believers did at Pentecost and throughout Acts.

### 2. Read Acts 8:14-19.


Philip preached Christ to the people at Samaria. Many men and women believed. Even Simon, who practiced evil magic, believed. After these received Jesus as their Savior, Philip baptized them.

The Samaritans, as all believers, received the Holy Spirit when they believed in Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the One who makes the presence of Christ real in each believer. All who belong to Jesus have the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9).

The question is not, “Does a believer have the Spirit?” Nor is the question, “How much of the Spirit does a believer have?” The question is, “How much of a believer does the Spirit have?” When we first come to Christ, we are thinking about our sins. Soon after, new believers begin thinking about telling others the good news. The Samaritans had been born again. But they had not yet received the fullness of the Spirit. They needed Him to expand within them and fill their lives.

Do not stumble over the different ways Luke describes our relationship to the Spirit. From one point of view, Luke describes the Spirit as a gift Father promised. From a

second point of view, Luke describes this wonderful relationship as a baptism. From a third point of view, he calls it a filling from within. Here in Acts 8 he says the Spirit came upon them (Acts 8:16). Each of Luke's descriptions helps us understand our relationship to the Spirit.


**Q 37**  *What do you think caused Simon to believe the Samaritans had received the Spirit?*

What happened when the Samaritan believers were filled with the Spirit? We cannot know for sure. But it seems that Simon, the former magician, saw and heard something. Something got his attention. Many Bible teachers think the Samaritans spoke in tongues. Some non-Pentecostals believe Simon heard the Samaritan believers speaking in new languages.<sup>43</sup> On the Day of Pentecost, tongues attracted the attention of the crowd. In Samaria, it probably attracted the attention of Simon. He had already seen Philip do miracles. He did not offer money for this power. What caused him to offer money to the apostles?<sup>44</sup> He probably heard people he knew speaking in languages they did not know!

### 3. Read Acts 9:17-19.


We are studying the five times in Acts when believers were first filled with the Holy Spirit. We have looked at believers in Jerusalem and Samaria. The third case is Saul who became Paul.

God commanded a disciple named Ananias to help Saul. From Acts 9:17, we see that the Lord Jesus sent Ananias to Paul for two reasons. Ananias prayed for Paul to see again and also to be filled with the Spirit. The fact that Ananias said "*Brother Saul*" shows that he knew Saul had already believed in his heart.

**Q 38**  *When do you think Paul first began speaking in tongues? Explain.*


Luke does not repeat everything that happened. He does not tell us that Paul was filled with the Spirit or that he spoke in tongues. The biblical writers often skip over the obvious details. In fact, Paul never states in his writings that he was filled with the Spirit. He gives his testimony several times to unbelievers. Therefore, he does not mention the deeper things of God like speaking in tongues. Speaking in tongues was so common in the early church that Paul did not need to mention it! It was plain to everyone that apostles spoke in tongues. If it were not for a problem at Corinth, there would be no record in the Bible that Paul spoke in tongues. However, because of 1 Corinthians 14:18, we know that Paul spoke in tongues more than others did. When did he start speaking in tongues? It is logical to believe Paul spoke in tongues when he was first filled like the other apostles (Acts 2:4.)<sup>45</sup>

### 4. Read Acts 10:44-46.

**Q 39**  *How did Peter know the Gentiles had been filled with the Spirit?*

The fourth instance in this section occurs at the house of Cornelius in Caesarea. Peter tells us that the Holy Spirit "*came on*" all who heard the message. This is the way Luke described what happened to the believers at Samaria when Peter and John went there (Acts 8:16). But how did Peter and the other Jews know for sure that the Gentiles had been filled with the Spirit? They knew because they heard them speaking in tongues (Acts 10:45-46). Peter tells the account later in Jerusalem. There he emphasizes he was sure the Gentiles were baptized in the Holy Spirit. He knew they had received the same baptism, and the same gift. How could Peter be sure? Because the Spirit "*came on*" them just as he "*came on*" the apostles at Pentecost (Acts 11:15-16). Likewise, we can be sure today that we have been baptized in the Holy Spirit if we speak in a new language.


### 5. Read Acts 19:1-7.

**Q 40**  *Were the 12 men at Ephesus filled with the Spirit when they were born again? Explain.*

The last example we will consider in this lesson happened in Ephesus, about 23 years after Pentecost.<sup>46</sup> Here is another clear example that the baptism in the Spirit is a different experience than being born again. The twelve men had believed, and were baptized in water in the name of Jesus—after Paul taught them. Who can deny that they were Christians at that point? But something was missing in their lives. They needed to

be filled with the Spirit who was already with them. So Paul placed his hands on them, and they were filled with the Spirit. What was the evidence? They spoke in tongues and prophesied (Acts 19:6).

We have seen a biblical pattern in this lesson. We have looked at the five different times in Acts when believers were first filled with the Spirit. In three of these, we are sure believers spoke in tongues as they received the gift of the Spirit. These three times included Jerusalem, Caesarea, and Ephesus (Acts 2, 10, 19). In the other two cases some evidence implies that they spoke in tongues (Acts 8, 9). In all five cases, believers did not seek to speak in tongues. The main purpose of the baptism in the Spirit was not to enable believers to speak in tongues. The main purpose of the Spirit was to give them power to witness for Jesus. However, tongues was the biblical sign. It showed that believers had been filled with the Holy Spirit they were seeking.

**Q 41**  How would you summarize the biblical evidence of being filled with the Spirit?

Lesson

17

## The Value of Speaking in Tongues (Acts 2:4)

**Goal:** Evaluate at least 5 reasons why speaking in an unknown tongue is valuable.

There are several reasons we value speaking in a new language as the Holy Spirit enables us.


### A. We value speaking in tongues because the Bible teaches it.

The Bible is our standard of faith and practice. We study it to see how to know God and walk with Him.


John Wesley compared himself to an arrow flying through the air. He said he was a spirit that came from God and would return to God. He saw his life like an arrow in the air, headed toward eternity. Wesley wanted to know one thing: the way to heaven. He believed that God wrote a book to teach us the way. His prayer was, “O give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God!” Once he had the Bible, he became a man of one book. That is, the Bible became the one book he lived by. Wesley’s attitude toward the Bible is a good example for us. We should base our faith and actions on what the Bible teaches us.<sup>47</sup>



Studying the Bible, we find that all of the apostles except Judas spoke in tongues. Paul was probably the most educated and greatest of the apostles (2 Cor. 11:23). Under the power of the Spirit he started many new churches and wrote about one-third of the New Testament. His life was so holy that he told Christians at least five times to follow his example (1 Cor. 4:16, 11:1; Phil. 3:17, 4:9; 1 Thess. 1:6; 2 Thess. 3:9). This great apostle was an example to us in many ways, including speaking in tongues. He thanked God that he spoke in tongues more than all of the Corinthians (1 Cor. 14:18). Praying in tongues was a key to Paul’s ministry. The Bible does not teach that Paul preached in tongues. But he prayed to God in tongues privately. Why? This built him up spiritually (1 Cor. 14:2, 4). Then when he was with other believers, he was able to edify them. Likewise, we value praying in tongues privately to build ourselves up. Surely this should be the attitude of all who follow Christ.

**Q 42**  Did all of the apostles speak in tongues? Explain.

The Bible teaches us that not only the apostles, but also many other Christians prayed in tongues. On the Day of Pentecost, all 120 believers spoke in tongues (Acts 1:15; 2:4). At the home of Cornelius the Spirit came on *all* who heard the message, and they spoke in tongues (Acts 10:44-46). At Ephesus the twelve believers spoke in tongues (Acts 19:6-7).

**Q 43**  Give 3 examples in Acts showing that laypeople spoke in tongues when the Spirit filled them.

Thus the Bible teaches that the Church began with believers speaking in tongues as the Spirit filled and enabled them. We value this practice today because the Bible teaches us that the early church valued it. As we have noted earlier, there are more than 520 million believers today who value speaking in tongues because the Bible teaches it.<sup>48</sup>

**Q 44** ↗ Which verses in Corinthians show that speaking in tongues is a form of prayer?

**Q 45** ↗ Do you know anyone who discourages believers from praying in the Spirit? Explain.

**Q 46** ↗ Do you think that praying in tongues is selfish? Explain.

## B. We value speaking in tongues because it is a form of prayer to God.

First Corinthians 14:2 says that anyone who speaks in a tongue is speaking to God, not humans. Speaking to God is a form of prayer. Thus the Holy Spirit enables us to pray to God in tongues (1 Cor. 14:14). Paul thanked God that he spoke/prayed in tongues more than others (1 Cor. 14:18). Paul encourages us to pray in the Spirit on all occasions (Eph. 6:18). Likewise, Jude encourages us to build ourselves up by praying in the Holy Spirit (Jude 20). Speaking in tongues is praying in the Holy Spirit. We value all forms of prayer.

Over and over the Scriptures encourage us to pray to our Father in heaven. Jesus said we should always pray and not give up (Luke 18:1). Paul told us that we should pray continually (1 Thess. 5:17). Let us use all forms of biblical prayer to follow the scriptural counsel to pray.

## C. We value speaking in tongues because it edifies the believer who does it.

First Corinthians 12 mentions nine different spiritual gifts. But praying in tongues is the only gift described as building up the one who uses the gift.<sup>49</sup> It is not selfish for Christians to build themselves up. Jude tells us to build ourselves up in our most holy faith. How? By praying in the Spirit (Jude 20)! Surely praying in tongues is praying in the Spirit. Therefore, praying in tongues is very valuable to believers.

Too often, Christians are too weak to help others. Weak Christians are like the believers in Hebrews 5:11-14. These believers were weak and young. They could drink milk but could not eat meat. They were part of the problem instead of part of the answer. Instead of helping others, they needed someone to help them. They took a lot of some pastor's time. They were like a garden that needed a lot of hoeing but produced little.



It is dangerous to be a Christian who does not edify himself or herself. Satan travels about as a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour (1 Pet. 5:8). Lions often look for the weakest animal in a herd. But you, Christian, have a valuable gift. Pray in tongues and build yourself up. Then you will be strong enough to overcome Satan. And you will also be strong enough to help a weaker believer.

## D. We value speaking in tongues as a sign to unbelievers and believers.

To unbelievers, an unknown tongue may be a sign that God is present (1 Cor. 14:22). On the Day of Pentecost, the speaking in tongues was a sign to the Jews. This sign showed that God was speaking through the disciples of Jesus.

Tongues are also a sign to believers. This does not contradict what Paul said in 1 Corinthians 14:22. There are times when tongues are a sign to unbelievers. Paul emphasizes this. But tongues were also a sign to Peter. How did Peter know that Cornelius and his family had received the gift of the Holy Spirit? He knew because of the sign of speaking in tongues (Acts 10:44-46).

The Spirit works in many ways. He convicts of sin. He comes to live within each believer at the time of the new birth. He causes us to remember Jesus's teachings. He gives us power to witness. But a biblical sign of being filled with the Spirit is important. Why? Without it a believer could not clearly discern being filled with the Spirit from other spiritual experiences.<sup>50</sup> So we value tongues as a sign to believers.



Two pastors we will refer to as James and John were talking. John had been filled with the Spirit. He enjoyed praying in a new language. James testified that once when he was praying he felt great joy in God's presence. James believed this joy was the sign that he had been filled with the Spirit. But John said it was not the common biblical sign in Acts. He encouraged James to continue seeking to be filled

**Q 47** ↗ In what way is speaking in tongues a sign to you as a believer?



with the Spirit. A few days later, James was filled and spoke in a new language. His joy overflowed. James was very thankful that God gave a biblical sign to show that the Spirit has filled us.

Speaking in tongues is an important sign. People who cut hair put out a sign. The sign will not cut a person's hair. But the sign assures others that the one who cuts hair is near. Likewise, there is always a sign in front of a public place to eat food. The sign will not feed a person, but it is evidence that a cook is nearby. Likewise, speaking in tongues is a biblical sign. God chose it to show that the Holy Spirit has filled a person.<sup>51</sup>



#### E. We value speaking in tongues as a way each believer can cooperate with God.

Usually, there are two parts to a miracle. There is God's part and our part. God's part is the big part, but He gives us a small part. In some miracles, the person's part was to fill a jar with water (John 2) or wash in a pool (John 9). In the baptism in the Holy Spirit, God's part is to enable a believer to speak a new language. The believer's part is to speak. God chose a part for us that anyone can do. The young or the old, the rich or the poor, the educated or the illiterate can do this small part God gives. Almost any person can speak anywhere and anytime. There are even cases of a person who was deaf and mute who often spoke in tongues and interpreted in public.<sup>52</sup>

**Q 48** ↗ *What is a believer's part in being filled with the Spirit?*

#### F. We value speaking in tongues as an exercise in humility and faith.

Like the cross, tongues is a stumbling block to the proud. To some, tongues may seem even more foolish than the preaching of the cross (1 Cor. 1:18-25). The human mind is proud. Knowledge puffs up (1 Cor. 8:1). By contrast, we feel humbled at what we do not understand. The mind does not enjoy bowing to what it does not understand. Speaking in tongues brings the most respected believer down to the ground of a common person. Presidents, professors, doctors, lawyers, and children all speak in tongues at the same level. The Scriptures emphasize humility as a key to fellowship with God (Matt. 18:1-4; James 4:6). Therefore, we place high spiritual value on all biblical practices that emphasize humility. Examples of these may include suffering, washing feet, fasting, and praying in tongues (2 Cor. 12:7-10; John 13:12-17; 1 Cor. 14:14).

**Q 49** ↖ *Does your mind protest when you pray in tongues? Explain.*

Praying in tongues links humility and faith. It is like walking on water. It reminds us to depend on God rather than self. We tend to trust in our minds, money, education, talents, and skills. None of these helps a person speak in tongues. Praying in tongues is a reminder to depend on God. It encourages being poor in spirit—that is, depending on God. Praying in tongues is humble faith in action.

**Q 50** ↗ *Of what does praying in tongues remind us?*

#### G. We value speaking in tongues because it is a step toward other spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:8-10).

Like tongues, all of the other spiritual gifts defy the mind. One who prays often in tongues learns to cooperate with the Spirit. Some teachers say speaking in tongues is the doorway to all the spiritual gifts. One teacher said speaking in tongues is the root and stem for all the other gifts. It is the way we are nourished.<sup>53</sup> Those who pray often in tongues learn to edify the Church with other spiritual gifts. One believer spoke a word of knowledge in public. But first, that believer spoke privately in tongues. In contrast, will a person who cannot speak in tongues *privately* speak a prophecy *publicly*? A short step is easier than a long one.

**Q 51** ↖ *Do those you know who minister spiritual gifts in public speak in tongues in private? Explain.*

#### H. We value speaking in tongues because it shows that a believer has completely submitted to the Spirit.

The word *baptize* is associated with a ship that sinks out of sight. To *baptize* means "to take completely under." To be baptized in water, all of a person must go under the water. To be baptized in the Spirit, all of a person must come under the Spirit's influence.

But the tongue is the most unruly part of a person (James 3:8). No human can tame the tongue! Speaking in tongues shows that a believer has submitted the mind and even the tongue to the Holy Spirit. Thus that person has been baptized—placed completely under the Spirit’s control. This may be only for a few moments. The remaining challenge is to stay under the Spirit’s control! A long journey begins with the first step.

### I. We value speaking in tongues because it lessens the gap between apostles and laypeople.

**Q 52** ↗ *What shows that a common believer can be as full of the Spirit as an apostle?*

On the Day of Pentecost the apostles were filled with the Spirit. They spoke in new languages. But common men and women also spoke in tongues on that day. Likewise today, God fills all who seek Him. Witnessing is not just for apostles, pastors, and teachers. God has work for every believer. In the age of the Spirit, God promised to pour out His Spirit even on slaves, both male and female (Acts 2:18). Speaking in tongues shows us that a common believer can be as full of the Spirit as an apostle.<sup>54</sup>

### J. We value speaking in tongues because it reminds us that our fellowship with God is more spiritual than mental.

**Q 53** ↗ *Do you think our fellowship with God is more spiritual or mental? Explain.*

The relationship of believers to God is spiritual. God is Spirit. We are eternal spirits living in temporary bodies. As John Wesley said, “I am a spirit.”<sup>55</sup> Jesus said those who want to worship God must do so in spirit (John 4:23-24).

Praying in tongues reminds us that the spirit can be full when the mind is empty (1 Cor. 14:14). We need to remember that the mind is only a tool to help us walk in the Spirit. Our minds are very limited. Often our minds cannot find words to express the love we feel toward other humans. And the love we feel toward God is greater. It is a spiritual language of prayer and praise to Him. Praying in tongues is spirit to Spirit. It is a deep fellowship with God that goes beyond what the mind can understand (See Phil. 4:7). Spiritual knowledge and intelligence do not depend on a physical brain. God is spirit without a physical brain, and no one else is as intelligent as He is. When a believer’s brain is dead in the grave, his or her spirit will be worshipping in the presence of God. Praying in tongues underlines the truth that our fellowship with God is spirit to Spirit.

#### Lesson

## 18

### Ten Questions Related to Being Filled With the Spirit (Acts 2:4)

**Goal:** Answer 10 questions people ask related to being filled with the Spirit.

God promised believers the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4, 38). However, to receive a promise from God, we must take it by faith. Sometimes believers have questions that prevent them from receiving a promise. Therefore, we will take a little time to discuss some questions. We do not want to argue with anyone. But it is good to help those with sincere questions. Let us look at ten questions believers often ask related to the Holy Spirit.

#### 1. Did I already receive the Holy Spirit when I was born again?

**Q 54** ↗ *Have you met some who did not know that all believers have the Spirit? Explain.*

Yes, the Holy Spirit enters each person when he or she is born again. The Spirit is called the Spirit of sonship (Rom. 8:15). When a person receives Jesus as Savior, the Holy Spirit enters that believer. The Spirit brings the inner witness and assurance that a person is God’s child (Rom. 8:16). Therefore, each believer has a measure of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9-17). In contrast to us, Jesus received the Holy Spirit without measure or limit (John 3:34).

#### 2. Why do we need more of the Spirit if we already have Him?

**Q 55** ↗ *Why do believers need more of the Spirit?*

The main reason we need more of the Spirit is that we need to grow in grace. God wants to give us a greater measure of the Spirit than we received at salvation. He wants us

to be filled with the Spirit. Jesus breathed the Holy Spirit into His apostles and told them to receive the Spirit (John 20:22). But they still needed to be baptized in the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. God wants to fill us up with the Holy Spirit. At conversion, we become God's children. Next, God wants us to begin to grow and mature. Then we can witness and help others become His children. Paul prayed for the Ephesian believers to grow and be filled with the Spirit. He wrote, *"That you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God"* (Eph. 3:19).

Some believers met together to pray. They had all been saved from their past sins. But they were hungry for more of God's Spirit. One prayed, "O God, please give me just a little bit of your Spirit."<sup>56</sup> Notice the contrast between this prayer and Paul's (Eph. 3:19). God does not want to give us only a *little* of the Spirit. He wants us *"to be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."* This sounds like a lot of the Spirit! God wants us to have so much of the Spirit that *"streams of living water will flow from within"* us (John 7:37-39).

Notice that in Ephesians 3:19 Paul was praying for believers. These believers had already received the Spirit. But believers need to grow in grace (2 Pet. 3:18). Those who do not grow and go forward may go backward (2 Pet. 3:17-18). To faith we must add goodness. To goodness we must add knowledge. To knowledge we must add self-control, and so on (2 Pet. 1:5-9). It is the Holy Spirit who ministers grace to us. He is called *"the Spirit of grace"* (Heb. 10:29). Remember that the fruit of the Spirit results from the Spirit's presence in believers (Gal. 5:22-23). Likewise, the gifts of the Spirit result from the Spirit's presence in believers (1 Cor. 12:7-11). So a key to growing in grace is being filled with the *"Spirit of grace."*

John the Baptist was filled with the Spirit even from birth (Luke 1:15). Still, he *"grew and became strong in spirit"* (Luke 1:80). *"Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men"* (Luke 2:52). The anointing on Him at age 30 was greater than the anointing he had at 12. He grew in favor with God! Imagine that! And we as servants are not above our Master (Matt. 10:24). Paul was filled with the Spirit near the time of his conversion (Acts 9:17). But he *"grew more and more powerful"* (Acts 9:22). Apostles and laypeople need to grow in grace. *"Eagerly desire the greater gifts"* such as prophecy (1 Cor. 12:31; 14:39). We can each be a greater blessing today than we were yesterday. Seek to be filled with the *"Spirit of grace!"*

Someone may be asking, "After I have been filled with the Spirit, do I need to daily seek more of the Spirit?" Yes! We receive the Spirit when we come to Christ. Then we seek to be filled with the Spirit. The first filling of the Spirit is called the baptism in the Holy Spirit. At this time, a believer speaks in a new language. But it is not enough to be content with yesterday's filling. Why? As we said above, we need to grow in grace. Also, note that all sources of power on earth need to be renewed. Batteries become weak. Cars run out of gas. Yesterday's kerosene, electricity, firewood, or food will not give you the power you need today. Likewise, there is only one baptism in the Spirit. But there should be many fillings. The apostles were filled a second time with the Spirit in Acts 4:31. The Spirit's filling gave them new boldness to witness for Jesus. Likewise, Paul prayed for us to keep being filled with the Spirit (Eph. 5:18). Do you desire to eat today after you were full yesterday? How much more should we have a daily appetite to be filled with the Spirit! Those who hunger and thirst for the right relationship with God will be filled daily (Matt. 5:6).

### 3. Does the New Testament teach there is only one baptism?

Ephesians 4:5 says there is *"one Lord, one faith, one baptism."* To understand this verse, a person must understand the purpose of Ephesians. Paul wrote to the believers at Ephesus to emphasize a great truth. In Christ, God brought Jews and Gentiles together



**Q 56** ↪ Why is being filled with the Spirit a key to growing in grace?



**Q 57** ↪ If you have been filled with the Spirit, should you be content? Explain.

**Q 58** ↪ How many times should a person be baptized in the Spirit? Explain.

**Q 59** ↪ What does Paul mean when he says there is only one baptism (Eph. 4:5)?

into one body. In the past, the Gentiles were far off from God. They had no hope (Eph. 2:11-12). A wall stood between them and the Jews. But Jesus broke down the wall (Eph. 2:14). Now both Jews and Gentiles can come to God through Christ. There are many lords on the earth. But there is only one Lord over the Church. There is not one Lord for Jews and a different one for Gentiles. There is only one Lord for both. Likewise, there is not one baptism for Jews and a different one for Gentiles. There is only one baptism for both. This probably refers to water baptism (Rom. 6:3-4).

**Q 60** ↪ Which 4 baptisms did the 12 believers at Ephesus receive?

However, the New Testament refers to at least five different baptisms.

- John’s baptism in water was for repentance. It was a baptism to get people ready to receive Jesus (Luke 3:3-6). This baptism was no longer needed after Jesus began His ministry.
- Water baptism comes after a person has received Christ. As Philip said, after one believes, he or she may be baptized (Acts 8:37; 16:31-33).
- The Holy Spirit baptizes (places) each new believer into the body of Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). This happens at conversion, at the moment a person receives Christ and is born again.
- Jesus wants to baptize believers in the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:11; Acts 1:5). This is a baptism of power for those who are already a part of His body. For many the baptism in the Holy Spirit is their third baptism. For example, consider the believers at Samaria. They had received Jesus as Savior. This means that the Holy Spirit had baptized them into the body of Christ. This was their *first* baptism. *Second*, Philip baptized them in water. *Third*, the apostles prayed for them and Jesus baptized them in the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:9-17). For the twelve men at Ephesus, the baptism in the Spirit was their *fourth* baptism (Acts 19:1-7)! These baptisms included the baptism of John, the baptism by the Spirit into the body of Christ, the baptism in water, and the baptism by Jesus in the Spirit.
- For some believers, there is a baptism of suffering (Mark 10:38-39).

Type of Baptism	Person Baptizing	Purpose	Scriptures
1. John’s baptism	John	Sign of repentance; preparation for Christ	Luke 3:3-6
2. Baptism into the body of Jesus	Holy Spirit	Becoming a part of the Church, or body of Jesus	1 Cor. 12:13
3. Water baptism	Pastor	Sign of becoming a Christian	Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 6:1-4
4. Baptism in the Holy Spirit	Jesus	Power to witness	Acts 1:4-5, 8
5. Baptism of suffering	God	Identifying with the sufferings of Jesus	Mark 10:38; John 18:11

**Figure 5.14** Five different types of baptism in the New Testament

#### 4. Why did God link speaking in a new language to being filled with the Holy Spirit?

**Q 61** ↪ Why do you think God linked tongues to being filled with the Spirit?

There are several possible reasons. We will review a few.

- The purpose of being filled with the Spirit is to become witnesses for Jesus to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). In other words, believers will witness for Christ in all languages of the earth. Thus speaking in a new language is a sign that a believer will have a part in this global witnessing.<sup>57</sup>
- The tongue is the most rebellious member of the body (James 3:1-12). Thus allowing the Holy Spirit to control the tongue may be a picture of complete surrender to God.
- Almost every miracle has two parts: God’s part and our part. Speaking in a new language allows both God and the believer to have a part.
- Speaking in a new language reminds us of a great truth. We cannot do anything for God without His help. There is always the temptation to depend on self. We

may trust in money, education, skills, titles, and so on. But our trust should be in God. Without Him, we can do nothing (John 15:5). As often as believers speak in new languages, they remember to depend upon the invisible God. It helps us focus on the unseen (2 Cor. 4:18). Speaking in tongues reminds us that we do not succeed by might or power, but by God’s Spirit (Zech. 4:6).

- Speaking in a new language is a form of praying. Praying is speaking to God. He who speaks in a tongue speaks (prays) to God (1 Cor. 14:2, 14). Jude refers to praying in the Spirit as a way we build ourselves up (Jude 20). How wonderful that God chose praying in a new language to edify us!

**5. Are spiritual things like healings, miracles, and speaking in a new language for today?**

Some teach that spiritual gifts died with the apostles. They base this false teaching on a true passage. Take a minute to read 1 Corinthians 13:8-12.

*<sup>8</sup>Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. <sup>9</sup>For we know in part and we prophesy in part, <sup>10</sup>but when perfection comes, the imperfect disappears. <sup>11</sup>When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me. <sup>12</sup>Now we see but a poor reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known (1 Cor. 13:8-12).*

**Q 62** ➤ What will life be like when the perfect comes?

First Corinthians 13:8-12 contrasts two times: now and then. Now we live in an imperfect time. But then, when Jesus returns, perfection will come. Now we do not see well. But then we will see face to face. Now we do not understand well. But then we will know as we are known. Now we live in an imperfect body. But then we will have a perfect body (1 Cor. 15). Now we have a great need for spiritual gifts and power. Then we will not need spiritual gifts.

Now (The Imperfect Appears)	1 Cor.	Then (The Perfect Comes)	1 Cor.
We need prophecy, tongues, and knowledge.	13:8-9	We will not need spiritual gifts.	13:10
We talk, think, and reason like children.	13:11	We will put childish ways behind us.	13:11
We see but a poor reflection, as in a mirror.	13:12	We will see face to face.	13:12
We know in part.	13:12	We will know fully, as we are known.	13:12
We live in a physical body.	15:44	We will live in a spiritual body.	15:44
We are waiting for the trumpet.	15:52	We will hear the trumpet sound.	15:52
We can die.	15:53	We will never die.	15:53

**Figure 5.15 First Corinthians 13 and 15 contrast the present with the future.**

How long do we need spiritual gifts? Until Jesus returns. Some have said that we do not need spiritual gifts because the Bible has come, and the Bible is perfect. But it is the Bible that tells us to eagerly desire spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 14:1)! How long did Paul want the Corinthians to have spiritual gifts? Read 1 Corinthians 1:7 for a clear answer. “Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.” We need spiritual gifts until Jesus is revealed at His Second Coming (1 Cor. 1:7).

**Q 63** ➤ Does the Bible teach that we still need spiritual gifts? Explain.

**6. Is speaking in a new language only for those who are not mature? Is it the least of the gifts?**

Some who do not speak in tongues say tongues is the least of the gifts. The Bible does not say that speaking in tongues is the least of God’s gifts. But if it did, should we

refuse a gift from God because it was small? We should give thanks for all gifts God offers us, whether they are great or small.

**Q 64** ↪ *How would you answer one who says speaking in tongues is for young or weak believers?*

Is speaking in tongues only for those who are not mature? The apostle Paul prayed in tongues privately. He spoke in tongues more than all of the Corinthian believers did (1 Cor. 14:18). In other words, the one who was the most mature prayed in tongues the most! Let us follow his example and pray much in the language the Holy Spirit gives us.<sup>58</sup>

### **7. Does God give each believer a new language when he or she is filled with the Spirit? Or does God give different spiritual gifts to each believer?**

On the one hand, God does give different spiritual gifts. All are not apostles, prophets, teachers, or leaders in the church. Not all do miracles, speak in tongues, or interpret tongues to edify the church (1 Cor. 12:27-31).

**Q 65** ↪ *When Paul asks, "Are all teachers?", is he referring to teaching at home or in the church? Explain.*

On the other hand, each believer does things in private that he or she does not do in public. A believer may not pray for the sick in church, but all believers can pray for the sick outside of church services (Mark 16:17-18). A believer may not teach in the church, but most adult believers teach at home. A believer may not lead in the church, but each father and mother leads the children at home. Thus believers do the same things at home, but different things in church services.

First Corinthians 12–14 reminds us that not all believers speak in an unknown language in a church service. Paul spoke in tongues more than all the Corinthians (1 Cor. 14:18). But in church, he preferred to speak in a language others knew. Thus Paul contrasts his private praying in tongues with public church services.

**Q 66** ↪ *Which biblical verses show that all who are filled with the Spirit speak in tongues?*

Few have the specific gift of speaking in tongues to edify the entire church. But it is common in the Bible for all believers to speak in tongues when they are filled with the Spirit (Acts 10:46; 19:6). On the Day of Pentecost, all 120 believers were filled with the Spirit and spoke in tongues (Acts 2:4). God enabled each believer to speak in a new language. Why? Because praying in a new language edifies a believer (1 Cor. 14:4). Like Paul, each Christian should be filled with the Spirit and pray in tongues privately. Focus on your own personal needs when you are alone. But in church, seek to edify others.

Do you want more evidence that God desires each believer to speak in a private prayer language? Ask any of the 523,767,000 Charismatics or Pentecostals!<sup>59</sup> Few of us have ever spoken in tongues for the whole church. But many of us pray in tongues daily to build ourselves up in private. We follow the apostle Paul's example.

### **8. Should I avoid all spiritual gifts because they might bring division or confusion? Should I seek love instead of the gifts?**

**Q 67** ↪ *Should we avoid spiritual gifts since they might cause division or confusion? Explain.*

God does not want us to choose between love and spiritual gifts. Confusion and division come when believers do not walk in love. It is not spiritual gifts that bring confusion and division. Neither is it generous giving that causes division (1 Cor. 13:3). We should not stop giving because our offerings might cause division. Division and confusion can result from anything if people do not walk in love.

It is true that a believer should neither give nor speak in tongues without love (1 Cor. 13:1). But this did not keep Paul from speaking in tongues more than all the rest (1 Cor. 14:18). Love is the path we must walk on as we practice spiritual gifts.<sup>60</sup> It is the excellent way or path in life for all of us. Jesus walked in love and power. Do not choose between love and spiritual gifts. That would be like choosing between mercy and witnessing. Let us choose both. Let us choose love, mercy, humility, spiritual gifts, and all the other good blessings the Holy Spirit offers!

## 9. Will God embarrass me by causing me to speak in a new language in public?

The Holy Spirit enables a believer to speak in a new language. But the Spirit does not force a believer to speak. The Holy Spirit is as gentle as a dove. He does not force anyone to do anything. God always allows us to make choices.

One man feared speaking in tongues. He was afraid it would be him speaking, not God. But it is never God who does the speaking in tongues. God enables the believer to speak in the unknown language. The believer may always choose to speak or be silent (1 Cor. 14:28, 32). Also, believers may speak as loudly or as quietly as they choose. They may shout in tongues or whisper.

Remember that there are two parts to most miracles. God's part is to fill a believer with the Spirit. He guides the believer in speaking a new language. The believer's part is to speak the language. Therefore, a believer will never be embarrassed by speaking in tongues. A believer may choose to speak or be silent.

## 10. How can I be sure the new language is from God, not Satan or the flesh?

Remember the story of the two drunks who were talking in a bar. One of them asked the other if speaking in tongues was from the devil. The other replied, "No, if speaking in tongues was from the devil, we would do it!"<sup>61</sup>

Those who seek the devil find him, not God. And those who seek God find Him, not the devil. Jesus promised that when we pray to our Father in heaven, He will not deceive us.

<sup>11</sup> "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead?

<sup>12</sup> Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? <sup>13</sup> 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!" (Luke 11:11-13).

Seek God, and you will find Him, not Satan (Luke 11:9-10).

**Q 68** ➤ Does the Spirit force a believer to speak in a new language? Explain.



**Q 69** ➤ If we ask God to fill us with the Spirit, should we fear being deceived? Explain.

### Lesson

## 19

### Peter's Message to the Crowd (Acts 2:5-41)

**Goal:** Explain what happened at Pentecost, why it happened, and how it can happen to each believer.

#### Setting (Acts 2:5-13)

Acts 2:5 says that in Jerusalem there were Jews from every nation under heaven. This type of writing is called an overstatement or \*hyperbole. In an overstatement, the speaker states something bigger than it actually is. He does this to emphasize a point. The listeners or readers know that the speaker or writer is not lying. He is just using the method of overstatement to underline the truth. Emphasizing a truth by overstating it was a common method of Jewish teachers. For example, the Old Testament says Solomon made silver as plentiful as stones in Jerusalem (1 Kings 10:27). This is an overstatement to emphasize the prosperity of Solomon's reign. Likewise, Jesus said the Pharisees strained out a gnat but swallowed a camel (Matt. 23:24). The Lord overstated a truth to make a point. Likewise, in Acts 2:5, Luke overstates his point. He was aware of nations like Ethiopia that were not represented in Jerusalem. But he overstated the point for a purpose. He emphasized that at the Passover, Jews were present from many nations. These were Jews who had been scattered by war and persecution. Each year, many of these Jews returned to celebrate the Passover in Jerusalem. Figure 5.1 shows the 15 places Luke mentions.

The crowd was amazed and confused. They probably knew that most of the 120 were from Galilee by the way that they dressed.<sup>62</sup> But the 120 were speaking in many different

**Q 70** ➤ What is a hyperbole and how does Luke use it?

languages (Acts 2:6). The listeners were amazed to hear their own languages. But they were also confused. How was it possible for the 120 to be speaking the languages of other nations?

**Q 71** ➤ *What caused a crowd to gather on the Day of Pentecost?*

Some teachers seem to be as confused as the crowd was at Pentecost. They falsely teach that the 120 were all speaking one language. They also wrongly say that the miracle was in the hearing, not the speaking! This contradicts the Bible. It was not the crowd that was filled with the Spirit and heard new tongues! The Bible says the 120 were filled with the Spirit and spoke in new languages as the Spirit enabled them (Acts 2:4). This caused the crowd to gather. Acts 2:6-7 emphasizes that the crowd heard the 120 speaking in different languages. The miracle took place in the speakers, not the listeners! The speakers were filled with the Spirit. The listeners were filled with amazement and confusion.

**Q 72** ➤ *Do you know some that criticize what they do not understand? Explain.*

Others in the crowd mocked. Because they could not understand the meaning, they decided there was no meaning.<sup>63</sup> Some are like this today. They criticize and mock what they do not understand. But Peter showed they were wrong. Those who get drunk are not out in the street praising God at nine in the morning!

Next, Peter and the other eleven apostles (including Matthias) stood up. Peter spoke under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The same Spirit that enabled him to speak in tongues enabled him to prophesy to the crowd (1 Cor. 12:10; 14:3). He did not sit down and plan three points for his message. Rather, the Holy Spirit inspired him to speak.<sup>64</sup> Let us look at three things Peter explained.

#### **A. Peter explained what happened at Pentecost (Acts 2:14-21).**

**Q 73** ➤ *To what do “the last days” refer (Acts 2:17)?*

The Spirit had come down! This was what Joel had prophesied. Joel’s prophecy covered a long period of time. The last days began with the First Coming of Christ and will end with His Second Coming (Acts 2:17).<sup>65</sup> Joel emphasized that God would pour out His Spirit. Joel prophesied that the Church Age would be a time of supernatural events. Under the Old Covenant, signs, wonders, and miracles were rare. But supernatural events are a characteristic of the age of the Spirit, the last days.

God promised He would not be partial or have any favorites as He poured out His blessings. Note the following five areas in which God said He would treat all alike and have no favorites.

**Q 74** ➤ *What are 5 areas in which God said He would not show favoritism?*

**First, God promised He would not favor one nation over another.** He said He would pour out His Spirit on all flesh or people (Acts 2:17).

**Second, God promised He would not favor men over women.** He said He would pour out the Holy Spirit on both sons and daughters (Acts 2:18). Both sexes would prophesy. Recall that there were women among the 120 who spoke in tongues.<sup>†</sup>

**Third, God promised He would not favor the old above the young.** He said the young would see spiritual visions and the old would dream spiritual dreams (Acts 2:17). The baptism in the Spirit is for all ages. Many children have been filled with the Spirit at an early age. Likewise, many elderly people have been baptized in the Spirit.

**Fourth, God promised He would not favor the rich over the poor.** Israel was once a nation of slaves that God delivered from Egypt. Now Israel was under Roman rule. There were more slaves than free people in the Roman Empire. But through the cross and Pentecost, both rich and poor become God’s slaves or property. Jesus bought us at Calvary. At Pentecost, He takes full possession of believers.

<sup>†</sup> Recall that Paul says prophecy and speaking in tongues are equal blessings if the listeners understand (1 Cor. 14:5-6). Perhaps Peter was inspired to recognize that at Pentecost the tongues served as a prophecy for those who understood.



All of the Epistles refer to believers as slaves. The one Greek word *doulos* means “slave” or “servant.” Even the apostles and brothers of Jesus call themselves slaves or servants of Jesus (James 1:1; Jude 1). Masters as rich as Philemon or as poor as his slave Onesimus may both be filled with the Holy Spirit of Pentecost.

**Fifth, God promised not to favor the early over the late.** He blesses both the first to hear and the last. Acts 2:19-20 refers to signs that will take place at the end of the last days. But Acts 2:21 assures us that whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. In the years just before Jesus returns, conditions on earth will get worse. Because evil will increase, the love of most will grow cold (Matt. 24:12). The last days will be terrible days (2 Tim. 3:1-5). But even in the worst of times, God will help those who call on Him. Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved, whenever (Acts 2:21)! Likewise, Acts 2:39 says there is no time limit on receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. This gift is for parents, their children, and those of every generation and race.

Wow! What good news this is to all. God is not biased. He has no favorites. He will pour out His Holy Spirit on all. Pentecost is for everyone. Those of any race, either sex, any age, any social level, any time may drink of His Spirit. Whosoever will may come! Welcome!

### B. Peter explained *why* Pentecost happened (Acts 2:22-36).

Acts 2:14-21 centered on the Holy Spirit. But Acts 2:22-36 focuses on Jesus. Peter tells the crowd four truths related to Jesus.

**First, God approved Jesus through miracles, wonders, and signs (Acts 2:22).** These are the three words used in the Bible for supernatural acts.

**Second, God allowed Jesus to be crucified by unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem (Acts 2:23).** God had planned for Jesus to die. But this does not lessen the guilt of those who crucified Him. We should note, however, that not all Jews are guilty of killing Jesus. The Bible never puts this guilt on the Jews in general. For example, look at Acts 13:27-29. There, in talking to Jews, Paul says “they,” not “you,” killed Jesus. Only the unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem were guilty of killing the Messiah.<sup>66</sup>

**Q 75** ➤ Are all Jews guilty of killing Jesus? Explain.

**Third, God raised Jesus from the dead (Acts 2:24-32).** Peter quotes David in Psalm 16:8-11. David prophesied about the Messiah’s resurrection. When Peter spoke, David was in his tomb in Jerusalem. Therefore, the people understood that David was not prophesying about himself. The Holy Spirit used this explanation and illustration to convict many.

**Fourth, God exalted Jesus and gave Him the Spirit to pour out (Acts 2:33-36).** Note the Trinity in Acts 2:33. The Father exalted the Son to sit at His right hand. This was the greatest place of power and honor. (In Christ, we are also seated at the right hand of God, Eph. 2:6.) Then the Father gave the promise of the Spirit to the Son (See John 16:7). Finally, the Son pours out the Spirit on us. The Father gave the promise. But Jesus is the One who baptizes us in the Spirit (John 1:33).

**Q 76** ➤ How does Acts 2:33 describe the Trinity?

### C. Peter explained *how* Pentecost can come to each person (Acts 2:37-41).

One preacher falsely taught that our relationship with God has two parts. He said our part is to get lost, and God’s part is to do the rest. But the Bible puts much responsibility on each person. Words like repent, be baptized, receive, and save yourselves emphasize what God commands us to do (Acts 2:38-40). Only those who ask, seek, and knock receive what God wants them to have. Peter spoke about two levels of blessing God desires for us.

**First, Peter spoke about salvation.** His message to the crowd caused guilt. His words were like a knife that cut their hearts (Acts 2:37). The Holy Spirit convicted them

**Q 77** ➤ Do you think guilt is good or bad? Explain.

of their sins (John 16:5-11). He caused them to feel guilty. Guilt from God is a gift. He sends guilt to stop us from traveling the path of sin.



Some turned away from God when they began to feel guilty. This was a terrible mistake. It is natural for a person who feels guilty to look down or turn away. Isaiah felt guilty, unclean, and afraid in God's presence (Isa. 6:1-5). Likewise, Peter felt guilty in the Lord's presence. Peter's first response was, "Go away from me, Lord; I am a sinful man!" (Luke 5:8). God knows we are sinful. But His desire is not to go away from us because of our sins. His great desire is to forgive and cleanse us. Jesus did not come to condemn us, but to save us (John 3:17). Therefore, we should never turn away from God when we feel guilty. Guilt is God's invitation to repent.

Others made the right decision. They turned toward God with their guilt. They asked, "Brothers, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). This is the question that all sinners should ask when they feel guilty. Peter had preached hard truth to them, but still called them brothers (Acts 2:29). Perhaps this helped them call the apostles brothers. We should always talk to others like they are brothers and sisters.

**Q 78** ➤ What step did Peter link with repentance?

**Q 79** ➤ Is it possible to face sin and God at the same time? Explain.

Peter told them to repent and be baptized (Acts 2:38). These are the two steps God commands sinners to take. Repentance means a change of mind. Those who repent change their minds about sin. They turn away from sin toward God. It is impossible to face sin and God at the same time. No person can face north and south at the same time. We must choose one or the other. Those who repent choose to face God and walk toward Him.



Two men were talking about their past sins. One man said, "If I could live my life over, I would do more of those sins." The other said, "If I could live my life over, I would avoid those sins." One man was still facing sin. The other had repented. He had changed his mind about sin. He had turned from sin toward God.

When we turn from sin toward God, we are facing the Savior. His name is called *Jesus* because He saves His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21). But we have a part in our salvation. What is it? We must choose to turn from sin toward Jesus (Acts 2:40). But only He can free us from the power and penalty of our sins.

After Jesus saves a person, that believer is ready for water baptism. Baptism is the first step of obedience after receiving Jesus as Savior. Water baptism was a big, radical step for Jews. Why? Because the Jews taught that water baptism was just for Gentiles. Jews were born Jews. Only Gentiles who wanted to become Jews were baptized. Thus John the Baptist shocked people. He told the Jews that they needed to repent and be baptized!<sup>67</sup> However, he refused to baptize people until *after* they repented (Matt. 3:5-10). Likewise, believers are baptized *after* they are born again.

Baptism is an outward picture of an inner experience. A believer is baptized to show his or her sins have been forgiven (Acts 2:38).<sup>68</sup> Baptism shows that the old, sinful life was buried with Christ. As Christ went down into the grave, believers bury their old life in water. Then, coming up out of the water shows we are rising with Christ to live a new, holy life (Rom. 6:1-4).

**Q 80** ➤ What is "the gift of the Holy Spirit"?

**Second, Peter talked to the crowd about receiving "the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).** There are five places in Acts that Luke refers to the baptism in the Spirit as a gift.

- Jesus told the disciples to "wait for *the gift my Father promised*" (Acts 1:4).
- Peter told Jews they would receive "*the gift of the Holy Spirit*" after they repented and were baptized (Acts 2:38).
- Peter rebuked Simon the former sorcerer. Simon wanted to buy the ability to impart "*the gift of God*" to others (Acts 8:18-20). Peter taught him that God's

gifts could not be bought or sold. They are free! Anyone who wants the gift of the baptism in the Spirit can have it. (Notice that believers in Samaria did not receive the gift of the Spirit until after they were baptized in water.)

- Peter was sure that *“the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God”* (Acts 10:45-46).
- Peter recalled that John baptized in water, but Jesus baptizes in the Holy Spirit. *“God gave them (the Gentiles) the same gift as he gave us (the Jews)”* (Acts 11:16).

Some Jews were offended when John the Baptist said they needed to be baptized. They said they were already children of Abraham (Matt. 3:9). But John’s baptism was not to make them Jews. It was because they had a need in their lives. Likewise, some believers today are offended when told they need to be baptized in the Spirit. They say they are already Christians. But the baptism in the Spirit is not to make people Christians. It is for those who are already believers. The apostles were already followers of Christ, but they needed the gift of the Spirit (Acts 1:4). The Samaritans had believed and been baptized in water. *Afterward*, they were baptized in the Spirit (Acts 8:15-16). Paul preached Jesus to twelve men in Ephesus. They were born again and baptized in water. *Afterward*, he prayed for them and they were filled with the Spirit and spoke in tongues (Acts 19:1-7). Every person needs to be baptized twice. *First*, repent, believe, and be baptized in water. *Then* seek to be baptized in the Spirit. Water baptism is for the outside of the body. Spirit baptism is our Father’s gift for us on the inside. Read Luke 11:9-13.

**Q 81** ➤ Does the baptism in the Spirit enable a person to become a Christian?

**Q 82** ➤ How does Luke 11:9-13 strengthen your faith?

Ask your Father for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Keep asking until you receive. Ask with a smile on your face and confidence in your heart. Earthly fathers give good gifts to their children who ask. How much more will He give the Holy Spirit to those who keep asking! He will give you the same gift that He gave the 120 at Pentecost! God does not show favoritism (James 1:5).

Come to Jesus to be baptized in the Spirit. *“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever”* (Heb. 13:8). He will change your weakness to witness.

Lesson

20

## The Promise Is for You (Acts 2:38-39)

**Goal:** Explain and follow 4 steps to receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

### Setting

Before Jesus left, He told His disciples to stay in Jerusalem.

<sup>4</sup>*On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. <sup>5</sup>For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit”* (Acts 1:4-5).

The disciples obeyed. They returned to Jerusalem and waited. On the Day of Pentecost they were together in an upper room. Suddenly, just as Jesus promised, the Holy Spirit came. They were all filled with the Spirit. They began to speak in languages they did not know as the Spirit enabled them. The 120 continued speaking in tongues as they went outside. A crowd began to gather. There were Jews in Jerusalem from many different nations. These scattered Jews had returned to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. Many became a part of God’s plan to spread the gospel.

The crowd witnessed the miracle of Pentecost. They were amazed and confused. How could the disciples speak languages they did not know? This still amazes us today!

There are two parts to this lesson. We will review Peter's message to the crowd. Then we will study how each believer can be baptized in the Holy Spirit.

### A. A review of Peter's message to the crowd (Acts 2:12-41)

Peter's message centered on two questions that the crowd asked.

**Q 83** ↗ In Acts 2:12, to what does the word "this" refer?

**Q 84** ↗ What was the answer to the question of Acts 2:12?

**Q 85** ↗ What does it mean today when a believer speaks in a new language?

**"What does this mean?" (Acts 2:12).** This was the *first* question of the crowd. They wanted to know why believers were speaking in new languages. Peter explained that the baptism in the Spirit was from God. He was the gift the Father had promised. He told the crowd that this miracle fulfilled a prophecy of the Old Testament (Acts 2:16). God made a promise through Joel. *"In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people"* (Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17).

The promise was for all. Young and old, male and female could receive. Everyone who called on the name of the Lord would be saved. And all could receive the gift of the baptism in the Spirit (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:17-21).

Peter continued answering their question. He preached good news to the people. Many of these people already knew about Jesus. They had seen the miracles, wonders, and signs that God did through Him (Acts 2:22). In God's plan, Jesus had been handed over to the unbelieving Jews. With the help of wicked men, they had nailed him to a cross. *"But God raised him from the dead"* (Acts 2:24). Then Jesus was exalted to the right hand of God. Peter declared that this same Jesus had received the promised Holy Spirit. Then Jesus had poured out the gift of the Spirit. That was what the crowd was seeing and hearing (Acts 2:32-33)!

Thus Peter answered their first question, *"What does this mean?"* Now, let us look at the second question of the crowd.

**"What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37).** Many accepted Peter's answer to their first question. Now they understood that God was pouring out His Spirit. They were convicted of their sins. And they wanted to receive the blessings God had planned for them. So they asked, *"What shall we do?"*

<sup>38</sup> 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. <sup>39</sup> The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call"* (Acts 2:38-39; see Isa. 44:3; 57:19).

For whom is this gift? Who can be baptized in the Spirit? Was it *only* for the apostles? No! This is not a gift only for a special class of people. God does not offer the gift to only a few "holy men." Peter said that the promise was for all. The promise of being filled with the Holy Spirit is not just for the apostles, or the 120. The promise was for the Jews, their children, their grandchildren, and those of every generation. God's promises are for all He calls, and God calls all. He wants all to be saved and filled. *"All"* includes *us!* The gift of the baptism in the Spirit is for anyone who wants it.



Imagine that I am standing in front of you with a gift. I say it is for you. I extend it for you to take. All you have to do is believe me, reach out, and take it! Likewise, God offers us the free gift of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. He wants to fill us with the Spirit's presence. But it is up to us to accept the gift. He offers salvation to all, but only a few take it. He offers the baptism in the Spirit to all. Are you ready to receive this gift?

### B. How to receive the gift of the baptism in the Holy Spirit

Let us consider four steps to being baptized in the Spirit.

**First, obey what Peter told the crowd (Acts 2:38).** Repent, receive Jesus as Savior, and be baptized in water. Have you been born again? If not, turn toward God now.

**Q 86** ↗ To whom does God offer the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:39)?

**Q 87** ↗ What 2 things did Peter say would come before the gift of the Spirit (Acts 2:38)?

Repent of your sins and accept God's forgiveness (1 John 1:9). Have you been baptized in water to show that your sins are forgiven? If not, then obey the Lord and be baptized in water. Baptism in water is important. It is the first act of obedience for a new believer. As we obey what God commands, it gives us confidence when we pray (1 John 3:21-22).

Should a person be baptized in the name of Jesus or in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit? *In the name of Jesus* means "upon the authority of Jesus." Luke does not say much about baptism. Sometimes he does not explain what was already clear to the early church. Comparing Acts 2:38 with Matthew 28:19 is helpful. Together, these verses give a more complete picture. Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize people into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This means we baptize people into the worship and service of God, the Trinity.<sup>69</sup>


**Second, look at what God promises about the baptism in the Spirit.** We need faith to receive this blessing from God. And faith comes by hearing God's Word (Rom. 10:17). What does the Bible say about the promise of the Spirit's fullness? Read Acts 2:33, 38-39; John 7:37-39; 14:16-17; and Luke 11:11-13.


Realize that the promise of the baptism in the Spirit is for you, right now!


**Third, ask and get ready to receive this precious gift the Father is offering you.** Luke 11:13 states that God will give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him. So ask! Pray something like, "Father, I believe your promises are true. I believe the gift of the Holy Spirit is for me, today, right now. By faith, I have already received your gift of salvation. Now by faith, I trust you to baptize me in the Holy Spirit. I expect that you will enable me to speak in a new language. I open my life to you. I reach out in faith to receive the gift of the baptism in the Holy Spirit. I thank you in the name of Jesus. Amen."


**Fourth, by faith do your part to receive this gift.** The story of Peter walking on the water illustrates the believer's part (Matt. 14:22-33). It took God's help for Peter to walk on the water toward Jesus. Likewise, only God can enable you to speak in a language you do not know. God is ready to do His part. But you also have a part in the miracle. Did Jesus force Peter to leave the security of the boat? Did Jesus pick up Peter's feet and cause him to step out onto the water? No! All Jesus did was invite Peter to walk to Him. Jesus invited Peter with one of God's favorite words, "Come" (Matt. 14:29). Then Peter's part was to use his feet and begin walking. The miracle was not that Peter walked. Peter was using his feet in the way he used them each day. Likewise, the miracle of speaking in tongues is not that you talk. You will talk with the same tongue and voice you use each day. It was Peter who took the steps. And it will be you who says the words. It was Peter's choice to start walking and his choice to stop walking. It is your choice to start talking and to stop talking. God will do His part, but you must do your part.

A believer called Albert sought for 3 years to be baptized in the Spirit. Many times he prayed, "Lord, I am ready. Baptize me in the Spirit. Begin speaking the new language." Albert thought Jesus would do the talking. He did not understand the difference in the Lord's part and his own part. Time after time Albert came to the Lord and said, "Go ahead, I am ready." But nothing happened. The Lord often put the new words and syllables into Albert's mind. Then He waited on Albert to start speaking. But Albert did not realize it was time to speak. Imagine two people playing a game like \*chess. They take turns. After one moves or takes a turn, it is the other person's turn to move. But nothing will happen if one of the players refuses to take his or her turn. They will just sit and look at each other! It took Albert 3 years to understand that his part was to speak! Then one glorious night he understood. He


**Q 88**  Has comparing Acts 2:38 and Matthew 28:19 helped you? Explain.

**Q 89**  Summarize the promises in Acts 2:38-39, John 7:37-39, and Luke 11:11-13.

**Q 90**  Summarize the first 3 steps toward receiving the gift of the Spirit.

**Q 91**  What is the believer's part in being baptized in the Spirit? Explain.



**Q 92**  Do you know people who had the same problem as Albert? Explain.



**Figure 5.16**  
Checkerboard with checkers on it

**Q 93** ➤ How is being baptized in the Spirit like walking on water?

quietly whispered the words that came to his mind.<sup>†</sup> Then he stopped. His mind did not understand the new words. They sounded strange, like a language he did not know. Albert turned away from analyzing the new language. He realized his mind could never understand this spiritual experience. As Paul said, “*For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful*” (1 Cor. 14:14). So Albert focused on Jesus and began again to speak in childlike faith. He spoke his words as praise offerings to God. Then he heard the Lord sigh and say to him, “Oh, so you finally believe me!” A great peace began to fill Albert as he prayed in the new language. He felt like he was being baptized in love. Alone in his room, he prayed in the new language for over an hour. It was as if a pure river of love was flowing through him. From that time forward his life was changed. He felt new love for old enemies. It became easier to follow Christ and live a holy life. No longer did living a Christian life seem like climbing a mountain. Also, the Spirit enabled him to conquer a bad habit in his life. Best of all, he became a more powerful witness for Jesus.

After Jesus puts new words or syllables in your mind, it is your turn! Speak them out in faith! Whisper the new words or shout them as loudly as you desire. The voice and the choice are yours. Jesus invited Peter to come to Him on the water. The next step was up to Peter. It was Peter’s turn. Nothing could happen until Peter picked up his foot and stepped away from the boat. You will be baptized in the Spirit only when you begin to speak.

It took faith for Peter to take the first step. On the one hand, he was stepping from the known to the unknown. This was scary! On the other hand, he was stepping from the known to the known. This was easy. Why? Because he was stepping toward the Jesus he knew. This was the key to Peter’s faith. He was able to take a step of faith because he focused on Jesus. Jesus is the author and perfecter of our faith (Heb. 12:2). Likewise, you will receive the faith you need to speak in a new language as you focus on Jesus!

You can trust Jesus. Remember, if you ask Him for a fish, He will not give you a snake (Luke 11:11). Jesus will give you the faith you need as you keep your eyes on Him. The Holy Spirit will enable you to speak in a new language (Acts 2:4). And Jesus will baptize you in the Spirit as you speak the words the Spirit brings to your mind.

Those who are baptized in the Spirit receive the same gift that the Father gave to the first believers. Also, they join a group of over 520 million Charismatic and Pentecostal believers.<sup>70</sup> Millions around the world will testify that this precious gift from God is the key to witnessing for Jesus. Pray in tongues daily as you enjoy the fullness of the Spirit in your life. Praying in the Spirit will build you up spiritually (1 Cor. 14:4; Jude 20).

<sup>†</sup> Sometimes believers speak forth the language of the Spirit without thinking about the words. In these cases the language seems to completely bypass the mind.



**Test Yourself:** Circle the letter by the **best** completion to each question or statement.

1. According to Luke, the Lord's last command to His disciples was to
  - a) *love one another.*
  - b) *go and make disciples of all nations.*
  - c) *wait for the gift my Father promised.*
  - d) *go into all the world and preach.*
2. The One who baptizes believers in the Holy Spirit is
  - a) the Father.
  - b) the Son.
  - c) the Spirit.
  - d) the local pastor.
3. A key to receiving the blessing of Pentecost is
  - a) sacrifice.
  - b) obedience.
  - c) good deeds.
  - d) location.
4. Believers should seek to be filled with the Spirit because
  - a) church leaders encourage them.
  - b) the Scriptures guide us this way.
  - c) other believers have been filled.
  - d) Satan does not want this for us.
5. The chapters in Acts about believers being filled with the Spirit are
  - a) 1, 2, 6, 10, and 26.
  - b) 2, 8, 9, 10, and 19.
  - c) 2, 7, 11, 13, and 15.
  - d) 2, 11, 15, 21, and 26.
6. The main reason we value speaking in tongues is
  - a) history records it.
  - b) believers practice it.
  - c) the Bible teaches it.
  - d) the mind despises it.
7. The Holy Spirit enters a person when that person is
  - a) born into the world.
  - b) born again.
  - c) baptized in water.
  - d) filled with the Spirit.
8. In pouring out the Spirit, God promised He would
  - a) favor adults more than children.
  - b) honor men more than women.
  - c) give the poor the first chance.
  - d) bless those in all nations.
9. A passage that helps give faith to receive the Spirit's fullness is
  - a) Acts 4:2-5.
  - b) John 3:16-18.
  - c) Luke 11:11-13.
  - d) Acts 12:1-4.
10. An event that illustrates the believer's part in the Spirit-baptism is
  - a) Philip's preaching in Samaria.
  - b) Peter's walking on the water.
  - c) Stephen's glowing like an angel.
  - d) Ananias's searching for Paul.



**Essay Test Topics:** Write 50-100 words on each of these goals that you studied in this chapter. (9 points each, and 1 point for good spelling).

- Analyze the purpose and the evidence of being baptized in the Spirit.
- Evaluate at least 5 reasons why speaking in an unknown tongue is valuable.
- Answer 10 questions people ask related to being filled with the Spirit.
- Analyze the command, the gift, and the Baptizer in Acts 1.
- Explain the plan, the place, the power, and the purpose of witnessing. Relate these to self and others.
- Identify and do 3 things that precede being filled with the Spirit.
- Explain what happened at Pentecost, why it happened, and how it can happen to each believer.
- Explain and follow 4 steps to receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit.