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THE LANTERN
a discipleship course on basic bible truths

A Note From Your Pastors

The Lantern Discipleship Course was originally produced as the Foundations Discipleship Course by a team of men associated with Grace Church of Mentor, in Mentor, Ohio. These men have graciously given us permission to produce The Lantern using their material as a starting point and then adding in some material specific to our local ministry here at Lighthouse Baptist Church of Edmonton, Alberta. Our special thanks go out to these men for the hours of work poured into this material. Chapters 1-12 represent the work of these men with minor edits and changes. Chapters 13-14 are added material that more specifically represent the positions of our local church.

We are trusting that God will use this discipleship course to point you to the truths of God's Word in an easy and accessible way so that we can fulfill the part of the great commission for the church that commands us to "teach them to observe all things, whatsoever I have commanded you." Whether you are new to Christianity, or just new to Lighthouse Baptist Church, we think it is important that you get an introductory crash course on some of the basic teachings of the Bible that form the basis for our ministry. Completing this course is a big commitment. It will involve a minimum of 14 weeks of homework. But don't think of it as a chore or a duty because you will be guided by this course into the pages of scripture – God's Holy Word! This book is filled with the person, character, and wisdom of God and it will have a profound impact on your life if you let it. So while we warn you to take the commitment of this course seriously, we also encourage you to get excited and expect great things from God, knowing and trusting that He will use His Word in your life - through this course - to accomplish incredible things for His glory!

Along with the Apostle Paul, it is our prayer "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead..." (Eph. 1:17-20a)

~ The Pastors of Lighthouse Baptist Church of Edmonton

*(Here is an excerpt from the original forward,
to express our gratitude to the original authors of this work)*

Foreword

These studies bear the “fingerprints” of the entire staff of Grace Church and its branch churches. Pastors Robert Potter and Tim Potter initially had the burden and vision for the studies. Pastor Chris Anderson carried out the writing process. Pastors David Cannon, Greg Habegger, Kent Hobi and Todd Nye assisted with editing, and countless others made recommendations and corrections that were extremely helpful. The combined pastoral staff agreed on the final content. It was our aim to produce a discipleship series that is biblically astute and theologically accurate, yet easily understood. We recognize that the studies will be beneficial only to the extent that they prompt believers to study and apply God’s inspired and sufficient Word (II Timothy 3:16).

Ours is a day in which an increasing number of professing Christians are biblically illiterate. We pray that the Lord will use this series as one step in correcting that problem. It is our hope for individuals that these studies will help you to become grounded in the basic, life-changing truths of Scripture. It is our hope for churches that these studies will be a useful tool in your discipleship ministries. For us, they have especially filled a void in our efforts to follow-up with new converts, enabling us to be as aggressive and effective in our edification as in our evangelism.

May the Lord be magnified!

~ The Pastoral staff of Grace Church of Mentor, Ohio.



THE LANTERN

Chapter 1 – Salvation
God's Gift to You

Chapter 2 – Eternal Security
Your Relationship With God

Chapter 3 – Confession
Your Fellowship With God

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Your Remembrance of Jesus Christ

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Chapter 13 – "Baptist?"
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Chapter 14 – "Fundamentalist?"
Defending the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith

Did you know that the Bible has a lot to say about you? It does! Although it doesn't mention you by name, it does have something to say about every member of the human race, including you. It contains some good news, some bad news, and some great news. Let's start with the good news.

I. YOU AND GOD

Scripture is unlike any other book. It is not primarily a history book. Nor is it a rulebook. It is far more than a “roadmap” for life. Scripture is first and foremost the self-revelation of God. It is God’s autobiography – His communication to mankind about Himself. Therefore, it is appropriate to begin this series of Bible studies with several foundational truths about God:

- ♦ God is eternal – without start or end (Psalm 90:2).
- ♦ God is absolutely holy – He is set apart from everything that exists; there is no other like Him (Isaiah 6:3).
- ♦ God is completely sinless and cannot allow sin in His presence (Habakkuk 1:13).
- ♦ God is all-powerful (Psalm 86:10).
- ♦ Thankfully, God is also good (Psalm 86:5).
- ♦ God is absolutely just – everything He does is right (Psalm 145:17).
- ♦ God is love (I John 4:8).

Scripture assumes God’s existence and reveals Him to be the Creator of everything that exists. Acknowledging God as the Creator of all is essential to everything else Scripture teaches. Read **Genesis 1:1**. This is the first verse of the Bible. What does it say?

According to **Genesis 1:27**, from where did you come?

Although it is commonly taught today that mankind is the result of countless years of evolution, Scripture teaches clearly and repeatedly that “all things were made by him (Christ); and without him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:3).

Psalm 19:1 tells us that the heavens and all of creation “declare the glory of God.” **Romans 1:20** concurs, saying that creation teaches two key lessons about God: that He exists and that He is powerful. It concludes by saying that those who reject God and His creative power are “without _____.”

The Bible’s teaching that you are created by God is not intended merely to solve the question of man’s origin. Rather, it has two implications that are very great for you personally:

1) Because God made you, you are accountable to Him!

If you were merely the product of “chance” as evolution teaches, you would be your own master. You would be answerable to no one. But because you are a creature, you must give an account of your life to your Creator. The Bible records that time of judgment in

Revelation 20:11-15 and refers to it as the Great White Throne. According to verse 12, both “the small and great” will appear before God to be judged. Who does that indicate will give answer to God?

PRINCIPLE

Because God created you,
you will one day appear
before Him
to be judged.

What does **Hebrews 9:27** say to reinforce this fact?

2) Because God made you, He owns you!

Colossians 1:16 teaches “by him (Christ) were all things created, that are in heaven and in earth.” It concludes by saying that “all things were created _____ him and _____ him.”

“The Chief End of Man”

The Shorter Westminster Catechism – a statement of Bible doctrine that has been especially useful for the instruction of new believers since the 17th century – asks students the purpose of God in creation: *“What is the chief end of man?”* The pupils respond with an answer that is biblically accurate and personally challenging: *“Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever.”* Not only did God make you, He made you for Himself!

Read **Revelation 4:11**, a record of the worship of Christ in heaven. Why is God worthy to receive worship – “glory and honor and power”?

Why did God create you?

God wants to have fellowship with you and know you. Read the Bible’s account of creation in Genesis 1-3. As far back as the garden of Eden, God’s pleasure was to walk and talk with His creatures (Genesis 3:8). Just as God was with Adam and Eve in the garden, He wants you to be with Him in Heaven forever...that’s the good news. Sadly, Adam and Eve broke their fellowship with God when they sinned (Genesis 3:6). Because of their sin, you are now born a sinner (Romans 5:12; Psalm 51:5). That’s the bad news.

Principle

God loves you and created you to glorify Him.

II. YOU AND SIN

You are not only a sinner by birth – you are a sinner by choice. Explain **Romans 3:10-11** in your own words.

Now read **Romans 3:23**. How many people have sinned? _____

I John 3:4 defines sin as breaking God’s law. What is God’s law?

Give some examples of sin.

It is popular today to say that man is “basically good.” Yet, Scripture teaches that every man, woman and child is a sinner. How does **Jeremiah 17:9** describe the condition of your heart?

Principle

You are a sinner, by both birth and by choice.

Isaiah 53:6 summarizes the sinfulness of all men as intentional and determined rebellion against God. Like sheep, we have each “gone astray” from God and chosen our “own way” rather than His way.

The fact that you’ve sinned is bad news, but it gets worse. Read the following verses and explain what they teach about the effects of sin:

Isaiah 59:2 -

Revelation 21:27 (*Hint: this verse is talking about heaven*)

Romans 6:23 is a very important verse regarding you and your sin. It says that “the wages of sin is death.” What is a wage?

According to **Romans 6:23**, because you sin, what do you deserve?

The Bible speaks of two deaths. The first is physical death. God promised Adam and Eve that if they sinned, they would “surely die,” and they did, eventually (Genesis 2:17). This is the sense in which we usually think of death.

Far worse than the first death, however, is the second. It is spiritual, eternal death. How does the Bible describe the second death in **Revelation 20:14-15** and **21:8**?

Hell is temporary, but...

Revelation 20:14 says that hell will one day be cast into the lake of fire. Hell is a terrible but temporary place of judgment where sinners await the Great White Throne. It could be compared to a county jail where criminals await trial. However, following the “trial” of sinners at the Great White Throne, they will be cast with hell into the lake of fire – a place of eternal torment. Those who go to hell at their death will be punished in the lake of fire for eternity.

The truth of eternal damnation is hard for most people to swallow, but the Bible teaches that everyone who has sinned deserves to be punished for that sin forever in the lake of fire. Many people think that hell and the lake of fire are just for men like Hitler or Charles Manson. But the Bible says that hell is not just for murderers; it is for sinners! The fact is, because you sin, you deserve to be punished for eternity in the lake of fire. That is not just bad news – it is terrible.

Many people try to compensate for their sin by doing good works. They reason that if they do more good things than bad, they’ll go to heaven. The problem is that Scripture teaches that no one can earn heaven. **Romans 6:23** teaches that eternal life (with God in heaven) is a “gift.” Can you earn a gift? _____

Principle

Sin separates you from God and makes you deserving of the lake of fire.

Read Ephesians 2:8-9. The Bible teaches that salvation is by grace (undeserved kindness) through faith (trust in God). What does verse 9 say? What does it mean?

What are some things that people do to try to earn heaven?

So far the news has been very bad. We all have sinned. Because of that sin, we deserve judgment. Further, there is nothing we can do to earn salvation. If that were all that Scripture said, it would be a tragic book. Thankfully, it goes on. The Bible says that God made a way for you and all other sinners to avoid the lake of fire. You deserve hell, but you don't have to go there... that's the great news!

III. YOU AND JESUS

The Bible has much to say about who Jesus is:

- ◆ He is eternal (John 1:1, 2).
- ◆ He is God (John 1:1).
- ◆ He is the _____ (John 1:3).
- ◆ He became "flesh" (John 1:14). What do you think that means?
- ◆ He is absolutely sinless (Hebrews 4:15).

Romans 5:8 teaches something else about Jesus. It says that He loves us, His creatures. How did He demonstrate His love for us?

Most people know that Jesus died, but very few understand why He died. **1 Peter 3:18** answers that question:

- ◆ It says that "Christ suffered once for sins." When did He do that?
-

- ♦ Scripture teaches that Jesus never sinned, so for whose sins did He die?

- ♦ I Peter 3:18 teaches that Christ died, “the just for the unjust.” Who is the “just” (righteous) One? _____

Who are the “unjust” (unrighteous) ones?

Don't miss this important point: Jesus (the righteous One) died for you (the unrighteous one). He was your substitute. He paid the penalty that you deserve! Remember Romans 6:23. Because of sin, you deserve death. Jesus paid that penalty by dying on the cross! Instead of you paying for your sins in the lake of fire, Jesus suffered death one time on Calvary. He paid for your sins!

Principle

Because of His great love, God sent Jesus Christ to die on the cross as your substitute.

Now look back at **I Peter 3:18**. “For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, _____
_____.”

(Note: This quotation is taken from the King James Version.)

What great news! Jesus died to pay for your sins so that you can avoid hell and enjoy heaven with Him!

Guilty...yet free!

The story is told of two brothers who immigrated to the U.S. from China in the early 1900's. The older began his new life by getting a job and a house. The younger, however, was determined to “enjoy” his new freedom. He spent his days and nights drinking and gambling. One fateful night he began fighting with a man who had accused him of cheating. In his drunken state, the younger brother drew a knife and murdered the man. He knew that if he were caught he would be hung. He fled to his brother's home.

The police began to search from house to house, looking for the murderer. As the older brother entered his home, he found a pile of bloodstained clothes. Immediately he knew what his brother had done. A few moments later, the police approached the home, only to find the older brother wearing the bloody clothes. Throughout his questioning and trial he remained silent. He eventually died for a crime he didn't commit, motivated by love for his brother. He died as a substitute, the innocent for the guilty, a very small picture of the death that Christ suffered for you.

Though innocent, Christ died for the sins of others.

Though guilty, the sinner may be free, ransomed by his Substitute's blood.

IV. YOU AND YOUR SIN

The Bible teaches that you will live somewhere forever – either in heaven or the lake of fire. Jesus died to allow you to go to heaven. Although people teach that there are many ways to heaven, the Bible teaches that there is only one. Read **John 14:6** to find out what it is.

Jesus is offering a tremendous gift: freedom from hell and eternity in heaven. Sadly, many people reject Jesus and His offer of salvation. Instead of rejecting Christ, **John 1:12** instructs you to “receive” Him. The key question is this: How can you receive Jesus Christ and His gift of salvation?

There are two simultaneous aspects to receiving Christ:

1. You must repent of your sins.

You have offended God by sinning. You now need to turn from that sin and to God – that is what Scripture calls repentance. It is not cleaning up or reforming yourself. Remember, you cannot earn heaven. Instead, repentance is changing your mind about God and sin. It is desiring God instead of your sin.

C. S. Lewis puts it this way:

*“Fallen man is not simply an imperfect creature
who needs improvement:
he is a rebel who must lay down his arms ...
This process of surrender...is what Christians call repentance.”¹*

What does **Acts 3:19** require for your sins to be forgiven?

I Thessalonians 1:9 defines repentance and conversion as “turning to _____, from _____.”

Indeed, the very move toward Christ demands a move away from sin and idols. Christ wants to replace your old way of life. He will not be merely added to it.

According to **Matthew 1:21**, from what does Jesus save you?

There are some people who believe they are forgiven, yet have never turned from sin. They believe that they have the best of both worlds: they can “bear hug” their sin and refuse to let it go, then they can go to heaven. Yet, according to **Matthew 1:21**, Christ saves His people from sin, not just hell. Anyone who has not repented of his sin has not been saved! **That is not to say that a saved man will not struggle with sin.** However, a saved man has “changed his mind” about sin. He may struggle with it, but he won’t relish it.

Isaiah 55:7 gives a clear picture of repentance. Explain it in your own words.

If you have not yet turned from your wicked way, you have not yet been saved!

¹ C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1952), 59.

2. You must trust in Jesus Christ alone.

John 3:16 is probably the most well known verse of the Bible. It teaches that you must believe in Jesus. That means more than just acknowledging that He lived and died. The Bible word ‘believe’ means to be convinced, to trust or to place your faith in someone.

Principle
Your only hope of salvation is to repent of your sins and trust Jesus Christ as your personal Savior.

You must realize that Jesus is your only hope of going to heaven and place your faith completely in Him. Not Jesus *and* good works...not Jesus *and* baptism...not Jesus *and* church...Jesus alone.

Two sides of the same coin...

Faith and repentance cannot be separated. Genuine faith includes repentance, and genuine repentance includes faith. Think of it this way...

Your Way ← Heart God’s Way

Isaiah 55:7 pictures you as a rebel who insists on going your own way, the exact opposite of God’s way. It then instructs you to “forsake” your way (repentance) and “return” to the Lord (faith).

Your Way Heart → God’s Way

*In order to be saved, you must turn to God and from sin.
If you have not turned from your own way, you have not turned to Christ.*

In **Acts 16:30**, a sinful man asks the Apostle Paul and Silas a vital question: “What must I do to be saved?” What was their simple answer in **Acts 16:31**?

Read **John 3:36**. Notice that the Bible divides all of humanity into two groups – there is no middle ground. How do the two groups respond to

Christ?

What happens to each of these groups?

You obviously don't want to be the object of God's wrath. What do **Romans 10:9** and **13** require of you to be saved?

Once you have trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, it is essential that you mature in your relationship with Christ.

Principle

God promises eternal life to all who receive Jesus Christ as Savior. The only way to "call upon the name of the Lord" is to speak to Him in prayer. Many have asked Jesus Christ to be their Savior. According to **John 5:13**, those people know that they have eternal life. Do you have that assurance? If you have never trusted Jesus as your Savior, you can do it now, right where you are.

In a simple prayer, acknowledge to God...

- that you are a sinner.
- Tell Him of your desire to turn from that sin, and ask for His forgiveness.
- Thank Him for sending Jesus to die for your sins,
- and ask Jesus to be your personal Savior and to give you the gift of eternal life.

Here are some key steps in that direction:

1) Although you are a Christian, you will still struggle with sin. Sin will not remove you from God's family, but it will remove you from fellowship with God. Fellowship must be restored by confessing sin

directly to God as soon as you are aware of it. This matter will be dealt with in greater detail in Chapter 3, so keep going!

2) Begin reading your Bible. Start with the book of John or Matthew. Make notes of who Jesus is, what He did, and what He has done for you. The importance of immersing yourself in the Word of God will be addressed in Chapter 5.

3) Get involved in a church that faithfully preaches the Bible. The importance of being committed to a godly church will be covered in Chapter 7.

4) Begin memorizing God's Word on your own. Memorizing Scripture will help you to better understand it, will prepare you to share it with others, and will help protect you from error and sin.

Here are some verses to start on:

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

John 3:16

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

What are the three most significant lessons that you have learned in this Bible study? Why are they important?

1)



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*Does being a Christian mean that you will never sin again?
If you do commit a sin, are you still saved?
Do you need to be saved again each time you sin?*

These are important questions, and the Bible gives clear answers. The Bible teaches time and time again that once you are a Christian, you are eternally secure – that is, you cannot lose your salvation. As it is often stated, “once saved, always saved.” Work through this study to find out what the Bible says about Christians, sin and eternal security.

The Bible teaches that the salvation you received at the moment you repented of your sins and trusted in Christ is irrevocable (can’t be taken back). This vital doctrine is called “Eternal Security.” Once you have been saved from sin by grace and through faith, you are eternally secure. You cannot be lost. Eternal security is indeed a foundational doctrine, and it is supported by the entirety of Scripture.

When you trusted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, a lot of things changed, and they changed permanently. You were hopeless and lost before you trusted Christ, but now...

I. YOU ARE SAVED BY GRACE

Ephesians 2:8-9 were discussed in Chapter 1 regarding your salvation. They apply also to your security. Verse 8 states that you “are” saved by grace – not “were.” It is a present tense verb, indicating that the salvation which you received by grace – God’s undeserved favor – you continue in by grace.

Amazing Grace!

John Newton wrote the following words in his hymn,
Amazing Grace:

“Tis grace that brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.”

You became saved by Christ’s work, not your own. Similarly, you remain saved by Christ’s work, not your own.

Read **Galatians 3:3**. How did you enter God’s family – by faith (“the Spirit”) or your own effort (“the flesh”)?

So how will you remain in God’s family and “mature” (*which is what the old English of the King James Version of the Bible calls, “to be made perfect”*) – by faith or by your own effort? _____

<p style="text-align: center;">II. YOU ARE IN GOD’S FAMILY</p>

Read **John 1:12-13**. What right (or “power”) did Jesus give you when you received Him as your Savior?

What strict qualification must you meet to enter into Christ’s kingdom, according to **John 3:3**?

Nicodemus had a good question in the next verse: How can a man be born twice? Jesus explained what it means to be “born again” in **John 3:5-7**. Your first birth was physical. When did that happen?

Your second birth was spiritual. When did that happen?

When you received Jesus Christ, you became a child of God – you were born into His family! God is your Heavenly Father!

Is the parent-child relationship temporary or permanent?

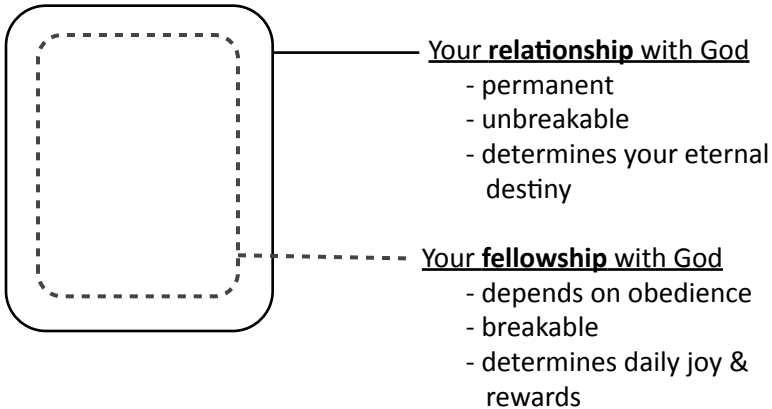
Once you become God’s child, you are His child forever.

Here's an illustration:

As you grew up, did you ever make your father or mother angry by disobeying them? When you did, were you still their child?

You still had a relationship with them – you didn't have to go to the courthouse downtown and become adopted! You are their child regardless of what you do. Your **relationship** was unchanged, but your **fellowship** was broken – you weren't as close as you had been. The same is true of your relationship with your Heavenly Father. When you sin, you are still His child – that's your relationship. But you aren't close to Him – that's your broken fellowship.

Perhaps a picture will help explain:



You have a relationship with God – you became part of His family the moment you were saved. You are secure in Him! Though your sin hurts your fellowship with God, your relationship as His child is eternal and unchanging.

III. YOU ARE IN CHRIST

The Bible teaches that when you trust Jesus as your Savior you gain a new position: you are in Christ. You are intimately joined to Christ. Since you are in Christ, you have the same position and privileges before God that Christ does!

Romans 8:1 says that because you are “in Christ” you will not face

_____.

That means that you will not be condemned for your sins. Christ already paid for them!

I Corinthians 15:22 says that though you were dead before salvation, in Christ you have been _____.

II Corinthians 5:17 says that you are a _____.
The second half of the verse lists the practical results of your new birth. What are they?

Romans 5:1 says that when you put your faith in Christ as your Savior you were “justified.” That means that at that moment God declared you to be righteous.

Romans 4:11, 23-24 teaches that at the moment of salvation, Jesus’ righteousness was “imputed” to you – meaning that it was counted for your credit. Although you continue to struggle with sin (in your practice - practically), God now sees you as being as righteous as Jesus Christ (in your position or status - legally). Why? Because you are in Christ!

As Good As Done!

Romans 8:30 uses several words to describe God’s work of salvation on your behalf. One of them is “glorified,” and it describes the condition of those in heaven who are free from sin, disease and death. The verse says that God has already glorified you (past tense)!!

In other words, in God’s eyes your salvation and glorification in heaven are so certain that He describes it as already having occurred!

You are eternally secure!

IV. YOU ARE KEPT BY THE POWER OF GOD

Throughout church history, the matter of eternal security has been addressed from two different perspectives:

1. Perseverance - is the teaching that genuine believers will all persevere (*endure, or stay true*) until they are with Christ in heaven. Read **I John 2:19**. It teaches that those who don't "persevere/endure" do not *lose* their salvation. Rather, they prove that they never were believers to begin with. In other words, the true condition of their hearts (unsaved) comes out in their lives and they fall away from Christianity.

2. Preservation - is an even stronger argument. Its focus is not on the Christian's faithfulness, but on God's faithfulness. It is the teaching that God will preserve all who are genuinely saved. According to **I Peter 1:5**, you do not keep your salvation by human effort. Rather you are "kept by the _____ of _____."

Read **John 6:37-40**. Christ teaches that He will not lose any that the Father has given him. Similarly, Paul says in **II Timothy 1:12** that He knows that Christ is able to "keep" the thing committed to him until His return – Paul's salvation. Now read **Jude 24**. It teaches that God is "able to _____ you from _____, and to present you faultless" in heaven. The question is not whether you could lose your salvation...it is whether God could lose you!

If it were up to you to keep yourself saved you would be in big trouble. Thankfully, God has made "keeping" you Christ's responsibility. You are perfectly secure!

Read **John 10:27-29**. In verse 27, what does Jesus call those who have received Him as their Savior?

How do saved people prove that they belong to Him (v. 27)?

Jesus gives 3 promises in verse 28. What are they?

1. _____.
2. _____.
3. _____.

What promise does Jesus make in verse 29?

Is God able to keep you? _____ Is He willing? _____

What important promise did Jesus make in John 6:37?

V. YOU ARE IN GOD'S LOVE

Romans 8:35-39 are comforting verses for the Christian. What question is asked in v. 35?

What difficulties are mentioned in v. 35-36?

What answer is given in v. 37 to the question of verse 35?

List all of the things in v. 38-39 that cannot separate us from God's love.

Jeremiah 31:3 describes God's love as "everlasting." What does that mean?

Can you lose your salvation? Only if God stops loving you, and Scripture says that is impossible.

VI. GOD'S SPIRIT IS IN YOU

So far, we have learned that you are saved by grace, in God's family, in Christ, kept by the power of God and in His love. Scripture also teaches that God is in you! Read **I Corinthians 3:16**. What does it call you?

In the Old Testament, God lived in the Tabernacle (a portable, tent-like place of worship). He later lived in the Temple, the permanent place of worship in Jerusalem. Of course, technically God is everywhere (omnipresent), but the Tabernacle and Temple were His special dwelling places among His people – to show that He was with them. Now, God's special dwelling place is *in* His people...including you!

Some people believe that the Holy Spirit lives only in obedient Christians or that He comes into Christians who desire Him enough, but the Bible teaches that He lives in all Christians from the very instant they are saved. Read **I Corinthians 3:1**. How does God describe the people in the church of Corinth?

The word "carnal" means "fleshly." Though saved, the Corinthian Christians were disobedient. Yet, just 15 verses later, God calls them the "temple of God." Do you lose the Holy Spirit and your salvation when you sin? _____

Read **Ephesians 1:13-14**. Verse 14 says that the Holy Spirit is the "earnest of our inheritance." When you purchase a home you put down earnest money (or a down payment). What does the earnest signify?

In the same way, God gave His Spirit to you as an earnest – it is His

promise that he will complete the rest of the transaction. You are assured that your eternity in heaven (inheritance) is settled. In fact, verse 13 says that you have been “sealed” by the Spirit, like a letter from a king whose contents are secured with the king’s seal.

VII. GOD’S LIFE IS IN YOU

Throughout Scripture God promises life to those who have received Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Have you repented of your sin and asked Jesus to be your Savior?

If so, **John 5:24** is one of God’s many promises to you. What does it promise?

According to Scripture, those who trust in Christ have eternal life (John 3:16, 36). Eternal life does not become yours when you die – you already own it now if you’ve trusted Christ.

VIII. YOU ARE A NEW CREATURE

This point is an important safeguard of the doctrine of eternal security. Some who criticize this teaching argue that it might lead to a life of sin because the Christian has no fear of losing his salvation. Such belief that eternal security is “dangerous” is based in reason, not Scripture. Charles Spurgeon responded aptly to this groundless charge: *“The question is, is it in the Bible? If it is there let none of us ever say it is dangerous.”*²

In **II Corinthians 5:17**, Paul states that the Christian is a “_____.” The results of the new birth are evident in everyday life as “old things _____” and all things are become _____.” A genuine believer doesn’t want to _____

² Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *Spurgeon’s Sermons* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), vol. X.

sin! He has no desire to return to the bondage from which Christ delivered him. Does your life demonstrate that type of change?

It is true that there are some who claim to be saved, yet continue without visible consequences or regrets in their sin.

What about them? **1 John 2:19** provides the answer. Those who appear to fall away *“went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest [that it might be proven] that they were not all of us.”* Those who continue in sin with no sign of “new creature living” are not saved, nor have they lost their salvation. Rather, they never were saved. Indeed, John teaches that true Christians will “no doubt continue.” That’s the perseverance of the saints!

IX. DEALING WITH FACTS, FAITH & FEELINGS

There may be times when you don’t feel saved. Such lack of assurance³ may be caused by sin you’ve allowed to be part of your life. It may be Satan’s attempt to discourage you. Whatever the cause of doubt, you must remember that ***your salvation is not based on how you feel***. It is based on the facts of God’s Word. Your responsibility is to respond to God in faith based on Bible fact regardless of how you feel.

The facts are that you are saved by grace. You are now in God’s family. You are in Christ. You are in God’s hand and love. His Spirit and life are in you. You are a new creature. God has promised that He won’t cast you out.

What do we learn about God from **Titus 1:2**?

³ It is important to distinguish the objective and unchanging security of the believer with subjective assurance of salvation. Assurance refers to your confidence and certainty that you are saved. Although assurance of salvation is important and grounded in Scriptural teaching (such as Romans 8:16), security is based in objective fact, not subjective experience.

How does that description of God prove you cannot lose your salvation? _____

The belief that you can lose your salvation – one point of a theology called Arminianism – is not a minor issue. It is believed by millions. Its implications for individuals are obvious. However, its implications for Bible doctrine are also great. The stakes are very high:

1. This false teaching has a low view of salvation,

It teaches that you receive eternal life by grace, but keep it by works (contrary to Galatians 3:2-3). In reality, it amounts to works salvation. The result of such teaching is the pride condemned in Ephesians 2:9.

2. This false teaching has a low view of sin.

Many who teach that you lose your salvation by sin also teach – of necessity – that it is possible to live a life entirely free from sin (contrary to all of Scripture and the experience of the Apostle Paul in Romans 7). To justify the belief that one can be sinless, they often redefine or minimize sin. They boast of not being drunkards, adulterers or liars, but they neglect sins of the heart such as anger, pride and lust. No one who correctly understands the holiness of God would presume to be called sinless himself.

“If ever it should come to pass
That sheep of Christ could fall away,
My fickle, feeble soul, alas,
Would fall a thousand times a day.”

~ C.H. Spurgeon ⁴

3. This false teaching has a low view of God.

It teaches that God would bestow a gift, then change His mind (contrary to Romans 11:29). It teaches that He would exact punishment for one sinner two times (contrary to Hebrews 1:3 and I Peter 3:18). It makes him fickle.

Read **Malachi 3:6**. Here God states the reason why He did not “consume” (or destroy) Israel, though they certainly deserved it. What reason does He give for His continuing mercy?

⁴Charles Haddon Spurgeon, Spurgeon’s Sermons, vol. X, p. 23.

“For I am the LORD, I _____.”

God’s preservation of His people had more to do with His character than theirs. Similarly, your security as a Christian does not rest in your performance. Instead, it rests in the unchanging Word of God and in His character.

4. This false teaching has a low view of Christ.

It teaches that although He died for sin, His death is inadequate to pay for all sins (contrary to I John 1:7) and insufficient to satisfy God’s justice (contrary to I John 2:1-2 and Isaiah 53:11).

John **19:30** tells of Christ’s sixth cry from the cross. It was a declaration of victory: “It is _____!” That glorious phrase comes from one single Greek word: *tetelestai*.⁵ It is a word used to describe a payment or purchase, and it means that the account in question has been “paid in full.” So Christ paid in full for your sins. No more payment is required. It is finished. For God to require two payments (one by Christ and one by you) would be unjust.

Consider this: when Christ died for your sins nearly 2000 years ago, how many sins had you committed?

All of your sins were yet in the future, including those you committed yesterday, today, and even tomorrow. Yet, according to I John 1:7, how many of them are washed away by Christ’s blood? _____ (including those you have not yet committed.)

⁵ Grammatically, *tetelestai* is a **perfect passive indicative**. Though that fact may seem like a technicality, it is very important for the following reasons:

- The **perfect tense** means that it “has been” finished. It happened in the past, but its results continue today.
- The **passive voice** means that our salvation was accomplished by someone else. Christ finished it, not us!
- The **indicative mood** means that it is a certainty, not merely a possibility.

In the words of Charles Wesley,

*“Love’s redeeming work is done,
Hallelujah!
Fought the fight, the battle won,
Hallelujah!”*

Finally, **I John 2:1** contains a very strong proof of eternal security, and it is found in the person and work of Jesus Christ. Although God’s desire is that you “sin not,” He has also provided an “advocate” or representative for us when we do sin. Who is it? _____

Furthermore, Christ is called the “propitiation” for our sins in v. 2. That means that He has already satisfied God’s wrath on our sin by dying on the cross. As stated earlier, Christ bore God’s punishment for your sins...even those you have yet to commit.

CONCLUSION

It is essential that you put the issue of eternal security to rest in your mind. First, be certain that you have indeed trusted Christ. Then, make sure that your lifestyle indicates the change befitting a “new creature.” Compare your life with the tests of salvation listed in the letter of I John. In the words of II Peter 1:10, “give diligence to make your calling and election sure.” Lewis Sperry Chafer provides this warning: the Bible offers “no divine promise of keeping for the mere professor who does not truly believe.”⁶

Once you have placed your faith in Christ alone, rest in Him. As long as you doubt your salvation, your insecurity will prohibit you from growing or serving. Take God at His word and stand secure in the promise of I Peter 1:5 – you are “kept by the power of God.” Move past your doubts and get busy!

⁶ Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Salvation* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1973), 71.

Secure to Serve

“During initial construction on the Golden Gate Bridge, no safety devices were used and 23 men fell to their deaths. For the final part of the project, however, a large net was used as a safety precaution. At least 10 men fell into it and were saved from certain death. Even more interesting, however, is the fact that 25% more work was accomplished after the net was installed. Why? Because the men had the assurance of their safety, and they were free to wholeheartedly serve the project.”

~ source unknown

Remember, sin does not change your *relationship* with God. However, sin does break your *fellowship* with God. Chapter 3 will discuss maintaining your fellowship with God.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

John 6:37

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

John 10:27-29

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

I John 2:1

My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

What are the three most significant lessons that you have learned in this Bible study? Why are they important?

1)

2)

3)

*Answer the following questions to measure
your understanding of eternal security:*

- 1.) Why does being saved by grace mean you are secure? (p. 20-21)
- 2.) Do you continue in your Christian growth by faith or by effort alone?
(p. 21)
- 3.) What is the difference between relationship and fellowship? (p. 22)
- 4.) What can separate you from the love of God? (p. 25)
- 5.) Is it possible to be struggling with sin, yet saved? (p. 26)
- 6.) When does eternal life begin? (p. 27)
- 7.) What motivates Christian obedience? (p. 28)
- 8.) What is the difference between security and assurance? (p. 28)
- 9.) If it were possible to lose salvation by sinning, who would remain
saved? (p. 28)

10.) Check off the following verses only when you can say them from memory:

John 6:37

I John 2:1

John 10:27-29

Do you believe that you know this material well enough to teach it to someone else? _____ If not, review it until you do!

NOTES & QUESTIONS



THE LANTERN

Chapter 1 – Salvation
God's Gift to You

Chapter 2 – Eternal Security
Your Relationship With God

Chapter 3 – Confession
Your Fellowship With God

Chapter 4 – Baptism and the Lord's Supper
Your Remembrance of Jesus Christ

Chapter 5 – The Word of God
God's Communication to You

Chapter 6 – Prayer
Your Communication to God

Chapter 7 – The Local Church
Your Place of Ministry

Chapter 8 – Temptation
Your Struggle with Sin

Chapter 9 – The Holy Spirit
God's Presence in You

Chapter 10 – Progressive Sanctification
God's Work in You

Chapter 11 – Stewardship
Your Gift to God

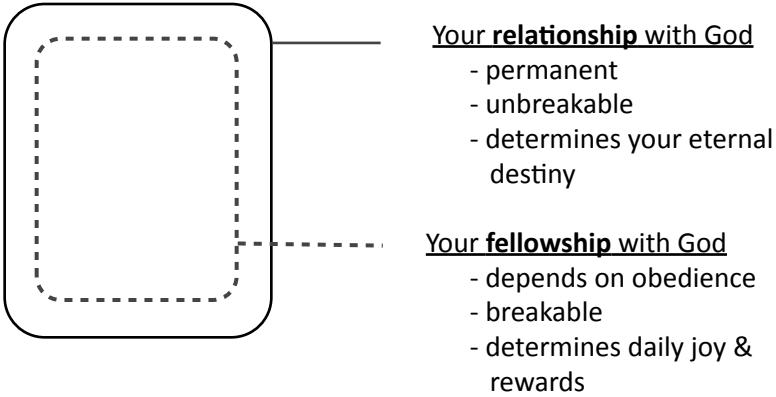
Chapter 12 – Evangelism
Your Ministry to the World

Chapter 13 – "Baptist?"
What it Means to Be A Baptist

Chapter 14 – "Fundamentalist?"
Defending the Fundamentals of the Christian Faith

Chapter 2 emphasized your relationship with God. Remember, once you receive Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, you are a child of God – your relationship with Him cannot be broken.

This chapter will emphasize your fellowship with God. Even though you cannot lose your salvation, sin can remove you from fellowship with God. Look again at the difference between your fellowship and relationship with God:



A good working definition of fellowship = continuous, unhindered communication between two people.

I. COMMITTING SIN

Read **I John 2:1a**. What is God’s desire regarding you & sin?

(“a” means the first half of a verse and “b” means the second)

According to the second part of this verse and I John 2:2, God makes a provision – a plan B – for when you do sin. What is it?

(HINTS: an “advocate” in scripture is someone who comes “along side” to help or defend you. A “propitiation” is the satisfaction of a penalty. Jesus satisfied God’s wrath on your sins by dying for you.)

What does **I John 1:8** say about a person – Christian or non-Christian – who claims to be without sin?

Do not make light of sin – although Scripture teaches that you will still struggle with sin, it also indicates that you will be sinning less and less. Read **II Corinthians 5:17**. What does the Bible call someone who is saved (“in Christ”)?

Describe the last part of this verse in your own words.

Someone who has been genuinely saved is now a different person than they were before. In **I Corinthians 6:9-11**, Paul was writing to Christians in the city of Corinth. What specific sins had they been involved with before they were saved? (Note: The key word is “were.”)

What does the Bible say of them after their salvation?

As a Christian you will still struggle with sin. However, if you continue in the same sin as though you were never saved in the first place the Bible calls into question whether you were ever legitimately saved.

(See **I John 3:4-10**. Note: The Greek words here are in present tense verbs, which indicates a repeated, on-going action: committeth, doeth, sinneth, etc. This addresses continuous, habitual sinning, not a normal struggle with sin that is common to all Christians.)

II. CONSEQUENCES OF SIN

The Bible teaches that you will struggle with sin until your death. How to win battles with temptation will be covered in a later chapter. When you lose the battle with temptation and sin, you are still saved. However, there are some dire consequences of sin.

The first consequence of sin is that you offend God. What did David say about his sin in **Psalms 51:4a**?

What does **I John 1:5** teach about God and sin?

Why is God offended by sin? Because sin is not just breaking a rule; it is breaking God's rule. How does **I John 3:4** define sin?

What is the "law" referred to in that verse?

A second serious consequence of sin is revealed in **Psalms 66:18**. What is it? _____
(HINT: the word "regard" means to cherish or hold, the opposite of confession)

As was stated earlier, a Christian's sin breaks his fellowship with God. You don't need to be saved again, but you need to restore your fellowship with Him. A child who disobeys his parent is still part of the family, but communication is hindered until the child confesses his disobedience.

Yet another consequence of sin is chastening. This idea deserves its own section...

III. CHASTENING FOR SIN

Hebrews **12:5-11** is the classic passage on chastening. The word “chasten” means to discipline, punish or spank.

Read verses 5-7. What human relationship parallels our relationship with God? _____

According to v. 6, what emotion motivates God’s discipline?

Explain the above answer. How can that be?

Read verses 7-8. What is true of someone who continues in sin but is never disciplined for it?

Verse 8 makes sense. You may discipline your own child for disobedience, but you don’t discipline a stranger’s child for doing the same thing. Discipline proves that you are God’s child and is a very serious test of genuine salvation.

Read verses 9-11. God does not discipline us for His pleasure, but for our good. Verses 10-11 each give specific goals for God’s chastening of his children. What are they?

IV. CONVICTION OF SIN

The Bible word “conviction” means proof of sin or wrongdoing. Conviction is the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of someone who has sinned. The Spirit convinces you of the reality of your sin. According to **Ephesians 4:30**, how does your sin affect the Holy Spirit?

What does that mean, and why should it motivate you to avoid sin?

You can be sure of this: when you sin and grieve the Holy Spirit, He will grieve you back. He makes you uncomfortable about what you have done. One of the clearest instances of such conviction in the Bible comes from King David in **Psalms 32**. In the first two verses he speaks of the happiness (blessedness) of someone who has had his sins forgiven. Why does he state that forgiveness brings happiness? Because he knows by experience that sin brings misery to a believer’s heart until it is confessed and forgiven. How did David describe the Holy Spirit’s conviction of sin in Psalm 32:3-4?

David literally felt sick because of his sin. Thankfully, he responded to conviction by confessing his sin in **Psalms 32:5**.

David obviously took time for introspection, searching his heart for unconfessed sin. Yet, he also realized the possibility that he had sinned in ways that were a mystery even to him. Therefore, he asked for help as he confessed his sin. Notice his prayer in **Psalms 139:23-24**: *“Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: 24 And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.”*

What a model prayer this is for Christians. “Lord, You know if I’ve sinned. Please search my heart and make me aware of sin so that I may confess it.”

It is essential that you understand the difference between conviction and condemnation (often called guilt). Satan wants Christians to feel guilty so that they will be useless for the Lord. What is Satan called in **Revelation 12:10**? _____

Satan accuses you before God, but Christ is your Advocate (1 John 2:1). However, Satan also accuses you to yourself. He wants you to doubt God's forgiveness. He delights in reminding you of sin and making you feel guilty.

Perhaps you have experienced a feeling of guilt when you have sinned. If so, you are experiencing God's conviction, and it will continue until you "confess and forsake" your sin (Proverbs 28:13). However, if that feeling of condemnation lingers even after you have confessed and forsaken your sin, it is no longer a work of God's Spirit. What are the differences between conviction and condemnation?

<u>Conviction</u>	<u>Condemnation</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Conviction is a work of God.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Condemnation is a work of Satan.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Conviction urges you to return to God and be forgiven for your sins: <i>"You sinned again, but Christ paid for that sin. Confess it and return to fellowship with Him."</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Condemnation urges you to give up your walk with God: <i>"You're a failure. You call yourself a Christian? You tried and failed. Just quit. God couldn't forgive you again."</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Conviction ends the moment you confess your sins to God. It will never be brought up again.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Condemnation continues even after you've confessed your sins to God. Satan delights in reminding you of past sins.

Conviction of sin is only a means toward an end. God's ultimate desire is that you confess your sin to Him.

V. CONFESSION OF SIN

What promise does God give to Christians in I John 1:9?

The word “confess” means to admit, to acknowledge guilt. Many people believe that confession is something done before a priest. However, Biblical confession is a matter between the sinner and God alone.

Look at David’s definition of confession in **Psalm 32:5**. What does he say?

What is the opposite of confession from this verse?

To whom did David “acknowledge” his sin?

No Middle Man!

The word “confession” may cause you to think of going to a church to confess your sins to a priest. Yet, Scripture instructs you to confess your sins directly to God, not to a man. Why?

- ♦ Because you have sinned against God, not man (Psalm 51:4).
- ♦ Because only God can forgive your sins (Mark 2:7).
- ♦ Because you don’t need a “go-between.” In the words of I **Timothy 2:5**, there is “one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

Another verse which deals with confession of sin is **Proverbs 28:13**. What does it promise to someone who covers sin?

Compare the previous answer to David's experience in **Psalm 32:3-4**.

Back to **Proverbs 28:13**, what two things does someone need to do in order to "have mercy"?

We know what the first one means. What is the second? What does it mean? Why is that necessary?

Compare the end of **Proverbs 28:13** with **Psalm 32:5**. What is God's promise to the person who confesses sin to Him?

God has said that your sin will remove you from His fellowship until it is confessed. With that in mind, sin should be confessed immediately and specifically.

What does God promise about forgiven sin in **Hebrews 10:17**?

What does God say about forgiven sin in **Micah 7:18-19**?

No Blankets Allowed!

Many Christians are content to offer blanket confessions, asking the Lord to forgive them "if they have sinned." Yet, Scripture encourages us to confess our "sins" (1 John 1:9), not just our sin. Here is a good rule to apply: Be as specific when you confess your sin as you were when you committed the sin. Deal with them individually as soon as you become aware of them.

Read **Psalm 103:8-14**. How do these verses describe God?

What does God say about forgiven sin in **Psalm 103:12**?

How is God described in **Psalm 86:5**?

The last several verses teach that God is eager to forgive you when you sin. Yet, many Christians refuse to confess their sin, and therefore, they have no fellowship with God. Confess your sin as soon as you become aware of it. Don't let unconfessed sins accumulate. Rather, make it a life pattern to "keep short sin accounts with God."

*"Nothing between my soul and the Savior,
So that His blessed face may be seen;
Nothing preventing the least of His favor:
Keep the way clear! Let nothing between."*

~ Charles A. Tindley

Let's review the facts from Scripture:

- ◆ Although you are a Christian, you still have a sin nature – you were born with a desire to sin, and that desire continues in you until your death.
- ◆ Sin won't remove you from God's family (your relationship),
- ◆ But it will remove you from close fellowship with Him.
- ◆ When you break fellowship with God, you must confess that sin to God immediately and specifically.
- ◆ God will then forgive you, and your fellowship will be restored.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Psalm 66:18

If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me.

Proverbs 28:13

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

What are the three most significant lessons that you have learned in this Bible study? Why are they important?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

*Answer the following questions to measure
your understanding of confession:*

1. What is God's desire concerning you and sin? (p. 36)
2. What provision has God made for when you sin? (p. 36)
3. What are some of the consequences of sin for the Christian? (pg. 38-39)

4. Why does God discipline Christians? (p. 39)
5. What is the difference between God’s conviction and Satan’s condemnation? (p. 41)
6. Why do you confess your sins to God and not men? (p. 42)
7. Finish this phrase from a paragraph located on page 43: “Sin should be confessed _____ and _____.”
8. Does God hold confessed and forgiven sins against you? (pp. 43-44)
9. What specific sins is God convicting you about? Take time now to confess and forsake them.
10. Check off the following verses only when you can say them from memory:
- Psalm 66:18** **I John 1:9**
Proverbs 28:13

Do you believe that you know this material well enough to teach it to someone else? _____ If not, review it until you do.

NOTES & QUESTIONS