

## **Basics: Five Lessons on Knowing and Walking with Jesus**

- The five lessons in this study are meant to guide you through some important lessons in the Bible regarding how you can have eternal life and how you should walk by faith now.
- These lessons are intended for you to go through with someone who can help you understand the right answers.
- This five-part study is a companion to a five-week sermon series at Cornerstone Church during the months of October and November, 2023. You don't need to listen to the sermons in order to go through this study, but you may enjoy listening to the sermons in concert with this study. The sermon audio for each sermon can be found at: <https://cornerstonechurchff.org/sermons/>

## 1)The Gospel

- How do you think a person can get to heaven?
- How sure are you that you will go to heaven?
  
- Ephesians 2:1-10 is a passage that walks through our need to be brought from death to life and how we can receive the gift of eternal life.

### **Read Ephesians 2:1-10 and then discuss the following questions:**

- From v.1, what does it mean to be dead in transgressions and sins?
- From vv.2-3, what are the ways of this world, of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, and of our flesh (also called our sinful nature)? What does it mean that “All of us also lived among them at one time”?
  - Note: “the ruler of the kingdom of the air” is probably a reference to Satan.
- Verse 3 talks about God’s wrath as the end result of that way of life. What kind of wrath is this? Did we deserve wrath?
- Verse 4 starts out with the word, “But.” Even though we deserved wrath, why does God respond to us with love, mercy, and grace?
- From v.5, what does it mean for us to be “made alive with Christ”?
- We know that Jesus was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven. From v.6, what does it mean for us to be raised up with Christ and seated with him in the heavenly realms?
- Verse 7 mentions God’s grace and kindness. What does it mean to you that, even though we have all sinned, God responds to us with grace and kindness?
- Verses 8-9 are some of the most famous verses in the Bible regarding how we are saved.
  - What does it mean that we are saved by God’s grace?
  - What does it mean that we are saved through faith?
    - How would you define faith?
      - Here’s one definition: to believe in God in such a way as to commit to follow him.
  - What does it mean that this salvation is a gift from God and is not from ourselves or by our works?
    - Many people assume they will gain eternal life because of the good things they have done, or because of the bad things they haven’t done. Why is that assumption misguided?
      - If we could save ourselves, then we might boast about that. Instead, our salvation is a gift from God and we should thank him for it.
- Verses 8-9 tell us how we are saved. Verse 10 tells us what we should do because we have this gift of salvation. What does it mean that we were created to do good works?
  - Are we saved by doing these good works or should we view these good works as a way to honor the God who saves us by his love, mercy, and grace?

### **Personal Application:** Have you put your faith in Jesus Christ?

- John 1:12 says of Jesus, “Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God--”
  - What does it mean to receive Jesus and to believe in his name?
    - You can pray to receive Jesus as your Savior and Lord.
      - As Savior, Jesus saves you from your sins. His death on the cross and his resurrection from the dead show you that he is the solution to our sin problem.
      - As Lord, Jesus will lead you in a new way of life. You should commit to follow him.
    - A sample prayer: God, thank you for your great love for me. Thank you, Jesus, for dying on the cross for my sins. I now pray to receive Jesus as Savior and Lord. Please forgive me for all of my sins. Please lead me in new life. Please fill me with the Holy Spirit and help me to follow you. Amen.
- If you have received Jesus as Savior and Lord, what should your next steps be?

## 2) Prayer

- If God already knows what we need before we ask and if he knows what we'll say before we say it, why should we pray? Some possible answers:
  - Prayer is one of the ways we maintain our relationship with God. Because we love him we should continue to talk with him.
  - One of the main goals in prayer is that our hearts would be changed, not just our circumstances. We can certainly ask God to change our circumstances, but we should also let him change our hearts.
  - In prayer, we can show God that we are willing to submit to his ways.
- Let's take a look at a prayer Jesus taught us to pray, often called "The Lord's Prayer." (Note: One good tip on prayer is to seek to pray the way the Bible teaches us to pray.)

### **Read Matthew 6:9-13 and then discuss the following questions:**

- From v.9, why is it important that Jesus taught us to pray to God as "Our Father"?
  - See Matthew 7:9-11 on God's desire to give us good gifts.
- From v.9, what does "hallowed" mean?
  - It means "to be made holy." This is a prayer that God's name would be seen as holy in our world and in our lives. If we are to recognize God's name as being holy, we should seek to worship him.
- From v.10, Jesus taught us to pray, "your kingdom come." Who is the King of this kingdom and what does it mean for us to pray that his kingdom will come?
  - In our first lesson, we talked about knowing Jesus as Lord. This is similar to the fact that God is our King. If God is King and Lord, what is our role?
- From v.10, when we say, "your will be done on earth as it is in heaven," we should recognize that we are asking for God's will to be done, not our own will. Jesus himself modeled this kind of prayer the night before he was crucified (see Luke 22:42).
  - When our will is different than God's will, what should we do? (Or you could ask it this way: When we want something different than what God wants, what should we do?)
- From v.11, why do you think Jesus taught us to pray for our daily bread?
- In v.12, the word "debts" refers to our sins. See also Luke 11:4, which uses the word "sins."
  - How are our sins forgiven? What did God do to bring about our forgiveness?
  - Why is there a connection in v.12 between God forgiving us and us forgiving others? Read vv.14-15 for more on this topic. If we think we deserve forgiveness from God, but are unwilling to forgive others, it shows that we haven't understood forgiveness the way we should.
- From v.13, what are we asking God to do when we ask him not to lead us into temptation?
- From v.13, what does it mean to be delivered from evil (or from the evil one)?
  - What is God's part in helping us not fall into temptation? What is our part?

### **Personal Application:**

- Prayer isn't about merely saying words like these in the Lord's Prayer. It is about our hearts connecting with God.
  - What can you do to take some next steps in your prayers?
  - How can you use the Bible to help you pray?

### 3) God's Word

- Why do you think it's important to listen to God's word?
- What gets in the way of listening to God's word?

#### Read Matthew 4:1-4

- How did Jesus view God's word?
  - Agree or disagree: We should have the same opinion of God's word that Jesus does.
- What does it mean for us to live on God's word?

#### Read 2 Timothy 3:14-17

- From v.14, what does it mean to continue (or: remain) in God's word?
- From v.15, what does it mean that Scripture can make us wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus?
- From v.16, what does it mean that Scripture is God-breathed? Should we believe that the Bible really is God's word?
- From v.16, what does it mean that Scripture is "useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness"?
- From v.17, how can it be an encouragement to know that God will use Scripture to equip us for every good work?

#### Read John 14:26 and 1 Corinthians 2:12

- How does the Holy Spirit help us understand Scripture?

#### Read Psalm 119:9-11, 16

- How does God's word help us live a pure life?
- Why might we stray from God's commands? How can we learn to seek God with all our heart?
- What does it mean to hide God's word in our heart?
- From v.16, what does it mean to delight in God's word?

#### Read John 17:17

- Note: "sanctify" means to "make holy." This is a prayer from Jesus that his followers would be made holy by the truth of God's word.
- What does it mean that God will make us holy by his word?

#### Application #1: Daily Scripture reading

- Psalm 119:16 urges us not to neglect God's word. What can you do to help you to be regular in God's word?
- Note: the goal is not merely that you would read God's word, but also that you would meet with him in his word and seek to apply his word to daily life.

#### Application #2: Study Scripture with other believers.

- How does studying the Bible with others help us?

- What commitment can you make today to help you form a healthy pattern of living according to God's word?

#### 4) Fellowship

- Why do you think spending time with other believers might help you grow in your faith?

##### **Read 1 John 4:7-12**

- What does it mean that “love comes from God” (v.7) and that “God is love” (v.8)?
- From vv.9-10, how does the cross of Jesus Christ show the love of God to us?
- “Since God so loved us, we ought to love one another” (v.11). What does that mean?
- What does it mean that God will live in us and that his love is made complete in us if we love one another?
- How does living in fellowship with other believers help us live in God’s love?

##### **Read Hebrews 10:24-25**

- In Hebrews 10:19-23, we see that we are invited into God’s presence because of what God did for us. We are cleansed and we have hope. Notice that these invitations are for “we” and “us.”
- What does it mean for us to “spur one another on toward love and good deeds” (v.24) and to “encourage one another” (v.25)?
- From v.25, why do you think some people get out of the habit of meeting together?
  - How can we obey this command not to give up meeting together?

##### **Read Hebrews 3:12-13**

- Three times in the surrounding context of these verses, we read, “Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.” When God speaks, we should listen. So we help each other listen.
- These verses are not merely a command for us to turn away from sin individually. We are also to “see to it” that no one turns away from the living God. Verse 13 talks about “sin’s deceitfulness.” Sin will call out to us and lie to us. But we are told to encourage one another.
  - How can we help each other stay away from sin?

##### **Read Acts 2:42-47**

- Previously in Acts 2, about 3,000 people responded to the gospel message and were included among the followers of Jesus. This section shows us their pattern for continuing in the faith.
- From v.42, what does the word “devoted” mean?
- From vv.42-47, what stands out to you about the fellowship of believers?
- How did the believers in this passage help each other grow in the faith?

**Discussion:** Why do you think God created us to grow in our faith together and not just individually?

**Application:** Are there any steps you should take to increase your fellowship?

## 5) The Holy Spirit

- According to Scripture, the Holy Spirit works to convince us of our sin and our need for Jesus. Back in our first lesson, we talked about receiving Jesus as Savior and Lord. If someone asked you how they could receive Jesus as Savior and Lord, what would you tell them?

- When we receive Jesus, we receive forgiveness and eternal life. That's part of the good news of the gospel. We also received the Holy Spirit when we received Jesus.

- Read Ephesians 1:13 on this topic.

- Just because we have received the Holy Spirit, that doesn't mean that we automatically follow the lead of the Holy Spirit. Galatians 5:16-25 is a great passage about how we can follow the Holy Spirit.

### Read Galatians 5:16-25

- Verses 16-18 speak of a conflict between the flesh (or: the sinful nature) and the Holy Spirit. What is the flesh/sinful nature?

- How does the sinful nature lead us to do things we don't want to do?

- Look at the "acts of the sinful nature" in vv.19-21. What are these describing? Why would people live that way?

- Note: In v.21, we're warned that people who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. We all struggle with sin, yet we are not to live like that. If the overall picture of your life is described by the sins of vv.19-21, you should repent and ask for forgiveness. If you truly repent of these sins when you become aware of them, it's a sign that you have forgiveness and eternal life. But we must seek not to live according to these sins.

- Look at the "fruit of the Spirit" in vv.22-23.

- Why do you think these are described as fruit? Who produces this fruit in us?

- How can we grow in these areas?

- Note: Pray for God to produce these things in you. He wants this for you.

- From v.24, what does it mean that we "who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature"?

- Note: In Christ, we are set free from the power of sin. Yet, we still sometimes choose poorly and follow the temptations of the flesh.

- Looking at this passage as a unit, we see that we are to "live by (or: walk by) the Spirit" (v.16), be "led by the Spirit" (v.18) and "keep in step with the Spirit" (v.25). What do you think these three phrases mean?

- How does the Holy Spirit help you to live the life God wants you to live?

- In Ephesians 5:18, we are told to "be filled with the Spirit." How should we obey that command? How often do you think we should ask to be filled with the Spirit?

- Over the course of these five lessons, we have looked at:

1) The Gospel

2) God's Word

3) Prayer

4) Fellowship

5) The Holy Spirit

- How does the Holy Spirit help us in these other four areas?

**Summary:** What have you learned in this series? What steps can you take to grow in your faith?